

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, November 17, 1954.

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

QUESTIONS.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.

Mr. HAWKER—My question is prompted by the recent visit of Parliamentarians to Radium Hill and an article which appeared in Saturday's *Advertiser* stating that electricity might be produced for as little as one penny a unit with nuclear power. The chief difficulty of supplying electricity in the less populated parts of the State is the cost of reticulation and transforming to a usable power. Can the Premier say whether any research is being made with regard to the cheapening of reticulating electricity and breaking it down to usable power?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I believe considerable advances have been made in this connection. Indeed, I fancy the transmission line from Port Augusta to Adelaide is the longest high voltage line in the Commonwealth. The cost of transformers will get lower. The Government is prepared to extend and is continually extending the bonus system in assisting to meet transmission costs in certain country areas, although of course it is not possible to harness every farmhouse in this State with electricity. Obviously the cost in many instances would make that impossible, but I believe we will be able to go a long way in electrifying country areas in due course.

SUBSIDY TO DRIED FRUITS INDUSTRY.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—My question arises from information supplied by the Minister of Agriculture in reply to a question I asked yesterday. I had drawn his attention to conflicting statements that have been made on behalf of those who are supposed to represent the dried fruits industry. On one occasion we were told that no request had been made to the Commonwealth for a subsidy, but that was contradicted subsequently. Yesterday the Minister revealed conclusively that the dried fruits industry had asked for a subsidy, but it had been refused. The leaders of that industry, I feel, are more interested in placing the responsibility for the breakdown in the marketing of dried fruits on our soldier settlement areas than in putting their own house in order. They say, in effect, that it is because of the extension of soldier settlement that there has been a breakdown in the marketing of dried fruits. I point out that this year, with the soldier

settlement schemes in production, only 89,000 tons of dried fruits, including currants, sultanas and lemons have been produced. In 1938 we produced 91,000 tons; in 1940, 95,000 tons; in 1942, 92,000 tons; in 1943, 90,000 tons; and in 1944, a record crop of 104,000 tons. Therefore I suggest to the Premier that it is futile for the so-called leaders of this industry to blame the soldier settlements, because this year the harvest was only 89,000 tons. The Commonwealth Government has provided subsidies for many types of production, including gold and sulphuric acid, and has permitted profits of 12½ per cent to be made before the subsidy is interfered with. As this question is of great importance to the finances of the State and probably of more immediate importance to soldier settlers who have been placed on the land and those who are hoping to be so placed, will the Premier take up this matter directly with the Commonwealth Government, irrespective of any vested interest which might make suggestions, to see whether or not the dried fruits industry should receive a subsidy or whether there is any need for one?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This question is, of course, of great importance to the State. If we are to use our share of water under the River Murray Agreement obviously we must develop the dried fruits and fresh fruits industries because, so far as I know, they are the only industries where the return per acre is sufficient to justify the high lifts involved in the lower reaches of the Murray. I am quite prepared to take up this question with the Prime Minister and will supply him with a copy of the honourable member's remarks and ask if he will have the necessary investigation undertaken.

SOIL EROSION.

Mr. WHITE—Last Friday I attended a meeting of the Murray Valley Development League at which some landholders who have land contiguous to Lake Alexandrina expressed grave concern at the erosion in that area. For some years it has been well known that erosion is taking place there. About four years ago when I was a member of the Murray Plains Soil Conservation Board I was a member of a party which inspected the area. At that time between 1,000 and 2,000 acres of valuable grazing land had been lost through erosion. The Department of Agriculture has been notified that this erosion is taking place. Can the Minister of Agriculture indicate what investigations are being made to solve this problem?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I have made some personal examination of this problem and have gathered a little information. It seems that a good deal of the country has been lost because of the rise in the level of the lakes as the result of the locking system; for instance, at one time there was a reserve adjacent to the lake shore of about 150 links, but today that is all under water. In regard to the erosion problem, I find that practically all the land held on the lake shores is privately owned right to the water line. Therefore, I suggest that the landholders themselves have some responsibility in tackling the problem; I do not think they should expect the Government to undertake that work on their behalf. We have a Soil Conservation Branch that watches these problems, but it has not the necessary personnel to devote much time to research into the best methods that could be adopted or applied by the landholder to arrest erosion. However, I want to pursue the matter and discover, if we can, the best type of tree, shrub, reed, or rushes that could be grown to combat erosion. I point out again that the landholders can help themselves considerably by experimenting with plantings. I know that in many cases, either on lake shores or river banks, many landholders have effectively tackled the problem by planting willows, but if landholders generally devoted some time and attention to the problem they could help themselves greatly. My department is not losing sight of the problem.

BETTING FACILITIES.

Mr. FLETCHER—On October 26 I directed several questions to the Premier about betting matters. One was:—

As prison sentences are being imposed on offenders against the State betting laws, is it the intention of the Government to have further inquiries made with a view to granting to other country towns the same betting facilities as those enjoyed by Port Pirie?

The Premier replied:—

Inquiries have been made and show that figures for offences involving illegal betting during 1953-54 were—in the metropolitan area, 127; outside the metropolitan area, 49.

His reply did not fully answer my question. Earlier he gave the returns for Port Pirie, which showed that the State was getting considerable revenue as a result of granting betting facilities at that town. Will another review be made of the larger country towns with a view to granting them the same facilities as Port Pirie enjoys?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The question is covered by the present law which set up the

Betting Control Board. The Board is continually at work and has permanent functions, amongst them being one to review all applications for betting facilities. On a number of occasions it has received and considered applications and dealt with them in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

CHLORINATION OF MURRAY WATER.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—Can the Premier say whether the Government intends to install automatic chlorinating devices in the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline and, if so, will they be installed when the first Murray water runs into the mains, or will temporary manually-controlled chlorinating devices be used then?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will get the honourable member a report on the question.

TOWN PLANNING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. DUNNAGE—Metropolitan councils are concerned about a rumour that the Town Planning Act Amendment Bill will not be proceeded with this session. I notice that it is almost at the bottom of the Notice Paper, and I know how local government authorities feel on this question. They are wholeheartedly behind the Government and want the Bill to go on. Can the Premier say definitely whether the Government intends going on with this legislation this session or whether it will be abandoned until next session?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Bill was placed at the bottom of the Notice Paper at the request of metropolitan local government authorities, who desired time to consider the matter. I believe that the Municipal Association sent a questionnaire to its members and that there was a series of conferences in connection with it, but to enable them to consider the Bill I was requested by the association to have it deferred so that the whole ambit of the legislation could be examined by them. They have now sent me a report that seems to be unanimously in favour of the Bill, though several amendments have been forwarded to me, some of them quite far-reaching and valuable. They have been examined by the Parliamentary Draftsman and the majority have been accepted by the Government. They should now be on members' files, and the Government intends to proceed with the legislation now that the necessary review has been made by local government authorities. I hope Parliament will consider the Bill again in the near future.

SOLDIER SETTLEMENT VALUATIONS.

Mr. STOTT—Recently the Director of Irrigation stated that there would be a considerable writing down of property valuations under the Soldier Settlement Irrigation Scheme. Some time ago I asked the Minister of Irrigation a question about the valuation of these properties, and he said that the department was looking into the matter. Is the Minister now in a position to indicate the percentage of the writing down that was indicated by the Director? If not, will he bring down a report?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The statement referred to, I believe, was made by the Secretary for Irrigation before the Grants Commission as an estimate of the writing down. A meeting with Commonwealth officials has been tentatively arranged for November 24 or 25, and after that I will be in a better position to give a definite answer to the honourable member and also the honourable member for Chaffey, who has also inquired about this matter.

ST. JOHN AMBULANCE BRIGADE GRANT.

Mr. WHITE—A few days ago I received a letter from the Tailm Bend division of the St. John Ambulance organization indicating that it was contemplating the purchase of a new ambulance and asking me to ascertain what financial assistance, if any, could be obtained through some Government instrumentality. Has the Treasurer any information on this matter?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Under the heading "Chief Secretary—Miscellaneous" on this year's Estimates a fairly substantial sum has been provided for the St. John Ambulance Brigade to assist the establishment and maintenance of ambulance services throughout the State. The Brigade has undertaken the function of co-ordinating ambulance services and is arranging for services to be provided. Those services are being extended into country areas. I suggest that the authority concerned communicate with the Brigade to see by what means assistance is given and whether it would qualify for assistance.

STIRLING NORTH TO QUORN ROAD.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Premier a reply to a request made to him that the savings of the Government on the freight of coal shipped from Leigh Creek to Port Augusta be put into a special account and portion ear-marked for the improvement of the Stirling North-Quorn main road?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I had a note of a number of questions asked by the honourable

member but I did not quite understand the significance of his last question regarding Quorn. Some time ago I made a statement in the House on this matter. I suggest that later in the afternoon the honourable member contact me and I will try to clear up the outstanding point.

LINCOLN HIGHWAY.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Premier a reply to my recent question regarding the stoppage of work on the Lincoln highway south of Whyalla?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Highways Commissioner reports:—

The Honourable the Minister approved of expenditure of £20,000 on the reconstruction of a section of the Lincoln highway south of Whyalla during the current financial year. The Whyalla Town Commission were advised that during the current year they were permitted to spend up to £17,000 on this work, the balance of £3,000 being held for sealing departmentally that section of base constructed by the Whyalla Town Commission. During the construction of this work, the Whyalla Town Commission used very little of its own plant, as it had on loan from this department, a tractor, dozer and ripper, and are employing a contractor for loading the material. In any case they are now working at a point approximately 17 miles from Whyalla which is the limit of working efficiently. They are still working on this road but are nearing completion.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE: Mr. H. L. TAPPING.

Mr. HUTCHENS moved:—

That a further two weeks' leave of absence be granted to the honourable member for Semaphore (Mr. H. L. Tapping) on account of ill-health.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—On behalf of members on this side I express sincere sympathy to honourable members opposite concerning the prolonged illness of their colleague.

Motion carried.

WINNING BETS TAX.

Mr. STOTT—I move:—

That this House is of the opinion—

- (a) that the principle of applying the winning bets tax to the amounts invested by racegoers is unjust;
- (b) that the relevant legislation should be amended so that the amounts so invested will not be taxed after June 30, 1955;
- (c) that the share of the winning bets tax payable to racing and trotting clubs should be adjusted so that they will not incur loss by reason of such amendment.

In principle the motion means that the tax now imposed on the stake money involved in a winning bet should no longer apply; it does not mean the complete lifting of the winning bets tax. I am opposed to the taxing of the stake money because it is iniquitous and unjust. When the tax was first introduced I gave an illustration of how it would work and expressed the opinion that it would be bitterly opposed by punters at trotting and race meetings, and that prophecy has come true. Many South Australians are opposed to the payment of a tax on the stake. That principle does not apply in other States, and I am therefore anxious to have an expression of opinion from this House on the question. I do not intend by means of this motion to upset the Treasurer's financial arrangements; therefore paragraph (b) of the motion states:—

That the relevant legislation should be amended so that the amounts so invested will not be taxed after June 30, 1955.

That should give the Treasury, racing clubs, and anybody else concerned time to get their houses in order before any new law operates.

The man who invests £10 each way on a winning horse at 4 to 1 collects not only his £40 winnings, but also the £10 invested—a total of £50. A tax of £1 10s. is paid on the £50. The punter has won £40 and on that amount the tax should be paid. The bookmaker writes the bet as £40 to £10. If the horse on which the punter has bet £10 each way runs second, £10 is lost because the horse did not win, but £20 is collected because the horse has run second, and the tax is paid on that amount. When a horse is priced at four to one many punters back it each way in order to save their stake. By betting that way the punter finishes even when the horse runs second. On that £20 the tax has to be paid, which means that the punter finishes up a loser. Some people say there should not be a tax on the bet because the horse has run second and the punter has won nothing, but I do not agree. However, he should pay a tax on only the £10 that he has won through the horse running second, not on the amount invested. Some investigation has been made on the effect my proposal would have on the amounts received by the Treasury and racing and trotting clubs. During 1953-54 the total amount of tax collected was £662,483. Of that amount the Treasury received £507,226, racing clubs £128,944 and the trotting clubs £26,313. If there had been no tax on the amount invested the total tax received would have been £466,653, of which the Treasury would have received

£357,290, the racing clubs £90,828 and the trotting clubs £18,535. Based on the 1953-54 figures the tax reduction equalled 29.56 per cent. Working out 29.56 per cent of £662,483 we get £195,830. Dividing this amount the Treasury would get £149,936, the racing clubs £38,116 and the trotting club £7,778, but I do not want it to apply this way. There should be no tax on the amount invested, and the racing and trotting clubs should not lose anything.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Who should lose?

Mr. STOTT—The Treasury.

Mr. Davis—Why only the Treasury?

Mr. STOTT—That matter has been raised. The money received by the racing clubs through the winning bets tax is used to increase stakes and to make racing more attractive. In other words, the amount they receive from this tax goes back into racing. If the amount the clubs receive is reduced the stake money offered must accordingly be reduced.

Mr. Hawker—Why should a punter receive more consideration than a man who pays any other tax?

Mr. STOTT—This tax is most unjust and iniquitous. It is not a matter of showing the punter consideration: it is a matter of removing one of the most pernicious taxes ever introduced. I do not support any suggestion of removing the winning bets tax on winnings. If a man is lucky enough to win he should pay tax on his winnings. The total amount that would have been collected last year, under my proposal, is £466,653. The Treasury would receive £311,396, the racing clubs £128,944, and the trotting clubs £26,313. The clubs would receive a total of £155,257. It will be seen that the Treasury would still receive more than double that paid to the clubs. In other words, the Treasury would stand the whole of the reduction.

Mr. Teusner—To be consistent you would have to remove the totalizator tax also.

Mr. STOTT—I am not dealing with the totalizator tax. This proposal applies only to the winning bets tax. Of the amount invested in the totalizator, 12½ per cent is deducted before a dividend is paid. The totalizator tax will remain as it is. If the racing and trotting clubs were asked to support the removal of the winning bets tax, even on the amount invested, they would probably say, "Not if we are going to suffer." If the amount they receive were reduced they would not be able to increase the stake money they offer. However, my proposal should receive their full

support because it does not visualize any reduction in the amounts they are receiving today.

The Hon. T. Playford—Do you suggest that your motion is supported by the racing clubs?

Mr. STOTT—No. I am suggesting that it should be supported. If they do not support my proposal they deserve to lose. The member for Port Pirie (Mr. Davis) has indicated that he does not agree with my contentions. He suggests that if there is to be any reduction in the taxation the clubs should lose the same proportion as the Treasury.

Mr. Davis—I am more concerned about money that is devoted to hospitals and education than with that which goes to racing and trotting clubs.

Mr. STOTT—So am I, but we are dealing with the winning bets tax. If the clubs are not interested in my proposal, which ensures that they will not lose, then they are putting their necks out. They have not indicated that they do oppose this. I understand from correspondence I have received that they believe a conference should be held between all clubs before they indicate the view they will take on this proposition. I have met dozens of people who believe that the tax on the amount invested should be removed. Hundreds of people in this State are behind my move.

Mr. Davis—Thousands would be.

Mr. STOTT—That is probably so. If the racing clubs are not interested in their thousands of patrons they should be. Under my proposal they will not lose and I am sufficiently optimistic to believe that when they consider it thoroughly they will support it. They could not be expected to support a proposal under which the amount they receive would be reduced.

In Victoria racing taxation varies. The winnings bets tax does not apply there, but that State has other sources of revenue through the bookmakers and the totalizator. On race courses within 20 miles of the G.P.O., Melbourne, a 12 per cent tax is imposed, 8 per cent going to the Government and 4 per cent to the clubs. Beyond 20 miles from the G.P.O. there is a 12½ per cent deduction, 3½ per cent going to the Government and 9 per cent to the country clubs. Bookmakers in the grandstand enclosure, if operating within 20 miles of the G.P.O., pay a stamp duty of 6d. a ticket. On the hill at Flemington and the Guineas at Caulfield the duty is 2d. a ticket, on the south hill at Moonee Valley they pay 1½d., and elsewhere in the metropolitan area on any racecourse they pay 1d.

Mr. Davis—Is that irrespective of the amount invested?

Mr. STOTT—Yes, the stamp duty is payable on the ticket only. Outside a radius of 20 miles from the G.P.O. bookmakers in the grandstand enclosure at six named courses pay a duty of 3d. a ticket, and on any other part of the course 2d., and at other courses 1d. In addition they pay a turnover tax under the Betting Taxation Act of 1951, and the bookmakers have to lodge statements regarding all bets. On bets of up to £5 they pay a duty of 6d.; over £5 and not exceeding £10, 1s.; over £10 and under £15, 1s. 6d.; over £15 and under £20, 2s.; £20 to £25, 2s. 6d.; £25 to £50, 3s.; £50 to £100, 5s.; and on £100 and over 10s. for every £100 or portion thereof. They also have to pay licence fees to operate. They pay £60 a year, which all goes to the Government, in the Flemington grandstand enclosure, £20 on the Hill, and £10 on the flat; in the Caulfield grandstand they pay £60, and for other parts of this course £10. At other courses within 20 miles of the G.P.O. they pay £15 in the grandstand and £10 for other parts; and for courses beyond 20 miles they pay £10 for all parts.

In New South Wales there is a totalizator tax on race courses within 40 miles of the G.P.O., Sydney, on all forms of racing. On the totalizator 12½ per cent from the turnover is taken, the Government getting 7½ per cent and the clubs 5 per cent. The same applies to trotting. Outside 40 miles from the G.P.O. the 12½ per cent is still deducted, but the Government takes only 4½ per cent and the clubs get 8 per cent. The bookmakers pay a turnover tax of 1 per cent, which goes to the Government and they pay another 1 per cent to the racing clubs, but one half of that also goes to the Government. Bookmakers also pay a licence fee in New South Wales, which is taken by the Government. For the saddling enclosure at Randwick the fee is £70, for the leger £28, and for the flat £7. At suburban courses the fee is £28 in the saddling enclosure and £14 in other parts. Elsewhere, including trotting, the fee is £20 in the saddling enclosure and £10 for other parts. In 1930 the New South Wales Government introduced a winnings bets tax similar to the tax we have in South Australia, but it was abolished in 1932. That State adopted the turnover tax, but it also collects fielding fees, registrations, etc. from bookmakers.

In Western Australia on all courses 13½ per cent is deducted from the totalizator turnover, 7½ per cent going to the Government and 6

per cent to the clubs. There is some stamp duty on tickets but it varies according to the amount invested. In the metropolitan area the grandstand bookmakers pay 3d. a ticket, in other parts of the course they pay 1d., and at all other race courses the duty is 1d. There is no turnover tax in Western Australian. All the licence fees charged go to the racing clubs.

In Queensland the totalizator tax on courses within 20 miles of the G.P.O., Brisbane, is 13½ per cent, 5 per cent going to the Government and 8½ per cent to the clubs. Outside 20 miles from the G.P.O., 15 per cent is deducted from the totalizator turnover, 5 per cent being taken by the Government and 10 per cent by the clubs. The bookmakers pay a stamp duty on courses within 20 miles of the G.P.O. of 3d. a ticket in the saddling enclosure and 1d. in other parts. At all other parts of the State the tax is 1d. a ticket. There is no turnover tax in Queensland, but licence fees are charged. Within 20 miles of the G.P.O. the licensing fee for the saddling enclosure is £50, for the ledger £25, and for other parts £5. Queensland also has what they call unregistered meetings, and the bookmaker has to pay a fee of £25 for the saddling enclosure and £10 for other parts. There are zones there within 10 miles of Ipswich, or Toowoomba, or Rockhampton, for which a fee of £15 is charged for the saddling enclosure and £7 for other parts. In all other parts of Queensland the licence fee is £5.

In South Australia the totalizator deduction is 12½ per cent, and the Government takes 1½ per cent and the club 11½ per cent if the amount does not exceed £2,000. If it does not exceed £3,000 the Government takes 2½ per cent and the club 10½ per cent. If it does not exceed £4,000 the government takes 3½ per cent and the club 9½ per cent. If it does not exceed £5,000 the Government takes 4½ per cent and the club 8½ per cent; over £5,000 the Government takes 5½ per cent and the club 7½ per cent. In South Australia there are some betting premises, and there we find a slight alteration in the stamp duty, for it is a flat rate of ½d. a ticket. The turnover tax for bets on the courses is 1 per cent, and for bets on premises 2 per cent. One per cent is payable on races within this State. For instance, if a race meeting is held at Murray Bridge on a Saturday afternoon the club would collect 1 per cent on races run at Adelaide as well as on races run at the local meeting. From the tax obtained from betting premises the board retains a sum not exceeding £5,000 to apply as it thinks fit for the benefit of country racing clubs. The remainder goes to the Government.

There are several other small fees such as clerks' fees. I realize, of course, that the Treasurer, being prudent, will oppose the motion on the grounds that it will mean less income, and he will probably argue that the person betting on the totalizator is willing to pay a tax of 12½ per cent; but two wrongs do not make a right. The tax on the winnings should remain to assist racing clubs with regard to their stakes. It has been suggested that if the tax on the stake were removed the Treasurer could recover the £190,000 thereby lost by charging a tax on the price of admission to trotting and race meetings. I am concerned about the penalizing of the tens of thousands of people who attend racing and trotting meetings and who are affected by this unjust tax on stake money.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—The honourable member said that the same principle that applies in the winning bets tax in this State does not apply in any other State, but, as I will show, that is the most masterly understatement I have ever heard in this House. I have been making some research into racing in South Australia and in other States, and this afternoon I will draw some conclusions on this matter so that members will know the position here and the policy of my Government in this matter. Every honourable member will admit that all taxation is inequitable and unjust; indeed, I have never heard of any taxation that is not bad in one way or another! There is always some objection to any taxation, but that the winning bets tax is more inequitable or unjust than any other tax on racing is not true. The investor on the totalizator knows that, whichever horse wins, £12 15s., will be deducted from every £100 invested, whereas the winning bets tax, which is 3d. on every 10s. or part thereof, generally works out at only about 3½ per cent.

Mr. O'Halloran—Provided the punter wins.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The fact remains that only 3½ per cent is deducted as taxation; therefore, unless the bookmaker takes a margin of nine per cent or more for his services, the punter betting with the bookmaker is in a better position regarding deductions than the investor on the totalizator. The honourable member said that the principle applying in South Australia with regard to the winning bets tax does not apply in any other State; but I go further and say that in no other State does the Government collect taxation

for the racing clubs. Indeed, in some States the racing clubs are required to collect taxation for the Government.

Mr. O'Halloran—In this State the book-makers collect the tax for the Government.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government has to take the responsibility for its collection. Mr. Stott said that the iniquitous tax was imposed by the Government and that a reduced amount should go to it, but the racing and trotting clubs should lose nothing. I recall that the tax, for which the Government gets the blame, was first advanced by the racing clubs. The idea was examined sympathetically by the Government but it made the fatal mistake of accepting it. We adopted a wrong principle. There is no future in the collection of taxation for other people. I have said that many times in regard to uniform taxation. Last year as the result of racing taxation the State collected £741,889. For the racing clubs it collected £575,380. Part of Mr. Stott's motion says that the share of the winning bets tax payable to racing and trotting clubs should be adjusted so that they will not incur loss by reason of any amendment. He wants to take from the State some of the revenue it now gets from racing, but he still wants the State to collect on behalf of the racing and trotting clubs. Under his proposal the State would collect £589,000 and for the clubs it would collect about an equal amount. Mr. Stott suggested that the scheme should not apply until June, 1955, so that the Treasurer could adjust his accounts. He did not say in what way the money lost to the State could be recouped. Does he suggest another land tax, an entertainment tax, or must there be the so-called economies that we hear so much about except when the Estimates are being considered? Is the money to come out of the vote to the Education Department? The Minister of Education will tell us that he cannot carry on educational services properly with the money now available to him. Is the money to come from the vote to the Minister for Health for hospitals? Are the salaries of public servants and the police to be reduced? The honourable member implies that so long as a few months' notice is given accounts can be easily adjusted.

Mr. Stott—I suggested that it could come from a tax on admission tickets.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The State Budget for this year has been adopted by Parliament and it provides for a large deficit. Under Mr. Stott's proposal the racing and trotting clubs are not to lose any revenue. He gave me notice

only yesterday of his intention to move this important motion and I have not had much time to gather information. Last year, taking a line on the published statement of its accounts, the Port Adelaide Racing Club obtained through members' subscriptions £5,080. Its gross profits from meetings were £81,078 and the interest on investments, etc. was £1,729. That gave it a total revenue of £87,887. Its expenditure was £67,444, leaving a surplus of £20,443. Its current assets and investments, including cash, bank balance, Government bonds, etc., was £81,391. Other assets less liabilities amounted to £153,593. So this club is not doing badly as the result of the winning bets tax; apparently better than the State Government is doing. The South Australian Jockey Club received in members' subscriptions £7,000, and I suggest that anyone subscribing as a member of that club gets full value for his money. Gross profits from meetings amounted to £59,500 and interest on investments, etc., was £777. Its total revenue was about £67,000 and its expenditure £44,000, leaving a surplus after providing for reserves and depreciation of £22,000. It had cash, bank balances, bonds, etc., amounting to £56,000, and its total assets after providing for liabilities were £160,000.

Mr. Dunks—The racing clubs are not asking for anything.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think I have interpreted Mr. Stott's remarks correctly. He said they are not asking for anything because they are afraid the Government would not agree, but if they thought the Government would agree they would have both hands out for it. Mr. Stott said he could not see the racing clubs objecting to his proposal so long as they lost nothing. I think the racing clubs are prepared to take all they can get from Parliament and to leave Parliament with the responsibility of collecting money for them to spend. They are willing for Parliament and the Government to take all the unpopularity associated with collecting the money.

Mr. Fletcher—Have you any information about country clubs?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No. I have not had time to get any information about them, but they would not be on the same level as the city clubs because they do not have Saturday afternoon meetings as city clubs do. The Adelaide Racing Club collected in members' subscriptions £4,000. Its gross profits from meetings amounted to £32,000 and interest, etc., totalled £1,900. Its total revenue was

£38,000 and its expenditure £18,000, leaving a surplus of £20,000. It had cash, bank balances, etc., amounting to £75,000 and its total assets after allowing for liabilities amounted to £162,000. So the three racing clubs are going broke. They must be looked after very carefully because of the pernicious system that applies. I have looked at this matter in many ways and have gathered some information, but I cannot find any evidence to justify the statement that racing in this State is on the down grade. I have some particulars about the turnover per head. Last year in South Australia it was £38. The turnover on the totalizator, where the deduction is $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, was £2,500,000. The turnover of the bookmakers, where the betting tax applies, was £27,250,000. That gave a total of £29,750,000, and on a population basis it worked out, as I have said, at £38 per head. In Queensland the turnover on the totalizator was £3,000,000 and the bookmakers' turnover was £27,000,000, making a total of £30,000,000, or a per head figure of £23. In Victoria, where various experiments were tried before the Government applied the turnover tax, the totalizator turnover was £12,000,000, the bookmakers' turnover £55,000,000, a total of £67,000,000 or £28 a head. In New South Wales the totalizator turnover was £14,000,000, the bookmakers' turnover £115,000,000, a total of £129,000,000 or £38 a head the same as in South Australia. It will be seen that much money is invested in this industry. There is no justification for assuming from those figures that the racing industry in South Australia is lacking in investors to support it. It cannot be assumed from the recorded profits of the clubs that they are not doing extremely well out of the present set-up. I am prepared to help the honourable member and suggest a proposal which is not made hastily, but after the Government has given great thought to it. The principle upon which the proposal is based is that the Government shall collect the revenues it requires from racing for its purposes of government and that the racing clubs shall collect the revenues they desire for the maintenance of racing.

Mr. Macgillivray—Which would take priority, the Government or the clubs?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This is my proposal:—

1. All existing levies be abolished in favour of a single turnover tax designed simply to bring in the present extent of revenue to the Government. The rate required would be $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent and, except for that on totalizator turnover, would be collected by a governmental authority.

2. The clubs be required to finance themselves by appropriate levies by means of bookmakers' licences, turnover percentages, or other means. They will determine the rates to be charged and be required to collect the amounts themselves.

I think that is a fair proposal. The racing clubs will collect their own levies and will decide their form and extent. We will, if this proposal is accepted, be dissolving partnership except that we will have a slight mutual interest in the totalizator.

I have figures relating to the revenue collected at the present time. The Government receives £118,791 from totalizator percentages; £7,686 from unclaimed totalizator dividends; £57,274 from commission on bets; £509,144 from winning bets tax; £30,348 from duty on betting tickets and £18,646 from unclaimed bets; a total of £741,889 or 2.5 per cent of all betting turnover. The clubs receive £198,572 from totalizator percentages; £221,551 from commission on bets and £155,257 from winning bets tax; a total of £575,380 or 1.94 per cent of all betting turnover. Charity receives £33,368 from totalizator fractions of .11 per cent of all betting turnover. The total tax collected represents 4.55 per cent of all betting turnover. The Government will receive, under my proposal, as nearly as it is possible to mathematically estimate, the same as it collects at the present time. I make that offer with no reservations to the racing clubs.

Mr. Macgillivray—Will it apply to the trotting clubs?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. I am prepared to meet a deputation at any time of the day or night, except Sundays, to finalize this matter, if it is so desired. If the racing clubs do not want this proposal let them come out in the open and frankly admit that they support the present method and are partners in it, because if they are not prepared to say that then this House, I believe, will, of its own volition, have to consider this matter again next session. I oppose this motion which I believe is not in the best interests of racing nor in accordance with the desires of the racing clubs. The additional money made available to the clubs has resulted in better stake money being paid and better horses competing. Better stakes are being paid and each year I require the clubs to furnish me with a statement of the stakes they pay. I make my offer to the clubs that we dissolve partnership. It is open to them if they desire, but if they want the partnership to continue they must come out into the open and say so. The principle operating in South Australia does not operate in any other State. No other State Government

collects taxation and hands it out to outside bodies. In most instances in other States the Governments require the racing clubs to collect the taxation and hand it over to them. If the racing clubs do not like the present set-up they need only ask for it to be altered and I will support, to the best of my ability, the passage of a Bill along the lines I have indicated this afternoon. I oppose the motion which is not in the best interests of racing and which, I believe, is not sponsored by responsible racing authorities.

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

LOTTERY AND GAMING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 3. Page 1267.)

Mr. FRED WALSH (Thebarton)—Despite criticism levelled by certain sections at the action of the member for Port Adelaide in introducing this Bill, I believe he is to be commended because the control of trotting and racing should be considered by Parliament. No-one in this House, or perhaps even outside, is more competent than he to discuss this question. He showed by the way he explained the Bill that he has a wide knowledge of trotting. He was one of the pioneers of this sport in South Australia. Racing generally needs a thorough clean up. I do not think anyone would deny that there is fraud and malpractice in the racing business. Interested clubs have some say in trotting control, but the efficacy of that arrangement is in question. I confess that I have little knowledge of the internal workings of trotting clubs and the Trotting League, for I am only one of the punters who bet in a small way. Let us compare the powers of the South Australian Jockey Club with the powers of the South Australian Trotting Club. The S.A.J.C. is all-powerful in the control of racing. Probably its authority grew as it grew. I think it was the original club in this State and it assumed certain authorities that could be open to question, but it is accepted as the ruling body that determines almost everything associated with racing outside the provisions of the Lottery and Gaming Act.

One might ask, why should the S.A.J.C. be all-powerful? Why should there not be an authority representative of all racing clubs constituted in a manner similar to the Trotting League? I do not mean by that that I agree with the present arrangement in relation to

trotting. Let us examine the actions of the course-owning racing clubs which were mentioned by the Premier during another debate. I question whether one club owns its course, for it leases it from the City Council, but because of the conditions of the lease it has full authority to determine who shall use the course. The course-owning clubs decided not to permit the Adelaide Hunt, Amateur Turf, and Licensed Victuallers' Clubs to race on their courses after a certain date. This will eventually put those clubs out of business unless they can race on country courses.

Mr. Fletcher—Then they would have to get dates allotted to them.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Yes. About two years ago I raised this issue and the Premier obtained a report from the course-owning clubs, but it was very vague. The three clubs I have mentioned should not have to go out of business. There should be some over-riding authority to prevent that. The Commissioner of Police is the sole authority who can permit the use of the totalizator on race courses, subject to the approval of the Chief Secretary but the S.A.J.C. is the body that allocates dates to the respective clubs. Further, all racing colours and horses have to be registered with it, yet the South Australian Trotting Club has only the same representation on the Trotting League as the smallest country club.

Mr. Pearson—Would you say that the Trotting Club has helped country trotting clubs?

Mr. FRED WALSH—I think the member for Port Adelaide pointed out how helpful it has been, for it has subscribed large sums to the Trotting League. In turn, the league has subsidized all other trotting clubs, except the Gawler Trotting Club. The appointment of stipendiary stewards is another matter in the hands of the S.A.J.C., but in trotting the League handles this matter. These stewards are appointed to keep the game clean and free from malpractices, but I doubt whether they are doing this. Stipendiary stewards should be appointed by a Government authority. The Government should control every aspect of horse racing and trotting in this State. I believe that in one of the other States there is a Government board to control racing.

Mr. Stephens—Do you think it would be right for trotting drivers to appoint stipendiary stewards?

Mr. FRED WALSH—No. Some of those who appoint stewards own horses and drive them. I believe that the brother of one driver is a stipendiary steward. Blood is thicker than water, and if there were some doubt whether

a driver had done his best in a race I believe he would be given the benefit if his brother were a steward.

Mr. Fletcher—That arrangement lends itself to suspicion.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Of course it does. That cannot be in the best interests of the sport.

Mr. Stephens—There are four members of the Trotting League who have drivers' licences and who have driven in races this year under stewards they have appointed.

Mr. FRED WALSH—One of the objects of the Bill is to delete section 22, which empowers the Trotting League to grant permits to use a totalizator at a meeting held with the permission of the Commissioner of Police. The Commissioner is powerless to issue a permit for the use of a totalizator at trotting meetings. In this regard I believe the League should be stripped of all power and that the Commissioner should be the sole authority. Mr. Stephens explained the negotiations that have been conducted in recent months between the country members of the league, the Owners' and Breeders' Association and the Premier. One can understand the Premier's reluctance to become embroiled in a dispute of this nature and his desire to refrain from interfering with the sport. That attitude would be commendable if this were merely an ordinary sport such as athletics but where gambling is involved to the extent it is in this case the Premier should look at the matter from a different angle, because apart from the interests of the trotting clubs and the Owners' and Breeders' Association the interests of the public must be considered. The Premier told the representatives of these bodies to confer in an effort to arrive at a satisfactory basis of representation on the league. I understand that the presidents and secretaries of the bodies concerned were willing to accept the basis proposed at the time, namely, four representatives of the league, three of the club and one of the Owners' and Breeders' Association and to refer that tentative agreement back to the constituent bodies for ratification. The Premier's idea was that the interests of country clubs should be preserved; but are we to be plagued in all matters with this phobia for preserving country interests? Are we to apply such reasoning to all our social and economic activities? I suggest we should not do so in this case but rather look at the matter from the point of view of which body contributes most. I am reminded of the old Socialist slogan: "From each according to his ability; to each according to his needs." That could be applied to some

extent in considering the constitution of the league, which must be constituted on a just basis and in the best interests of trotting.

The member for Torrens (Mr. Travers) made out a strong case for representation on the league of the Owners' and Breeders' Association, and I believe he would be quite happy to accept any reasonable set-up so long as that association was represented; but, although that association plays a big part in the successful conduct of the sport and is therefore entitled to representation on any controlling body, the interests of the public must be considered because without public support this sport could not be conducted successfully. Years ago trotting meetings were conducted with bags of chaff as prizes; we do not want to return to those days. The conference between the representatives of the organizations reached an agreement that they thought would be ratified, but it was rejected by the league for reasons that have not been stated.

Mr. Stephens—The chairman of the league, who moved that it have four representatives, said that 90 per cent of his members were behind him.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Yes, and therefore cognizance must be taken of his view. The South Australian Trotting Club is the biggest subscriber to league funds and keeps many country trotting clubs in existence; therefore the attitude of country clubs in this matter would seem to be that of biting the hand that feeds them. The sponsor of the Bill has not provided for the insertion of words in lieu of those proposed to be struck out by the Bill, and I believe that he is waiting on the results of further negotiations in this matter. In the meantime he hopes that the second reading will be passed and the Bill amended in Committee by the insertion of certain words.

In speaking of Mr. Stephens' introduction of the Bill, Mr. Travers used the word "sabotage"; I hope not seriously because it has a sinister meaning in these days when we hear so much about subversive activity. Mr. Stephens does not wish to sabotage the league, but merely wishes to provide for an equitable basis of representation on it. If the league is to comprise the representatives suggested by Mr. Travers, the Government should appoint a chairman who would be expected to report periodically to the Government on the activities of the board controlling the league. At present the chairman of the board, who is appointed by the league, has a casting vote as well as a deliberative vote and I believe that practice is to continue. I do not

believe, however, that any chairman should have a dual vote. If he is not empowered to use a deliberative vote he should be given a casting vote, but I prefer that he should have only a deliberative vote and that in the event of the voting being equal the motion should be negatived. I have been successful in more than one organization with which I have been associated in having that principle applied, and I believe it would be only fair to provide that a similar practice should operate in the league. If we accept the representation suggested and the chairman comes from the country clubs the casting vote will give them five votes, which will enable them to out vote the league. There is a rumour going around the House about another set-up—five representatives from country clubs, two from the league, and one from the owners and breeders, but that would make the position almost as bad as it is today. If that is the best that can come out of this debate it would be as well to end it now. It is thought that the zone system will not be used and that the representatives will come directly from the country clubs. I do not think that would be in the interests of trotting and I hope the move will be defeated. It is vital that there should be a direct representative of the public on the proposed league. The public provides the money needed for carrying on the sport and they should be represented. Delegates from the league go to interstate and interdominion conferences. When I gave my views to someone outside this House about the Government appointing the chairman he said it would be no good because the chairman and secretary always attended the conferences. I know there is a social side attached to them and that the chairman and secretary like to go, but if there were a Government appointed chairman he need not necessarily attend. An attempt was made recently by the Trotting League to make the South Australian Trotting Club increase entrance fees and totalizer units. I am not certain how the Act operates in regard to trotting but in relation to racing section 20 says:—

No licence to use the totalizer shall be granted to any club unless the Commissioner of Police is satisfied that that club provides or will provide facilities for the public to use the totalizer on those portions of the racecourse known as the "Grandstand," "Derby" and "Flat" on payment of either 2s. or 2s. 6d. per ticket on every day on which the totalizer is used on any other portion of the racecourse; provided that this section shall not apply in respect of any racecourse situated more than 20 miles from the G.P.O., Adelaide, nor in respect of the racecourse known as the Onkaparinga racecourse . . .

Under the legislation the club must provide units of 2s. or 2s. 6d. For many years the Pt. Adelaide Racing Club had a unit of 2s., and throughout Great Britain the unit is 2s. The Trotting League in trying to force the Trotting Club to increase its totalizer units had in mind making the club unpopular; the league is jealous of the club. Evidently it thought the club would not obey the direction or request.

Mr. Stephens—We said we could not do it.

Mr. FRED WALSH—I do not think it can be done. The club refused to agree to the request by the league to increase entrance fees. I would not mind any increase in this way if the additional money were spent in providing more amenities. People who attend racecourses in South Australia know that very little money is spent on providing better amenities. The Trotting Club and other clubs are restricted in this matter because they do not own the courses on which they operate, but some of the racing clubs have not spent any worthwhile sum on amenities for many years. Only the South Australian Jockey Club has spent money in this way and I give it credit for what it has done.

The Trotting Club must be accepted as the most popular club in the State. Its trotting meetings are attended by huge crowds who are not there just for the purpose of gambling but because they want to enjoy open air entertainment. It is far better for a man to take his wife and family to an open air entertainment and enjoy it, without even having a wager, than to go to picture theatres that do not see the light of day from one end of the year to the other. The Trotting Club has done much to improve the sport. It contributes large sums of money to charity. None of the other clubs get anywhere near it in the amount contributed. Its balance-sheet shows that last season it conducted two charity meetings and made available £2,036 to both the Legacy Club and the Queen Victoria Maternity Hospital and £3,204 to Returned Soldiers Distress Fund. The total amount contributed to charity last season was £7,277 19s. 9d., something to be proud of. Charitable institutions benefited from totalizer fractions to the extent of £11,355, which made nearly £19,000 contributed to charity by the club. Stakes amounted to £138,029 and the total amount paid in salaries, wages and payroll tax was £32,194 4s. 9d. The bookmakers' turnover tax amounted to £37,884 15s. 2d., the winning bets tax was £18,001, and licence fees,

etc., totalled £13,572. The turnover tax is imposed on the amount of money that goes through the bookmakers' bags.

When the league was established in 1938 it could not have envisaged such a development in trotting, nor that there would be 13 clubs in the State. The S.A. Trotting Club is being strangled more or less by this Frankenstein monster. The country clubs are able to out-vote the city club in every way and that is the reason for the move by Mr. Stephens. Trotting has grown into one of the principal industries in this State. It is felt that the present position should be corrected and that there should be some semblance of fair representation. I can appreciate the position of country members who have clubs operating in their districts and they should support the second reading in order that the establishment of a new league can be properly considered. I have no reason to believe that members opposite would not give consideration to any worthy suggestion presented in Committee. If we permit this strife to continue there will be no chance of achieving co-operation between the clubs, and there may be a definite break away so far as the South Australian Trotting Club is concerned. I support the second reading.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS (Stirling)—I must oppose this Bill because I believe that it will ultimately result in the loss of control over trotting by the league, which would automatically cause chaos in trotting in South Australia. Whether or not the passing of this Bill would mean that control would fall into the hands of the South Australian Trotting Club I cannot say. The league has operated for some years. I believe it was originated by the South Australian Trotting Club and it operated satisfactorily until it grew to such an extent that the representation increased from two or three to some 13. The set-up of the league at present is that there is a delegate from each club. There is only one metropolitan club, so there is a big preponderance in favour of country clubs. It is acknowledged by members that the league has become top-heavy and costly to maintain, and they realize, as do representatives of the Trotting Club, that something will have to be done. With that end in view a conference was called some time ago at which delegates agreed to return to their constituent clubs and present the recommendation passed at that conference. However, it was not accepted by the country clubs. It was opposed principally because some country clubs are in a precarious position and if the representation were altered some, because

of their distance from the city—Kimba and Whyalla, for instance—would not always be able to attend the monthly meetings of the league, and as no proxies can be appointed under the Act the country clubs could be in a minority. That is why they look for more than the four-three-one representation. They would prefer a five-two-one representation. There would be five representatives from country clubs, two from the South Australian Trotting Club and one from the Owners' and Breeders' Association. The Owners' and Breeders' Association has not been represented up to the present and everyone on the league is fully agreed that it should be.

Mr. Fletcher—Where would the country representatives come from?

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—The representatives would be selected from country areas and not necessarily from country zones. Those selected should be the most capable and the best advised on trotting. It would be advisable to select them from areas nearer the city than the far-flung places.

Mr. Macgillivray—What about the zoning basis?

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—That could be unsatisfactory.

Mr. Macgillivray—Why?

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—One of the zones is on the far west coast. Meetings are held monthly and frequently a delegate finds that there is not much on the agenda concerning his area and does not attend. The five representatives should be selected by all the clubs. That would fit the bill satisfactorily so far as the country clubs are concerned.

Mr. Stephens—You would further reduce the representation of the Trotting Club.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—It would gain another representative. It has only had one representative in the past.

Mr. Stephens—The agreement arrived at at the conference held at the request of the Premier provided for four country representatives and three from the Trotting Club.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—The Upper River Murray has only one not very strong trotting club. If there is representation from the zones that club would have a representative, but if it ceased to operate there would be one country representative less as no proxies can be appointed.

Mr. Macgillivray—It is proposed to start a club at Loxton.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—That can be done so long as it complies with certain standards.

Mr. Riches—How many country clubs have expressed an opinion on a five-two-one representation?

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—All country clubs favour it.

Mr. Stephens—No they don't.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—I believe they do.

Mr. Stephens—Two or three members in this House could contradict that.

The SPEAKER—Order!

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—There are several things hanging on this. If the league breaks down in its control the repercussions could be very dangerous to the South Australian Trotting Club and to country clubs. It must be agreed that country clubs furnish many horses and much support to the South Australian Trotting Club. For instance, before a horse can start at Wayville it must win two races on certain marks at five clubs or four races on other marks at other clubs. The country clubs provide sport for many horses that could not compete at Wayville because they are not eligible to start on certain marks.

Mr. Stephens—Do you think the league shows favouritism to certain country clubs?

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—I do not.

Mr. Stephens—Why does it give Snowtown £240 a year? It has been doing that for the last 14 years. It has rejected other clubs after they have held two or three meetings.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—I cannot tell you about the internal workings of the league. I believe that the South Australian Trotting Club has done very well for itself. Its balance-sheet last year revealed about £77,000 in assets—£56,000 of which is in inscribed Commonwealth bonds and cash—money in reserve and also provision for certain other contingencies. It has been suggested that that club is the premier trotting body in this State. I agree that it provides splendid entertainment in the metropolitan area, but we must not forget that under the league administration it is protected. Without the protection provided it could not operate so successfully financially or otherwise. There is a restriction on any other club commencing operations within 25 miles of the metropolitan area, but if this Bill were passed and the control were removed from the league there would be nothing to prevent other clubs from operating in the metropolitan area. That would immediately detract from the benefits of the South Australian Trotting Club. Under that protection, which the league has faithfully administered, the Trotting Club has flourished.

Mr. Stephens—It pays the league £7,800 a year.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—Yes, but every country club pays a *pro rata* amount. The South Australian Trotting Club has greater attendances and more income and pays more proportionately.

Mr. Stephens—How many of the country clubs get less out of it than they pay in?

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—I cannot say.

Mr. Stephens—They get more out of it than they pay in.

The SPEAKER—Order!

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—The league has always demonstrated its desire to assist the South Australian Trotting Club. It does not demand a full levy on stakes paid during the inter-dominion carnival period, but bases the levy on the overall stakes paid during a specified period. That must represent great financial assistance to the Trotting Club. It cannot be said that the league is not sympathetic towards that club. The league has encouraged charity meetings and always foregoes its levy charge in favour of the charities benefiting from those meetings. The present chairman of the league, Mr. Heath, is the most informed trotting man in South Australia. He would probably be considered by other States as one of the best informed men in the Commonwealth. He has fought on numerous occasions for trotting in this State. He fought hard against all comers at the inter-dominion conference against discretionary handicapping and he has since been vindicated in his attitude. I have a letter addressed to Mr. Heath from Mr. H. Matson, the chairman of the Inter-dominion Trotting Conference. It reads as follows:—

You will be very interested to hear that we have gone back to the straightout handicapping system and wiped the open class and discretionary handicapping. I have to admit that you were the only one with the right knowledge. Attached is a statement setting out the change, and in due course the official amendments will go forward to the Inter-Dominion Trotting Conference and State bodies. That gives some indication of the wide knowledge of trotting and the foresight that Mr. Larry Heath has. When he became chairman of the league he took over from Mr. J. J. Rice, who was chairman of the Trotting Club. Until then there was never any dissatisfaction with the league because the chairman was also chairman of the Trotting Club. Mr. Heath has attended practically all conferences held since 1938, and he is considered to be one of the greatest authorities on trotting administration in Australia. I point out that members

of country club committees are not paid for their services as is the case with the committee of the Trotting Club, and which is not desirable. Country committee members work hard in the interests of trotting, but that cannot be said of all the committee members of the Trotting Club.

The member for Thebarton (Mr. Fred Walsh) said that the Trotting Club provided many amenities. I admit that it has good amenities at Wayville, but more money should be devoted to trotting facilities generally. I was a foundation member of the Victor Harbor Trotting Club and a steward until a few years ago. Every year the balance-sheet showed that considerable money had to be spent on commitments, but the money remaining was spent on amenities for the public, and this is still being done. The club built the totalizator, grandstand, beautiful tearooms, and provided an electric urn for the ladies who arrange luncheons, the proceeds from which go to the Country Women's Association. Every year some money is given to charities. The Strathalbyn Trotting Club has been a wonderful asset to that town. It has donated considerable money to the hospital there and to other charities.

The member for Port Adelaide (Mr. Stephens) said that no excuse had been given by the Trotting League for refusing licences. When a club applies for registration or to be licensed an investigation is made into its position and to see whether it has a suitable type of track. The dimensions of the track have to be given and it must be safe for racing. The league has ably carried out these investigations. Country clubs are afraid that if control were taken from the league they would be thrown to the wolves. Many country clubs have had a hard struggle, for they do not get big attendances to keep their incomes up. Mr. Stephens said that he did not know where all the league's money goes, but it has to control the registration of horses, issue of licences and colours, and it controls the breeding of horses to keep the standard high. It inquires into the alteration of the handicapping system from time to time, it appoints stewards officiating at all registered meetings, and it appoints the handicapper who handicaps horses competing at meetings of all registered clubs.

Mr. Fletcher—Does it issue a balance-sheet?

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—Yes. Mr. Stephens also said that no balance-sheets were available, but at every monthly meeting of the league a balance-sheet or statements of receipts and payments is produced and delegates of all

clubs can peruse them. The administration of trotting in South Australia is highly regarded by the authorities of other States and by New Zealand. The Inter-Dominion Trotting Conference adopted the form of clearance used here. The sires registration system is also being adopted by other States. These are innovations that have been advocated by the chairman of the league. Visitors to South Australia have been high in their praise of the system of records kept in the league's office. Its comprehensive library on trotting has been praised by all who have seen it.

Mr. Stephens said that the Trotting League gave no reason when it refused a licence. Although the trotting Club is regarded as the premier trotting club in this State it has never given much lead on innovations. This has been left to the progressive Gawler Trotting Club, which introduced the automatic totalizator, the camera eye, derbies, and the free-for-all races. These innovations were hotly contested by the Trotting Club, but they were for the benefit of people interested in the sport and the Gawler club must be given full credit for them. Mr. Stephens said that the Gawler club had been refused a licence to trot for no apparent reason. At the time the member for Newcastle, who was its president, sent Mr. Heath to Gawler to investigate the position. At the meeting held in Gawler five people attended, apart from Mr. Heath, three being from Adelaide and two from Gawler. Under the conditions required for a club to operate a membership of 50 must be assured. At that time, over 25 people came from Adelaide, or within five miles of Adelaide, and some of them were members of the Trotting Club's committee. Mr. Heath's report was forwarded to the league, which decided that as soon as a sufficient membership within the Gawler district had been obtained a licence would be granted. When this number was obtained the club was duly registered. I cannot support the Bill, for it is not in the best interests of trotting.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

INDUSTRIAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 3. Page 1282.)

Mr. BROOKMAN (Alexandra)—The Leader of the Opposition explained the Bill fully and referred to about 12 provisions that he considered should be inserted in our industrial legislation. I oppose the Bill and disagree with

many of the contentions of the Leader of the Opposition. I believe that many people are too eager to change our industrial laws. Australia has wonderful arbitration machinery which ensures a fair go for everyone in industry. It does not necessarily follow that it will work more smoothly if the law is altered. Industrial peace depends on the maintenance of goodwill between the various forces in industry. When we strike industrial trouble many people say, "Let us amend the law," because that does not offend anybody. However, people are offended if one says that one party or the other is at fault. This reminds me of the story of two doctors treating a patient in a hospital. First they ordered sulphanilamide for him, but after a few days they found he was no better. Then they said he should be treated with penicillin. Still he did not improve so they said, "There is nothing for us to do but to examine the patient." We should leave our industrial laws alone.

The Leader of the Opposition wants boards of references appointed to interpret the judgments of the Industrial Court. They would be new to South Australian legislation, but I suppose someone or some organization would have to meet the expense, though they would only add to the existing growing confusion in the industrial field. Why should we have boards of reference to interpret these things? Surely the courts can give judgments that people can follow. I shall certainly not agree to bringing more organizations into an already full set-up, and I hope that the House will not accept the Bill. The Leader of the Opposition wants to delete from the Industrial Code all references to strikes and this I consider to be most sweeping. Obviously we have strikes, and most of us do not approve of them. I am not quite sure how the Opposition stands; sometimes they say they do not approve of a strike and at other times they are very quiet about it. However, nearly everyone deplores the tendency to strike, and I noticed that in England during the recent strike Mr. Deakin the Labor Leader was most upset.

Mr. O'Halloran—That was an unauthorized strike in defiance of the union.

Mr. BROOKMAN—In any case, the Leaders of the Unions in England definitely disapproved of it. I do not know why we should be asked to delete the whole of the machinery in the Act relating to strikes.

Mr. Fred Walsh—The right to strike has been accepted by the International Labor Organization.

Mr. BROOKMAN—The definition of a strike is a long one and in paraphrasing it I may have made it a little less accurate, but in general terms it means the act of a number of employees in refusing to do their work in order to compel the employer to agree to their demands. The Leader of the Opposition did not advance any very strong reason why we should strike out these provisions beyond saying that the labourer has only his labour to sell. I notice that in justifying the right to strike, members opposite always say that the labourer has only his labour to sell, but in talking about long service leave they always say that the labourer has served faithfully for many years, so it all seems to amount to the way one looks at these things.

The third thing I noticed in the Leader of the Opposition's remarks was that the court should be permitted to order preference to unionists. I strongly disapprove of that. It may or may not be compulsory unionism, but it is a trend in that direction and I do not like it. In any case it is a form of coercion. It is also a monopoly—a monopoly of labour in one field of industry or another, and it seems to me that such monopolies should be kept well and truly out of our industrial relationships. The fourth point the Leader made was that he wanted to bring agricultural workers within the ambit of the Industrial Code. He has attempted that at various times in the past few years and on each occasion I have opposed it and still do so. I see no point in bringing this legislation into the farming community which is getting on particularly well at the moment. Wages and conditions are very good and it is rather remarkable to note how, when the Opposition wishes to illustrate the bad treatment of labourers in this industry, how far back in history they have to go.

We generally hear something about the Tolpuddle martyrs, and of people sleeping in harvesters some 30 years ago, and no doubt we will hear more about it. The point is that conditions in the rural industries are particularly good for the working man, as are the relationships between employers and employees and it would be a shocking thing to disturb the present state of affairs. There is no difficulty in finding work on the land; if anything, labour is in rather short supply, particularly due to the fact many of the more enterprising men who work in the country are doing some sort of contract or piece work. They are doing very well on fencing contracts and things of that nature and are rendering a very good service to the farmers. Some years ago, in about 1939,

I actually worked on a farm in England for a few months and had a chance to see the conditions of the agricultural workers.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Did you work as an employee or one seeking experience?

Mr. BROOKMAN—As an employee in order to have the experience.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Did you have to work under the provisions of the Agricultural Workers Regulation Act?

Mr. BROOKMAN—I am not quite clear under what conditions I was employed, but I rather fancy I was paid very little.

Mr. Fred Walsh—To gain experience?

Mr. BROOKMAN—I only mentioned it in relation to my opportunity to see the conditions there. The agricultural employees were working under an agricultural wages board and their conditions by no means compared favourably with conditions in Australia at that time. This farm was approximately 40 miles from the centre of London, about one hour's journey by bus, and yet one of those farm workers had never been to London and another had not been there for 20 or 30 years. Still another had never taken more than a weekend off for as long as he could remember, and although these men were happy and there was no misery their wages were very small and their conditions undoubtedly worse than could be found in Australia at that time.

Mr. O'Halloran—Would the honourable member be surprised to know that, allowing for accommodation etc, their conditions today provide about the best basic standard of any workers in England.

Mr. BROOKMAN—I would not be surprised to find that the conditions have improved tremendously. I was there just before the outbreak of the last war and I should like to see it again now. I know that the whole set-up has been completely altered and that returns for primary products there are much higher.

The farmer is not in a position to be bound by awards under the Industrial Code. No other type of employer has to stand the colossal fluctuations in return for his labour. There are times when secondary industries fail and other times when they boom, but generally the returns do not alter to anything like the same extent as they do for the farmer, and it would be a bad thing therefore to tie him down to any form of award which would make it mandatory for farm work to be done under award conditions. Let us examine the alterations in returns that the farmer has experienced in the past year or so. In October, 1953, a certain class of pig could be sold for £24, but 12 months later its price

had fallen to only £14. In 1953 the price of eggs to the producer only once fell below 4s., but in late October, 1954, it was down to 3s. 2d., and it is still falling. The outlook for the egg industry is particularly poor. No doubt the dock strike in Britain has adversely affected our egg market there, but apart from that the overseas demand has fallen considerably, and the Egg Board is worried about the position. Although the price of eggs to the producer has fallen, the price of poultry feed has not, and therefore the producer is at a disadvantage. Last year potatoes sold in Sydney at up to £60 a ton, and in South Australia under price control the maximum price was about £36. This year, however, there has been a tremendous glut of potatoes and many tons are rotting simply because they cannot be marketed. The last price I heard was about £7 a ton, and today the producer will give away quantities because they are soft, sprouting, and consequently of little value. This year the farmer grew his potatoes at a loss, and such an experience must undoubtedly worry him in a way in which a secondary producer is rarely worried by price fluctuations.

In 1952 South Australian-produced clover seed sold at about 5s. 6d. a pound, but in 1953 the price fell to 2s. 3d. a pound or less than half the 1952 price, although production costs remained the same. This year clover seed has been quoted at 3s. a pound, but I understand the price will probably rise before the end of the year. This story of price fluctuations is typical of farm produce generally. A few years ago South Australia imported onions from Egypt to relieve the local shortage, but shortly afterwards so many onions were available that large quantities were unmarketable. Market gardeners have to contend with these risks, and those who grew potatoes at such a disastrous loss this year have had to decide whether to prepare the land for next year's crop. Some have dropped out of the industry and there is no real guide on what the following year's price will be. It would be impossible for an award covering agricultural workers to make allowances for such price fluctuations. Court awards undoubtedly place the employer-employee relationship on a business-like basis that is rather inflexible. Award rates are likely to become the minimum, and therefore, any award covering rural industry would undoubtedly harm many workers who today earn more than the minimum wage that would be provided by an award.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Do you suggest that the rural worker is paid so much above the basic wage?

Mr. BROOKMAN—I know of workers who are getting tremendously high wages as well as being provided with many amenities. I remember the case of a man who a few years ago was receiving not only £10 a week, but also living in a house rent free and being provided with free meat, milk, telephone service and light and free petrol for his motor car. That sort of thing is typical of conditions operating throughout rural industry in this State today, and if an award were made providing a minimum wage the harmonious relationship existing between employer and employee would be upset. This State relies on its primary industries much more than many members seem to realize, and Parliament should not tamper with the happy conditions existing in it today.

Mr. HEASLIP (Rocky River)—At first glance this Bill appears harmless, but a closer scrutiny reveals that it is of such importance that it could have a tremendous effect not only on rural workers' conditions but also on primary production generally. In his explanation of the Bill Mr. O'Halloran said:—

This Bill proposes a number of important amendments to the Industrial Code. They have been suggested, after careful consideration and long experience in industry, by representatives of the trade unions, with the full concurrence of the Labor Party, and I feel they should be incorporated in the Industrial Code in the interests of industry in general and as a means of improving relations between employers and employees.

Why should a Bill such as this which affects the interests of practically everybody in the community be referred only to the trade unions and the Labor Party?

Mr. O'Halloran—It has been before the House for a long time and no employers' organization has protested against it.

Mr. HEASLIP—Possibly not, but on behalf of my constituents who will be affected by this Bill I protest against it. Before legislation is introduced everyone affected, and not merely one section, should be consulted. In his speech the Leader of the Opposition said:—

This Bill proposes a number of important amendments to the Industrial Code. . . . One provides for the establishment of boards of reference to solve problems arising from the interpretation of awards and determinations. . . . As an example of the kind of matter committed to such a board under clause 5a, the board may visit premises to satisfy itself that facilities are being provided in order that trainees may have the opportunity of learning their trade.

Contrary to the remarks of the member for Thebarton (Mr. Fred Walsh) I have had some

experience in industrial matters and on the question of apprentices. It is not the employers' fault if there are not sufficient apprentices in trades. It is the result of better conditions and remuneration provided in awards that apprentices are not interested to learn a trade. Unfortunately, many unskilled men are being paid tradesmen's rates, despite the fact that tradesmen have been apprenticed for five years.

Mr. Lawn—You do not think that tradesmen get tradesmen's rates, do you?

Mr. HEASLIP—They must, under the awards.

Mr. Lawn—You might know something about wheat, but you know nothing about industry.

Mr. HEASLIP—Employers pay award rates.

Mr. Lawn—You say that employers are paying tradesmen's rates to unskilled tradesmen.

Mr. HEASLIP—Yes, because they cannot get skilled labour.

Mr. Lawn—You are not suggesting that they are paying tradesmen the award rates?

Mr. HEASLIP—They are getting at least award rates. If they did not there would be a strike tomorrow. I believe the Australian Workers' Union has played fair on the question of apprenticeship. Although the honourable member says I know nothing about industry, I have endeavoured over a period of years to get apprentices to learn a particular trade in which I am interested. The award provides that not more than one apprentice can be employed for each three skilled men.

Mr. Fred Walsh—What trade is that?

Mr. HEASLIP—Graphic arts. Honourable members opposite may not know what that means, but I do, yet they accuse me of knowing nothing about industry. It comes under the printing award and relates to paper ruling and binding. A six-year apprenticeship is involved.

Mr. Davis—The A.W.U. has nothing to do with that.

Mr. HEASLIP—It has. Although the award provided that you could apprentice only one youth to three skilled tradesmen, after an explanation that there were no more skilled men available in Australia I got the co-operation of the secretary of the union and he was prepared to admit another apprentice. I am nominating two skilled tradesmen from England, as such men are not available in Australia. It is said that boards of reference preserve the best relations between employer and employee. I have never had to approach a board of reference to settle difficulties, but have found the best results follow a close

contact between employers and employees. It is a question of give and take. There is no need to set up boards. In his speech the Leader of the Opposition said:—

I believe that our Industrial Code should be made an instrument of conciliation rather than of arbitration. Employers and employees could then settle their disputes by negotiation around the table instead of by application to the court. Why set up another board of reference when the Leader of the Opposition suggests that the best results can be obtained by a round table conference? I agree that is the best method to overcome any little difficulties, and there is no need for another superfluous board. The question of piecework was mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition, who said:—

At present the Code makes it illegal for an employer to engage a man on piece work if the industry is working under an award fixing a day labour rate.

He went on to explain that the Housing Trust and a number of others were taking advantage of contract work. I am not too clear on this.

Mr. O'Halloran—I do not think you are.

Mr. HEASLIP—I have been to the Parliamentary Draftsman to get an opinion on what the clause means, but unfortunately he cannot give one. I do not know what it means. It provides:—

Section 140 of the principal Act is amended—

(f) by inserting the following new definition.—“piece work” (without limiting its ordinary meaning) includes all systems of work whereby a quantum of work is required for payment of a wage and all systems of subcontract work where the person undertaking the subcontract does not supply all materials and plant necessary to complete the subcontract.

I understand it means that unless you supply the material you cannot be a subcontractor and you then become a piece-worker. I do not know the difference between piece work and contract work.

Mr. John Clark—It sounds as if you need a board of reference.

Mr. HEASLIP—I do not, because I can always get on with my employees without one.

Mr. John Clark—How do they get on?

Mr. HEASLIP—Very well, and I have had men with me for 30 years and more. As an agriculturist I let a contract to a man to sew my cornsacks. Under this clause it would not be a contract but would become piece work, although I still let it for the same money and conditions. What is the difference between contract and piece work?

Mr. O'Halloran—No difference in that type of work. You are talking about something you know nothing about.

Mr. HEASLIP—If the Bill is carried we shall need a board of reference to interpret it and a few lawyers in addition. It is so obscure I cannot understand it.

Mr. John Clark—The Leader of the Opposition explained the position.

Mr. HEASLIP—He did not. He now says there is no difference between contract and piece work.

Mr. O'Halloran—In that type of work you mentioned.

Mr. HEASLIP—I do not know where we would be in the shearing industry. That is considered to be piece work, but under this Bill we would not be allowed to have share farmers who do not supply—

Mr. O'Halloran—Oh dear!

Mr. HEASLIP—I may have all the plant and a share farmer does the labour. He contracts to sow and reap my wheat, but evidently under the Bill he would not be allowed to do so. Another clause provides for preference to unionists. Even if there were nothing else objectionable in the Bill I could not support that provision. The Leader of the Opposition had this to say:—

Another provision which is perhaps more important, because it involves a principle, is contained in clause 6. The principle is that of preference to unionists.

Preference means compulsion. Giving preference to unionists may be all right with over-full employment, but what happens when two men are looking for the one job? The man who is not a unionist would not get the job because of this clause, and that means nothing but compulsory unionism despite what anyone can say about it. That is what we have in other States and I am absolutely against compelling a man with a wife and family to subscribe to certain principles in which he does not believe.

Mr. Corcoran—What an outrageous thing! That is terrible in your opinion.

Mr. HEASLIP—It is; I cannot imagine anything much worse. It is proposed under this Bill to add a new paragraph at the end of the definition “industrial matters.” Clauses 4 (a) and 10 (a) both provide for striking out the definition “agriculture.” This does not sound much, but it means that all primary producers would come under the Industrial Code, and awards would be fixed to which everyone would have to subscribe. The harmony

try between employer and employee is far beyond that in any other industry in South Australia. There is no compulsion, and there is more share farming with people obtaining a share out of profits in this industry today than ever before, and more than in any other industry. If we have compulsion in primary industries, the one industry that can still export will be in the same position as secondary industries. It will be dependent on Australian markets because costs will be so high that it will not be able to export.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I regret that I will not have very much time to reply to the many arguments advanced by members who opposed this Bill. I confidently expected that I would have sufficient time, but one sometimes makes compacts in this place that are not kept by the people with whom one makes them. However, in the brief time at my disposal I desire to deal with certain aspects advanced by people who either did not take the trouble to read the Bill or who, because of their lack of experience in industrial matters, were not able to understand it. Some mention has been made of boards of reference. The duty of such boards is not to interpret awards or to interfere with the decisions of wages boards, the President of the Industrial Court or the Board of Industry, but to deal with those very minor matters that frequently involve the employer and employee in court action today because there is no reference and no authority to which an appeal can be lodged to determine the matter. This should be settled by a board of reference. It is not suggested that a new board should be created. We have wages boards in most industries operating under the Industrial Code and all that is necessary is to clothe them with the power I have sought to give them under this Bill.

The matter of preference to unionists has been bandied around the House as if the Bill included a clause providing for preference, but all it does is to remove a prohibition that at present prevents the court from awarding preference to them. Surely there is nothing wrong with that. Surely our friends opposite who claim to believe in the rule of law, and who also claim to have confidence in the court, will not deny the right of the Industrial Court if it feels disposed to award the principle of preference to unionists? I now turn to the question of rural workers. I know that their conditions are excellent, but why? It is because the employers have to pay them more than ordinary rates of pay to keep them in the country. That has been brought about because

in the old days employers did not encourage men to stay in the country or to take to rural occupations as a way of life, and as a result they now have to pay very high rates and provide good conditions to obtain labour. One would think awards have never applied to any rural industry in South Australia, but the pastoral industry employees have had an award of the Federal Arbitration Court for as long as I can remember. Has there been any trouble because of that award and the rates and conditions prescribed therein? The station hands, shearers, wool pressers and practically all employees in this industry make it their way of life and their avocation, and I venture to say that not 1 per cent of them would have the right of the court to determine conditions of labour in the industry removed if they were asked to do so.

There is another very important aspect to this matter. We are parties to the United Nations and to the various organizations that have been set up by that body to deal with all manner of subjects relating to conditions of employment and health in industry. Amongst other things the International Labor Organization Convention dealt with wages and conditions of rural workers. Australia, this proud country that proclaims its progressiveness to the world, is one of the few of the 60 odd nations present at that convention that has failed to ratify it. That is because the Commonwealth Government has not the constitutional power to ratify, and despite the fact that in every other State rural wages and conditions are prescribed by law, this State has put Australia in the position of having to attend the International Labor Organization Conference and say, "We are sorry, but because South Australia will not prescribe conditions for rural work we cannot ratify the convention." Coloured peoples and the allegedly backward peoples in South America have got this, but we who pride ourselves on being amongst the foremost people in the world have the shame imposed on us that we have prevented the Commonwealth from ratifying the convention.

Reference has been made to the penal provisions. I propose to strike them out of the Industrial Code because I believe that the basis of this legislation ought to be conciliation rather than arbitration. If these provisions are deleted and it is left to the employer and employee to meet around the table as I suggested and to have their agreements registered, then there are sufficient penal provisions in the Code to ensure that those agreements will

and conciliation that exists today in this industry kept. The Premier did not suggest that I should withdraw the Bill, but he suggested that something might be gained if the Trades and Labour Council would agree to an inquiry. I have consulted the executive of the council and it has authorized me to say that it wants this Bill passed. It believes that there is great scope for improving the Industrial Code, and it is prepared to join in an inquiry such as suggested by the Premier provided that the terms of reference are fair and the constitution of the inquiry is equitable. I hope that the second reading will be carried.

The House divided on the second reading.—

Ayes (15).—Messrs. John Clark, Corcoran, Davis, Dunstan, Fletcher, Hutchens, Jennings, Lawn, Macgillivray, O'Halloran (teller), Quirke, Riches, Stephens, Frank Walsh, and Fred Walsh.

Noes (18).—Messrs. Brookman, Christian, Geoffrey Clarke, Dunks, Dunnage, Goldney, Hawker, Heaslip, Hincks, Sir George Jenkins, Messrs. Jenkins, Michael, Pattinson, Pearson, Playford (teller), Teusner, Travers, and White.

Pairs.—Ayes—Messrs. Tapping and McAlees. Noes—Messrs. McIntosh and Shannon.

Majority of 3 for the Noes.

Second reading thus negatived.

[Sitting suspended from 6.03 until 7.30 p.m.]

ANATOMY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

(No. 2.)

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS (REDIVISION) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 16. Page 1360.)

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY (Chaffey)—With a good deal of trepidation I rise to continue this debate for I have a feeling that before I resume my seat I will be ground between the upper and nether millstones of the two major Parties that have dominated the debate so far. I have a feeling also that my puritanical political friend, Mr. Travers, will sit in his place with a stop watch in his hand to see how long I speak on this matter. I assure him that I will speak briefly, which will suit him. On few occasions is a member prepared to restrict his rights to

express his views as freely as he likes following on his election to this place. I briefly indicate that I am opposed to the Bill and I oppose it for an entirely different reason from the Opposition. The Labor Party has given a prominence to this measure to which it is not entitled. The Bill does not propose to do anything of a major nature. It only offers a sop to the younger members of the Liberal and Country League, who, at annual meetings, bring up the matter of electoral reform. Now the Government will be able to go back to the next annual meeting and say that it has carried out its promise to introduce a Bill to establish electoral reform. I do not know how the more intelligent members of that organization will receive the Government statement. Whether it is what they want is beside the point. The Labor Party seems to be particularly annoyed with the present electoral set-up because it does not return the Party to office. It is justified in holding that view but I respectfully point out that there is nothing in the Constitutions of the Commonwealth or the State electoral laws, to say that any political Party should be recognized in the matter of electoral methods, because that is a matter entirely for the electors. Only the voters are interested in the electoral system. If the Labor Party forgot its bias in this matter and its desire to occupy the Treasury benches, and attacked the Bill in relation to electoral matters, it would get farther than it is likely to get now. Our electoral system must of necessity give a false return. It contains all the faults mentioned by the Labor Party, but there has been no suggestion to rectify something which I regard as fundamental. At the last State elections the Labor Party polled a larger number of votes than the Liberal Party, but neither Party has suggested a way to rectify the position. The Government has taken a leaf out of the book of the Labor Party, which, during the last two sessions, has endeavoured to alter the electoral boundaries. No attempt has been made to alter the method of election.

Mr. Lawn—Yes.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—No.

Mr. John Clark—I spoke for an hour last year on proportional representation.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Yes, but the Bill concerned had nothing to do with proportional representation.

Mr. Lawn—It did deal with proportional representation.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I wish the Leader of the Opposition would explain to his Party exactly what the Bill covered. Labor members spoke on a matter which was not before the House. The Leader of the Opposition always knows what he is talking about and the Bill introduced then by the Labor Party is similar to the one now before us, except that the Labor Party Bill was mandatory.

Mr. O'Halloran—And it prepared the way for proportional representation.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I accept that, but the Bill did not mention proportional representation. I think that most Labor members give lip service to proportional representation but do not agree with it. I am a firm supporter of it and have been for over 20 years, and am proud of it. I intend to make a suggestion that will provide a true reflex of the views of the people.

Mr. Dunstan—That is not what the Government wants.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—And the Labor Party does not want it either. If the Party were favourable to proportional representation it could have introduced a Bill.

Mr. Stephens—You would have voted against it.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The honourable member forgets that I have done more for proportional representation in this State in the last 16 years than has any other member. I introduced a Bill and it got as far as the Legislative Council, which is more than the Labor Party has been able to do.

The SPEAKER—I think members will agree with me that any discussion on proportional representation would be an obstruction. I have given the honourable member some freedom in this matter, but he cannot spend all his time on it.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—With your permission, Sir, I am going to debate that as a concrete amendment to this Bill.

The SPEAKER—That should be debated in Committee. It cannot be debated now.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Clause 2 of the Bill defines the metropolitan area. The Labor Party complains that it does not get a fair representation so far as votes cast in the metropolitan area are concerned. I agree with that. Thousands of voters in the metropolitan area are disfranchised every election. A Liberal voter in the Port Adelaide or Hindmarsh district might just as well stay home on election day as cast his vote. He probably

only votes because he will be fined £2 if he does not. A Labor supporter living in Burnside also loses the value of his vote. For many years the Labor Party has made no attempt to alter the present method of voting.

Mr. John Clark—You will admit that in the last two years Opposition measures have sought to provide ultimately for proportional representation.

The SPEAKER—Order! We are not discussing a Constitution Act Amendment Bill now.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The whole of the metropolitan area should be regarded as one constituency and members for it should be elected on proportional representation. There would probably be 13 members—six from one Party and seven from the other. That is the basic principle of proportional representation. One of the peculiarities of the Federal system is that in olden days when there was a swing of 5 per cent in voting the entire representation of the Parliament would be changed. If the swing was towards Liberalism all Labor members went out of office and if the swing went the other way the reverse happened. The Labor Party of that generation adopted proportional representation but the Party systems now say that proportional representation is wrong because they cannot get the majorities they desire. They do not want stability. The whole tenor of the debate on this measure has not been to provide justice to the electors.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Do you think it is stability when a Government cannot carry its legislation?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I do not know that that has happened.

Mr. Coreoran—Who introduced proportional representation into the Federal Senate?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The Labor Government. That was one of the finest things the Labor Party has ever done. It provides stability of Government so that men who do the right thing are assured of return. The Labor Party's suggested amendments will do nothing to bring about proportional representation.

Mr. Fred Walsh—When are you going to have a go at the sponsors of the Bill?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I am not attacking the sponsors of the Bill. That was done yesterday in a manner rather unusual in this House. To suggest that because some person or persons take political action they are immoral—

Mr. John Clark—What does "immoral" mean?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—It usually refers to persons who have perverted sexual impulses.

Mr. Dunstan—Rubbish!

The SPEAKER—I do not think any of these matters are contained in the Bill.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Had the expression “unmoral” been used it might have been accepted even by the Deputy Speaker because there is a big difference between the meanings of the two words. “Unmoral” refers to persons who cannot, because of age, imbecility or insanity distinguish between right or wrong.

Mr. Jennings—That might have been appropriate.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I would be the last to suggest that because people differ from me—and about 95 per cent of this House usually do—they are unmoral or immoral. This is a free country and we are a freedom-loving people and people are entitled to their views. All I ask is the same right to express mine without casting reflections on anyone.

Mr. Dunstan—The honourable member is reflecting on my Party.

Mr. MACGILLIVAY—The honourable member should be the last to hold up his head and say that anyone is reflecting on members after what happened yesterday.

Mr. Davis—Have you ever lowered the dignity of the House?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I hope not. I once differed with the Premier, but we did not lose any fellowship because there was no personal reflection. It is my intention to refer to a statement in tonight's *News* because it appears at an appropriate time following on the statement of Mr. Lawn last night who said, in effect, “No-one could ever suggest that the *News* is a supporter of the Labor Party.” I think tonight's issue—

Mr. Riches—The *News* is interested in electoral reform, not in Parties. You cannot get that into your mind.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I am dealing with arguments that have been advanced on this Bill. We must pare off the dead wood and do some pruning before the tree springs into new growth. The new growth I want is proportional representation which has been a dead letter of the Labor Party.

Mr. John Clark—We keep trying to tell you that it is not.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—But members of the Labor Party do not know what they are debating usually.

Mr. Riches—I would like to know what you are debating.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The article in tonight's *News* about this Bill states:—

It virtually ensures the present Government's tenure of office, even should there be a massive anti-Government vote by the people.

Mr. John Clark—That has been proved.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I cannot follow that line of reasoning. I cannot see why the Labor Party cannot win under the present electoral methods. It can lose under it. I think the member for Burnside referred to the district of Murray. The Labor Party held that seat for a number of years.

Mr. John Clark—That is a 50-50 seat.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—It was held without a break by the Labor Party for about 15 or 16 years. The previous member for that district kept that seat, if not for the Labor Party then away from the Government, for that period.

Mr. Corcoran—An unusual set of circumstances developed in connection with that seat.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Why could Labor not win the Torrens seat, for instance?

Mr. Fred Walsh—We gave it a pretty close go.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I was surprised the Labor Party did not win that seat because I thought it would be a sitter for it. I do not want to make invidious distinctions, but everyone knows that there are seats which could have been and should have been won, but the fact remains they were not. Instead of putting its own house in order and finding out why it didn't win them the Labor Party says, “The electoral system is wrong.” Even if the Labor Party had a majority it would not make any difference because the electoral system does not represent the wishes of the people. The Labor Party has done nothing about altering it.

The SPEAKER—The honourable member has made that point. We cannot have undue repetition of it.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I have made it more than once. I am tired of repeating it, but the trouble is the Labor Party cannot understand it. It is still in the backwoods of this argument. I thought it was usual Parliamentary practice to deal with arguments that have been advanced by both sides before referring to the measure itself.

Mr. John Clark—That's a good idea.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I thought so, but I have not had much opportunity to refer to some of the finer points.

Mr. Jennings—You have been concentrating on the Labor Party because no arguments were advanced by the Government.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I have had no opportunity to discuss the finer points of the debate because everyone is taking exception to what I say. Normally members are prepared to listen but tonight the Labor Party is not prepared to listen at all. The Bill will not rectify the present electoral system.

The Hon. T. Playford—What you suggest is that we should not worry about the electoral districts but about the system of voting?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Exactly. I think the Government is more or less taking a leaf out of the Labor Party's book. For the last two sessions the Labor Party has tried to alter electoral boundaries, but that would have taken us nowhere. The Government, evidently supporting the Labor Party as it usually does, because they are hand in glove—perhaps I should say the Lib-Lab Federation—is going to do the very thing the Labor Party has tried to do and failed on two or three occasions.

The Hon. T. Playford—They are growling about it.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—They are not too pleased. Clause 2 refers to the metropolitan area, but if that were made into one constituency and proportional representation were used, we should find that Liberal voters who live in Port Adelaide and Labor voters who live in Burnside would get some representation in this House. Every vote would be of value, but this Bill will not have that effect. No suggestions that have been made during this debate will do that; in fact, I doubt very much whether the two Parties want any change that will not give them a chance of holding the reins of Government. That is the crux of the whole matter. Those who are in office want to stay there, and those who are out want to get in. The man in the street who has been made the stalking horse for this type of argument is left out of consideration altogether.

Mr. Riches—Do you think we could have proportional representation without altering the electoral boundaries?

The SPEAKER—Members must not discuss that all night. Proportional representation is not mentioned in the Bill.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—About the only suggestion that I have heard so far is for an increase in the number of members. Since I came into this House in 1938 my electorate has increased from over 5,000 to over 7,000, which shows the fine representation the electors of

Chaffey have. My point is that although my electorate has practically doubled in population my work has not altered. I have not found it any more difficult to represent 7,000 than to represent 5,000 people.

The Hon. B. Pattinson—What about those fireside chats you give over the air?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I treat my electors as human beings and as friends, irrespective of their political or religious views. We should take that spirit into debates in this House. We should consider all matters on their merits and debate them as friends instead of throwing brickbats and making nasty insinuations or imputing all kinds of motives which is a most unfortunate state of affairs. Fellowship is the thing that matters. Above everything else, friendship is the most important thing in the world. Splitting constituencies or States into warring factions with one section calling themselves Liberals and the other Labor members will not get us far. A policy of moderation that gives representation to every section of the community is the one that will take us further than anything else. The commission to be appointed under the Bill will be of no value except that the Government will be able to go along to the next annual meeting of the L.C.L. and say that it has adopted Liberal's policy and that it has changed the electoral system. However, I do not know whether the young enthusiastic supporters of the L.C.L. will accept this Bill as adequate. The Government may be like the Labor Party: it may not know whether it is debating electoral laws or the Constitution.

Mr. Fred Walsh—The Labor Party supports proportional representation, and your Party subscribes to it too.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The honourable member is mistaken—we are not a Party. We are four members comprising four Parties, and every one pleases himself. I think the four of us would agree on proportional representation because we are reasonably intelligent people. We have to be, otherwise we could not defy the might and power and the finances of the Party system, which has made continuous efforts to win our constituencies for many years, yet we are still here. Indeed, I think we are likely to be here for many years yet, irrespective of the changes that the Government or the Opposition may make to the electoral system, for the people know instinctively when they are well served. The Bill will not do any good. It may alter a few electoral boundaries.

Mr. Corcoran—It might alter yours to your detriment.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I am certain it will not. I have been in political life for many years now. I have studied all that goes on and I know where the Parties make mistakes. Altering electoral boundaries does not mean altering electoral methods, and any system of voting that does not give equal value to every vote cast throughout the State is wrong in principle. Unless we alter our electoral methods we shall be worse off when we finish playing around with electoral boundaries than before. At least constituents are now used to single electorates and know their members and how to get in touch with them. I am sorry that the Government has not brought down a Bill with something fundamental in it, something that would benefit the people, and for once let us forget Parties. The people are the only consideration. They are fined if they do not vote, but when they do vote they know they are simply wasting their time. I cannot think of anything more likely to bring the electoral system into discredit than this Bill. The result of our Party system in Australia is that our Parliaments have become a cheap, music-hall joke.

The SPEAKER—I hope the honourable member is not referring to us. If he is, he is not in order. That is not fair to members.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I meant no reflection on this House or on any section of it, but politics in Australia today has been so lowered that it has become a cheap joke, so that any comedian on the stage, if he cannot get a laugh, has only to mention a politician and the audience knows there will be a joke and starts to laugh, but they forget that they are laughing at themselves because they are the people who send members here. However, if we do not have a just electoral system the people cannot have the representation that they want. That is why I oppose the Bill.

Mr. STEPHENS (Port Adelaide)—I had to wait for the honourable member's last four words before I knew where he stood.

The Hon. B. Pattinson—He doesn't know himself.

Mr. STEPHENS—That is true. All we have had from him for some time has been a criticism of the Australian Labor Party. I am a member of that Party and I am pleased and proud of it. Members opposite are proud to belong to the Liberal Party, but the honourable member never knows where he is, nor does anyone else. We never know how he will vote or where he is going. That reminds me of the story of the old lady stand-

ing in the street watching soldiers marching by. She said "There is my Johnny, and he is the only one in step; all the others are out of step." Evidently the member for Chaffey thinks that all other members of the House are out of step. One member once said that he was a member of the non-party Party. It would have been much better if he had joined some Party and told the people where he stood.

Mr. Stott—They might have rejected him.

Mr. STEPHENS—That is what he is afraid of. It is all very well to be able to go out when people complain against some law and say "I had nothing to do with it. It was the work of one of the Parties." I would sooner take the credit or the blame, than take that stand. When the honourable member for Burnside (Mr. Geoffrey Clarke) was speaking on this Bill I interjected with the question, "Are you prepared to trust the Commission?" and the honourable member tried to construe my question as meaning that I was not prepared to trust the Commission. When he thinks about it, however, I think he will realize the true meaning of the words because I have always been sincere when speaking in this House. Mr. Clarke said:—

We cannot have it both ways. If we have a Commission we must define its duties otherwise its report could be either valueless or inconclusive. I would hesitate to suggest that a Royal Commission is likely to bring in a biased report, as the member for Port Adelaide assumes it would.

At that stage I said:—

I did not say that. I asked if you were prepared to trust the Commission.

Later he said:—

A Supreme Court judge has the same jurisdiction wherever he may be within the Queen's realms, and the judge whom Mr. Stephens is not prepared to trust—

I interrupted him at that stage stating that I had not said that and that he knew it. On the other hand the honourable member would not say whether he would trust the Commission.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—I said most emphatically that I would. I now accept the honourable member's explanation of his own statement.

Mr. STEPHENS—I thank the honourable member for accepting my explanation. Although I am willing to trust the Commission, it seems that the Government is not prepared to trust it, because it is to be hamstrung. It is to be told that it must do only what Parliament allows it to do. It reminds me of the man

who said he could trust his bulldog because it had a good chain around its neck and was wearing a good muzzle. The Commission is to be muzzled and chained! Why not trust it to do a complete job and bring in a report after a complete investigation?

Much has been said in this debate about the number of electors in the various districts. Although at the 1953 elections there were 30,379 electors in the Port Adelaide district, the average district enrolment throughout the State was only 11,529, which means that in the Port Adelaide district 18,850 voters were not allowed to exercise an effective vote. The total number of electors in Frome (3,660), Newcastle (3,989), Young (4,218), Rocky River (4,719), Burra (4,336), Eyre (5,084), and Stanley (5,029) is approximately equal to the number in the Port Adelaide district, which means that, although the people in those districts have an aggregate of seven votes in Parliament, the people of Port Adelaide have only one vote. That is wicked and wrong. If war were to break out tomorrow, the Port Adelaide electors would be expected to help save Australia from invasion the same as country electors, but after saving Australia they would probably be told, "That's the end. We only used you as a tool!"

Mr. Lawn—They would become the forgotten legion.

Mr. STEPHENS—Yes. I register my protest against the present iniquitous and ungodly system. Members stand in their places while the Lord's Prayer is repeated and at times some members preach in our churches; yet many members are willing to rob the people of this State of their just rights. Is that true religion or hypocrisy? Why are we not fair enough to give the people an effective vote no matter whether they be poor or rich? In am reminded of the lines:—

All men were equal born
In this and every nation;
The rich along with the poor would be
But for wealth and education.
But when you are laid beneath the sod
With 100 years to back it,
No-one can tell which were the bones
That wore the ragged jacket.

Government members should remember that the only time Australians are really equal is at birth and burial. They forget this, however, and engender a class distinction that is contrary to the true religious teachings of our people. I do not want to say anything that would bring me into trouble in this House. In my 20 years as a member I have been fortunate in that I have never been asked to leave

because of any statement I may have made. Members should regard this Bill not as a Party measure or one to be used to keep Labor out of power; they should remember that they have a duty to perform on behalf of the people of this State. Members who vote for this Bill assist to perpetuate the robbing of the 18,850 people in the Port Adelaide district who are denied an effective vote.

Steal not our votes for fear of shame,
For on the roll appears our name;
And when you die the Lord will say,
"Where are those votes you stole away?"
And if you say you cannot tell,
The Lord will cast you into Hell.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose the Bill..

Mr. QUIRKE (Stanley)—I do not support the Bill. Ever since I have been a member, although elected as a representative of a single electorate I have never supported the single electorate system, which I believe is unfair and unjust because it deprives the people of the very essential of democracy—their right to vote. Now a Liberal Government has introduced this Bill to set up a commission, and, although I have not the slightest doubt that within its terms of reference it will honourably perform its task, I believe that, because of the close instructions it will receive, its recommendations will not improve the position of the general elector. There are in South Australia about 100,000 electors at every election who do not vote. There are some South Australians now 36 years of age who have never voted for the House of Assembly, and under the present system they probably never will. I think it is about 16 years since the district of Frome was contested and about 10 years since your own district, Mr. Speaker, was contested, which means that there are people over 30 years of age in those districts who have never voted. Nothing can be said for the system that brings about that state of affairs. It is the inevitable result of the splitting of this State into districts on Party lines, and under this Bill the position will probably be worse. I give that as only one reason why I could not support this measure. There is only one fair way to elect a Parliament and that is by having competition between Parties. In the district of Frome the majority of the electors espouse the Labor cause, whereas in Young the majority support the L.C.L., therefore the value of their votes is equal to nothing. Let the people who support such a measure as this explain to me how that can possibly be right in a democracy. The very meaning of the word is that the people rule, but where do they rule under such a system as this? The Parties rule.

The Liberal Party has been the dominant factor for so many years by force of numbers that it can bring about this kind of electoral position. It is inherent in the Party system to protect the Party, and to endeavour by any means in their power to retain the Government benches.

Mr. Fred Walsh—They are not doing too well in those countries that have not the Party system.

Mr. QUIRKE—They are doing all right in Switzerland.

Mr. Fred Walsh—They have a Party system in Switzerland.

Mr. QUIRKE—But their electoral system is different from ours. I have no objection to Parties, but I choose not to belong to one. However, the first and foremost object of a Party is to protect its position irrespective of the wishes of the people; and that is what this Bill is doing. They cannot do it in the Federal sphere.

Mr. Fred Walsh—That is what we want here.

Mr. QUIRKE—I have not the slightest doubt that if the Labor Party were returned to power in this State and found it necessary to protect its position as a Party it would do precisely the same as the Liberal Party is doing.

Mr. Corcoran—You only assume that.

Mr. QUIRKE—Have a look at Queensland. The same would be done here. Do not tell me that any Party is going to throw away its chance of being called to the Treasury benches.

Mr. Corcoran—We have too much respect for democratic principles.

Mr. QUIRKE—What is the objective of the Party but to obtain the Treasury benches? It would be because Labor thought it could do better than the Liberal Party, which has brought the practice into being. There is no proposal to alter the single electorate system, which must inevitably deny at least 100,000 people in this State the right to vote at an election. Labor does not contest a recognized Liberal district, and the same applies to Liberals in a recognized Labor district, but what about the people?

Mr. Fred Walsh—Anyone can nominate.

Mr. QUIRKE—We know all about that. The Bill proposes to set up the same number of districts as at present, but in some way to equalize the number of electors. What will it achieve, how many uncontested seats will there be and how many people will be deprived of a vote thereby? They are reasons why I oppose the Bill, on the same principle as I

oppose the single electorate system itself. It cannot possibly give good representative Government with the right for everyone to be represented. It is not designed to do it. I have mentioned all these factors before on somewhat similar Bills. Should any one be under a misapprehension, I conclude by saying that I will not support the Bill.

Mr. DAVIS (Port Pirie)—I oppose the Bill and am surprised to hear a debate on it. I was also surprised at the attitude adopted yesterday to certain matters arising from the discussion, and was astounded when I found members on this side did not have the right to get the adjournment and were deprived of the right to continue their remarks at a later stage. This was forced on us by the powerful men opposite, who are power drunk and have been for a long time. After the last elections they realized the danger of losing three or four seats, but to make those seats quite secure they are going to gerrymander the State to a great extent. After analysing the past activities of the Government I find that its Leader is a greater dictator than either Hitler or Mussolini ever were. The Government has always condemned Communism, but on this occasion it is using the same tactics and technique as Communists throughout the world. I believe in democracy, and would not be prepared to force my way into power by the support of those behind me; and I would not choose to be as servile as some of those members in the House today. They are so servile that immediately the Leader of their Party says they have to do a certain thing, they are prepared to do it, and are not prepared to stand up and express their opinion. They have not the courage of their convictions.

The SPEAKER—Order! If the honourable member speaks like that it will be very awkward for me to protect him if members retaliate in the same strain.

Mr. DAVIS—I am sorry if I cannot speak the truth in the House.

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member can speak the truth, but cannot reflect on other honourable members.

Mr. DAVIS—I hope I shall never be so servile that I shall do just what my Leader tells me if I think it is wrong. Some honourable members object to single electorates and say this system does not give people the right to exercise their vote. There is nothing that I know of which prevents Independents from nominating for every seat. I hate to think what would happen if they got a majority

in the House. Then they would have to form a Party, as otherwise they would defeat themselves when the first Bill came before the House. We never know where Mr. Macgillivray is. We never hear him agree with anyone in the House. He is a wizard on finance, a champion of electoral reform and many other things which come before the House, but he is not prepared to join up with any Party and give it the advantage of his good advice. He does not belong to a Party because there is no Tory Party with which he could link up. All he does in this House is to vent his spleen on our Party, and this seems to give him much delight.

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Chaffey is not mentioned in the Bill.

Mr. DAVIS—It deals mostly with the appointment of a commission to consider the redivision of the State's electoral districts. It is peculiar that it is proposed to set up a commission of three and that a quorum will comprise two of the members. If one is absent the remaining two will have power to elect one of their number as chairman. I can visualize this commission sitting under those circumstances. I suppose the chairman will sit up like Jackie and the other member will sit on the floor and they will decide how to split up the districts. It is not fair. Furthermore I take it that the members will be nominated by the Government, although the Bill says they will be nominated by the Governor. We know that such recommendations actually come from the Government. I am not prepared to support the appointment of any commission appointed by the Government to act under a Bill of this nature. The commission will be powerless to do anything except try to equalize the number of voters in each district. It will only be allowed to set up 13 electorates in the metropolitan area and 26 in the country. For instance I do not know how it will equalize the districts of Rocky River and Port Pirie, unless it takes off part of my district and attaches it to Rocky River; or probably it will have to go down a few miles into Young, and that possibly would result in a danger to the present holder of that seat. I remember some years ago when Mr. Peake was Premier he did exactly the same thing as this Government is trying to do by gerrymandering the district, but unfortunately for him he lost his seat to a raw political recruit. He had no experience in politics, and although the district was gerrymandered and made safe for the Liberal Party, he lost his seat. I

warn the Premier that probably the same thing will happen to his Government if this Bill is passed.

Mr. Stott—Why don't you support it?

Mr. DAVIS—I would if I were sure that would happen. Under our present electoral set-up the people do not send us to Parliament; the only people who are sent here are those the Liberal Party nominates, because the people have no say in the matter. Every man nominated by the Labor Party has the full support of the rank and file of that Party. My Independent friends say that the people are denied the right to vote for those they desire to represent them. In the past some Independents had the courage to be nominated for my district, but the people in my district are intelligent and the Independent members almost lost their deposits. The people realize how useless it is to send them here because they oppose or support different matters knowing that their votes will not be effective. We who belong to the various Parties have the courage of our convictions and are not afraid to state that we stand behind a certain policy.

Mr. Macgillivray—The Party carries you all the time.

Mr. DAVIS—We are good passengers; if we were not we would not have any Parties at all. If there are any passengers in this House, they are the Independents, because they never do any work at all. They are useless and hopeless—as a matter of fact, they are no-hopers, because they have no chance of doing anything in the House. Of course, if a certain thing had not happened at the last election they would have been in the position to govern this State because of a balance of power, and that would have been a calamity. This Bill is the most unjust measure ever to be placed before Parliament because it will take away rights from the people. In the last elections the Labor Party had the large majority of 47,000 electors, which shows that the people of South Australia were desirous of a change of Government but they were deprived of that right because this State has been so gerrymandered that we have no chance of winning an election. The people will revolt against the dictatorship of our present Premier, because they cannot be fooled all the time.

Members opposite have said that the population of country areas has increased, and although that is true, the percentage has decreased. An article on this matter appears in today's *News*, from which it will be seen that the people are asking for a change of

Government. I do not think this paper leans towards the Labor Party. It might do so, although I am doubtful, but it is at least just and wants to see that the people get justice. It believes that the people should have the right to vote and that they should not be defeated by the electoral set-up.

Mr. Dunks—Just because this article appears in the *News*, how does the honourable member interpret it that the people are asking for this?

Mr. DAVIS—I do not think the honourable member would understand if I explained it. The vote at the last election proves it. I would like to know why the votes of the 38 per cent of the people in the country should be of greater value than those of the 62 per cent living in the metropolitan area. If this Bill is passed I believe that the number of electors in each metropolitan district will be 22,000 compared with 6,000 for each country district. From that it can be seen that the value of a country vote will be over three times the value of every vote in the metropolitan area. I belong to an industrial centre, and the workers there are just as much entitled to have the same value attached to their votes as those in the country, but under the present system there is no chance of that. There are towns outside the metropolitan area with populations of a few thousand. They are Port Pirie, with a population of 14,233; Mount Gambier, 10,333; Whyalla, 8,587; Port Augusta, 6,699; Port Lincoln, 5,910; Gawler, 5,011; and Angaston, 4,919. However, most other country towns have populations of between 1,000 and 2,000 and there are many that have less than 200, yet members of the Government boast that there has been an increase in the metropolitan population. The people in the country have a greater voting power than those in the city and I sincerely hope that the Government will see the unfairness of this and amend the Bill. The Leader of the Opposition has an amendment on the files and I hope the Government will realize the injustice contained in the Bill and will accept the amendment.

Mr. STOTT (Ridley)—I oppose this Bill. In my view it is just a question of the ins and the outs. I have heard a good deal of the debate and what I have not heard I have read, and I have not been impressed with it. I agree with the honourable member for Stanley that giving people the right of representation is the fundamental principle of voting, but the democratic principles that have dominated the debate are really only side issues because they cannot

be brought into effect merely by altering electoral districts. I am very much unimpressed by all this talk about dictatorship and being undemocratic because it does not strike at the root of the evil of this Bill. The measure seeks to appoint a commission and give it instructions to re-arrange the electoral districts, giving each equal voting strength but permitting a tolerance of 20 per cent either way. I cannot tell with a great deal of exactitude, and I do not think anyone can, but it could be possible that the commission, given an unfettered right to alter boundaries by making a change of 20 per cent above or below, would bring about the position that at the next elections a different Government would be on the Treasury benches because there are a few country seats with an average of over 7,000 voters and if they were altered to bring them to the average, that might affect the sitting member and could easily bring about an alteration in the Government. It has been said that we should have had a Labor Government after the last election, but it went very close to that position. It wanted only a few votes, slightly over 50, in one district to alter its representation. The district of Murray previously represented by Labor became a Liberal district, but the present Government could easily have been in a minority in this Chamber. It is possible that if the boundaries are altered with a 20 per cent tolerance there may be a change of Government following on the next elections, which would suit the Labor Party. The tone of the debate so far indicates that the Bill is wrong because it favours the Government. I think that what happened in Queensland could happen here. I do not like the principle of the Bill. It does not provide for electoral reform because it does not give people fair representation. We have heard much about the 47,000-odd more people who voted for the Labor Party at the last elections. The districts were so arranged that these additional Labor votes were registered in Labor strongholds. Under proportional representation a different position would apply. We would then have a fairly equal representation in Parliament with perhaps two or three members to influence Government policy. The present proposal does not impress me. It does not strike at the root of the evil, the voting system, and I oppose it.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—I oppose the Bill. I see no good purpose in unnecessarily reiterating argument advanced by other members. This is one of the most important measures introduced this session and no member should vote

without setting out his attitude towards it. It is of such importance that it could make or break Governments. It cannot be treated lightly. I am not sure of the extent to which the Premier himself supports the Bill. I have never known him to introduce a measure of such importance with so little explanation. His second reading speech covers less than half a page of *Hansard*. If he were enthusiastic about the measure and really thought it would achieve what the State needs in the way of electoral reform he would have been heard to much better advantage. I do not think he claimed it to be a matter of electoral reform. I accept the position that as Leader of the Government he introduced the Bill because it represented the view of his Party. I think that is a fair inference, because Government supporters have not spoken much in favour of the measure. I give some credit to the Premier because there is a need to re-arrange the electoral boundaries, but by no stretch of imagination can the proposal be regarded as electoral reform.

According to the Premier the shape of the electoral districts has to be considered by the commission, but I do not know what that has to do with electoral matters. It would be difficult to determine anything from the shape of some of the electorates in the north. Perhaps shape has something to do with members opposite being more interested in broad acres than in people. Surely government is government of the people, by the people, for the people, but that cannot result under a system which denies representation to so many. In one part of the State a number of electors have seven times the representation of an equal number in another part. Even if we accepted the statement of Government supporters that because of sparsely populated areas there should be a loading for country districts, the present system cannot be justified. The district of Stuart was particularly mentioned in the Opposition Bill and it is mentioned in this Bill. The increase in the number of electors in Stuart about equals the number of electors in the districts on either side of it. A cursory examination of the size and population of that district indicates that it will be difficult for any Commission to satisfactorily rearrange the boundaries to provide equality of voting without increasing the number of members.

We are in the extraordinary situation of having already indicated by vote on another Bill that the number of members in this House should be increased to 45. That Bill is still before the House, but we are now discussing

a measure under which a commission will be appointed to rearrange electoral boundaries but to provide that the number of seats shall remain at 39. Surely this is a situation unprecedented in South Australian Parliamentary history. It is true that one is an electoral Bill and the other a constitution Bill, but it is a curious state of affairs that in Committee we should have agreed that the numbers should be increased to 45 and yet within a few weeks be discussing another measure which provides for the retention of 39 seats.

The Government should pay serious attention to the member for Gawler's suggestion that if there is a determination to insist on a loading of two to one for country districts as against the metropolitan area, and if we are not to regard South Australians as such all over the State as having equal citizen rights, voting rights and equal representation in the Houses of Legislature, and if we are to get away from that and not have government for all the people, it should be arranged on a population basis instead of on an electorate basis and instead of on the basis of the actual number of members in this House? If that were done we would have better representation of the people. If it were proposed that city districts should have twice the number of electors as country districts that would not be so bad as the present gerrymander, but whilst it is true that there are twice the number of country districts as there are metropolitan districts the loading is in the vicinity of seven to one against metropolitan electorates as demonstrated by the member for Port Adelaide (Mr. Stephens) this evening. We must not lose sight of those figures. No-one can argue that the people living in the Port Adelaide electorate should be entitled to only one representative when the equivalent number in the country have seven representatives in this House. This Bill does nothing to correct that position and we express our disappointment and opposition to it, particularly as the House has already decided in another measure that there should be 45 members in this Chamber. When I first entered this Parliament there were 46 members. The State's population has increased tremendously since then. The responsibility and work of a member of Parliament have increased, but this Bill seeks to perpetuate a smaller Parliament today than existed 20 years ago.

Mr. Frank Walsh—People make more representations to their members today than they did then.

Mr. RICHES—The work in my district is much heavier now than it was because there are more people there. I do not know that the district of Stuart is a fair criterion because in every part of that district there are growing pains with their associated problems. It has been argued in this House that because a district is growing the representation should be easier, but that has not been my experience. The member for Alexandra (Mr. Brookman) voiced the feelings of Government members about this Bill. He claimed that South Australia has had good government and that therefore the present electoral system is right. In his judgment, as South Australia has had good government the present Government must be forced upon the people whether they like it or not. As I understand democracy, the people should be enabled to decide whether the Government is satisfactory or not and they should be given the right to defeat a good Government if they want to.

Mr. Dunks—They nearly did at the last elections.

Mr. RICHES—They actually did. It was only the curious arithmetic peculiar to the Liberal Party that saved the Government. The people voted against the Government but are still saddled with that Government. There is nothing in this Bill by way of reform to alter that situation. If it were a matter of the number of votes there would have been a change of Government at the last elections. The people can express their will, but the districts are so cut up that the minority can over-ride the desires of the majority. That is our chief complaint and why we object to the system.

The member for Chaffey (Mr. Macgillivray) tried to make the point that the only objection the Labor Party has to the present set-up is that it is difficult for it to attain office. I believe that would be just as difficult for the Labor Party under the Leader of the Opposition's Bill as it will be under this Bill. I do not know that proportional representation favours one Party as against another in the Federal sphere and I have never heard that there are Party advantages to be gained from proportional representation. That is not the contention of members in applying themselves to this measure. The people should have the right to choose the Government they want. We have sufficient faith in the people, for it is they who determine the Labor Party's policy. We know they will accept it if given the chance, but we will accept their verdict in any case under

a just electoral system. Those who claim they are not associated with any Party seem to have a Party phobia. The Independent members have charged the Labor Party with only being concerned with having a measure passed to unseat the present Government, but the Labor Party only wants a measure that will give the people the right to elect the Government that they want. I hope the Bill will not be carried but that the Government will appreciate the Opposition's sound argument for real electoral reform and that it will further consider South Australia's requirements and give democracy its deserts.

Mr. FRED WALSH (Thebarton)—I oppose the second reading. I might be bereft of arguments because of the good speeches that have already been given, but I am certainly bereft of adjectives because I have heard more in this debate than in any other since I have been in Parliament. I am at a loss to appreciate the motive behind the Bill. I do not know whether it was brought down because the Leader of the Opposition got in ahead of the Government on a Constitutional Bill or whether, as suggested by the member for Chaffey, the Government merely wanted to satisfy a certain section of the Liberal and Country League that moved at its last conference for electoral reform. Perhaps the Premier will be able to go to the next conference and say "I gave effect to some of your proposals", but actually the position will be the same as it is now. However, I am inclined to think there is something deeper behind this Bill because restrictions will be placed on the Commissioners to be appointed. Therefore it seems that the Bill has been introduced with a view to making certain metropolitan seats safe for the Government.

No one in this House, least of all members opposite, will deny that they received a shock at the close vote in Glenelg, Unley and Torrens at the last elections. The member for Glenelg is now a Cabinet Minister and held in high esteem, yet it was not until the final votes were counted that it was known he would hold the seat. I believe that it was not on account of any unpopularity on his part but because of the Government's unpopularity that he had such a close call. Mr. Dunnage had held Unley for many years, but he only just got back. I consider that Torrens is always an open seat, and it was just a toss of the coin whether the Labor or Liberal candidate was successful.

The Hon. T. Playford—The honourable member had Torrens won before the election.

Mr. FRED WALSH—No. We were able to assess the position as well as the Premier could. By no stretch of the imagination did we consider the seat was in our pocket, but we thought we had an even money chance, and I think we will do better at the next elections. Because the Government wants to make these seats safe it has decided to revise the electoral boundaries, using the argument that the population of several metropolitan electorates has changed. I believe that some of the Glenelg district will be allocated to Thebarton, which I represent, but that will not affect my work because many of the electors in the northern part of Glenelg already think that I am their member. I point out that I am not for a moment reflecting on the present member for Glenelg, but they do not know the boundaries and because they are in the Federal division of Hindmarsh they think they are in one of Labor constituencies in the State Parliament. Many persons from Glenelg come to me to see what I can do for them. The former Minister of Agriculture knows that I approached him frequently on behalf of electors in Glenelg, though I told Mr. Pattinson of these approaches as a matter of courtesy. Therefore, I feel that I will not be at any disadvantage even though the northern part of the present Glenelg district is transferred to mine. A certain part of the Goodwood district will probably be transferred into Unley to bolster up that Liberal-held seat. I do not know what will happen in the Adelaide district, but I assume the boundary will be extended into North Adelaide in an effort to make Torrens safer for the Liberals.

Mr. William Jenkins—You are free to give evidence before the Commission.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Yes, but I ask the honourable member to listen to the way in which I would be restricted as a witness. Clause 5 states:—

Subject as hereinafter mentioned, the commission shall—

- (a) redivide the metropolitan area into thirteen approximately equal Assembly district; and
- (b) redivide the country areas into twenty-six approximately equal Assembly districts; and
- (c) divide each proposed Assembly district into subdivisions.

In effect, the two to one ratio in favour of the country will remain, but the boundaries are to be revised. Clause 7 states:—

(1) In redividing the State into Assembly districts, the commission, so far as is compatible with the provisions of section 5 of the Act, shall endeavour to create districts in each of which respectively the electors have common interests.

(2) The commission shall also, so far as is compatible with the provisions of section 5 of this Act, and with subsection (1) of this section, endeavour to create Assembly districts, each of which—

- (a) is of convenient shape and has reasonable means of access between the main centres of population therein; and
- (b) retains as far as possible, boundaries of existing districts and subdivisions.

The Premier did not explain "common interests." Further, it is difficult to understand the meaning of paragraph (b). Clause 8 states:—

Before making its report the commission shall by such advertisements as the commission deems necessary, inserted in newspapers circulating generally throughout the State, invite written representations from individuals and organizations as to the redivision of the State into electoral districts and shall by such advertisements fix a time within which such representations must be made.

The Premier did not indicate what is meant by common interests. Has he in mind horse racing interests at Morphettville, manufacturing interests at Keswick or side-show interests at Glenelg? A witness could not go to the commission, which will comprise learned men, with some cock and bull story and expect to interest them: the commission will be impressed only by cogent arguments. Never before in my 12 years' experience as a member have I witnessed the Government's persistent refusal that we saw last night of a member's request for an adjournment of a debate. It is regrettable that such a procedure was adopted by the Government. I do not know whether the action was a reprisal for earlier incidents, but if so, it was unfair to inflict such a reprisal on other members. The procedure was entirely out of keeping with the general tone in this House.

Mr. Brookman—You have had weeks to prepare your speech on this Bill.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Government members have had months because they knew it was coming, but how many of them have spoken? Three besides the Premier! If the Government members want it the way it was last night members on this side do not mind. We are quite capable of taking up a debate on any issue coming before the House. We try to carry on the debate in a spirit of understanding and tolerance. The honourable member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) spoke about the popularity of the Playford Government.

Mr. Brookman—He was quite right.

Mr. FRED WALSH—He suggested that, because of the popularity of the Playford Government, it did not matter how the boundaries were fixed: the Playford Government would

still win. If, however, Government members have such faith in the popularity of their leader, why do they not accept electoral reform and take a chance? Government members value their seats on behalf of their Party the same as I value mine in the interests of my Party. The inaccuracy of the reference by Mr. Shannon to the popularity of the Playford Government as a deciding factor under any electoral set-up is borne out by the article that appears on the front page of this afternoon's *News*, an extract from which states:—

It was perfectly possible in the last election—and even likely—that if 61 or 62 per cent of South Australians had voted to oust the Playford Government, the votes of the 38 or 39 per cent of Government supporters would have retained for it a majority of seats. Such an electoral set-up is the negation of democracy as our own founding fathers understood it.

If a member opposing the Bill is not prepared to speak in this debate he should read that article, which is a damning indictment of the Bill. I imagine that Government supporters must have been ashamed when they read that article, for the *News* is by no means a Labor journal. It coincides with our particular viewpoint, and went on to say:—

In introducing such a Bill Mr. Playford is, in effect, saying to the majority of South Australian electors: "I can't get a popular majority. But I am a good Premier. I judge it best for you that I remain your Premier even if the majority against me gets even bigger. This Bill will ensure my retention of office.

That is their opinion, and it also happens to be ours. When the Premier speaks I hope he replies to this leader in the *News*. I think the member for Rocky River said there was no popular demand for electoral reform. That leader is the opinion of a popular newspaper which circulates throughout the State and is held in fairly popular esteem among the people. Certain country members opposite are concerned about their own electorates. Perhaps it is not from the point of view of personal monetary loss, which does not apply to them so much as it applies to members on this side. However, they are concerned to retain their seats in the interests of their Party, and in doing that help to retain the present Government in office. An overwhelming majority at the last election showed they wanted a change. There are also members on this side representing country districts, but they are prepared to take a chance and accept a redistribution. Whether Port Augusta and Whyalla are separated is no concern of Mr. Riches as an individual. The same

applies in relation to Port Pirie, and to the district represented by the Leader of the Opposition, who throughout the years has advocated electoral and constitutional reform. It shows they are not concerned about their own interests, but of the interests of the State and in the State having a properly representative Government.

The member for Alexandra quoted figures to show there had been increases of population in certain country districts. He was very careful to quote figures which suited him. It is only natural to expect that, but he lost sight of the fact that there had been increases in certain metropolitan districts. In Port Adelaide there is a striking example of the position existing today. In that district 32,000 people are on the roll, whereas in the district of the Leader of the Opposition, Frome, the number is only about 4,000. This small number therefore has representation in this House equal to the very much larger district of Port Adelaide. Is there anything to warrant that? The Premier is attempting to perpetuate such a system, and makes no allowance for bringing about a balance. In the country there will possibly be a chance of striking a balance between the districts, but no attempt is made to strike a balance in the metropolitan area. That is where the whole thing is at fault. Members have not at any time questioned the Federal electoral boundaries, and no one could do so with justice. It is true that sometimes when there is re-adjustment of boundaries we are not happy with the result, but that can be more or less wishful thinking on our part. However, we are prepared to accept it, and we would be quite happy for South Australia to be divided in the same way as was provided in the Bill presented by the Leader of the Opposition last session.

We heard much this evening from Mr. Macgillivray, that eminent social and political reformer, who in most of his speech indulged in criticism of the Labor Party. Although he said he is opposed to the Bill he made no attempt to discuss it, but only attacked my Party, and not the sponsor or those behind him. That shows how prejudiced he is against the Labor Party. I do not know that he is able to impress very many people either inside or outside Parliament. Most members will agree that despite his advocacy of proportional representation throughout the years he has not been very successful. He blames the Party system for his not being able to make any headway, but it cannot be said that this

system has been a success where it has been tried. It is certainly not a success in France. There is no civilized country in the world with a constitutionally elected Parliament where there is a more unstable Government than in France. They do not know where they are from week to week, or hardly from day to day. We all know that the British Government was not prepared to accept the risk of France in relation to the European Defence Community as originally proposed, and it finally accepted another agreement. I believe M. Mendes-France, Premier of France, had already given it approval, but because of the unstable nature of his Parliament was not game to act contrary to its wishes, knowing that he would have been forced out of office the next day.

The member for Stanley mentioned that Switzerland had no Party politics. I suggest he does not know anything about the position, because they do have Party politics there, and as far as I know every other European country and America have the Party system. The honourable member advocated the abolition of Party politics, but where would we be without them and what sort of system would we have? We must either have Party politics or a system of totalitarianism, and not even the Independents have suggested that, although there can be no other result if the present system is abolished. I believe the people are better off under the Party system. I subscribe to it, and I am prepared to abide by the decisions of my Party. I think everyone should be prepared to do the same thing and I say in all fairness that I believe members opposite should also be prepared to do so. I do not know how the Independents face up to the elections or what they put before their electors, but I can only assume that they attack either the Labor or the Liberal Party, go in between, and trust to luck as to the result. It does not matter whether there are two or three Parties, although I suggest there should be only two, but the candidates from both Parties go to their organizations, meeting in conference with all their rank and file memberships in accordance with their own ideas and rules, and a policy is determined which is put before the people and is supported by every member of that Party. I know that the public generally is not interested in politics, but they do become interested immediately before an election and want to know the policy of each Party. The ordinary intelligent person is able to analyze each policy as it affects his own interests, and when one Party is returned

with a majority it should be able to give effect to its policy. On the other hand the Independents have no policy and take sides with whatever Party suits them from time to time. This position can be seen in America where there are two Parties, the Republicans and Democrats, and where it is not unusual to find that some members subscribe to the policies of both Parties. Unlike the honourable member for Chaffey, who often advocates proportional representation, I know the policy of my Party and I support it. I hope that the arguments put forward by supporters of the Bill will not influence members, but that they will consider the measure on its merits and in doing so will vote against it.

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I oppose the second reading of this Bill. It has created many unpleasant incidents and will not do the Parliamentary institution much good, particularly because of the spirit shown during the course of the debate. It is regrettable that on such an important measure the usual procedure in a democratic country of delaying legislation so that the people may register their protest against the injustices that will arise from it has not been followed. As the ground was covered fairly fully by my colleagues I wondered what I would speak about until I received a letter protesting very vigorously against the measure. Incidentally, it is very strange that it should have been written by one whose name is difficult to pronounce because he is a recent arrival to this country, although he has been here long enough to be naturalized. He has lived behind the Iron Curtain and has been pressed down by the heel of the German army, so that he knows something of a dictatorship. In the concluding part of the letter he has set out what he suggests would be a good nursery rhyme for the future. It is:—

Tom, Tom, the Premier's son,
Stole the State and away he run,
Democracy was beaten

For the electoral system was for cheat'n.

I think that is the position in South Australia today and will be in the future. Under this Bill it is proposed to set up a commission that will make recommendations, and it is the terms under which the commission will work with which I am concerned. It is an undeniable fact that it will be tied hand and foot and will bring down a recommendation as desired and planned by the Government that will worsen the present system, as bad as it is. That position will be accepted because the Government has the numbers, but it has failed to appreciate

the lessons that have been taught in the past. History has proved that the people will stand so much suppression only and then will rebel, and I say they will soon rebel in this country. At this late stage of the debate I ask members to use some wisdom and to vote against the second reading. The Bill proposes to give to the few remaining land barons of this country the right to deny the will of every other citizen of the country, just as the land barons of China virtually created the bed in which Communism germinated and grew. It has been proved conclusively by the Labor Party that this class are the incubators of Communism in Australia, and particularly in South Australia. They talk about democracy and the freedom of the individual, but they lose sight of the fact that Australia gave some of her greatest sons in a war in opposition to dictatorships. Many of our brave sons have marched behind a flag that demands that men shall above all value human lives. This Bill is undemocratic and has for its purpose something that will bring sorrow and misery to the State. I know it will pass because the Government has the numbers. The present electoral system was established in 1936, and it was most unjust. As reported on page 1096 of *Hansard*, 1936, the Hon. S. W. Jeffries, then Attorney-General, said:—

In introducing this Bill I am carrying out the promise made by my Party prior to the last election. In outlining our programme the Premier said, "We will favour a reduction of members of the Assembly, maintaining the present ratio between metropolitan and country constituencies." For some time the officials of the Electoral Department, at the request of the Government, have been engaged in preparing a redivision of the State into 39 single electorates, and in May of this year the Government was in possession of a tentative scheme prepared by the Electoral Office. This scheme was referred by Cabinet to a committee consisting of His Honour, Judge Paine, the Commonwealth Returning Officer for the State (Mr. M. V. Jeffreys) and the Surveyor-General (Mr. J. H. McNamara). The Government issued the following terms of reference to the committee:—

The Government policy is to reduce the numbers of the members of the House of Assembly by seven and to divide the State into single electorates, preserving the present ratio of representation between the metropolitan and the extra-metropolitan districts, bearing in mind always the desirableness of electoral districts having a community of interest as far as possible. The accompanying plan having in view these points has been tentatively prepared by the Electoral Office and the Government would be glad if you would consider the whole position and report at as early a date as possible whether in your opinion the plan brings about

the reduction of numbers in a fair and equitable manner. The Government also desires you to adjust Legislative Council district boundaries to conform with the new Assembly districts.

This reference was made without the matter being discussed by Parliament. Later the then Attorney-General read a letter sent by the committee to the Premier and it began "In pursuance of your letter of 4th instant. . . ." As the result of the report a vicious gerrymander was created. Since that time the electoral position has worsened and the present proposal will make it even worse. Many endeavours have been made in this debate to show that the country population has increased at the same rate as the population in the metropolitan area. Only a person blinded with political prejudice and a desire to hang on to the reins of government would be foolish enough to expect the people to swallow that. *The Statesman's Pocket Year Book* shows that the present electoral system has done nothing but increase the metropolitan area population to the detriment of the country. In 1940 about 54 per cent of the population resided in the metropolitan area and 46 per cent in the country. In following years the position was:—

	Metropolitan area	Country.
	Per cent.	Per cent.
1947	59	41
1949	59	41
1950	60	40
1951	60½	39½
1952	61	39

Despite this the Government says that the legislation will induce more people to go to the country.

Mr. John Clark—It is supposed to be designed for that reason.

Mr. HUTCHENS—It is alleged, not supposed, to be designed that way. Its real purpose is to keep the Government in office against the desires of the electors.

Mr. Dunks—Who said it was against the desires of the people?

Mr. HUTCHENS—Truthful people, but untruthful people will contend that that is not the position. Only political parasites will tell you that it is not so.

Mr. Dunks—At the last election the people were happy to return the present Government

Mr. HUTCHENS—The honourable member has remained in his seat throughout this debate and he is now trying to find an excuse to speak when no Opposition members are left to reply to what he says. I pleaded with the

Government Whip to induce members on that side to speak if they had anything to say, but apparently they are not prepared to say their piece until all Opposition members have spoken.

Mr. Dunks—If the honourable member had not broken me up so much perhaps I would have spoken tonight.

Mr. HUTCHENS—If I have touched the heart of the honourable member I have achieved something as I thought it was one of the untouchables. Let us consider what has happened under this system. When it was introduced into this House in 1938 the then member for Wallaroo (the Hon. R. S. Richards) pointed out how unjust it was. He said that it would lead to greater injustice. At that stage it was sufficiently unjust because for every 100 persons a country member represented, a metropolitan member represented 276. Mr. Richards' prophecy came true very rapidly as the following figures will indicate. In 1941 the figures were 100 to 285 respectively; in 1944, 100 to 307; in 1947, 100 to 320; in 1950, 100 to 325 and in 1953, 100 to 327. The position is deteriorating all the time. It was suggested yesterday that there was some justice in the Bill because some country districts had increased numerically. That is so, but of course the general population of the State has increased. In 1938, the 26 country district had an average of 5,900 electors but today that has increased to 6,100. In 1938 the metropolitan area districts had an average of 16,300 but today that is 22,000.

The member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) rose timidly to debate this measure. Apparently he did not know what to say. Because he had no arguments to put forward he referred to the good things the Government had done and he sang its praises from the beginning to the end of his speech. He pointed to the Premier and the Cabinet Ministers and said, "Look at them! They are marvellous. They have done all the great things." But he is not prepared to let them face the test of a just electoral system. There are too many political shysters in South Australia today who refer to the good things they have done, but they have a yellow streak down their backs and have a cowardly outlook.

The SPEAKER—Is the honourable member referring to any members of this House?

Mr. HUTCHENS—No, Sir. I said there were too many political shysters. I understood that a person did not need to be a member of Parliament to have a political outlook. Some members have referred to the 20 per cent tolerance. Mr. Shannon suggested it was what

the Labor Party advocated. The 20 per cent referred to in the Leader of the Opposition's Bill was not to apply in fixing the numbers of electors in a district but the numbers could fluctuate subsequently but not beyond that tolerance. The tolerance provided in this Bill is to be considered in fixing the quota of electors in a district.

Mr. O'Halloran—That percentage could increase.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Yes. Under the Bill the quota for a metropolitan district will be approximately 22,000, and 20 per cent of that is 4,400. That means that there could be a fluctuation of 8,800 in the number of electors in the metropolitan districts. There could be as few as 17,000 in one district and as many as 26,000 in another. That provision is included to protect certain members who are in danger of losing their seats. The terms of reference to the commission provide for the retention and worsening of the present unjust system. I wonder what the result would be if this system were applied to the Commonwealth electoral system. A learned lecturer in political science from the Adelaide University, Mr. Saintsbury, in addressing the League of Women Voters in Adelaide at the weekend said that if the South Australian electoral set-up were applied to the Commonwealth Parliament the Northern Territory would be entitled to elect at least 20 members to Canberra. That reveals how unjust, ridiculous, abominable and undemocratic is the proposed system.

A few moments ago I referred to the sign contained in the flag of this country. All the great ideals which have been advanced in this world aim at bettering the standard of living and at providing something for humanity to aspire to. In the early days of Christendom one of the disciples of the great Teacher sold his Master for a few filthy pieces of silver. Men from this country have paid the supreme sacrifice in order that the ideals of democracy might prevail and advance. Many members of this Chamber are privileged to wear the badge of the returned soldier and I envy them. I only wish that I could have earned one. That was denied me, but I appeal to those who have seen their comrades make the supreme sacrifice in order that democracy may flourish—

Mr. Lawn—They were told they were fighting for democracy.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Yes, and they believed they were. They gave their full measure of devotion to the ideals of democracy and I

ask members not to betray them merely for the right to handle a few pieces of filthy silver. I hope they will join with my colleagues in an honest effort to enable democracy to progress so that the will of the people shall prevail. Therefore, I urge all members to oppose the Bill.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—It is necessary, perhaps, to go over a little past history because electoral matters have a background to them. The member who just resumed his seat quoted copiously from *Hansard* of 1936 when the present electoral distribution was made, but first I want to deal with a few current matters and only go back as far as the last State elections. Then, as is common at all elections, the principal Parties, through their leaders, submitted policies to the public. The Independent members had not that privilege because they have not a leader and frequently they have not a policy. The policies submitted are statements of what a Party hopes to do if elected to office. The Government issued its policy of what it proposed to do if returned, and the Leader of the Opposition issued a policy of what his Party proposed if elected to the Treasury benches. He said he was not satisfied with the present electoral set-up and that he would make drastic alterations.

Mr. Riches—The people endorsed that policy.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I point out there was another plank to the Leader of the Opposition's platform, namely, the horror budget of Sir Arthur Fadden. The Labor Party did not go to the poll on the misdemeanours of the Government of this State, but upon the unpopularity of the Federal Government in introducing drastic taxation, which was particularly unpopular in some rural areas. We have heard a great deal about the result of the elections. The Government lost Norwood, which in the past has been a traditional Labor seat. It was held by the Government for some time only because of the strong personality of the candidate we placed in the field, a man who was popular with every section of the community and who won the seat not because he was a Liberal—in fact, frequently he stated opinions in this House which were much more democratic than opinions usually expressed on this side.

Mr. Macgillivray—Hear, hear!

Mr. John Clark—Hear, hear!

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That member won Norwood not because he was a Liberal, but because of his own personality, and now that he is returned to health we shall see him

here again in due course. Some members have stated that the majority of the member for Glenelg (Mr. Pattinson), who is now Minister of Education was considerably reduced, but we must remember that he was a sick man and not able to conduct any campaign. However, in the second largest electoral district in the State, in which all the force of the great Australian Labor Party was brought to bear and in which one would have thought there would be a great deal of agitation for electoral reform it could not unseat a sick man. Mr. Pattinson was not able to address one meeting.

Mr. Jennings—That is why he was returned.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No, because the electors of Glenelg refused to confuse the issue of Federal politics with State politics. Every Labor Federal member available was brought to Glenelg in an effort to win the seat, though I am sure some of them would not be brought there now, but at the time the Liberal Party was somewhat unpopular. I point out also that we won Murray, a district normally held by Labor. It is true that we lost one seat in the South-East, but only because our member strongly supported the unpopular Federal Budget. The result in that electorate was determined largely by a swing of votes in the normally Liberal town of Naracoorte, but that again will be duly rectified on an appropriate occasion. When the so-called iniquitous electoral set-up was introduced what were its results? At the next election 15 Liberal, nine Labor and 15 Independent members were elected.

Mr. Fletcher—So-called Independents!

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member was one of them.

Mr. Fletcher—And I'm still Independent.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The fact remains that the system, which according to members opposite was specially designed to preserve Party interest, did not preserve it at all, and for one period the Independents dominated the Parliament elected in 1938.

Mr. Fred Walsh—They were elected because of the five-year Parliament question.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Although the Independents dominated the Parliament they did not have the Whip to govern it. The reason why members opposite have been unable to attain office in the past few years has been their policy and not the electoral system: the people of South Australia have no confidence in the dead hand of Socialism. I listened to the member for Thebarton (Mr. Fred Walsh)

when he attacked the member for Chaffey (Mr. Macgillivray) on his advocacy of proportional representation. Mr. Walsh has supported proportional representation for years, yet he takes another member to task for advocating it. The Leader of the Opposition was the only Labor member who dealt with the provisions of this Bill. Other members opposite talked about many other things but not about the Bill. What does it do?

Mr. Lawn—It perpetuates the gerrymander!

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member has made one speech, to which I listened with much interest, although I did not agree with all he said. Some of the terms of the Bill are almost the same as part of the Bill introduced by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. O'Halloran) earlier this session. Indeed, when I spoke on the Leader's Bill I stated publicly that with one exception I accepted the formulae he set out.

Mr. O'Halloran—Are you going to amend your Bill and accept them now?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will deal with those matters in a few moments because, as the Leader knows, Standing Orders do not allow me to deal with amendments at this stage of the debate. Clause 8 of the Leader's Bill states:—

In making any proposed distribution of the said zones into electoral districts the distribution Commissioners shall give due consideration to—

- (a) community or diversity of interest;
- (b) means of communication;
- (c) physical features; and
- (d) existing boundaries of subdivisions.

The Government has provided for the consideration of all those factors. The clause continues:—

Subject thereto, the quotas of electors provided in the preceding section shall be the basis of the distribution and the distribution Commissioners may adopt a margin of allowance, to be used whenever necessary, but in no case shall the quota be departed from to a greater extent than one-fifth more or one-fifth less.

That one-fifth tolerance is equal to the 20 per cent provided in the Government's Bill.

Mr. Macgillivray—You and the Leader usually run in harness!

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—In this matter I was prepared, after reading the Leader's second reading explanation, to publicly state that some of the terms he had provided were just and equitable, and I instructed the Parliamentary Draftsman to provide for them in my Bill.

Mr. O'Halloran—In a totally different way.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Parliamentary Draftsman is now in the House and

I have been able to make sure that my 20 per cent is no different from the one-fifth provided by the Leader.

Mr. Macgillivray—The basic principle is the same.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. The Leader's Bill, however, contained one other provision—

The SPEAKER—The honourable member may not discuss that in a reply on his Bill.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am not discussing it, Mr. Speaker. It merely arises from the criticism levelled by some members. Members opposite generally advocate the sacred principle of one vote one value.

Mr. Dunks—They have dropped that lately.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That is the basis of the criticism, and apart from that the set-up in the Leader's Bill is the same as that in mine. Both Bills propose to establish a commission and to give it certain directions. The only difference is that we provided in effect that zone A shall be the metropolitan area and zone B shall represent country areas. On the other hand the Leader of the Opposition provided that zone B shall be a selected number of northern and western electorates and zone A the remainder of the State.

Mr. Macgillivray—Your Bill sounds like a plagiarism.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is very closely a copy.

Mr. Fred Walsh—It is so close you cannot recognize it.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member recognizes it all right, and he knows that the Bill introduced by the Leader of the Opposition and supported by members opposite did provide for a zoning of the State. That is a usual feature in setting up a Parliamentary establishment where there is an uneven size of electorates and uneven development and where special problems arise in country areas as opposed to city areas. One would think the Bill was designed to keep the Leader of the Opposition out of office. If we want to perpetuate a Liberal Government in this State for the next 20 years I suggest we would not need to do it by passing an Act of Parliament. All we would have to do would be to allow the electors to experience a Labor Government. They would then appreciate what was involved in good Government and what was not involved.

Mr. Stephens—Why did 47,000 more people vote for the Labor Party at the last elections than for the Liberal Party?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—In a number of districts there were Communist Party candidates competing against Labor Party candidates. In those circumstances my Party has always advocated giving its votes to a Labor Party candidate in preference to one from the Communist Party, and yet the Labor Party has the temerity to say that such votes are Labor votes.

Mr. O'Halloran—What about Woomera?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I would hate to think that any member of my Party voted for a Communist in preference to the Labor candidate. In his speech on the Bill the Leader of the Opposition made this statement:—

Another alleged reason for perpetuating the existing gerrymander is that "if all parts of the State are to be effectively represented in this Parliament, it is not possible to have country electorates with the same number of electors as metropolitan electorates." But the L.C.L. has never explained why there must be such a degree of inequality as there is between metropolitan enrolments and country enrolments to ensure that all parts of the State shall be effectively represented. The L.C.L. is the only political party that insists on an electoral system based on the so-called principle of city *versus* country without any relation whatever to the population of those areas, although even some of its own members are now beginning to protest against the retention of this electoral policy.

To hear his statement one would think that the fact that we have given additional seats to the country is something peculiar to South Australia, and particularly peculiar to the Liberal and Country League Party. Since he made his speech I have been to our Library and got some information on this particular topic. I considered the position in the adjoining State of Western Australia where for a long period there has been a Labor Government. I turned up the *Statistical Register* for that State and found that during the 15 years of Labor Government there had been no double dissolution. There had been a recent resubdivision and this had the support of Labor members. Looking at the electorates of Western Australia I found that the Canning district had the most electors at that particular time—1947-48—the total being 15,357. The district of Kimberley had 862 electors and yet members opposite say our system is peculiar to South Australia. However, there has been a redistribution since then and we find that the number of small electorates has been increased. The district of Pilbara has a total of 1,134 electors and the elected member at the last election received a total of 607 votes. There are 1,010 electors in the Kimberley district and in Gascoyne the number is 1,657.

Canning on the other hand has 13,514 electors.

Mr. Fred Walsh—But there are many more members in Western Australia than in South Australia.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Does that alter the principle we are discussing? The Leader said that the system in South Australia which gives to the country electorates better representation than they would have with an even distribution of population—

Mr. Fred Walsh—You know we would not get it through the Legislative Council.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member underrates his ability and apart from that he has completely changed the ground of his argument. Honourable members opposite say that any system that does not provide for an equality of votes is a negation of democracy. That is their argument.

Mr. O'Halloran—My Bill provides exactly the same as they have in Western Australia and for the same reasons—sparseness of population and great areas.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have always given the Leader credit for the fact that on several occasions he has advocated methods and ideas for decentralization because, as he has said, too much of the population is in the metropolitan area. He has on numerous occasions made excellent speeches on that matter but when it comes to doing something practical with that end in view and giving representation that would assist in the development of country areas, because it does not suit his Party he is opposed to it. There are more problems in the representation of a country district than a city district; there is a much greater problem of development, country areas have less amenities than the metropolitan area, they have very great problems of transportation and particularly great difficulties in providing the necessary means of communication. All these things do not exist in the metropolitan area where in some instances members can walk around their electorates for exercise before breakfast.

Mr. Davis—Such as Unley.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, if the honourable member likes to quote that. If we are going to develop this State and provide for decentralization that is no warranty for taking away representation by country members, because I can take honourable members to many districts in the country in which it is necessary to travel long distances. I have often heard Mr. Quirke make a statement that I believe to be very true, that the best manure that can be put on a farm is the footsteps of the owner, and if we are to have development in

country areas we must have members who can get around the districts. Has anyone stopped to consider the vast area the Minister of Agriculture has to go over? The Leader of the Opposition represents numerically one of the smallest districts in the State but there is decidedly not a case to take away representation from that district. If I may express my wish, I hope that the Leader may long serve that district.

The fact is that this Bill is designed to do only one thing. When I introduced it I said quite clearly that it was designed to set up a commission to deal with the inequalities that have arisen in electoral districts since the last redistribution because of the change of population in some districts. For instance, some districts in the metropolitan area have grown enormously—for instance those represented by the members for Glenelg and Port Adelaide—whereas the district of Adelaide has gone down very rapidly. This applies to some other districts. In the metropolitan zone we have inequality of one electoral district having, say, 12,000 votes, and another having, say, 33,000. The member for Stuart made a very reasoned statement on this aspect and pointed out that his district has grown enormously since the last redistribution. In other cases the districts have not grown proportionately and one or two have lost population. This Bill sets out to adjust these differences and bring the position back so we will have two zones of approximately the same strength as before. The numerical strength in the two zones, taking into account all the factors which the Commission would consider necessary, should be brought into some equality again as they were in the last redistribution.

Before the last election I did not go to the country with a policy of redistribution from the point of view of altering the set-up of electoral districts, nor did I make any suggestion of changing the Constitution to alter the ratios between city and country, although my honourable friends opposite did so. I said that I believed that the present country electorates were not too small but in many instances too large, and that I was not in favour of taking away representation from the country because I believed the representation it had was necessary if the areas were to be developed and the best interests of the State served. I point out that the best interests of the State as a whole and of the city are served if the country districts are developed equally with the city, and no-one can deny that. The fact that we are able to develop our country areas is not derogatory to

the city, but will enhance the State's prosperity, its economic advancement, and its industrial and social advancement, yet members opposite would take away representation from the country under the Bill introduced by the Leader.

This State will go forward—and I am not speaking from a Party political point of view when I say that—but we cannot progress in the city without going forward in the country, because the success of the city is bound up with the success of the country in a way that no-one can separate. This Bill seeks to iron out inequalities that have arisen in the two areas created by Parliament long before my Government took office. In fact, I think they were created at the time the State was formed. I would have thought that instead of opposing the Bill Opposition members would have said that they did not agree with Adelaide having 12,000 electors and Port Adelaide 33,000, and that they desired the number of electors in the two districts to be more equal. I cannot understand members saying that the legislation is iniquitous. The Bill makes no alteration to the Constitution. Mr. Macgillivray was correct when he said that too much time had been taken up in discussing the Bill because it only set up a commission to submit a recommendation to be considered by Parliament.

Mr. Macgillivray—Its report will be laid on the table of both Houses.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, and before it could be given effect to an alteration of the Constitution would have to be approved by an absolute majority of members. Previous Governments have not adopted this procedure. They have appointed Royal Commissions without referring the matter to Parliament. We could have done that, but we felt the matter was of such importance that the matter should be discussed in Parliament and if thought necessary amendments made to the legislation introduced. Members opposite have objected to the Bill because they think the country will be given more generous representation than the metropolitan area. Their opposition cannot be justified from the point of view of the welfare of the State. If the Opposition could put forward a policy that met with the approval of the electors, even under the present electoral set-up the Government could be defeated. In 1938 and in 1941 the Government did not have a majority and had to rely on the support of Independents. In 1944 the Government had a majority of one, but after a Speaker had been appointed that majority was lost. Then, because of a defeat at a by-election held soon after the

general elections, the Government was in a worse position. Yet, members opposite say that under the present electoral system the Opposition cannot win. Over a period of years the State has prospered, but the Government does not take any credit for that. A State prospers in accordance with the efforts of its people. Our people have recognized that the policy of the Government has been fair to all sections. Although there has been a large Liberal vote at State elections many of those voters have supported Labor at Senate elections. Mr. Pearson has pointed out to me that they do the opposite in Queensland, but, be that as it may, this Bill seeks only to appoint a commission to iron out anomalies that have occurred in our electoral set-up since 1936. I ask members to support the Bill.

The House divided on the second reading—

Ayes (16).—Messrs. Brookman, Christian, Geoffrey Clarke, Dunks, Dunnage, Goldney,

Hawker, Heaslip, Hineks, Jenkins, Pattinson, Pearson, Playford (teller), Teusner, Travers, and White.

Noes (14).—Messrs. John Clark, Davis, Dunstan, Fletcher, Hutchens, Jennings, Lawn, Macgillivray, O'Halloran (teller), Quirke, Riches, Stott, Frank Walsh, and Fred Walsh.

Pairs.—Ayes—Sir George Jenkins, Messrs. McIntosh, Shannon, and Michael. Noes—Messrs. Stephens, Tapping, McAlees, and Corcoran.

Majority of 2 for the Ayes.

Second reading thus carried.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 11.18 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, November 18, at 2 p.m.