HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, June 8, 1955.

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

QUESTIONS.

CIVIL DEFENCE.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Last session I asked the Premier if any steps had been taken in Australia to provide something in the nature of civil defence, especially against the possibility of a war in which hydrogen and atomic forces would be used. He replied that the matter had been discussed at a Premiers' Conference and that it had been decided to establish a school to instruct personnel in carrying out defence projects. Has the school been established, or any further steps taken to organize civil defence to meet any emergency?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The action I informed the honourable member of last year has been taken. Since that time a number of statements have been made by Federal officers which certainly do not conform with the appreciation we were given at the time this matter was discussed by Ministers. It is difficult to get an appreciation of this matter when you have an official appreciation indicating the steps that should be taken in accordance with a certain line of action and then individual persons, highly placed and with high qualifications, making public statements very much at variance with what has been the official pronouncement. The matter was ventilated quite recently in the Federal Parliament when a private member's Bill was brought in, but not proceeded with. It will be discussed in a fortnight's time at the next conference between the Commonwealth and the States. The subject has been placed on the agenda by the New South Wales Government and, I believe, one other Government, and that is why I have not taken further action. At the conference we will have an opportunity to get an appreciation from the Defence Department as to what action should be taken. I will report to the Leader of the Opposition and to the House on my return.

SEWERAGE IN FOOTHILLS.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—Recently a great deal of housing development has taken place in my district, especially in the foothills, and I understand it gives rise to several problems. For example, it is extremely difficult to effectively sewer these areas. Can the Premier inform me whether the Government will consider introducing legislation to control such development?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Legislation to control this matter was introduced last session but it was not carried through all stages. Since then I have publicly drawn attention to the need for people purchasing land for house building to be sure that the blocks can be reasonably sewered, and that they come within the schemes proposed to be undertaken. I suggest that if the building blocks at present being sold for housing purposes have to be watered and sewered the whole of the Loan programme for this State for the next 10 years will be fully engaged in providing the services. Not only is land being sold and built on in a haphazard fashion, with much ribbon development taking place, but it is difficult to provide water and sewer services except at great cost. To give some idea, recently I had figures taken out for a scheme for Blackwood and to effectively service that area, where building has already occurred, would cost not less than £1,200,000. A Bill, similar to the one introduced last session, will be introduced this session and I hope it will be possible to reach finality in the matter, which is most important because many people will be bitterly disappointed under the system operating at present. The same problems exist already in the Burnside district where house development is creeping up over hills into areas which cannot be effectively watered and sewered. A public nuisance is being created in many instances where persons have houses on slopes below new houses being built. The Government is not unmindful of the problem and legislation will be introduced this session.

ARMS FACTORIES.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—The following is an extract from this morning's *Advertiser* under the heading "Many More Arms Plants Needed":—

Many more arms factories would have to be built, the Minister for Defence Production (Sir Eric Harrison) said today. Sir Eric Harrison was making a statement outside the House on the new £23,000,000 munitions plant planned by the Commonwealth Government for St. Marys, an industrial area near Sydney. Not only would the wartime factory at St. Marys have to be replaced, but many others —"probably an additional small arms factory, ammunition factories and new factories to take care of post-war design developments," Sir Eric Harrison said. The only ammunition filling factory now operating was that at Maribyrnong, Victoria, he said. This contributed substantially to peace time needs, but there remained a critical deficiency against defence mobilization and war needs. Many of the war time factories which might have been used in another emergency were not available now.

I am particularly interested in this matter because many of my constituents work at the Salisbury Long Range Weapons Establishment. Members will agree that a spur to the development of secondary industries came with the war work done at the establishment. I believe some accommodation is still available there. Has the Premier's attention been drawn to Sir Eric Harrison's statement? If so, does he feel that some move should be made to obtain a unit for South Australia, and will he consider approaching the Federal Minister on the matter?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I did not see the article but my attention was drawn to it this morning by a pressman, who asked me a somewhat similar question. I am prepared to take up this matter with the Federal Minister. It is not possible to put a proposal before him because we have no knowledge of the requirements of the industry that he proposes to establish. However, I will endeavour to obtain some information from him and if possible will make some proposal on behalf of this State.

CONSOLIDATION OF STATUTES.

Mr. WHITE—Last Thursday the honourable member for Torrens asked the Minister of Education to confer with the Attorney-General with a view to having the South Australian Statutes consolidated, and the reply indicated that something might be done. Since Christmas two district council clerks have approached me requesting the consolidation of the Local Government Act, perhaps the largest Act we have, the one most amended and the one most often referred to. It is often used by people without much legal training and it takes them a great deal of time to find what they require. Undoubtedly it would be a very big job to consolidate all the Acts, but, in view of the urgency of bringing the Local Government Act up to date, will the Minister confer with the Attorney-General and request that, if this work is put in hand the Local Government Act be the Statute that is consolidated first?

The Hon. BADEN PATTINSON—Following on the question asked last week by the honourable member for Torrens, I conferred with the Attorney-General, who assured me that the consolidation of the Statutes generally is receiving his consideration. I shall be very pleased to refer to him the specific request of the honourable member for Murray, and also to support it. Speaking from memory, this Act comprises nearly 1,000 sections, and is easily the largest, most comprehensive and most frequently consulted on our Statute Book.

WALKERVILLE—GLEN OSMOND BUS SERVICE.

Mr. DUNSTAN—I have recently asked the Premier a number of questions about the Walkerville-Glen Osmond bus service. After I asked one yesterday a statement was heard over the air and one appeared in this morning's newspaper that the Metro Bus Company, which has operated this service since Lewis Bros. discontinued it, was to continue the service on a restricted basis. I understand that the Metro Bus Company is not as such continuing the service, but that a Mr. Slattery has acquired the shares in the company and will operate a restricted service upon the present basis, at any rate for some time, of the Tramways Trust lending him buses. This means that the trust will be subsidizing him to the extent of about £30 a week, whereas the trust also had an offer from Lewis Bros. to operate the service with much more modern buses of their own, at no cost to the trust. Will the Premier further take up this matter with the trust, for it seems that there is some animus between the trust and Lewis Bros. which is resulting in a dis-service to the public instead of a service?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received the following report from the Government representative on the Tramways Trust:—

Metro Bus Co., now operating under new management, has applied to the trust to withdraw its previous notice of intention to discontinue the service. Lewis Bros. have applied for a licence to operate the service. The proposed timetable of Metro Bus Co. provides for a better service than that proposed by Lewis Bros. At the same time Metro Bus Co. has indicated its preparedness to pay the standard bus inspection charge of £7 10s. a bus per annum, whilst Lewis Bros. are not prepared to do so. Further, Lewis Bros. made a condition that the trust should subsidize the service for a period to ensure a minimum revenue of 2s. 6d. per mile, whereas Metro have requested no guarantee. In the circumstances the trust decided, at its meeting on June 6, to permit the Metro Bus Co. to withdraw its notice of intention to discontinue, providing that there is a reasonable assurance that the company can secure the necessary financial resources and vehicles to carry on for more than a limited period. Subsequent to the trust meeting which considered the matter Lewis Bros. withdrew their request for a subsidy. As the General Manager of the trust has received the necessary assurance from the Metro. Bus Co. the licence to that company will not be terminated.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Last week, in reply to a question concerning the Walkerville-Glen Osmond bus service, the Premier said:—

I have spoken about this matter to Mr. Seaman, a member of the trust, and I am

sure that if Lewis Brothers were prepared to carry on the service, the Tramways Board would be prepared, because the service is not a remunerative one, to licence that firm and forego the inspection fee normally charged.

It is clear from the applications that both persons have made for this service that the immediate cost to the trust will in the case of Lewis Bros. be less than for the present person whom the trust has licensed for the service. Will the Premier approach the trust again on this matter and try to get a reasonable service, such as Lewis Bros. offer? If the trust is not prepared to accede to the request will the Premier get from the trust what assurance it has that the proposed licensee will be able to obtain the necessary finance to carry on the service, when it can be expected he will get new buses instead of using the antiquated tramway buses he is at present leasing, and when he will begin to pay the inspection service fee he has promised to pay to the trust?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes.

SPRINGTON RECREATION FACILITIES.

Mr. TEUSNER—Earlier this year I introduced a deputation consisting of the chairman of the district council of Mount Pleasant and the chairman and members of the Springton school committee to the Minister of Education, urging that certain land near the Springton school be acquired under the Recreation Grounds (Joint Schemes) Act, 1947, for use as a playground by the Springton school children and for public recreation. What consideration has been given to this request?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Following on the deputation the Property Officer and other officers of the Education Department inspected the property and interviewed the district clerk and members of the school committee. Those officers submitted a report to me, which showed that the proposal was somewhat unusual and broke new ground as far as this Act was concerned because the scheme proposed not only the acquisition of land for recreation but also its improvement, such as levelling and grassing. Therefore, I submitted the matter to Cabinet, which approved of the propounding of a joint scheme. As a result I submitted the proposal to the Land Board for a report and valuation of the land. We received an offer from a landowner who was prepared to sell the land to us, and subject to a satisfactory report from the board, which I hope to receive soon, I shall be prepared to enter into the scheme as requested by the honourable member, the district councils and school committee.

SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL HOSPITAL.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked last week concerning a subsidy for the Strathalbyn Soldiers' Memorial Hospital?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Minister of Health has supplied the following report from the Director-General of Medical Services:—

From time to time consideration has been given to requests for financial assistance from the Strathalbyn and District Soldiers' Memorial Hospital towards capital expenditure in connection with extensions to buildings and purchase of equipment. The following special Government grants, representing approximately 50 per cent of the approved expenditure in each case, have been made available to that hospital:—April, 1952, enclosing verandah to provide additional accommodation, and the erection of drying room, £302; January, 1953, purchase of theatre and other equipment, £200; November, 1953, new ablution block, £910; and June, 1954, installation of X-ray plant, £302. It is understood that should the Hospital Board submit an application for a special Government grant towards expenditure involved in connection with any future proposals for extensions to buildings or purchase of equipment, such requests will receive favourable consideration provided they are in connection with approved items of expenditure.

DAYTIME EXPRESS TO MELBOURNE.

Mr. TAPPING—Last year I asked the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Railways, a question concerning the need for a daytime express from Adelaide to Melbourne. At that stage the Minister said that the matter had been discussed by the Adelaide and Melbourne authorities and that he had nothing further to tell me. Has he anything further to report now?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have no further reply from the Minister of Railways, but to the best of my belief the South Australian Railways authorities are still keen to run a train of that nature. For some time they have suggested the proposal to the Victorian authorities, but those authorities have maintained that they had not the necessary staff or plant. I will, however, see what progress has been made and bring down a reply, I hope tomorrow.

DELAYS IN INQUESTS.

Mr. STEPHENS—My question is directed to the Minister of Education, representing the Attorney-General. For some time I have noticed the long delay that occurs in the holding of inquests on deaths of people in the metropolitan area. Sometimes the delay has extended over several weeks and even months and this is embarrassing to relatives of the

deceased. I do not blame the Coroner because I do not know whether it is his fault, but I would ask the Minister if he would ascertain from the Attorney-General why the delays are so long and whether they could be shortened.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to confer with the Attorney-General as requested, but I would think that if there are long delays there are good reasons for them, because I think that the Coroners Act was amended a year or so ago at the request of the City Coroner, Mr. Cleland, when the procedure was streamlined. However, I will be pleased to ascertain if further improvements can be effected.

TEACHING ON MONETARY SYSTEM.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The Minister of Education will know that from time to time, extending over two sessions, I have tried to get information from him, as head of the Education Department, as to what the department teaches in respect of the creation of money. I have had replies from the Minister, evidently prepared by his department, from which I could only assume that this information was compiled either for the purpose of evading the question or through entire ignorance of the subject. I again ask the Minister if he will take up the matter because, after all, the State provides over £6,000,000 a year to educate the people and the most important factor in the whole economic system is the money the people are likely to have to spend on their homes and amenities. Last night I quoted statements by the late Sir Reginald McKenna, one of the world's leading bankers, who, in the course of his remarks, said that the ordinary citizen would not like to be told that banks can and do create money and destroy it, and the Minister evidently thought that members of Parliament would not like it either. My question relates particularly to high schools and the University, and I should like to know if the Minister has any further particulars.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to discuss the matter again with the Director and Deputy Director of Education, with both of whom I have discussed this very involved question over a number of months.

Mr. Macgillivray—I thought you must have discussed it with the office boy or the typist.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—There is no desire to evade or avoid the question. It may be that these things are relative, and that, according to the standards of the honourable member, the Minister and the Director and his deputy are ignorant on this subject. On the other hand, I think I have supplied the honourable member with a wealth of detail and documents during recent weeks.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—Perhaps he cannot digest them.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I think that is the difficulty, but there were pages and pages of typescript, and I am prepared to supply him with more and more if he so desires.

SUPREME COURT ACCOMMODATION.

Mr. HUTCHENS—My question relates to a subject that the honourable member for Torrens has taken up on many occasions, and I have his permission to ask it and wish to make it clear that I have no desire to cut across his efforts. I have been told by witnesses called upon to attend the Supreme Court that there are no conveniences suitable for the poor unfortunate women who have to attend the court, and none even for females employed on the premises. Has any programme been suggested for the reconstruction of these buildings so as to provide suitable accommodation?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Some years ago a block of buildings and the Supreme Court Hotel were purchased with the object the honourable member has in view. Then, as the Premier said yesterday concerning other projects, experts came in. Plans running into £250,000 were obtained and received almost universal accord until the experts then came in with more ideas, and it was then decided that much more elaborate accommodation was required. The war intervened and from that day to this the work has not been proceeded with. That is the present position. A scheme having in mind what is urgent as against what is desirable is being prepared. I will bring down details as soon as they are available.

FINANCE FOR ENTERPRISES.

Mr. QUIRKE—The following is an extract from last Saturday's *Advertiser* finance column:—

With the nation acutely short of capital it was not surprising that the demand for finance of various types should far outweigh the funds available, the chairman of the Australian Mutual Provident Society, Mr. C. H. Hoskins, said at the annual meeting in Sydney yesterday. An increase in savings was required in Australia to match the huge capital requirements necessary to build up great industrial enterprises, rural development, transport and other essential services, Mr. Hoskins said. Immigration policies had helped the manpower side, improved industrial relations, more

efficient equipment and greater availability of raw materials and fuel, on the production side. Expansion plans, however, could still be frustrated if the volume of savings and the inflow of international finance proved inadequate.

Frankly, I do not understand that statement. I should like to know how an increase in savings can be used to promote big industrial enterprises today when their output is dependent on the purchasing power of the people? Is the Treasurer in agreement with this statement that we cannot progress unless we have what is now known as a flow of international finance to Australia, and does that pre-suppose borrowing, say from the International Bank?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not think it would be appropriate in answer to a question to get into an involved discussion upon financial matters of the type the honourable member has mentioned. To deal with it in a simple way from the point of view of the State alone, the State is dependent upon the amount of money it can raise from the Loan Council for carrying out its loan programme. On present indications the loan market will not provide an ample supply of money for that purpose. In other words, the Australian people are not prepared to hand over to the States goods and services to the extent I believe necessary if we are to develop this country. To meet that position, the Commonwealth Government may provide some services and goods from overseas which will take the place in the first instance of international finance. I have always been opposed to international finance if it can possibly be avoided. We make an application overseas which can, particularly in time of depression, be very embarrassing to us. Though it may give temporary assistance, it would no doubt lead to long-term obligations which can be embarrassing. I believe it should not be used if there is any possible way of avoiding it, and it should then only be used on things which will be immediately reproductive to an extent that will guarantee that there will be no burden on the future Australian economy. The Loan Council, when it meets on June 22, will no doubt be confronted with the position that the loan market, in its present buoyancy, will not be prepared to provide sufficient finance at a reasonable rate of interest to finance the necessary public works programme of the States. That can be embarrassing, and requires a great deal of discussion and decision on general policy matters of the type the honourable member has mentioned.

Mr. Macgillivray—The Commonwealth Bank would provide it.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There is a point beyond which even the Commonwealth Bank cannot help us. For instance, it cannot help beyond the point where goods and labour are available. Once you get to the position where labour and materials are fully absorbed, any additional finance from the Commonwealth Bank does not help the position. In fact, it materially hinders it.

WALLAROO WATERSIDE WORKERS.

Mr. McALEES—A number of waterside workers at Wallaroo have been on attendance money of only 16s. a day for the last nine days because of the absence of work while there is congestion in every other Australian port. Can the Premier use his influence with the shipping companies and the Wheat Board, or in some other way relieve the unemployment situation there?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I shall be pleased to take up the matter with the Minister for Shipping and the Wheat Board to see whether it is possible to ship larger quantities of wheat from Wallaroo. This would not only expedite the handling of wheat, but could probably relieve some of the very heavy demands made on Port Adelaide.

PROBATE DELAYS.

Mr. STOTT—I understand that under the State law the time for finalizing probate is six months, and if it is not done by that time the estate is involved in a penalty until it is finalized; but before the State authorities will finalize any probate it has to be settled by the Commonwealth department. The Commonwealth department takes much longer, as it wants to get the two assessments to agree. Consequently, under the State law many persons are penalized by having to pay penalty rates because of the long-winded action either of the State or the Federal department in completing details. Will the Premier consider the matter and bring down legislation to amend the Succession Duties Act to enable a longer period to elapse so that the two departments can get together without private people and private estates being penalized?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have seen a number of protracted operations in getting probate declared. A number of cases of the type mentioned by the honourable member have been submitted for examination. To date the examination has shown that the delay has not been the fault of the Commonwealth or State departments but because of factors that are frequently outside anything the departments can do. I will have the matter examined carefully. It is undesirable that a person wishing to comply with the law in a reasonable manner should

be penalized. On the other hand, there is sometimes considerable difficulty in bringing matters to a conclusion with reasonable expedition unless there is a penalty clause for non-compliance with the law. As the honourable member knows, we have had to do it in connection with the payment of council rates.

DEEP SEA PORT IN SOUTH-EAST.

Mr. CORCORAN—Has the Premier any further information to give regarding the proposal to establish a deep sea port at Rivoli Bay?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No. I hope to be able later to give the honourable member more precise information as to what I believe would be a practical investigation and to what extent we should spend money on it. If the honourable member desires to have a look at them I have some charts that have been prepared in connection with this matter. He would see that it is not a simple proposal. Although there is much deep water close in shore the approaches are hazardous and shallow. It does not look as though a deep sea port can be established there with the means available to the State. Such matters as tidal influence and the state of the sea are being investigated. These are important factors in any port with an enclosed entrance.

MONARTO WATER SCHEME.

Mr. WHITE—Some years ago when the Monarto water scheme was installed the Monarto people were told that a tank was to be built into that part of the scheme which runs along the road leading from the Monarto South railway station to the northern part of the district. Such a tank would improve pressures, but so far it has not been built. In last year's Estimates there was a line dealing with the proposal. Can the Minister of Works tell me when the work will be carried out?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I conferred with the Engineer-in-Chief recently and the objective was to commence work this week, so it may have already been commenced, but, if not, it will start almost straight away.

LIGHTING IN RAILWAY CARRIAGES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Will the Minister representing the Minister of Railways take up the matter of installing improved lighting in railway coaches on the Marino line, particularly in the morning for those who go to work early?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will take up the matter and bring down a reply as soon as possible.

FISHING INDUSTRY.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—Has the Minister of Agriculture anything further to report on the fishing industry, about which I questioned him last week?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I have received the following report from the Chief Inspector of Fisheries and Game:—

1. No. The Fisheries Department is not aware of any decline in shark production. Statistical returns are not submitted by fishermen; therefore the department has to wait until the close of each financial year before it obtains voluntarily from buyers the quantity of fish handled by them during that year. The latest information—the figure obtained for the year 1953-54—does not indicate any fall in production. It showed that shark production was 1,433,000 lb. compared with 1,380,000 lb. for 1952-53.

2. Yes, it is known to the Fisheries and Game Department that one large fishing boat has gone out of the industry and that another very fine vessel is being offered to the Government for use as a Fisheries investigation and patrol boat. It is also known that shark fishermen are disturbed that the market for livers recently collapsed completely. It is not yet known whether this collapse is due to the synthesising of an oil of equal medicinal properties or to the importation of a lower priced oil. Fishermen have asked the department to press the Commonwealth Government to impose a tariff if the supplanting oil is an imported one.

3. It is not possible to give by species what frozen fish were imported into South Australia direct from overseas. It is disclosed in Commonwealth publications, however, that we imported from South Africa (the principal exporters of hake) 742,410 lb. of frozen fish, valued at £A48,439 during the financial year 1953-54. For comparative purposes Australia's imports of frozen fish from all overseas exports that year totalled 15,764,369 lb. valued at £A1,196,306.

Mr. Shannon—Is that in tins?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—No, frozen fish only. Mr. Fowler, secretary of the South Australian Fishermen's Co-operative, which handles most of the catch of shark and other fish, assured me that his members were still carrying on successfully, although they have appreciably felt the decline in their incomes because they can no longer dispose of shark livers.

Mr. BROOKMAN—Some years ago the Government opened the Bay of Shoals, Kangaroo Island, for net fishing, and there was considerable opposition by fishermen to the move, the opponents expressing the view that their most important fish, whiting, would eventually disappear. However, the bay was opened and is still open to net fishing in spite of a request by the fishermen to have it closed. They claim that the fishing has deteriorated and that

whiting is virtually non-existent. It is a question of whether the Inspector of Fisheries is correct or the fishermen. It seems to me that the people most concerned are the fishermen who make their livelihood from the industry, and I feel that the Government might well consider their opinion very seriously. Will the Minister reconsider the decision?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I do not recollect precisely all the circumstances associated with the Bay of Shoals case, but I know that this is no new argument; many times we have heard the conflicting claims of line and net fishermen. There has always been a definite conflict of interests between them. Many waters today are overnetted because that method yields many fish, other than whiting, that are not normally caught, and this helps to provide fish for South Australian consumers. I shall have to refresh my mind on the circumstances of the Bay of Shoals matter, and will have it examined closely.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—In view of the Minister's disclosure on the amount of fish imported into Australia and South Australia and the effect it must have on our overseas trade balance, will the Minister do all in his power to explore and exploit the unexplored fishing grounds on our extensive coastline for the benefit of the people and the fishermen of this State?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I think we are doing that today. We have embarked on a programme of very extensive exploration of our natural resources of fish. As announced last week in regard to tuna fishing, we were guaranteeing a tuna exploration venture to the extent of £9,000. This was to be assisted by American experts, but they were unable to come last year because of the wrecking of one of their boats. However, we are still expecting them in the new tuna season beginning at the end of this year or early next year. We are still committed to the venture. Also, as I indicated the other day, a private individual is making investigations overseas and we have given him letters of introduction to various people. His object is to interest large overseas concerns in the development of our fishing industry. I assure the honourable member that we are very keen to expand this important primary industry as far as lies within our power.

GIRLS' TECHNICAL SCHOOL.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—In the press last Saturday the Minister of Education was reported as having said that it was the intention of the department to establish a girls' technical school in the South Plympton area, bounded, I believe, by Marion and Cross Roads. Was the Minister correctly reported?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes. Usually, I might say, almost invariably, I am reported correctly by the press. The department proposes to construct a girls' technical school at Plympton on an area of about 12 acres owned by the department, bounded by Wheaton Street, Eyre Street, and Lynton Avenue, and the Architect-in-Chief has been requested to draw preliminary sketch plans for submission to the Public Works Committee.

ROADWAY TO TECHNICAL SCHOOL.

Mr. JENNINGS—Recently I have addressed many questions to the Minister of Education regarding the roadway to the Nailsworth Boys' Technical School. Has the Minister any further information?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—At the request of the honourable member, I obtained a further report from the Architect-in-Chief, through my colleague the Minister of Works. The report reads:—

Access to the existing classrooms and also the new buildings under construction is now made from the eastern roadway which is over natural ground and this has proved suitable even during the last rains. It is covered with low grass. I have arranged for a screen pathway from the roadway to the school buildings. This will be proceeded with immediately. The roadway will, if it is found necessary as winter develops, also be screened. Up to date it is not thought that this will be required as it is a temporary roadway. The main or western roadway into the school is under construction, now in its first stage. A large area of ground including the roadway, has to be filled and consolidated to a depth of between 18'' to 24''. This should consolidate before the final traffic roadway is completed. Under the contracts now let all stormwater drains are laid under this roadway and it is essential that the ground be sufficiently consolidated for the heavier vehicular traffic. When this is complete, the eastern roadway will not be required. In the meantime, the western roadway entrance has been wired up.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: M.T.T. INDUSTRIAL ACTION.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—On the front page of this morning's *Advertiser* there appears the report of a reply to a question asked in this House yesterday regarding an application by the Municipal Tramways Trust to the Arbitration Court. The report attributes the question to me, whereas I wish it to be understood that it was asked by the member for Thebarton (Mr. Fred Walsh).

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from June 7. Page 250.)

Mr. FRED WALSH (Thebarton)—I associate myself with the expressions of regret by previous speakers at the death of two highly esteemed members of Parliament—Mr. Stephen Dunks and the Hon. Reginald Rudall. I knew both of them for many years, particularly Mr. Dunks, who was Chairman of Committees for a long time. Although there were times when we did not agree it can be truthfully said that he never showed any vindictiveness or took offence at what was said. The same can be said about Mr. Rudall.

I extend my congratulations to the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) on his election to Parliament. It is pleasing indeed to see a young man of his type entering Parliament, though it would be hypocritical of me to wish him a long term in this House, but I certainly wish him every success. I think the member for Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip) said that the result of the Mitcham election indicated the popularity of the Playford Government, but if he never had any doubt on the result of that election we on this side of the House never had any doubt either. It would not have mattered who represented the Labor Party in Mitcham, for there was little prospect of success. The only hope of Labor winning a district like Mitcham lies in the re-allocation of the electoral boundaries, which is now being investigated by a committee.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—But the Liberal and Country Party might then have a chance of winning Port Adelaide or Hindmarsh.

Mr. FRED WALSH—I was very glad that the House was called together much earlier this year, and I join with the Leader of the Opposition in hoping that this will be the forerunner of two sessions each year. If this were adopted Parliament would not have to sit for any greater number of hours in the year and we would get through the business better and not have the usual rush at the end of the session. I agree that the debate on the Address in Reply is of considerable value, but I think much time is wasted. I respectfully suggest that some speeches are too long. I do not wish to reflect on any member, but I think we would get better speeches if they were restricted. Then there would be a more attentive audience and members would get far better results from their research and preparation of their speeches. In the Federal Parliament, and I believe in some State Parliaments, there is a time limit on members' speeches. At the International Labor Conference the principal debate is on the director's opening report. It is similar to the debate on the Address in Reply because every delegate can speak on almost any subject, but there is a limit of 15 minutes on speeches. Surely if those delegates from all over the world, who represent Governments, employers and workers, are able to limit their remarks to 15 minutes—and their speeches are usually most interesting—it should be possible for members to say all they want to in, say, 45 minutes.

I consider that more thought should be given to the preparation and objects of legislation submitted to this House. The Government should look well ahead before bringing down Bills. Often we have amending Bills on the same Act brought down year after year. If, as some people outside suggest, Parliament sat throughout the year our Statute Book would be so cluttered up that not even a lawyer would be able to interpret our Acts.

The Premier referred to the introduction of politics into this debate, but if such a charge could be levelled against any member, surely it could be levelled against the Premier. At any rate, in a political institution of this kind one must expect the introduction of politics. While Government members slap the Premier's back, he smiles, but when Opposition members criticize his Government's policy he frowns and later replies vigorously as he did in this debate. Indeed, many of his statements on this occasion won him no credit, for he stepped from the high plane he usually occupies when addressing this House, and made many remarks unworthy of him, especially when replying to the arguments of Opposition members on Parliamentary representation. The Premier had much to say about the rules of the Australian Labor Party, but he quoted only those that suited his argument. True, a certain number of delegates to Labor Party councils and conferences represent a certain number of members, but if every member of the Labor Party were to attend our conference we would have to hold it on the Victoria Park racecourse. There is no analogy between Parliamentary and Party conference representation.

In praising the Government some members opposite gave the impression that South Australia was the only State that has had real development; but what has been achieved here that has not been achieved in some form in every other State? Industries, both primary and secondary, have been developed all over

Australia since the war. Early this year members visited Western Australia and saw the great post-war development that has taken place there. One can always make comparisons, but sometimes they are odious. South Australia was particularly fortunate because it received sympathetic support and assistance from two Federal Labor Governments. Further, at the end of the war the large munitions establishments at Salisbury, Hendon and Finsbury were left vacant, but the Federal Labor Government placed them at the disposal of private interests. True, the Premier induced certain overseas interests to come here, but the same thing has been done with as much success in other States.

Many members have gone out of their way to give the Government full credit for the construction of the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline and, although I appreciate the speed with which the pipeline has been constructed and give the department credit for its work, I dread to think what the position might have been had the pipeline not been constructed on time. Having regard to the precarious nature of our other water supplies, what would the effect have been on our factories, householders and the community generally? Much justifiable criticism can be levelled at the Government because of its inactivity over the years because, even though the reticulation of River Murray water to Adelaide was considered 50 years ago, many years elapsed before a scheme was implemented. It would seem that our water supplies for the foreseeable future are guaranteed, and we all hope that we have seen the last of bore water in our factories and homes. The Government should immediately institute a programme of relaying and, where necessary, enlarging metropolitan water mains, some of which have been down for 40 years and more, whereas their estimated life was only about 25 years. One can imagine the corrosion which has taken place and which has prevented their taking the pressure necessary to ensure a satisfactory supply.

Referring to the Labor Party rules the Premier said that he had been informed by a reliable source that his copy of the rules was authentic and that it contained all the amendments since 1951. I can only say that that was rather a traitorous act on the part of the person who gave them to the Premier because they are not easy to obtain outside the Labor Party, and it would appear that we have rats in our Party just as the Liberal Party has. It was no credit to the person concerned that the Premier was able to use them—as he thought—to the detriment of the Labor Party.

Mr. Frank Walsh—It was less creditable of the one who quoted them.

Mr. FRED WALSH—The Premier found it convenient not to refer to the fact that at our conferences we have a system known as the card vote system, and that on matters of importance delegates from a prescribed number of affiliations can demand a card vote, and the affiliations record their votes in accordance with their paid-up membership. If anything could be more democratic than that I would like to know of it. Our arguments have been mainly on the question of Parliamentary representation and although we admit that it is impracticable to apply the principle of one vote one value in all circumstances we believe that it can be done within certain tolerances, and as a Party we subscribe to that.

The Premier, in referring to a comparison of prices in the various States that had been mentioned by Mr. Hutchens, said that Queensland, where the Legislative Council has been abolished, has greater potential wealth but a lower standard of living than any other State. However, he did not produce any figures to establish that contention. He merely quoted certain items that suited his purpose without quoting them all. Had he used the figures accepted by the Commonwealth Statistician in arriving at the cost of living there might have been some merit in his argument. He simply picked out a few items; for instance, he quoted the price of milk per pint as 8½d. in Adelaide and 8½d. in Melbourne and Perth. I suggest that it would be very difficult to buy a pint of milk in Adelaide for 8½d., since we do not deal in farthings, and although the gallon rate may work out at 8½d. a pint the average householder does not buy milk by the gallon. He said that icing sugar was 11½d. a lb. in South Australia and 1/- in Melbourne and Perth. I cannot remember the last time I tasted icing sugar, and I suggest that few homes use it, so that has little bearing on the case. He quoted beef sausages at 1/6 lb. in Adelaide, 1/9 in Melbourne and 1/10 in Perth. Often it is difficult to find the beef in them—

Mr. Quirke—They are "well bread" sausages.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Yes. Why did not the Premier mention other kinds of meat consumed in the ordinary household so as to give a fair comparison? Had he done so we would have seen that Queensland prices are several pence a lb. cheaper than South Australian. The only way to make a comparison is to get some idea of the relative scale of the basic wage in

the various cities, for price means very little if the purchaser has the wherewithal to pay it. As everyone knows, the basic wage was pegged as from the June quarter of 1953, the rates then being — Sydney £12 3s., Melbourne £11 15s., Brisbane £10 18s., Adelaide £11 11s., Perth £11 16s. and Hobart £12 2s. That was the last time there was any alteration in the basic wage except in the case of Melbourne, to which I will refer later. According to the Commonwealth Statistician there have been variations in the cost of living since that date right up to March, 1955. In fact the Premier said that it had risen in Adelaide by 6/-. In actual fact it has risen by 7/-. In Sydney it has risen by 5/-, in Melbourne by 2/-, Brisbane 8/-, Adelaide 7/-, Perth 23/- and Hobart 7/-. Expressed in another way, workers engaged in industry all over Australia, with the exception of those working in Victoria under Wages Boards determinations, have lost by reason of the pegging of the basic wage—in Sydney £12 7s., Melbourne £5 17s., Brisbane £24 14s., Adelaide £16 18s., Perth £64 7s. and Hobart £35 2s. That is to say, every worker in South Australia has lost £16 18s. since 1953 from this cause. One might reasonably ask where the money has gone, and the reply, of course, is that it has gone into the profits and the pockets of the employers and nowhere else. Something must be done about it. The discontent of workers can be readily understood and also the reason for a demand for industrial action. The time is not far distant when those in authority will have to consider that aspect of our economy. I have here a long schedule of figures which I ask be inserted in *Hansard* without being read.

Leave granted.

COMMONWEALTH BASIC WAGE.

Variations in the Monetary Equivalents of the "C" Series Index Numbers (1 point equals 0·103/-) since the Abolition of Automatic Adjustments after those on June Quarter, 1953 (Base).

SIX CAPITAL CITIES (AND THEIR WEIGHTED AVERAGE).

Quarter.		Sydney.	Melbourne.	Brisbane.	Adelaide.	Perth.	Hobart.	Six Capitals.
		s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
June Quarter, 1953 (Base)		£12 3 0	£11 15 0	£10 18 0	£11 11 0	£11 16 0	£12 2 0	
Fixed rate		243 0	235 0	218 0	231 0	236 0	242 0	236 0
September, 1953.	(*a*)	3 0	2 0	3 0	2 0	4 0	10 0	3 0
	(*b*)	3 0	2 0	3 0	2 0	4 0	10 0	3 0
	(*c*)	39 0	26 0	39 0	26 0	52 0	130 0	39 0
	(*d*)	£1 19 0	£1 6 0	£1 19 0	£1 6 0	£2 12 0	£6 10 0	£1 19 0
December, 1953.	(*a*)	N.C.	1 0	3 0	1 0	−2 0	4 0	1 0
	(*b*)	3 0	3 0	6 0	3 0	2 0	14 0	4 0
	(*c*)	39 0	39 0	78 0	39 0	26 0	182 0	52 0
	(*d*)	£3 18 0	£3 5 0	£5 17 0	£3 5 0	£3 18 0	£15 12 0	£4 11 0
March, 1954.	(*a*)	N.C.	−1 0	1 0	−1 0	4 0	−5 0	N.C.
	(*b*)	3 0	2 0	7 0	2 0	6 0	9 0	4 0
	(*c*)	39 0	26 0	91 0	26 0	78 0	117 0	52 0
	(*d*)	£5 17 0	£4 11 0	£10 8 0	£4 11 0	£7 16 0	£21 9 0	£7 3 0
June, 1954.	(*a*)	−2 0	−1 0	−2 0	N.C.	13 0	−4 0	−1 0
	(*b*)	1 0	1 0	5 0	2 0	19 0	5 0	3 0
	(*c*)	13 0	13 0	65 0	26 0	247 0	65 0	39 0
	(*d*)	£6 10 0	£5 4 0	£13 13 0	£5 17 0	£20 3 0	£24 14 0	£9 2 0
September, 1954.	(*a*)	N.C.	−2 0	−2 0	3 0	4 0	N.C.	N.C.
	(*b*)	1 0	−1 0	3 0	5 0	23 0	5 0	3 0
	(*c*)	13 0	−13 0	39 0	65 0	299 0	65 0	39 0
	(*d*)	£7 3 0	£4 11 0	£15 12 0	£9 2 0	£35 2 0	£27 19 0	£11 1 0
December, 1954.	(*a*)	2 0	1 0	3 0	N.C.	−1 0	−1 0	1 0
	(*b*)	3 0	Nil	6 0	5 0	22 0	4 0	4 0
	(*c*)	39 0	—	78 0	65 0	286 0	52 0	52 0
	(*d*)	£9 2 0	—	£19 10 0	£12 7 0	£49 8 0	£30 11 0	£13 13 0
March, 1955.	(*a*)	2 0	2 0	2 0	2 0	1 0	3 0	2 0
	(*b*)	5 0	2 0	8 0	7 0	23 0	7 0	6 0
	(*c*)	65 0	26 0	104 0	91 0	299 0	91 0	78 0
	(*d*)	£12 7 0	£5 17 0	£24 14 0	£16 18 0	£64 7 0	£35 2 0	£17 11 0

N.C. equals No charge. (−) equals decrease—all others are increases.

(*a*) Difference over rate preceding quarter.

(*b*) Accumulative rate-difference at each quarter. This, added to the "fixed rate" of June quarter, 1953 (Base), gives the theoretical total rate for the quarter.

(*c*) Total amount not paid (or deducted) at each quarter (b x 13 weeks).

(*d*) Accumulative total amount not paid (or deducted) at each quarter.

Mr. FRED WALSH—I read in the *Advertiser* of May 31, a report of an address to his organization by the President of the New South Wales Metal Trades Employers' Association. It included the following:—

The Commonwealth Arbitration Court took "little or no regard to the future" in considering wages, hours and margins, the New South Wales Metal Trades Employers' Association president (Mr. R. B. Hipsley) said today. Speaking at the association's annual general meeting, he said that industry had also been handicapped by "lack of leadership by the Federal Government on economic policy. It is not surprising that as a result of the new inflationary effect of higher wages and salaries, there is fresh thought now being directed to an application to the court for a new basic wage and the reintroduction of quarterly adjustments. I believe that management and the majority of working people favour a reintroduction of any system of automatic adjustments."

In a seven-point plan to lower manufacturing costs he included the following:—

More co-operation by workers to the introduction of new production techniques.

Mr. Hipsley is a man in a most responsible position associated with an organization which applied to the Federal Arbitration Court about three years ago for a reduction in the basic wage, an increase in the hours of labour and the abolition of the system of quarterly adjustment of wages. It appears that in the light of subsequent events this organization is prepared to recognize that a mistake has been made. Who will deny that a mistake was made? The court in its so-called wisdom rejected the employers' application in respect of hours and the basic wage, but accepted its views regarding the suspension of the system of quarterly wage adjustments. As to margins, a formula was arrived at which left itself open to doubt from both sides. In my opinion it did not ease the position which was causing discontent at the time. If the committee had awarded marginal increases to make the wages of the skilled and semi-skilled workers comparable with those existing in 1937 some content might have resulted in industry, but a chaotic position has been created as a result of the increase of margins in only certain directions and the rejection of the demands of the unskilled worker, the man who needs it most. As a result of the cancellation of quarterly wage adjustments, workers have been robbed of more than £16 each, and now we find that certain leaders of industry are advocating a longer working week. They have given away the idea of a 48 or even a 44-hour week and are modest enough to suggest that a 42-hour week would be attractive. That, in the light of what is happening overseas, comes as a surpirse, because it was only the other day that I read that a man in a responsible position stated that in the United States of America a five-day week was on the way out and a four-day week was being looked forward to. In the minds of some people a four-day week may appear rather ludicrous, but such people ridicule any suggestion of a shorter working week.

Prior to World War I when industry was not very highly mechanized the food production of the world was not sufficient to provide a decent standard of living to those outside the more highly industrialized countries. After the war mass production was introduced. Goods were produced all right, but unfortunately this was done without any control. Wages kept static and production increased, with the result that there was not sufficient purchasing power in the hands of the community to buy the goods produced. The depression in the 1930's was the result. We know what happened in America, and what happens there in this respect will ultimately occur in Australia. In America production has been enormously accelerated, resulting in greater production per man-hour, and therefore it is time we took notice of the new problem which will be created. It is to be hoped that this time there will be some kind of control. I shall quote from an article written by Walter Reuther in the *News Digest* published by the United States Information Service. It included the following:—

For some 15 years and more, scientists have been bringing forth a host of new developments in the field of electronics. Many of the electronic devices developed during World War II in connection with military equipment have been applied since then to civilian use. Automation is the most common term used to describe these developments of electronic controls, and electrical computers. The impact of this new technology on the economy and society will no doubt be tremendous in the years ahead . . .

Regardless of how it is defined, this new technology represents the use of electronic devices, rather than human workers to regulate and control the operation of machines. It makes possible the automatic office, as well as the automatic factory.

It means, in effect, that instead of men controlling machines on repetitive jobs all day long every day, this work will be controlled by a machine. The article continues:—

These electronic devices are being introduced into American factories and offices. Radical changes in production methods, work flow, office procedures and labour skills are already under way in scattered parts of the American economy. A spokesman for the Ford Motor

Company, which operates an automatic engine block department in its Cleveland, Ohio plant, says:—"Automation reduces labour tremendously. Our experience has shown that we can count on a reduction of 25 per cent to 30 per cent in what we call 'direct' labour."

Let us get that into our heads and appreciate a general application of such a system. The article proceeds:—

According to a recent article in a scientific journal, an electronic computer at the General Electric Company plant in Louisville, Kentucky, "will undertake the preparation of payrolls, basing its computations on information stored in its memory concerning wage rates, overtime and the various deductions that must be made. It will compile sales records and prepare bills. It is expected ultimately to be used to make sales analyses, denote regional shifts in the sale of various appliances, and to modify production accordingly."

Electronic computers are being used by several insurance companies for the billing of customers' premium payments, calculating agents' commissions, figuring out dividends and ultimately they will work up the companies' actuarial data.

Automation holds out the promise of vast improvements in living conditions, in increased leisure for workers and in greatly increased economic strength. It likewise promises the elimination of routine, repetitive jobs. But the widespread introduction of automation within the coming decade or two will present serious economic and social problems, involving dislocations of the labour force, geographical shifts of industry, labour displacement, changing the skills of workers, and the need for substantial increases in consumer buying power for rapidly growing markets.

The Congress of Industrial Organizations convention, held in Los Angeles, California, last December, adopted the following rather interesting resolution on technological progress:—

To solve the problems resulting from increasing productivity requires full use of all the forces at our command. The legislative powers of the Government, as well as the economic power of organized workers, must be fully mobilized to find the correct answers, to ensure that purchasing power is expanded to keep pace with the growth of our ability to produce, and that, as there is lessened need for human effort, increased productivity is reflected in increased leisure through reduced hours of labour rather than in the barren idleness of mass unemployment.

A Congressional committee has been established by the Government to go into the matter with a view to solving the problem. A conference of businessmen, Government officials and trade unionists is to be held with a view to giving advice on it. What happens in America will surely be reflected in this country. Mr. Hipsley's statement about the co-operation of the workers in the application of improved techniques to industry means the same thing. They can see the possibilities of the application of science and technology to industry. We must see that the workers of the particular country have their standards raised sufficiently by increased wages to give them the purchasing power to get the goods that will be produced in such quantities. The following is an extract from the Premier's remarks on price control during this debate:—

I could give quite a number of other figures but I will summarize by saying that since price control was dropped in Western Australia—

Mr. O'Halloran—Was price control dropped or was the Government defeated?

The Hon. T. Playford—Does the Leader think the Government could not put its policy into operation? Is that the standard that honourable members opposite stand for? If a Government cannot carry out its policy it has no right to occupy the Treasury benches, because if it does it has to take responsibility for the laws. . . . On major matters it has been a long accepted principle of Parliamentary Government that if the Government cannot carry out its policy it goes to the people.

If we followed that out to its logical conclusion the Labor Party would never govern in this State. Never yet has it been a Government in the true sense. It has held the reins of government but it has not controlled the Parliament because if it did not suit another place to accept Labor legislation passed in this House it was rejected. The Premier suggested that a Party must resign if it cannot give effect to its policy. Of course, that attitude would suit the Premier and his Party very well if at the next election Labor were successful—and I think thir prospects are reasonably bright—and it found that the Party could not give full effect to its policy because of the attitude of another place. It would mean the resignation of the Labor Government.

I have some interesting information about legislation that was passed by the Assembly but rejected by the Council in the years 1924-26 and 1930-1932 when the Labor Party was in office. In 1924, 10 Bills were passed by the Assembly but rejected by the Council. They were Children's Maintenance, Constitution Amendment (Increase of Ministers), Constitution Amendment (Legislative Council Franchise), Constitution Amendment (Settlement of Deadlocks), Electoral Code Further Amendment, Motor Omnibus, Recommendations for Honours Regulation, Reduction of Members (Proportional Representation), State Insurance and Valuation of Land Bills. In 1925 there were seven—Day Baking, Loans for Fencing Act Amendment, Maintenance, Railway Ser-

vice Appeal Board, Surplus Revenue, Vermin Act Further Amendment and Wheat Harvest (Barring of Claims) Bills. In 1926 there were eight—Constitution Amendment (Increase of Ministers), Constitution Amendment (Legislative Council Franchise), Crown Lands Act Amendment (Compulsory Acquisition), Day Baking, Industrial, Marine Board and Navigation Act Amendment, M.T.T. Appeal Board and Valuation of Land Bills. The Labor Party was defeated at the elections in 1927, probably because it could not give effect to its policy. It was returned to office in 1930 when four Bills passed in the Assembly were rejected by the Council. They were Constitution Amendment (Increase of Ministers), M.T.T. Appeal Board, Railways Service Appeal Board Amendment and Unemployed Tenants and Mortgagors Relief Bills.

It is interesting to note that the Playford Government introduced a Bill for an increase in the number of Ministers and it was accepted by the Council, but when the Labor Party introduced such a measure in 1930 it was rejected by the Council, although passed in this House. In 1931 there were eight Bills—Crown Lands Act Amendment, Distress for Rent (Abolition), Police Appeal Board Act Amendment, Railway Motor Engineer's Salary Reduction, Subdivided Land Debts, Trotting Races, Valuation of Land and Workmen's Compensation. In 1932 there was some feeling amongst members of the Labor Party and before the election a split, so things were not as they should have been and that probably accounted for only three Bills being adopted by the Assembly and rejected by the Council. They were the Real Property Act Amendment, Tramways and Abattoirs Employees (Candidature at Elections), and Unemployed Tenants, Mortgagors and Purchasers Relief Bills. Altogether in those years 40 Bills were passed by the Assembly and rejected by the Council, yet the Premier says that a Government that cannot give effect to its policy should resign. It is interesting to note that some of the legislation rejected by the Council has subsequently been accepted because of their being introduced by a Liberal Government. This shows the urgent need for an alteration in the constitution of the Council. Until it is amended the prospects of a Labor Government giving effect to its policy is not bright. There are other matters I wanted to mention but there will be further opportunities to do that, so I content myself by supporting the motion.

Mr. TRAVERS (Torrens)—I support the motion and compliment the Government on its creditable record in the year that has elapsed since we last had an Address in Reply debate. I commend the Government for the full and good legislative programme it envisages for this year. Without repeating what has been so well said by other speakers on this motion, I associate myself earnestly with the kindly sentiments that have been uttered concerning my two good friends, the late Hon. R. J. Rudall and the late Mr. H. S. Dunks. I join in congratulating the new member for Mitcham and Mr. Teusner and wish them successful careers.

There are a few matters dealing with necessary law reform to which I want to draw the attention of the Government Reasonably urgent attention to these matters is needed. The first relates to the the juvenile court, or the children's court, as it is commonly called. That court is merely a court of summary jurisdiction. It is set up under the Justices Act in the same way as other courts of summary jurisdiction, commonly called police courts, but it has a far more extensive jurisdiction on the criminal side. There is a provision that enables the children's court to deal with offenders under 18 years of age. It may hear and determine all criminal cases except murder and manslaughter cases. In the case of adults, the police court has not the same extensive jurisdiction. There are indictable offences and it is necessary for the police court to commit for trial before a jury An amendment to the legislation is urgent in the matter of penalties. There are different kinds of penalty but let me refer to those that arise from day to day. The court has no power to impose a fine in excess of £5, although it may hear and determine a case of an extremely serious nature. In these days there are many youths between 16 and 18 years of age earning big wages, and for many of them the most effective way of giving a salutary lesson is to impose a reasonably heavy fine upon them, but the court has no power to do so. The result is that a great number of those youths are unnecessarily thrown into the reformatory. Because the court has a variety of forms of possible punishment open to it, the £5 penalty in many cases is totally inadequate, so it has to look to the alternative method and send the boys to the reformatory. That is most undesirable, and it is more so still when one considers the provisions of section 113 of the Maintenance Act, which gives power to commit to a reformatory. When that

Act was passed in about 1926 it gave power to send a child to a reformatory until reaching 18 years of age, or for such shorter period as the court thought appropriate. Later, I think in 1941, the legislature for some reason that is not apparent to me struck out the last part of the section. That leaves the section in a very undesirable condition, because the younger the offender the heavier the penalty must be. This position is urgently in need of attention.

The Maintenance Act also gives power to place an offender under the control of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board, and there again it is until 18 years of age. There is no reason why the court should not be given power to place a child under control of the board for three or six months if that is all that is necessary, and there is no reason why the penalty should be greater for younger children. A child of 13 has, in effect, a sentence of five years, but a child a week under 18 who has been charged with an offence meriting serious punishment can be committed for one week only, yet if the offence were committed a week later it might merit three years' imprisonment. Because he is under 18 the only penalty that can be imposed is a fine of £5 or a week in the reformatory. These sections are altogether unworkable and in urgent need of attention.

A further matter that needs attention is perhaps a mere matter of machinery. A few years ago the ordinary court of summary jurisdiction was given express power in minor indictable offences, when a plea of guilty is entered, to refrain from wading through the evidence by a provision enabling it to deal with such cases on statements of fact made by the prosecutor and the defendant. This saved an enormous amount of time and brought about precisely the same result, but nothing similar has been done in the children's court. That should be done because there is a provision in the Act requiring the attendance of parents, so that the interests of the children are adequately looked after. This would save a great deal of time that is expended for no valuable purpose. I believe that many of the courts have been departing from the practice of taking the evidence but obviously the procedure will be challenged because they have not the power to do so.

Section 108 of the Justices Act requires the evidence taken at a hearing on a committal for trial to be taken down and read back in the presence of the defendant and the witness, and signed by the witness. This section is a survival of the Justices Act of 1849 and obviously came into force in the days when there were no typewriters and the magistrate wrote the evidence in longhand, as possibly the prosecutor and counsel also did. The magistrate's notes were the official record, and had to be read back to the witness and signed. However, the evidence is now taken on the typewriter, and a copy, sheet by sheet, is handed to the magistrate, the prosecutor and counsel for the accused, so there is no reason why everyone should have to sit and listen while the evidence is read back to each witness after he has completed his evidence.

In perjury cases the depositions clerk gives evidence and says, "That is what the man said; there is my typewritten note", so there seems no reason why there should not be an alteration to allow the depositions clerk in a preliminary hearing to certify that what he has typed is correct, or at least to do that if everyone consents. In some cases the accused might require the evidence to be read back and it could then be done, but I have not known that to happen in my many years of practice. This is the sort of thing that goes on year after year and is given no attention, but it should be attended to because it increases costs of litigation. It costs a litigant enough to engage counsel to appear without having to pay him for sitting there twiddling his thumbs while evidence is read over. It does not take as long to read back the evidence as to take it, but in a case lasting for three days the time wasted by the process is a considerable item.

I wish now to refer to the appointment of magistrates, a matter which is in need of legislative attention. The office of stipendiary magistrate in South Australia has gained very considerably in stature in recent years. A magistrate has power to imprison for up to two years or impose a fine not exceeding £100. Let me pause on that and point out that the altered value of money has created a considerable disproportion that needs some attention. Some years ago £100 might have borne some relation to two years' imprisonment, but at present it is completely out of keeping. When there is an alternative between a monetary penalty and a term of imprisonment, the fine should bear some sort of relation to the imprisonment. Let me comment, as I did about the children's court, that in a case that would merit a fine of more than £100 the magistrate is forced to impose a term of imprisonment.

To return to the appointment of magistrates, I point out that the magistracy has been given very extensive jurisdiction over the

years, and their salary range is from £2,250 to £2,450. A magistrate in South Australia has a more extensive jurisdiction than district court judges in some of the eastern States, unless the Acts there have been altered recently. It follows that the office is of considerable importance, and the people to whom it is important are the general public. It is in the interests of the public that the best men available and willing should be appointed, but that is not the way things work out today, and legislative enactment should be brought in to alter the position. Magistrates operate in two separate jurisdictions—criminal and civil. Section 11 of the Justices Act enables Her Majesty in Council to appoint magistrates, and section 14 of the Local Courts Act contains a similar provision. Neither section makes any mention that a public servant shall have any prior claim to the appointment, but I think they clearly envisage that the applicant who is best fitted for the appointment is the one to whom the public is entitled. After all, the public is paying his salary, and it is the rights of the public that are to be determined by him. The best man available should get the appointment, but by some circuitous process it does not work out that way because the office of special magistrate is included in the Public Service Act. The office of judge is not, nor should the office of special magistrate. The office of special magistrate, with the extensive jurisdiction he exercises, ought to be put in a separate category—I do not say the same as that of judge—but if it is more convenient as a matter of machinery to keep the special magistrate under the Public Service Act well and good, but the best man should get the appointment.

I am not now casting any reflection on any magistrates appointed from the Crown Law Office, but I do not think that that office is a good training ground for a magistrate. The Crown Law officers are always on the prosecution side and they do not see things quite in the raw as does a man in private practice. I say we have been very fortunate in the selection of our magistrates, and I hope that will continue, and I do not suggest there is any likely appointment in the future that will not be a good one. I am only sounding what seems to me a necessary warning.

Mr. Lawn—Do you think it will do any good?

Mr. TRAVERS—I sincerely hope it will. The position is that unless a certificate is given by the Public Service Commissioner, or the board, to the effect that there is not someone in the Public Service as good as applicants outside the appointment must be given to a public servant. That creates an unfortunate situation. There are legal men employed in various branches of the Public Service. There used to be some in the Taxation Department, and there are several in the Crown Law Department. Of course, those in the latter department would have real qualifications and some experience for the job, although I do not think they would have nearly the same qualifications and experience as those in private practice. However, those not employed in branches of the Public Service other than the Crown Law Office have no real qualifications for the job, yet they would have a better chance of getting the appointment than those outside unless a certificate was given that they were unsuited for the position. In other words, under present circumstances, those in the Public Service have a leg in for the job, but that should not be permitted in appointments to judicial offices. No-one can value too highly the importance of keeping the judiciary at a high standard. No-one has a leg in for the office of judge, so why for the office of magistrate?

This situation has come about in an accidental way. Obviously the relevant section of the Justices Act never envisaged that anyone would have a leg in for the office of special magistrate, and the same applies to the appointment of magistrates for the local court. I noticed recently an additional magistrate was to be appointed and I hope this question will be considered before the appointment is made.

It seems to me that the Medical Board, which is a statutory body set up under the Medical Practitioners Act and which registers medical practitioners, ought to be given the power to discipline its members for minor misdemeanours, and the same thing should apply in regard to the legal profession. There is a statutory committee of the legal profession charged with the duty of making inquiries. Whereas in the dental profession there is a provision in section 45 of the Dentists Act that the Dental Board may discipline its own members, there is no such provision in regard to the legal or medical professions. The only explanation that occurs to me is that the Acts relating to the regulation of the dental profession are much more recent than those relating to the legal and medical professions, yet these two professions are probably much older than the dental. If a member of the medical or legal profession needs disciplining the statutory committee concerned has to hold an inquiry and reach a finding, but it has no power to do anything except to move the

Supreme Court, with all the attendant publicity, to discipline the man in question. The result is that it is only in the serious cases that any disciplining is done, otherwise it would be a matter of taking a cannon to shoot a mosquito. From time to time venial sins are committed by legal and medical practitioners, just as they are in the dental profession, and the statutory body should be able to deal with them. There is no question of querying the responsibility or impartiality of those boards, because when the court is moved the finding of the board concerned is accepted. All the court is asked to do is to impose a penalty. I think that better disciplining would be maintained if the governing body of these professions were given the same powers as the dental profession for disciplining any recalcitrant member.

Mr. Quirke—Couldn't that work the other way—that cases that obviously need publicity would be suppressed?

Mr. TRAVERS—It certainly could, but it does not work that way now. If anyone attributes *malefides* now the Medical Board or the committee of the Law Sociey does not send the man to the court, but the legislature accepts those bodies as being responsible for making inquiries and setting the professional standard. They decide whether a man has departed from that standard of propriety. There are many cases in which perhaps a small fine, suspension, or reprimand would serve a salutary purpose, but responsible bodies of that kind hesitate to take trivial matters to the court. Firstly, they would be spending much of their own time and money in doing so; secondly, they would be visiting upon the man to be dealt with an unnecessarily severe penalty in having the case broadcast to the world; and thirdly, they would be taking up the time of the Supreme Court in dealing with a matter that could be easily dealt with by the domestic tribunal.

The question of the retiring age of public servants should be reviewed, and in this I think I shall have the support of the Minister sitting in front of me because I have heard him express his views on it. I do not say that any public servant who feels he wants to rest at 65 should be compelled to continue working. At that age many people feel they have well earned a rest, and no doubt they have, but many public servants do not value idleness at 65. They have gained a great deal of experience and are probably more competent to do their job than they were 15 years earlier. Many of them now have to spend the rest of their lives in misery simply because they cannot endure idleness. Some get employment elsewhere, but it is somewhat degrading to see a senior public servant in a menial position. There should be some provision under which men physically fit and willing to continue could be allowed to do so.

I believe the first Public Service Act in this State was passed in 1916. The retiring age stipulated was 70, but in the intervening 40 years the age has been reduced by five years. Secondly, the schedules upon which insurance companies and actuaries assess their risks show that the expectation of life has increased by 10 years. Therefore, over that short period there has appeared a difference of 15 years. It seems to me that from year to year many extremely valuable public servants are compelled to retire, and in this way we are throwing away extremely valuable manpower we can ill afford to waste. Although I realize that provisions may be necessary to enable the junior man to be promoted in due course, I believe that such problems are superable and that the sooner we give these public servants the opportunity to continue while they are fit and anxious to continue, the better it will be for us all. Not only will the community be better off, but also public servants who have not been able to stomach idleness will be able to spend their days in content. There are some who can live and enjoy a respite, but there are others constitutionally incapable of doing so, and I suggest that the Government give this matter early attention.

Mr. TAPPING (Semaphore)—In supporting the motion I join with other members in expressing deep regret at the passing of two Parliamentary colleagues, the Hon. R. J. Rudall and Mr. H. S. Dunks. With many other members I had the pleasure of knowing those members since I was first elected. They were sincerely admired, not only by other members, but by South Australians generally. I knew the late Mr. Dunks the better because of our close associations in this House, and I subscribe to the view expressed by previous speakers on this side that, as Chairman of Committees, he was impartial and courteous. If he could help a new member in any way he always offered his services, which were always accepted with deep appreciation. Parliament is the poorer because of the passing of these two members.

I join with other members in congratulating you, Mr. Acting Speaker, on your appointment as Chairman of Committees. As Opposition Whip, I have found you, as Government Whip, helpful and co-operative and I wish you success in your new office and assure you of

the support of Opposition members. It is also pleasing to note that the Government has recognized the ability of Mr. Geoffrey Clarke, the member for Burnside, by appointing him Government Whip. Mr. Clarke has been most devoted to duties and has a fine record of attendance in this House. I congratulate him on his appointment, and offer him my wholehearted co-operation in the discharge of his arduous duties.

Last Tuesday week I placed on notice a question relating to overseas trips by Government officers, but, judging from his reply, I believe the Premier misjudged my intention, because he referred to the great amount of work and printing involved in the reply. I consider, however, that the return prepared by the departmental officer was too detailed, as I merely asked:—

1. Which officers in the employ of the State Government have been sent abroad to gain experience since 1945?

2. Which departments during that period have not been represented on such trips abroad?

I believe that the Premier felt that, as a result of the reply I received, I would castigate the Government, but I commend the principle of sending officers overseas for experience. I have realized, especially since I have been a member of the Public Works Committee, how desirable it is to send them abroad so that they may learn more. I was merely trying to ascertain which departments had not been represented on overseas trips. Over the years officers from the Engineering and Water Supply Department, the Harbors Board and the Department of Health have brought back from overseas a wealth of knowledge, from which the State has benefited. The interchange of visits between public servants of the various countries must be of advantage to the community generally, and I trust that, if there is any officer who should have been sent but has not gone overseas, the Government will take an early opportunity to send him. With the rapid development of our residential areas more hospitals and schools will be required, and to implement these projects we need the best brains available. If certain officers can acquire special knowledge on overseas trips they should be sent.

Recently it was announced in the press that British shipowners proposed to increase freight rates between Britain and Australia by 10 per cent. This proposal is most unjustified, as will be seen from the following extract, under the heading "Freight Rates," from the *News* of May 26:—

It is becoming increasingly difficult for Australians to see any justification for the increased freight charges which British shipping companies want to charge. The latest shock is the announcement by the P. & O. Company that it is making a bonus distribution of shares worth more than £13½ million (nearly £A17 million). This is a tactless disclosure. Coupled with the news of handsome profits by the other 13 shipping companies which have released balance sheets this year, it can hardly arouse the sympathetic consideration of the Australian public which is expected to foot the bill for increased freight rates.

The proposed increase will cost Australians £15,000,000 a year, which means that the consumer will pay all the way. On the other hand, the shipping companies are making enormous profits; therefore, we in South Australia should express our indignation at any attempt to impose such unjustified rates. The alleged reasons for the increase are many. We have been told that in all Australian ports the turn round is slow, indeed worse than in any other country. Communist leaders of the Waterside Workers' Federation are generally blamed for that, but there are many other reasons, such as the shortage of berths, which causes delay and expense to visiting ships. I have in my possession a report by the Australian Overseas Transport Association, headed "Factors that influence Stevedoring Costs in Australia. It states that the association was formed as the result of a conference called in 1929 by the then Prime Minister, Mr. S. M. Bruce, as the Government of the time had become most concerned by the possibility of a rise in freight rates when Australia was losing her markets overseas. At that conference leading representatives of Australian commerce, representatives of Australian shipowners and some shipowners from London discussed ways and means of conserving shipowners' costs in order to avoid the threatened increase in freight rates. As a result of the conference, the Association, consisting of representatives of exporters, importers, producers and shipowners, was formed. In 1930 a system of contracts between shippers and shipowners was inaugurated by Mr. Scullin, the Prime Minister, and the Australian Industries Preservation Act was amended to permit this procedure. In return for shippers confining their shipments to vessels of the shipowner signatories to the contract, those shipowners undertook to rationalize their services and to provide a regular shipping service to the United Kingdom and the Continent. As a result of this, the threatened increase in freight rates was averted. It behoves the present Federal Government to learn a lesson

from the action taken 25 years ago and to initiate similar action so that companies that are prepared to operate at the lower freight rates may enter into contracts to carry freight at those rates. This would mean the end of the proposed increases. Many reasons have been given for the proposed increase and I dislike having to mention any person in particular. I make it clear that in what I am about to say I cast no personal reflections, but I hold the view that the waterfront position will not improve until Senator George McLeay is out of the position of Minister for Shipping and Transport. As a man he is an ideal gentleman, but he is a misfit in that position; he has no idea of shipping, and I regret that I should have to link his name with that of the Hon. A. G. Cameron, Speaker of the House of Representatives, who is another misfit in politics.

The SPEAKER—I do not think the honourable member should criticize members of another Parliament.

Mr. TAPPING—I am making no reflection on their characters, but simply saying that they are not fitted for their jobs.

The SPEAKER—I think that is criticism of the superior wisdom of the House of Representatives which elected them to those positions.

Mr. TAPPING—If you desire it, Sir, I will retract, but I am referring only to their ability to do their jobs. Some months ago Senator McLeay went overseas and it was rather extraordinary that his arrival in England coincided with the marriage of his daughter in London.

Mr. Jennings—Pure coincidence.

Mr. TAPPING—That cost the taxpayers of Australia £3,500, but his mission was to study waterfront operations at firsthand. Later I read a statement published in the *Mail,* in which he said that he had made close observations of conditions at the London docks and that when he returned to Australia he proposed to bring in a 44-hour week and place waterside workers on a permanent basis, which, of course, was resented in Australia. It is of interest to note that while he was away making those observations his own Government decided not to implement the Act passed by the Commonwealth Parliament a few months earlier giving the shipowners the right to engage and dismiss waterside employees—a right hitherto possessed by the Waterside Workers Federation. This legislation was an attempt to cause turmoil and it did it very well; it was brought about because of the desire of Senator McLeay to cause turmoil, but the moment his back was turned Mr. Holt decided that it should not be implemented, and that was a very wise decision.

The shipowners blame the waterside workers and all and sundry rather than themselves. Page 20 of the report I am quoting refers to that other controversial matter—Port quotas. The Waterside Workers Federation has been urged by shipowners and stevedoring companies to bring its numbers up to the required quotas in the respective ports. According to this report the quota decided upon by the Stevedoring Industry Board for Port Adelaide was 2,000, and at that time 1,943 were engaged—a shortage of only 57 men. That is not very serious when we realize the prevailing shortage of manpower and the inducements offered by other industries. General Motors-Holdens, for instance, offer an incentive bonus to workers and when that is added to the normal wage it becomes reasonably attractive.

That is why the waterside worker today is not very happy in his job; firstly, because of the pin pricking and, secondly, because he does not get the remuneration that some people think he does. It is the responsibility of the Waterside Workers Federation in each port to call for applications to fill the quotas. Applicants are required to pass a medical examination, and they must be under the age of 45. As a consequence, if 100 men are required probably the Federation gets no more than 50, and after three or four weeks perhaps as many will have left the job. It is hazardous work, and in recent years those who undertake it are bound to serve an apprenticeship of five years in the holds of the steamers. Many people think that this occupation offers money on a plate, but when new recruits find that they have to spend four or five years working in ships' holds the work loses its attraction and they leave the industry. I have heard it said in precincts of this House that it must be an excellent job because the men get as much as £40 a week. However, I have the official figures of the earnings of the waterside workers in the main shipping ports throughout Australia from January to June, 1954. The following were the average earnings per week:—Brisbane £17 7s. 7d., Newcastle £17 0s. 2d., Sydney £17 9s. 3d., Hobart £20 15s. 5d., Melbourne £19 1s. 9d., Adelaide £19 15s. 10d., Fremantle £18 14s. 6d. Therefore, notwithstanding the considerable degree of danger attaching to this class of work, it will be seen that the water-

side worker earns approximately only £20 a week.

Mr. Brookman—That is not bad.

Mr. TAPPING—I admit that it is more than the basic wage, but the waterside worker needs to be experienced and must go through an apprenticeship. If he does not do his job properly or is careless he creates a hazard for others.

Mr. Brookman—Is it true that during the war soldiers loaded vessels at a much faster rate?

Mr. TAPPING—I have read such a statement and I think it might be true as a temporary measure. Many people who take on a job temporarily become very enthusiastic about it and put up startling figures. That kind of flash in the pan does not appeal to me and I think that if the men referred to were called upon to work steadily at the job year after year their rate would be no better than that of the others.

The shipping companies complain that they lose an enormous amount because of the slow turn-round of ships in Australian ports. This report refers to the vessels operated by members of the Overseas Shipowners Association. I will not quote all the figures, but will mention only Port Adelaide. For the period January to May vessels lost 8½ days through inability to find berths. I realize that it is a serious matter when a steamer is waiting for a berth, for, on reliable information, I believe it costs a shipping company £800 a day for a cargo vessel, and for a passenger steamer the delay represents a loss of £1,200 a day. It is well known also that steamers have to wait at Port Lincoln sometimes for two or three days before they can get a berth. I cannot condemn the Harbors Board for not providing enough berths because we cannot forget that World War II dislocated our programme of port rehabilitation, but I appeal to the Minister of Marine to do all he can to provide more berths in order that the delays to which the shipping companies refer may be avoided in the future.

Mr. Davis—What is wrong with using some of the outports?

Mr. TAPPING—I have said that at Port Lincoln steamers are often held up for two or three days while waiting for a berth, and that would probably apply at Port Pirie and Wallaroo.

Mr. McAlees—Wallaroo has been waiting for ships for the past nine days.

Mr. TAPPING—From January to May, 1954, according to this report, losses due to shortage of labour amounted to £406,000, on the basis of 508 days at £800 a day. I recognize that there have been labour shortages, but the Waterside Workers Federation has done its utmost to boost up the quotas to the desired strength, only to find that, having done so, the men leave within a few weeks to go to other industries. The only way to overcome the trouble on the waterfront is to bring about better understanding between the employer and the employee and I feel that the right Minister for Shipping would do much to overcome the trouble.

There is another aspect of this matter, and members may have read a letter which appeared in the *News* yesterday under the heading of "Ship Loading Delay", an extract from which states—

> For many reasons it is not always possible for a ship to arrive at its port of loading at exactly the right moment that all the cargo is ready for it. In this particular case, the Cornwall arrived at Port Adelaide early. While it could begin loading the available cargo, it had to wait until wool had been sold at auction and then delivered alongside the ship. Nobody is blaming the watersiders, the shipowners, or anybody else for this.
>
> From time to time ships arrive before schedule and cannot be loaded until the wool sale in progress is completed, which may be three or four days. This means a loss of several thousands of pounds to the shipping company, but it cannot be avoided. I am bringing out these points in order to show that the blaming of the waterside workers is not justified. I will not contend that some of them are not to blame, for in every walk of life we find those who are blameworthy for some reason or other. I am not going to hold up these men as being perfect gentlemen, because they make mistakes, and so do we.

Swimming in South Australia is a matter very dear to me. Some time ago I introduced a deputation to the Minister of Education on behalf of the Swimming Association of South Australia urging that the Government should include swimming on the school curriculum. The argument is very strong that if a child is taught to swim it becomes a potential lifesaver. Over the last 10 or 12 years an average of 52 people a year have been drowned in South Australia. If we teach school children to swim, I maintain that the average drownings would be reduced to 24 or 25 a year. It is unfortunate that the Minister or his department did not agree to the association's suggestion. No doubt one of the reasons for the rejection was that we have not enough swimming pools. It would be practicable to

teach swimming in the metropolitan area because we have a couple of swimming pools. Scholars from the Port Adelaide and Semaphore districts could be conveyed to the City Baths for their lessons.

In the country we have swimming pools at Mount Barker, Jamestown and other towns. I assure the House that the Swimming Association is going to press this matter, because it feels that the pattern of the other States should be followed. Swimming is a part of their school curriculum. The future of the swimming clubs in the Port Adelaide and Semaphore districts is in jeopardy because the Harbors Board proposes to reclaim portion of the Port Canal, and consequently these two clubs will go out of existence. It will mean that the tuition they have imparted over the years will cease, and if that occurs no doubt the number of drowning fatalities will be increased. My own daughter was taught swimming at a club in my district in four lessons, and I think that any child could be taught to swim in five or six lessons. Because the preservation of life is involved, I shall continue to advocate by deputation and by my voice in this House that swimming be part of the school curriculum. The Federal Government spends thousands of pounds a year on national fitness campaigns, which are also supported financially by the State Government. If we fall down in our tuition on swimming, money spent on national fitness will be almost wasted. Therefore, I look forward to the day when the Minister of Education will convince the Director of Education and those who have the say in this department that my suggestion is worthy of consideration. Let us introduce swimming into the school curriculum wherever practicable. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Motion for adoption of Address in Reply carried.

BULK HANDLING OF GRAIN BILL.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTAN (Minister of Agriculture) moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act relating to the bulk handling of wheat and other grain by South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited, and other matters incidental thereto.

Motion carried.

Resolution agreed to in Committee and adopted by the House. Bill introduced and read a first time.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN (Minister of Agriculture)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

I thank members for accommodating me in this matter. The Government desires the second reading moved today in the hope that the debate will be continued tomorrow. This is an urgent matter and steps must be taken soon if we are to have any sort of bulk handling programme this year. I do not intend to go extensively into the history of bulk handling, but it is desirable to refer to one or two phases, and to remind members of what has happened. Ever since my association with this House I have been a strong advocate of bulk handling, and have been connected with many investigations and attempts to bring it in, and I find myself in a somewhat peculiar position in finally having the responsibility of introducing legislation for its inauguration in South Australia. In 1935 there was a wheat committee associated with our Parliamentary Party that undertook investigations at its own expense throughout Australia. Following on that, a Bill was prepared and the Premier of the day, the Hon. R. L. (now Sir Richard) Butler, was agreeable to a charter being given to one of the co-operative wheat merchants in this State. However, after examining the prospects the company decided not to proceed with the charter. The principal reason was the great cost associated with bulk handling in this State, where there are so many main exporting ports. It is relatively simple to have bulk handling where the wheat can be concentrated at one or two ports. Then the volume of wheat takes care of the great financial outlay involved in providing the necessary loading equipment. That has been the stumbling block in South Australia in connection with all the attempts made to install bulk handling. There is great cost in equipping five principal shipping ports with the necessary loading facilities and the other ancillary equipment.

Legislation dealing with bulk handling has been before Parliament previously, but on every occasion the move has broken down because of the cost of the installation. New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia are fortunate in one respect at least: they can concentrate their wheat shipments on one port, or at the most two. When there is a volume of from 11,000,000 to 30,000,000 bushels of wheat going through a port the most elaborate and efficient equipment so far developed can be used, because the interest and maintenance costs are spread over the large volume, and

that makes the cost infinitesimal when compared with putting, say, 3 million bushels over the same type of equipment. Because of the extraordinary difficulties that have always existed in South Australia, the Public Works Committeee has taken a considerable period in examining the problem, and it has come in for much criticism from time to time, most of it not deserved. There has been this wide-spread criticism, frequently fomented by people who knew better, but the efforts of the committee have been prolonged because they have been centred on the hitherto insoluble problem of bringing about an efficient and economic bulk handling system in this State.

Mr. O'Halloran—Has the commitee solved it yet?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I think so.

Mr. O'Halloran—We have not heard about it.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The honourable member will do so. The committee has spent much time on the problem and in respect of one or two ports it has the answer. The answer would have been easier some years ago, when we had a considerable volume of wheat going through Port Adelaide, but even then attempts to establish bulk handling failed. It was as high as 10 million to 12 million bushels at one time, but today it is only 2,500,000 bushels. The task of equipping that major port now is much different from what it was when that relatively large volume of wheat passed through. Today the largest volume of wheat going through any of our ports does not exceed 4 million bushels. That happens at Wallaroo. Port Lincoln has 3,600,000 bushels, Port Adelaide and Port Pirie are on a par with 2,500,000, and Thevenard has 1,000,000. We have, of course, the port that the Wheat Board has acquired, Ardrossan, which was intended to handle about 1,250,000 bushels annually, but because much wheat from other zones has been diverted to it, it has handled as much as 4,000,000 bushels in one season. The efforts of the Public Works Committee have, I think, resulted in a solution. At least we hope it will be a reasonably satisfactory solution of the problem of handling the small volume of wheat going through our small shipping ports. The situation has been assisted because today we are growing very much more barley than in the past, and that is now being shipped overseas in bulk, involving bulk loading of vessels. This means that instead of having only 4,000,000 bushels of wheat to handle at Wallaroo, we shall have, according to the figures I have received from the Harbors Board, about 2,500,000 bushels of barley as well. At Port Lincoln the position is somewhat similar. That gives us a largely increased volume to justify the expenditure that is envisaged on these ports.

The scheme that this Bill seeks to establish is virtually in two parts. There is first of all the part that will be undertaken by the Government, namely the equipment of our overseas shipping ports with the necessary loading equipment and facilities. That will remain the responsibility of the Government alone, because the Government, through the Harbors Board, is responsible for all port installations. It owns, controls and runs those establishments. The picture in the other States is completely different. In Victoria and Western Australia there are independent harbour authorities at each port. Honourable members can well appreciate the confusion that could arise if, in South Australian ports, two authorities operated the shipping facilities. It is for that reason that we have adopted the principle of the Government undertaking that responsibility, and the company being responsible for country installations and terminal shipping bins. The shipping installations will not be the only governmental responsibility, however. As is no doubt known, the Government is guaranteeing the company to the extent of £500,000 in its own venture. The Bill contains a number of provisions that are safeguards, not only for the Government and therefore the taxpayers, but for the wheat industry itself. It would be simple, as has been advocated by many people, to embark on a great expenditure on this undertaking, but we have to remember—and it is peculiarly the Government's responsibility to remember—that we shall not always enjoy the present honeymoon prices for primary commodities. Someone has to consider the economics of any scheme having regard to the possibility that in the future there may be appreciable price declines. It is for that reason that the Government retains certain responsibilities and rights in the establishment of the undertaking.

From my perusal of legislation in other States I know that the exercise of control and even direction there is very much greater than that proposed in this measure. The Government believes in giving the wheatgrowers the responsibility of establishing the scheme in their particular section and also in giving them reasonably wide authority and discretion about how they do it. In Western Australia, where there is a similar co-operative bulk handling scheme, the Minister of Agriculture has to be satisfied as to the adequacy and the type of

installation at every country receiving place. Every individual item has to be scrutinized. We do not propose that here; so long as we are satisfied with the type of installation proposed, the wheatgrowers can go ahead and install the bins at the points where they are required to install them. There is, of course, the stipulation regarding the places at which the installations shall be provided.

I pay a tribute to the work of the Wheat and Woolgrowers' Association and their representative in this Chamber for the vast amount of organizational work done and for obtaining the support of wheatgrowers for this measure. I well remember that when in 1939 I introduced as a private measure a wheat handling and storage Bill that was adopted by this Chamber almost unanimously, the wheatgrowers themselves organized opposition to it. That was an extraordinary thing, but at the instigation of the grain agents thousands of farmers signed petitions against a measure designed entirely for their own protection and advantage.

Mr. Stott—They were badly misled then.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—But it showed what can happen. That measure was defeated in the Legislative Council largely because of the organized opposition of the wheatgrowers themselves. However, I am very pleased to know that the wheatgrowers have been organized sufficiently well on this occasion to support the measure and to meet the requirements of the Government that at least 12,000,000 bushels must be consigned by wheatgrowers in support of this project. That has been achieved. I have the necessary certificates that that quantity of wheat will be handled, and this quantity will bring in not less than £150,000 a year towards this undertaking. Negotiations between the company and the Government have been proceeding for some considerable time. They reached their climax last January when the conditions laid down by the Government were absolutely and unconditionally accepted by the company. Those conditions generally are embodied in the Bill, and I shall deal with them when I come to the individual clauses. The Bill as drawn will meet the position admirably. We have before us numerous examples of similar legislation. I have already alluded to some of the restrictive clauses in the legislation in other States. Sir Edgar Bean has, I think, fashioned a very good Bill. He has incorporated the Government's requirements and he has taken account of the desires of the bulk handling company, and I believe he has satisfied both parties to the agreement. I think we are now unanimous on the provisions incorporated in the Bill. I shall now explain the various clauses of this measure.

Bulk handling of wheat is an old problem. A Bill on this subject was introduced into Parliament as long ago as 1922 and another Bill was prepared in 1937 but not proceeded with. The question has also had a good deal of consideration from the Public Works Committee. It considered a scheme for Wallaroo in the years 1931-1934, and since 1947 has investigated a project for bulk handling at several ports. However, the origin of this Bill is to be found in negotiations between the Government and the Wheat and Woolgrowers' Association which commenced in October, 1953. The proposal of the association was that a company be formed on co-operative lines, and should be granted sole rights over the bulk handling of wheat and should also be empowered by statute to collect tolls from growers. The tolls were to be applied towards financing the construction and operation of bulk handling facilities. This proposal was referred to the Public Works Committee which, after inquiry, found that the tolls were unconstitutional as being an excise tax which the the State had no power to impose. Subsequently, the Wheat and Woolgrowers' Association propounded another scheme which provided for voluntary contributions towards the cost of bulk handling facilities by those wheat growers who should become members of the company. This scheme was not open to objection on constitutional grounds.

The Government, of course, is aware of the advantages of bulk handling and in the negotiations with the Wheat and Woolgrowers' Association its object has been to ensure that any scheme which might be submitted to Parliament should be a sound one, and not likely to fail through lack of finance or lack of support by growers. The Government was also concerned to see that the scheme was sound in law and that the interests of growers were fully protected. For these reasons when specific proposals were submitted to the Government by the Association the Government made a number of stipulations as to the management, finance and work of the proposed company for the objects I have mentioned. The basic requirement was that before any Bill was submitted to Parliament the Government should be assured that the scheme would have the support of a substantial proportion of the wheatgrowers. The Government accordingly

stipulated that before the legislation was introduced, wheatgrowers whose deliveries of wheat amounted to 12 million bushels a year should sign contracts with the company agreeing to make payments to the company of not less than threepence a bushel for 12 years for the purpose of raising capital. This stipulation has been complied with. Audited figures show that up to May 9 last applicants whose output of wheat was 12,379,992 bushels had become members of the bulk handling company and since that date more applications have been made, bringing the total up to about 13 million bushels. I have with me the necessary certificate from the Auditor of the company and a certificate from the Auditor-General, who made a check audit of the figures, and he is satisfied that this stipulation has been met.

Another important problem in connection with bulk handling is to ensure that the bulk handling facilities are erected so as to conform with the Harbors Board's programme of works. For this reason the Government felt obliged to stipulate that the installations at the terminal ports should be erected in accordance with plans and specifications approved by the Public Works Committee or by the Minister of Agriculture. One of the proposals of the company was that the Government should assist the company to raise finance by guaranteeing one half of the loan which the company desired to raise from the Commonwealth Trading Bank. The company has made arrangements for finance to the amount of £1,000,000 and the Government has undertaken to give a guarantee for amounts up to £500,000. So long as a Government guarantee remains in force the Government considers that, in the public interest, it should be represented on the Board of Directors of the company. The Government therefore laid down the condition that in the initial stages two of the nine directors of the company must be Government appointees, and the elected directors will be reduced from nine to seven. If the Government directors should disagree with any proposals of the company likely to affect the Government's obligations under its guarantee or affecting the priorities of the construction of bulk handling facilities at the terminal port, they may require the question at issue to be referred to the Minister of Agriculture for final decision. I do not expect any difficulty on priorities, but it is desirable for the final decision to rest with someone in authority because the Government might have embarked on providing port installations in one particular area and it is desirable that the erection of the company's installations should coincide with the Government's programme of work; otherwise, one party may be going ahead in one district and the other in another.

Another matter which gave the Government some concern was the obligation of the company to handle all wheat offered to it at its facilities whether by members or non-members. The company seeks exclusive rights over bulk handling of wheat and the Government considers that as a corollary of these exclusive rights the company should have the duty of meeting all requirements of the public at places where its bulk handling plant is installed, and also of doing the work for reasonable charges. With this in view the Government stipulated that the company should undertake to handle all wheat offered to it at its bulk handling plant, and that bulk handling charges made to non-members should be approved by the Auditor-General. Some other minor stipulations of the Government were that the initial rate of directors' remuneration should be approved by the Minister and thereafter should only be altered by a general meeting of the company, and that the provisional directors should retire as soon as the Act was passed and that thereafter an election of directors should be held without delay.

I turn now to the consideration of the clauses of the Bill. Clause 3 sets out the ports which are to be regarded as terminal ports. These are:—Ardrossan, Port Adelaide, Port Pirie, Port Lincoln, Thevenard, Wallaroo and any other port which may be subsequently proclaimed as a terminal port. The importance of the definition of terminal ports lies in the fact that the company is obliged, in due course, to erect adequate bulk handling facilities at each of them. Clauses 4 to 11 contain a number of provisions relating to finance, directors and management. By clause 4 the Treasurer is empowered to guarantee a loan not exceeding £500,000 made by the Commonwealth Trading Bank to the company on the security of a mortgage or charge over the assets of the company. The clause contains an appropriation of any revenue necessary for any payments which the Government may have to make under the guarantee.

Clause 5 makes a number of amendments of the articles of association of the company for the purpose of carrying into effect the conditions laid down by the Government regarding the appointment of directors. The clause provides for the reduction of the elected directors from nine to seven while the Government guarantee

remains in force, and for the appointment of two directors by the Government. The seven elected directors will comprise three elected from the whole State, and four elected from zones into which the State will be divided for the purpose of elections. The first election of directors must take place as early as possible after the commencement of the Bill. The term of office of elected directors is, as a general rule, six years, but there will be an election every three years because the first zone directors are required to retire at the end of three years. The term of office of the directors appointed by the Government will be fixed by the Governor.

Clause 6 provides that the initial rate of remuneration of directors must be approved by the Minister and is not to be altered except at a general meeting. Clause 7 sets out the powers of the directors appointed by the Governor to require that proposals of the company affecting the Government guarantee or the order of priority of the works, shall be referred to the Minister of Agriculture for decision. Clause 8 enables the company to hold its statutory meeting under the Companies Act at any time not later than six months after this Bill is passed. Under the Companies Act this meeting should be held within three months after incorporation but owing to the negotiations with the Government it has not yet been held and the company has asked for an extension of time.

Clauses 9 and 10 contain provisions to ensure that the directors and servants of the company will be impartial persons not interested in trading in wheat (except as wheatgrowers) and will not give preferential treatment to any particular customer of the company and will not assist the business of any particular wheat buyer. Clause 11 enables the company to apply any money arising from any excess outturn of wheat, to a reserve fund to meet shortages in outturn. If, however, the reserve fund should exceed £20,000 at any time the surplus can be used for the general purposes of the company.

Clause 12 may be regarded as the basic principle of the Bill. It confers on the company the sole right to receive, store and handle wheat in bulk throughout the State, and the sole right to contract or arrange for the transport and delivery of wheat in bulk within the State. There are, however, a number of exceptions to the sole right of the company. The clause will not affect the right of the Wheat Board to handle wheat in bulk in its own bulk handling facilities. Nor does it prohibit persons who use wheat or flour in milling or manufacture from establishing bulk handling facilities on their own premises for wheat to be used in such milling or manufacture. Further, the clause does not affect the right of the Railways Commissioner to receive, handle, store and carry wheat in the ordinary course of the business of the railways.

Clause 13 sets out some of the general powers of the company to purchase, lease or hire bulk handling facilities or sites for such facilities, or any rights to use land, jetties, piers, wharves, sheds, railway sidings or platforms. Clause 13 also provides that the amount of the rent or other payment payable to the Harbors Board or the Railways Commissioner under or for any lease, licence or right granted by the Board or the Commissioner to the company shall be approved by the Governor. The object of this provision is to ensure that all charges made to the company are reasonable and consistent with each other.

Clause 14 imposes on the company the duty to erect adequate bulk handling facilities at terminal ports, and at a sufficient number of railway stations, railway sidings and depots to receive the wheat which is to be taken to the ports. The clause also contains provisions to carry into effect the Government's stipulation that plans and specifications of the terminal bins must be approved by the Public Works Committee or by the Minister of Agriculture, and that the design and materials of country bins must be approved by the Minister. Clause 15 lays it down that the order of priority of the works will be determined by the company, subject only to the rights of the Government directors to have questions affecting priorities referred to the Minister. In determining priorities the company is obliged to take into account the urgency of the needs of the growers and shippers of wheat, the amount of wheat produced in the various parts of the State, the quantity of wheat which may be expected to be handled at each port, and the amount of finance, materials and labour available.

Clause 15 contains another provision stipulated by the Government to the effect that the company must call for tenders for all works except those costing under £5,000, and except works at Wallaroo for which contracts are let before the end of this year. The reason for exempting works at Wallaroo is to enable the company to proceed quickly with these works as soon as the Bill is passed. By clauses 16 and 17 the company is obliged to keep its bulk handling facilities in good order and condition and to take precaution to protect all wheat

handled by the company from loss and damage. That was one of the provisions that the company had inserted in the measure. The company is also obliged to obey any directions of the Minister which may be given with respect to the improvement or extension of the bulk handling facilities.

Clause 19 provides that the company may be appointed as a licensed receiver of wheat on behalf of the Wheat Board under the Wheat Industry Stabilisation Act. So long as the Wheat Board remains in existence the company will be limited to handling wheat owned by the board and the terms and conditions of handling will be arranged under the Wheat Industry Stabilisation Act. In preparing the Bill, however, it has been necessary to provide for the contingency that at some future time the Wheat Board may cease to exist. If this should happen the Company will be handling wheat belonging to growers and merchants.

The provisions relating to the handling of such wheat are based on the principle that the company will issue a warrant to every person who delivers wheat to the bulk handling plant, and that the warrant will be a transferable document conferring on the holder the right to obtain wheat from the company's bulk stocks. It is contemplated that the rights of warrant holders will be, to some extent, dealt with by regulations but there are also some provisions on this subject in the Bill. Clause 20, for example, provides that the terms and conditions on which bulk wheat is received, stored, handled and delivered to warrant holders is to be in accordance with the Act and the regulations and it will not be open to the company to make special bargains with anyone.

By clause 21 it is laid down that the prescribed charges and dockages for wheat delivered by growers and merchants are to be exhibited on a poster or placard set up on or near each bulk handling establishment. Clause 22 enacts that the company is obliged to receive all wheat in bulk offered to it for handling unless the wheat is below the lowest permissible grade and differs from that grade to a greater extent than the regulations allow. If there is any dispute about the quality of any wheat it must be decided by a referee.

Clause 23 provides for the assessment of dockages as against growers and merchants, and for the settlement of disputes as to the amounts of dockages. Clause 24 provides that if the company receives any wheat for bulk handling otherwise than as a licensed receiver of the Wheat Board it must issue a warrant in the appropriate form containing the prescribed particulars and clause 25 provides for the transferability of warrants. Clause 26 sets out the legal position of the company as regards all wheat received by it and provides that the company will not become the owner of the wheat, but merely a custodian of it for reward. If the mixed mass of wheat in the company's bulk handling system is owned by more than one person, all the owners will be, in law, owners in common of the whole mass. Wheat held by the company is declared not to be liable to be held or taken, or sold for the enforcement or discharge of any of the company's debts. That makes it clear that no such situation as developed in the Verco Brothers' case in 1932 can arise,

Clause 27 provides that if a person delivers wheat to the company to which he has no title and the company incurs any liability for wrongfully receiving or handling the wheat the person delivering the wheat must indemnify the company. Clause 28 requires the company to insure all the wheat in its bulk handling system in its full value against destruction, loss or damage by fire, storm, tempest, flood, explosion and any other prescribed risks. Clause 29 deals with handling charges and provides that these are to be fixed by the company by notice in the Gazette. Different charges may be fixed in respect of wheat delivered respectively by members and non-members of the company; but the charges payable by non-members must be approved by the Auditor-General before they are gazetted. In determining whether to approve any proposed charges the Auditor-General must make allowance for all the expense of the company and a fair margin of profit, but must also take into account any allowances made to the company by the Wheat Board.

Clauses 30 to 32 set out the obligations of the company to deliver wheat. So long as the Wheat Board remains in existence, the conditions of delivery are to be as agreed between the company and the board. If, however, the Wheat Board goes out of existence, the conditions of delivery to warrant holders will be as prescribed by the Act and regulations. Clause 31 lays it down that a warrant holder is entitled to receive from the company the quantity of wheat mentioned in the warrant and it must be of a grade substantially equal to the grade specified in the warrant. It is, however, realized that in a bulk handling system some variations in grades are inevitable and for this reason the Bill provides that wheat will be deemed to be substantially equal

to any other wheat if it does not differ from that wheat to a greater extent than is permitted by the regulations. Clause 33 empowers the company to handle bagged wheat and also bulk grain other than wheat, but does not give the company any exclusive rights in respect of these commodities.

Clause 34 provides for the regulations which will have to be made respecting the business of the company. It is not contemplated that many regulations will be required to regulate transactions between the company and the Wheat Board; but, as I mentioned earlier, if the Wheat Board should go out of existence it will be necessary to have a code of regulations regulating the practice and procedure of the company, and the settlement of disputes between the company and those whose wheat is being handled by the company. Clause 35 provides for the summary disposal of proceedings for offences against the Act, and lays it down that when the general penalty for an offence for which no other penalty is prescribed it is to be a fine not exceeding £100.

What I have said will give a general idea of the details of the Bill. I realize, however, that many problems will arise in working a bulk handling system and that some honourable members may desire a fuller explanation as to how it is intended that some of them should be dealt with. I will be pleased to supply any further information on request.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.56 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, June 9, at 2 p.m.