

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.**

Tuesday, June 14, 1955.

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

**APPROPRIATION BILL No. 1.**

His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor recommended to the House the appropriation of such amounts of the general revenue as were required for the purposes mentioned in the Appropriation Bill (No. 1).

**QUESTIONS.****ROAD HAULIERS CASE.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has Cabinet yet considered the implications arising out of the High Court's decision of last week in the road hauliers case, and has it been able to devise any means by which interstate hauliers will have to make a reasonable contribution towards the construction and maintenance of South Australian roads consistent with contributions made by owners of vehicles in this State?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Cabinet has given some consideration to this matter, but as the judgment was only available at the end of last week and it involves one of the most difficult and complex questions with which we have to deal we have not yet made any firm decision. It seems that whereas the South Australian case was held to be clearly invalid for a number of reasons that could not be remedied by an alteration of our Act, and the Queensland and New South Wales cases were also held to be clearly invalid, there seems to be some difference of opinion in regard to the Victorian legislation. I speak subject to correction by persons who may have more constitutional knowledge than I have, but the Victorian case seems to have been set aside on a technicality rather than on constitutional grounds, and, if that is so, the position in Victoria could be remedied. I understand that that State's legislation was held to be invalid because it gave an authority power to fix a fee, and did not itself fix the fee. That rather points to the fact that if a fee is fixed upon some equitable basis there may be a chance of it being held to be within the States' powers, but until a thorough examination of the matter has been made it would be premature for me to outline any steps that the Government proposed to take. The matter is being examined and the best advice possible will be sought.

Mr. STEPHENS—Will the High Court's decision have any effect on the powers of the

Highways Department or councils to prohibit heavy loads from being transported over certain roads?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not think the decision invalidates any State laws dealing with speed limits, weights of vehicles, or load limits, provided that they are not designed to prevent interstate trade, that is, provided they are general laws which apply to citizens generally. However, I point out that if we pass a law which imposes, for instance, speed restrictions on interstate vehicles only, notwithstanding that those restrictions were imposed to maintain the standards of our roads, it would probably be held to be unconstitutional. As far as I know none of our laws which are general in application has been attacked or can be attacked.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Last Thursday the Leader of the Opposition, with what one can only assume to have been a wonderful prescience, asked the Premier a question regarding the High Court's judgment in the road hauliers' case, and the Premier, in a lengthy and somewhat emotional reply said that the State had been placed in an anomalous position and that South Australians would be called on to maintain roads for people who were not residents here to use free of charge. Is it not also true that other States must also provide, free of charge, roads for South Australian motor vehicles, and that therefore the whole question levels out? Further, instead of kicking against the pricks, would it not be better to take up this question at the forthcoming Premiers' Conference to see that enough money is made available direct from the Commonwealth Government so that State Governments can carry out their duties in providing roads? This could be done either directly from Commonwealth general revenue or under the defence powers of the Commonwealth. Speaking from memory, Sir Philip McBride, the Federal Minister for Defence, said he had hundreds of millions of pounds he could not spend on defence because of the shortage of skilled manpower for factories. It is common knowledge that mobility of transport is vital to defence—

The SPEAKER—I hardly think the honourable member's observations on defence policy can be considered as an explanation of his question.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—With due deference to you, Mr. Speaker, I think it is most important because, if the Commonwealth Government cannot spend the money available for defence, and the States can—on roads—

then I am justified in placing before the Premier my views and those of the people I represent.

The SPEAKER—That question would be so wide that it would require a Notice of Motion and not merely an explanation of the question.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The socialistic policy of inflicting charges on road hauliers means that the consumer must pay more for the goods he buys. Will the Premier ignore the socialistic line of attack and take the democratic point of view that we should develop our roads as a national undertaking, and that the Commonwealth Government should make finance available to the States for this purpose?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member clearly does not understand what is involved in the recent case. It is a sound principle of taxation that everybody should contribute a fair share towards the maintenance of the particular service required. It is not a question of whether certain people will evade South Australian road taxation, but rather whether they will evade taxation for all road purposes and whether a person resident in, say, South Australia and conducting interstate trade with Victoria will not be required to register in either South Australia or Victoria. The High Court judgment means, in fact, precisely what I informed the Leader of the Opposition: that some people would be called on to pay additional sums for the upkeep of roads to enable other persons who would be using them to an even greater extent to evade that responsibility. The second part of the honourable member's question was obviously political, because he knows quite well that the States have made frequent requests to the Commonwealth for additional money for roads, and that the States have no power over Commonwealth Budgets.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I am still trying to find out where the Premier stands in connection with the road hauliers' case, which I regard as of prime importance to the State. Is he of the opinion that moneys received from the petrol excise by the Commonwealth Government are intended to be spent on developing roads in the Commonwealth? This State has agreed that moneys received from the registration and licence fees are to be spent, with a small deduction for administration, on developing State roads. Is it not a fact that large sums are diverted by the Commonwealth from road-making expenditure to general revenue, and that any extra charges levied on road hauliers will eventually have to be paid by the

consumers who are, in the main, working people?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not think this is the occasion to debate this matter, but with regard to the honourable member's last question, I did not hear that there was to be a new schedule of charges to the consumer this week as a result of the constitutional opinion given last week. The charges seem to be precisely the same this week as last week, notwithstanding that there has been a much lower charge made to the people using the roads. My general view is that all sections of the community should help to pay for the benefits they enjoy; I do not see any reason why one section should be obliged to pay taxes to maintain the roads for the benefit of another. I do not think section 92 of the Constitution was ever meant to be construed so that people could evade their just charges. I believe it was meant to provide that Governments would not impose border restrictions upon trade, or customs. I think people have tried to stretch the interpretation of the Act to mean many things that were never contemplated in the first place, but so that the honourable member may clearly know my views I say that if anyone proposed to amend section 92 I would most vigorously oppose the step. I believe the whole Constitution demands that section 92 be maintained for its proper purpose. That is very important from this State's point of view because we enjoy many privileges by selling our commodities on interstate markets. However, I believe that road hauliers should pay a fair share of the cost of maintaining our roads.

#### ABATTOIRS BOARD'S CONTRACTS.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—Will the Minister of Agriculture inquire whether the Metropolitan Abattoirs board is about to sign a contract for the sale of casings without having called for tenders? If it is, will the Minister seek the reasons and if they do not appear satisfactory to him will he suggest to the board that tenders be called before a new contract or an extension of an old contract is made?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The Metropolitan Abattoirs Board is not subject to any Ministerial direction, nor will I seek to interfere in any way with its admirable administration, but I will endeavour to get the information the honourable member seeks.

#### ENCROACHMENT ON PARKLANDS.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Over the years whenever sporting bodies and others have attempted to

encroach on the parklands there has been an outcry, mainly from the Parklands Preservation League and the public generally; but in recent years since the erection of the new Adelaide Boys' High School there has been a general encroachment on the western parklands near the school. That encroachment still persists and sporting bodies and the neighbouring council are concerned as to where it will end. Can the Minister of Education indicate his department's future plans in respect of further resumption of that part of the west parklands adjacent to the school?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I understand that a few years ago an agreement was entered into between the Adelaide City Council and the Education Department for the use for recreation of portion of the west parklands, but I know of no further plans. I shall, however, have inquiries made and report to the honourable member as soon as possible.

#### PASPALUM VAGINATUM.

Mr. PEARSON—This morning's *Advertiser* contains an interesting article by Sir Henry Newland on the plant *Paspalum Vaginatum*. The article indicates that the plant can be of great value for use in areas of our State that are denuded by salt damp. From my reading of the article it appears that it can only be propagated by the transplanting of roots—a very slow and costly method. Has the Minister of Agriculture or his department any detailed knowledge of the habits of this plant and its capabilities for the purpose outlined and, if so, will he make the information available to the House? Further, will he arrange to have a comprehensive survey on the possibilities of the plants printed in that excellent publication, *The Journal of Agriculture*?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I am not personally acquainted with this grass, but no doubt officers of my department have a good knowledge of it and may know already to what use it can be put. I will try to get full information and have it published as the honourable member suggests, for I am personally interested in the use of such a grass on areas that I know are affected by salt, and would like to see the utmost use made of it if it is found to be a useful fodder grass.

#### GLADSTONE TO ADELAIDE TRAIN.

Mr. HEASLIP—Last week I asked a question concerning the Gladstone-Adelaide rail service and the Minister promised to obtain a reply. At the week-end patron of that service

advised me that the train leaves Adelaide at about 4 p.m. and travels to Wasleys where it remains for half an hour before connecting with another train. It was suggested that if the train left Adelaide a half hour later it would enable passengers to spend that extra time in the city. I was also told that on numerous occasions that train has travelled at night without electric lighting in the carriages and the guard has been forced to use a hurricane lamp to find his way through carriages when examining tickets. Has the Minister received a report concerning improvements to that service?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have not received a reply to the previous question but I assume that both questions will now be answered together. As soon as I receive a report I will bring it before the House.

#### PUBLIC WORKS STANDING COMMITTEE ACT.

Mr. TAPPING—Can the Premier say whether it is the Government's intention to amend the Public Works Standing Committee Act to increase the amount of reference beyond £30,000?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Amendments to this Act are being drawn up by the Parliamentary Draftsman at the present time. They will be submitted to Cabinet for consideration. I assume that a Bill will be introduced this session.

#### CONSOLIDATION OF STATUTES.

Mr. WHITE—Last Wednesday I suggested that the Local Government Act be brought up-to-date, and consolidated, together with other Acts. The Minister promised to take this matter up with the Attorney-General. Has he any reply?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I referred the matter to the Attorney-General who has supplied the following report from the Parliamentary Draftsman:—

The Government Printer has informed me that stocks of the Local Government Act are beginning to run low and that in the ordinary course of business it will be necessary to reprint the Act before long. I have, accordingly, arranged for him to send up copies in order that the material for a reprint of the Act, with all amendments incorporated, may be prepared immediately.

That report is independent of the larger question of consolidation of the Statutes generally which was raised recently by the member for Torrens.

## SUPREME COURT ACCOMMODATION.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Last week I asked a question concerning accommodation at the Supreme Court. Has the Minister of Works anything further to report?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have been supplied with information from the Architect-in-Chief, which does not substantiate the honourable member's comment, which was:—

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.

The facts are that there are six conveniences and an 18ft. urinal block situated in the yard between the Supreme Court and the Local Court. One convenience is for female witnesses and general public. One is used for the male staff of the Supreme Court, two for the Local Court, one for occasional use by workmen and one was recently used by the Bankruptcy Court. The female staff of the Supreme Court are provided with two up to date lavatories on the ground floor adjacent to a room fitted up as a rest and toilet room in which are two hand basins. In addition, on ground floor level, there are conveniences located in the new No. 3 Local Court for both female and male witnesses or general public attending. These conveniences are also used by the Local Court for female staff, and, on occasions, male staff. One of the conveniences in the central block which is only occasionally used by workmen can be and will be opened for the use of male witnesses and the general public. Plans have been approved for a new library block which, when complete, will allow for the provision of, in the present Supreme Court building, additional rooms for witnesses, counsels, and conferences, and improvements will also be made to the conveniences for judges, staff, juries and witnesses. Though additional conveniences are desirable it is an over-statement to say there are none for the staff or witnesses. They are there and we hope to improve them.

## STRATHALBYN COURTHOUSE.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked last week concerning the supply of a magistrate's dais and furniture for the courthouse at Strathalbyn?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The position is that linoleum has been laid, a partition has been erected and will be painted when a local contractor has completed repairs to walls, and the magistrate's dais and furniture are being manufactured at Keswick workshops and will be delivered in approximately three weeks.

## GAWLER TRUST HOMES.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked last week concerning the provision of rainwater tanks in Gawler Housing Trust homes?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The chairman of the trust reports as follows:—

For a number of years supplies of galvanized iron for rainwater tanks were extremely scarce and the South Australian Housing Trust was obliged to omit rainwater tanks from rental houses in areas where there was a reticulated water supply. This was the position at Gawler. The supply of tank iron has somewhat improved and it is now possible to supply some tanks although it is not possible to make good all the arrears of tanks at once. It is more economical to install a tank at the time a house is being built and consequently tanks are now being installed in new rental houses as they are built. The trust is also endeavouring to make good the deficiency of tanks in houses already built and is attempting to make arrangements for this to be done at Gawler in the same way as it is being done elsewhere.

## NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINEES' ILLNESSES.

Mr. FLETCHER—On June 2 I drew the attention of the Premier to National Service trainees contracting illnesses whilst at Woodside. During a recent visit to Mount Gambier I was informed of another case. The parents told me that now the lad is of practically no use to them and that they have to support him. In his reply the Premier said that obviously it was a Commonwealth matter but if possible he would obtain a report from the State Health authorities to see if active steps could be taken from the public health point of view. Has he obtained the report?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Minister of Health has forwarded to me the following report by the Director-General of Public Health:—

On June 2, 1952, this office received notification from the Repatriation General Hospital, Springbank of a case of typhoid fever. Further tests at the hospital, however, failed to substantiate the tentative diagnosis. The illness was apparently one of gastro-enteritis, but the precise underlying cause could not be determined. Extensive laboratory investigations were done. A surgical operation was also performed. The illness was a prolonged one. Altogether four similar cases were observed. I have no information on the ultimate result of the illnesses in the four young men. Such gastro-intestinal infections occur from time to time in most communities. Sometimes, the causative organism can be readily determined by laboratory tests; in other cases extensive tests may fail to detect the cause. Great advances have been made in the study of such infections and it is certain that a very wide

range of germs can cause gastro-enteritis. Fortunately only few cases give serious or prolonged trouble. Protection of food from contamination is the main preventative measure against gastro-intestinal infections. The State Department of Public Health continues to do everything practicable to ensure adequate care, and most local boards of health are alert to the danger of carelessness in food handling. It is generally understood that the standard of food care in military establishments is exceptionally good and that food poisoning is now rare.

#### RISDON PARK SCHOOL.

Mr. DAVIS—on Friday last I visited the Risdon Park school and found the lavatories and the pit system in bad condition, and that the yard in wet weather gets very wet. I was informed that the children had to take their shoes off when they went into school in order to dry them. I understand tenders have been called for improving the yard and putting in septic tanks. Has the Minister of Education any information on the matter?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—No more than the honourable member has already supplied in his question.

#### PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE.

Mr. STOTT—My question relates to the matter of Parliamentary privilege and arises from the case heard in the Commonwealth Parliament last week. Can you, Mr. Speaker, indicate whether our Standing Orders meet present-day requirements and what would be the position if a similar case occurred in South Australia? Is it your opinion that legislation should be introduced to bring our Orders up to present-day standards and do you intend to approach the Government with that end in view?

The SPEAKER—I have always found that the rights of members are well provided for in our Standing Orders. I have found that so far we have been able to deal adequately with matters that have arisen from time to time. We have a Standing Order (No. 1) whereby, where not otherwise prescribed, we undertake the powers, authorities, procedures and practices of the House of Commons. If anything further were required in respect of the matter raised by the honourable member it would mean an amendment of the Constitution and the setting out precisely of the further powers the House wished to take unto itself. Personally, I do not propose to initiate such a matter.

#### HOMES FOR AGED WIDOWS.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Has the Premier obtained any further information regarding the matter I

raised on May 19 regarding the Housing Trust undertaking to provide homes for aged widows?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Mr. Cartledge, the Chairman of the Housing Trust, reports:—

The above question draws attention to the housing needs of some members of the community who are frequently forced to live under bad conditions, and the South Australian Housing Trust is now investigating the possibility of building small cottage flats for elderly people of limited means who are living alone. Some sketch plans for this purpose have been prepared. The trust has in mind providing small flats which have a bed sitting room, a kitchenette and a bathroom, with adequate fittings and appliances. It is expected that they can be built in conjunction with the cottage flats now being provided for elderly couples. I would point out that the proposal is still in sketch stage and it will be some time before any such accommodation can actually be built.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR TEACHER.

Mr. RICHES—Mr. W. Pearce, a teacher at Whyalla Technical High School, applied for leave of absence in order to attend the Centennial Conference of the Y.M.C.A. to be held in Paris, at which 50 delegates from Australia will attend. The invitation to Mr. Pearce was made 12 months ago and negotiations for his leave have been taking place ever since. He has endeavoured to obtain an exchange teacher from the United Kingdom, but I understand that no satisfactory response has been obtained to that request. Mr. Pearce has had to make arrangements for his journey and accommodation. After he has studied abroad he intends to return to Australia and resume his duties with the Education Department. Delay in dealing with his application means that he has only two weeks now in which to make up his mind whether to resign from the department, which he will be compelled to do, unless he is granted 12 months' leave of absence. Has the Minister of Education seen the correspondence on this subject, and is he in a position to give me a reply?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I think I saw the correspondence on this matter for the first time last week. I am favourably disposed to the application, but I prefer to consider it again and let the honourable member have a reply tomorrow.

#### BULK HANDLING AT WALLAROO.

Mr. HEASLIP—Has the Minister of Agriculture received any letter or information from the Public Works Committee about bulk handling at Wallaroo? If so, will he make it available, as it would be most valuable to members debating the Bill before the House?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The Government has received a letter from the chairman of the committee, and I would have cited it when explaining the Bill if I had had the time. It is dated December 15, 1954, and states:—

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works at a meeting held this morning reached a unanimous decision on the question of providing bulk handling facilities at the port of Wallaroo. As it will be some time before the committee is in a position to present a further progress report on this subject, I am conveying its recommendations to you in writing at once. The committee resolved to recommend:—

(a) That a bulk handling installation for Wallaroo be approved.

(b) The adoption of mobile pneumatic units for use on the jetty for loading of wheat from railway trucks into ships' holds and also for use on shore for unloading rail trucks into shore storage.

(c) That a thorough investigation be made of the possibility of siting shore storage on the high ground to the south of the jetty, facing the railways' marshalling yards, with a view to constructing a bin providing for 1,000,000 bushels of wheat and 400,000 bushels of barley in order that quick loading by chutes into railway trucks can be achieved.

(d) The provision at all railway wheat receipt sidings, where the average receipts are 30,000 bushels or more per annum, of concrete floor storage bins to accommodate an average harvest.

I have been informed by the chairman of the committee that he expects to furnish a report on bulk handling possibly this week or next.

#### DELAYS IN INQUESTS.

Mr. STEPHENS—Has the Minister representing the Attorney-General a reply to the question I asked last week about long delays in coronial inquiries?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—As promised, I consulted the Attorney-General, who has supplied me with the following report:—

I have ascertained from the City Coroner that in some instances there have been delays, but these delays have been unavoidable. In some cases delays have been caused by the need for further inquiries, and the unavailability of witnesses, due to their injury in the accident which caused the death, or to the fact that they reside in another State. Delay in completing the Coroner's inquiries must also occur in instances where a charge is laid against a person arising out of the death, for the Coroner is prevented by the Coroners Act from proceeding with an inquest until the hearing of such a charge has been completed. It has been the practice of the Coroner for some time to hold inquests on one day each week, but arrangements are being made for the Coroner's Court to sit more frequently when the number of inquests pending make it desirable.

#### POLICE MEDICAL OFFICERS.

Mr. TAPPING—Has the Premier a reply to my question of last week concerning the statement of Mr. Wilson, S.M., regarding long delays in the medical examination of motorists arrested on charges of driving under the influence of liquor?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received the following report from the Commissioner of Police:—

The newspaper report of the alleged delay in this case is not correct. The actual time at which the doctor was called is not recorded, but the earliest that it could have been was sometime after 1.35 a.m. If that is correct the delay was one hour, but I am more inclined to accept the doctor's notes which show that he received the call at 2.10 a.m. and commenced his examination of the defendant at 2.38 a.m., a delay of 28 minutes and not three hours as appearing in the newspaper report. The error arose through a wrong entry by the police sergeant in his journal.

I keep a personal watch on these matters and, taking the last seven cases that were heard in metropolitan courts, the shortest time between the call for the doctor and his arrival was 2 minutes, the longest 1 hour 20 minutes, and the average 39 minutes. At Port Adelaide for the last nine cases heard, the shortest time between the call to the doctor and his arrival was 15 minutes, the longest 2 hours, 5 minutes, and the average 59 minutes. I am satisfied that no undue delay exists between the time when the doctor is advised and his attending to examine a defendant, and at the moment there appears no grounds for appointing an additional Police Medical Officer to do the work.

#### INSURANCE OF MOTOR VEHICLES.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier any information to give regarding the question I asked on May 24 about insurance rebates when no claim is made against an insurance company for the preceding period?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I referred the question to Sir Edgar Bean (Chairman of the State Insurance Premiums Committee), who submitted the following report:—

I have looked into this question and make the following comments on it:—

1. The no-claim discount applies only to comprehensive motor insurance and not to compulsory third party insurance. The premiums for the latter type of insurance are fixed at rates which allow no margin for no-claim discounts.

2. The system of no-claim discounts is widely adopted by insurance companies in Australia and numerous other countries to encourage motorists to avoid accidents, and to give some benefit to those motorists who, whether by reason of good driving and parking habits, or because they drive in parts of the State where there is little traffic, are able to avoid making claims under their policies. The

right to a no-claim discount does not depend on innocence or guilt, but on the question whether the insured has refrained from making a claim under his policy. It is, as is commonly said, a "no-claim" discount, but not a "no-blame" discount. Nevertheless the companies do not refuse the discount in every case where the insured makes a claim.

3. Where a motorist makes a claim and some other person is liable for his damage and pays damages, the insurance company does not deprive the motorist of the no-claim discount, although the company may have incurred expenses in investigating claim.

4. In cases where a motorist makes a claim, and appears to the company to be free from blame, although no one else admits liability or is found liable, the company usually gives sympathetic consideration to a request for the no-claim discount. There are, of course, some cases where persons claiming to be innocent are not so, in fact, and companies must necessarily exercise some discretion in granting requests.

5. I do not recommend any statutory regulation of no-claim discounts. Any law on this subject would have to lay it down that the no-claim discount must be granted as of right to an innocent motorist notwithstanding that he has made a claim on the company which the company has paid, and notwithstanding that no other person has been found liable or admitted liability for the damage. The definition and determination of innocence in this connection would be a difficult matter and, in practice, there would be substantial expenses in investigating claims for no-claim discounts.

It must be remembered that even where a motorist is innocent in the sense that he is not legally liable for an accident, he may have contributed to the risk of it either by his own fault or otherwise, *e.g.*, by habitually leaving his car parked in exposed places or by constantly driving in places where there is an unusually high risk of accident.

Another point is that if these discounts had to be granted as a matter of statutory right to every innocent motorist, the companies would either have to grant the discount to everyone who asked for it, or alternatively make inquiries in all doubtful cases to determine strictly the question of guilt or innocence. Either of these courses would be unsatisfactory and might ultimately make the system of no-claim discounts useless and unworkable.

As the system in general works well at present, I suggest that it would not be desirable for the Government or Parliament to take any action in this matter.

#### BULK HANDLING OF GRAIN BILL.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—As you are the presiding officer of the House, Mr. Speaker, I ask if the Bulk Handling of Grain Bill now on the Notice Paper comes within the category of a hybrid Bill, and should therefore be referred to a Select Committee?

The SPEAKER—It is entirely a matter of opinion, but in my view it is a public Bill. I should think it falls within that category under

Joint Standing Order No. 2, which sets out what is a hybrid Bill. In the preamble the Bill sets out that there shall be no profit making, so that no-one will make any profit out of it. Secondly, the Standing Orders say that a hybrid Bill confers certain powers on a local authority and it seems to me that the authority under this Bill would be State-wide. Any Minister or member can move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee. The only difference between a public and a hybrid Bill is that the latter is referred to a Select Committee.

#### SUBSIDIES FOR OLD FOLKS' HOMES.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—In the 1953-54 Supplementary Estimates about £230,000 was provided for subsidies to various organizations prepared to provide additional accommodation for aged people. Subsequently the Federal Parliament provided for a similar subsidy on a pound for pound basis. Can the Treasurer say whether the Federal subsidy has superseded the State subsidy, or are organizations entitled to receive both?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—When the State introduced its scheme for subsidizing old folks' homes there was no Commonwealth scheme, and the State made the money available on the basis of a 50 per cent subsidy of the cost, the organizations concerned having to find the other 50 per cent. On its introduction the Commonwealth law provided that no money provided by the State would be subject to any subsidy. That provision did not deal with the question now asked, namely, whether an amount subsidized by the State would be eligible, under the Commonwealth law, to be considered as the basis for a Commonwealth subsidy. My opinion is that it would, and a number of organizations may have claimed it. In the case of any subsidies which we are now offering and which are provided for in this year's Supplementary Estimates, we are making it quite clear that we regard it as a separate transaction and not as a basis for another subsidy on an amount on which a subsidy has already been claimed. After the Commonwealth introduced its scheme we had no immediate applications; it may have been thought that as the Commonwealth had the more money it was the more desirable authority to approach, but that has not necessarily been found to be correct, and a number of the subsidies which have now been applied for and upon which these Estimates are based are being made to the State because the Commonwealth law is not applicable to the applicants. For instance, the Commonwealth law provides for old folks' homes in the sense of housing,

but not for an infirmary, the Commonwealth considering that to be part of the hospital field; so about £36,000 is being provided for a Methodist mission home of the infirmary type, which I believe was held to be not eligible for a Commonwealth subsidy because it was an infirmary dealing with bed cases rather than a home.

#### ADDITIONAL HORTICULTURAL ADVISER FOR UPPER MURRAY AREA.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—At present there is only one horticultural adviser serving all irrigation areas between Cooltong and Cobdogla, although at one time at least three were engaged there. In the more closely settled irrigation areas where three families may be getting a living off 20 or 30 acres, there is a considerable build-up of pests and other problems unknown to broad-acre farming. The present position with only one horticultural adviser is farcical, because it is impossible for him to carry out the work. Will the Minister of Agriculture have this matter examined to see whether it is possible to appoint one adviser to serve the Renmark and Cooltong areas and another the Berri, Barmera, Loveday, and Cobdogla areas?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—One of our problems is to get sufficient staff for the department's full requirements; at present we are about 27 officers short. Whether the river irrigation areas warrant an extra adviser I do not know, but I will take up the matter with the Director of Agriculture. I point out, however, that the river areas enjoy the benefit of an experimental orchard at Berri, which has a staff that can help settlers in their problems.

#### MENTAL INSTITUTION PATIENTS.

Mr. LAWN (on notice)—How many adults, according to the Superintendent of Mental Institutions, were in mental institutions in 1953 merely because of old age, as distinct from mental ill-health?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Superintendent of Mental Institutions reports:—

The literal answer to the question is nil. In explanation the following information is relevant:—On June 30, 1953, there were 2,572 patients in the three Mental Institutions. Of that number 36 patients were in hospital at their own request as distinct from being admitted under a certificate of mental defectiveness. That is, these 36 patients realizing that they were in need of treatment for some form of mental illness, voluntarily sought admission of their own free will. Included in the 36 there were patients of all ages and only a few would be over the age of 65 years. As stated in previous replies, some 300 to 400 of the total

2,572 were elderly patients who could be cared for more appropriately in their own homes by relatives or in an infirmary type of hospital. At the time these 300 to 400 patients were admitted they were in fact, suffering from varying degrees of mental illness consequent upon the deteriorating processes of advancing years. In short, they were mentally defective and so certified in accordance with the Mental Defectives Act. With treatment, these patients made improvement to a degree that they could be discharged to their relatives or to an infirmary type of hospital. There were those who were mentally and physically infirm to an extent that they could not adequately care for themselves without some assistance.

#### SCHOOL SANITARY SYSTEM.

Mr. TAPPING (on notice)—How many primary schools in the metropolitan area have sanitary arrangements other than septic tanks or sewerage?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—There are only three primary schools in the metropolitan area which have no septic tanks or sewers.

#### OAKBANK AREA SCHOOL.

The SPEAKER laid on the table a report of the Public Works Committee, together with minutes of evidence, on Oakbank Area School (new workshop block).

Ordered that report be printed.

#### SUPPLY BILL (No. 1).

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from June 9. Page 285.)

Chief Secretary, Miscellaneous, £171,495.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—The Supplementary Estimates provide for an expenditure of £704,147 on urgent and essential matters. Members are becoming inured to the consideration of Supplementary Estimates towards the end of the financial year, because for some years they have been submitted to Parliament, allegedly to provide for expenditure that was either inaccurately estimated at Budget time or suddenly became necessary just before the end of the financial year. During the last few years the Government has been informed about this time of the year that there would be a surplus and the Premier has cast about for avenues of expenditure to absorb the surplus before the end of the financial year. This has been a means of conveying to the public his intense interest and sympathy with certain activities deserving Government assistance. But the expenditure for



which authorization has been sought has not usually been for emergency items, and the practice amounts to window dressing.

In the 1953-54 Supplementary Estimates there was an item of £230,000 for a provision that had been sought by the Opposition in the previous session and in the previous Parliament. In effect, we said it was essential that some provision be made then for housing aged folk, but we were told that it was not necessary. Nothing was done by the Government until it was found, towards the end of the financial year, that there would be a surplus, and the amount I mentioned was hastily disbursed, by agreement with various authorities. I am not objecting to the disbursement or criticizing the excellent work done by the authorities with the money provided, but I point out that the item could very well have been made an ordinary Budget item for that financial year. The same applies to some of the items included in the Supplementary Estimates now before us. It applies, for instance, to the grant to certain non-profit-making private hospitals to enable them to provide more beds for those who cannot afford beds in profit-making private hospitals. I suspect that the Premier has some remote idea that these will be popular items, that they will represent a very useful fixture in the Government shop window and that they will stand out much better alone for all the world to see than if they had been included in the whole mass of Government expenditure ordinarily provided for in the Budget.

There is not much difference between this year's Supplementary Estimates and those of other years except that the additional expenditure proposed this year will add to the Budget deficit. Whether that is a sound method of finance remains to be seen. It would be interesting to know where the funds to meet this addition to the deficit are to come from.

I now propose to deal with some of the items in detail because I think it is necessary for us to consider them in the light of the general remarks I have already made. The first is the cost incurred in pumping water through the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline. The amount provided in the Budget was £258,832, and in the Supplementary Estimates a further amount of £212,000 is provided, making a total for the financial year ending June 30 next of £470,832, which is equivalent to £1,281 a day—a not inconsiderable expenditure. The cost of operating the pipeline was not emphasized when attention was concentrated on the

importance of supplementing the metropolitan water supply. The dramatic episode—turning on the water when the people of Adelaide were almost at their last gasp—was also strongly featured. But the precarious nature of the metropolitan water supply should never have been allowed to develop. If the State had been developed and populated on correct lines the population of the metropolitan area would never have grown to such an uneconomic proportion of the population of the State. This is something on which I have been addressing the House for many years. If we made more adequate provision in the way of amenities for country districts we would arrest the flow of population to the metropolitan area and thereby avoid the greatly increasing and very costly problem of providing essential services, such as water and sewerage, for the already overgrown wen that is growing rapidly from year to year. When we suggest that something be done in the provincial centres we are told that it is not economic, and when industries consider migrating to South Australia almost invariably the metropolitan area is the only place having the amenities that render their establishment possible.

So the vicious circle goes on, increasing in size and momentum. Money is spent to entice people to the metropolitan area and as the population grows more money is spent to provide amenities for new industries and a further increased population. Apparently no cognizance whatever is taken of the ultimate cost. A case in point is the expenditure on the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline. When this scheme was approved by Parliament, after investigation by the Public Works Committee, we were told the total cost would be between £4,000,000 and £5,000,000. It is now well established that the total cost will be over £10,000,000, and furthermore, the operating costs have increased more, in proportion, than the capital cost. Instead of providing towns along the Cockburn line with a good supply of water, and supplying Radium Hill from it, a pipeline has been taken from Broken Hill to Radium Hill to provide a good water service there. The running costs of this scheme are, like those of many of the Premier's other grand schemes, exceptionally high. Incidentally, an adequate supply along the Cockburn line would mean enormous savings in railway working expenses. However, the Premier evolved a scheme to get water from Broken Hill, and a pipeline was laid from the Umberumberka Reservoir instead of from the

South Australian pipeline. I understand that the cost to the South Australian Government is about 30s. a thousand gallons for pumping, plus £1 a thousand gallons for the water supplied. I admit that from the capital aspect the Broken Hill scheme was cheaper than the South Australian scheme but the working expenses are substantially higher, and seem likely to continue so.

As a result of these schemes, the metropolitan water districts have shown a loss for the first time in history. Of course, country schemes have been showing an increasing loss for many years but we have been prepared to set against the losses the fact that most of them were necessary to development and production. In the final analysis, if there were no development in country districts, there would not be such a large population in this big wren to pay water rates. Now that the metropolitan scheme is losing—and it appears that the loss will increase soon—I wonder what will happen to balance the Budget ultimately. Water rates are not to be raised, though assessments are—I understand substantially—thereby people will pay more for the water. I mention these things because, sooner or later, this House will have to find some alternative to them, as the time may come when seasonal conditions are not so good and revenue will not be as buoyant as it is now. We might then realize that the Playford Government has not been such a benign institution as it thinks it is and was acclaimed from house tops in a recent debate.

The question of homes for aged persons was raised by the Opposition three years ago, but rejected out of hand by the Premier. Since then the Government has made a token gesture in supplementing the funds of certain religious and philanthropic institutions, but there is need for a thoroughgoing review of policy on this question. Although it was brought before Parliament by the Opposition three years ago I propose to submit it again briefly this afternoon. At that time we put forward a comprehensive policy to provide for each category of our aged and infirm folk. We started off with infirm persons—people who had become senile and to some extent mentally affected by their senility—and suggested means whereby they could be housed and given proper care instead of being committed to one of our mental institutions. I know that they are not placed there compulsorily; the Government does not send out a press gang to take these people to Parkside or Northfield, but the plain facts are that

moral compulsion is imposed upon them since they have nowhere else to go.

Mr. Lawn—Do not the police pick up some of them?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—As my friend, who has taken a very sympathetic interest in this matter reminds me, the police pick up some of them because they have become derelicts and, having no means of providing for them otherwise, have to commit them as neglected persons. Then we suggested that there should be another type of institution to provide accommodation for those who were able to care for themselves, and finally—and this is one of the most important points—that there should be adequate provision for aged folk who were in the main still capable of caring for themselves, so as to enable them to live in a frugal degree of comfort with some slight supervisory nursing attention; aged married couples, for example. That was the three-point programme submitted by the Opposition three years ago and rejected out of hand by the Premier, and the majority of members of this Parliament when it carried that pious amendment, using the term satirically, to the effect that the Government be commended for what it had done. At least our effort had the effect of stirring the Government into doing something but, like a great deal more of this Government's policy, it was a half-hearted attempt to emulate the good, humanitarian policy of the Labor Party. It is a thing of bits and pieces and, like all things built of bits and pieces, it rarely works adequately or satisfactorily.

It will be remembered that in the course of that debate I referred to the excellent report which had been produced in England as the result of the activities of the Nuffield Foundation which showed that the Old Country, despite its terrific sacrifices as a result of the second World War, the wholesale destruction of whole towns and industries, was still prepared to do something practical and adequate in order to solve the problem of the housing and care of the aged. Since that time further progress has been made in Great Britain, but we have contended with a policy which, I hope, will not obtain much longer. I hope that we will soon settle down to preparing a co-ordinated plan not only regarding the care of the aged and infirm, but to provide more adequate hospital facilities. Admittedly some provision is made in these Estimates for assistance to certain private hospitals of a non-profit making character. I do not object to that, for it is a step in the right direction, but again, it is one of those half-hearted palliatives that do not go to

the root of the problem; the real trouble is that the Government has no properly co-ordinated, comprehensive policy on hospitals.

We have our Government hospitals, such as Royal Adelaide, Port Lincoln, Wallaroo, Port Pirie, Port Augusta and Barmera, which are erected and maintained in the main by the Government. We have our 45 subsidized hospitals which are erected with partly Government and partly local finances and are maintained by moneys raised by all forms of local effort plus Government subsidies and, thirdly, we have our community hospitals that do not receive any direct Government subsidy towards their maintenance but which occasionally receive a subsidy towards capital expenditure, as is provided in these Estimates in one particular case. As a consequence of all this we find that people in one community have their hospitals virtually provided out of State revenue, and in another mainly provided by their own efforts. In reply to a question this afternoon we heard the Premier say that he did not believe in discrimination where road haulage taxes are concerned. I suggest that that might be applied to hospital policy. If the people of Barmera, Port Augusta or Wallaroo are entitled to preferential treatment why should not people living at Riverton, Clare or Peterborough enjoy the same privilege? It is about time we looked at this question from a State standpoint and evolved a comprehensive policy.

A small amount is provided in the Supplementary Estimates for the Adelaide Children's Hospital. This institution is looked upon by the community in respect of children, in much the same way as the Royal Adelaide is looked upon in respect of adults. Royal Adelaide is built and maintained by the Government, but the Children's Hospital is a semi-private institution. It is true that, as the years pass by, the financial provision made by the Government is increasing, but it is still a semi-private institution and it ought not to be. It should be in the same category as Royal Adelaide. Surely, in the matter of medical treatment, the future citizens of the State are entitled to the same consideration as adults.

Mr. Macgillivray—What is the position of the Queen's Home?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—As I understand it that is given a considerable subsidy because it is a training school for obstetricians and maternity nurses, but it is not completely a Government institution. I am pleased to note that the Bush Church Aid Society Flying Doctor Service at Ceduna is to receive some

financial recognition at last. I note that the Minister of Agriculture is smiling because this has been a controversial subject for some time, but at least the Opposition was able to agree on a common policy as to the worthiness of this service. I have little comment to offer on bush fire relief beyond saying that the amount provided for His Excellency the Governor and his staff is by no means generous, but some slight recognition of the great losses they sustained, and an expression of our gratitude to the Almighty that they were saved from the holocaust. The same applies to the amount contributed by the Government to the Bush Fire Relief Fund. This represents the State's sympathetic gesture to those in various parts of the State who lost substantially as a result of the disastrous fires on what has become known as Black Sunday. A small amount is provided for rebuilding the National Park kiosk, also destroyed by fire, and I am wondering whether this might not be more properly treated as an item of capital expenditure and included in the Loan Estimates rather than as a revenue item. The National Park is a playground established and maintained by the Government for the benefit of the people and, under normal circumstances—bush fires excepted—a kiosk should have a very long life. Perhaps there are reasons why it should be treated as revenue expenditure. It may have been erected from capital in the first place and no provision made for insurance, so it is necessary to provide for it out of revenue.

The total cost to the State Bank of earthquake damage is now estimated at £184,000. An amount of £70,000 was previously provided and it is proposed to furnish a further £25,000. Payments already made total £144,000. In view of the time that has elapsed since the disastrous earthquake it may be that all claims have been submitted. One cannot help feeling that it was lack of foresight on the part of the Government and the management of the State Bank not to ensure that the insurance fund covered earthquake damage. The fact that we had not had a serious earthquake previously was no guarantee that we would not have one and the fact that we have had an earthquake is no guarantee that there may not be another. Provision should have been made for a comprehensive system of insurance on all these properties.

An amount is provided for the purchase of motor buses for school transport. Again I wonder whether this item should not be provided for in the Loan Estimates. I do not criticize the expenditure because I believe that

the Education Department's policy of securing its own buses for school transport is excellent and should be expanded. I understand that in all cases the buses are driven by departmental officers—usually teachers—who live in the centre served by the transport.

The total cost to the State since the first appearance of fruit fly is about £1,000,000. The amount provided this year is not large because the infestation was not as extensive as in former years. Whilst I have some doubts about the Government's policy of eradication, I sincerely hope the large expenditure has not been in vain.

Mr. Brookman—What do you think should have been done?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I think stripping was carried to extremes. The responsibility should have been placed on the owners of properties to strip their fruit or be punished. Had that method been adopted a considerable sum could have been saved.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—Was not that method tried in Western Australia and proved a failure?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I do not know that it did prove a failure. Apparently in some districts the Western Australian policy was entirely satisfactory, but in others unsatisfactory. I am not prepared to say whether that was due to natural conditions or because the policy was more efficiently administered in some districts than in others.

An amount of £30,000 is provided for an aerial magnetometer survey. The question arises whether this amount might not more properly be provided in the Loan Estimates. It is pleasing, however, to note that the Government is adhering to its policy of supporting private enterprise, because this survey will be conducted on a charter basis by a private company. Considerable expense is being incurred in the survey. Greater expenditure is being incurred by the Government in its search for minerals. The searches may or may not produce results and pay dividends. I hope they will, but the amounts provided for mineral search and research are reaching astronomical heights. An additional amount of £30,000 is provided for ensuring security of, I take it, some of the secret processes and the plants housing them from the prying eyes of undesirable and inquisitive people who might be able to turn them to profitable account with a potential enemy. Had a little foresight been shown by the Treasurer many of the amounts provided in the Supplementary Estimates could well have been provided in the

Loan Estimates. Nevertheless, in themselves, they are worthy of the support of the Committee.

Mr. BROOKMAN (Alexandra)—I support the first line. I was rather surprised to hear the Leader of the Opposition again complaining that the Budget was not exact and that these Estimates were all wrong. I do not know how he examined them, but if one considers that they are within 1.4 per cent of the Budget figure, it is fairly accurate budgeting.

Mr. Lawn—Where do you get that percentage from?

Mr. BROOKMAN—I suggest the member sit down and work it out. I cannot give him a lesson in arithmetic now. I do not think anyone else could have furnished such an accurate estimate. Certainly primary producers would have had difficulty in budgeting so well. The items mentioned amount to about £700,000 and a considerable proportion of it is bound up with the added pumping costs of the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline. It is too late now to regret the cost of pumping; everyone wanted the pipeline. The Leader of the Opposition has asked repeated questions concerning the delays in construction and many other anxious inquiries came from all sections of the community. Now that we have a pipeline it is suggested that it is too expensive to pump the water. It seems to me that the Opposition feels it must make an attack and this is about the best it can do.

Our system of assisting hospitals is, in my opinion, particularly good. I would not appreciate a system whereby every hospital that received Government support must be a Government hospital. That, I think, is the Leader of the Opposition's contention. I do not think that Governments can maintain efficiency to the same extent as private organizations. A system of Government hospitals would be faulty as would a system of private hospitals not assisted by the Government. Private hospitals would not have been able to continue operating unless their fees were greatly increased. In South Australia we have combined the two systems and private hospitals from time to time receive Government assistance. This, together with the tremendous amount of voluntary work carried out, has maintained the financial stability of the hospitals. A large amount of voluntary work is available for hospitals but it will be lost if we change to Government-owned institutions. It would be a shocking waste of efficiency. Calvary, Memorial, and McBride hospitals are efficient organizations. I do not

know much about the Central Mission Old Folks' Home, but obviously it is a praiseworthy institution.

Although not a Government hospital, the Children's Hospital is particularly well run. It is to receive £10,000 towards building a new operating theatre. I think the Government contributes about 60 per cent of its revenue, and the patients 24 per cent. The contributions by the patients include the Commonwealth payment, which I think is 8s. a day per patient. In effect the patients do not contribute much towards expenses. About 16 per cent of its revenue comes from donations, legacies and fund-raising activities. Great strides have been made at the hospital in the last 10 years, but conditions are by no means perfect. I understand that now it can take 47 more patients than it could 10 years ago, and that the number of outpatients treated has increased by 50 per cent. I think the hospital needs £400,000 a year, and consequently it is a good move to contribute towards the cost of a new operating theatre. The present theatre is housed in Angas Building, which is about 57 years old. I do not know whether the theatre is that old, but from time to time it must have been improved. It is not yet a good theatre and some doctors prefer to take their patients to the Royal Adelaide Hospital for operations. I was not clear on the position of Estcourt House, but I now understand that it is used by the Children's Hospital as a convalescent home.

Tourist attractions in this State are again to be assisted, which is a wise move, but we need better accommodation for tourists. It is well below world standard, and the difficulty of getting even the accommodation available makes the position worse. I do not know the answer, but Australia generally has never been noted for good hotels. Perhaps some of our better quality hotels in the city may be up to world standard, and some of our country hotels provide a good and willing service of a quality that is not apparent at first sight. Whatever the position, however, it is not satisfactory. Recently Mr. Riches drew attention to the beauty spots in his district and suggested that Alligator Gorge might be built up as a tourist attraction. If his description of the gorge is correct, he is right in his suggestion, but until more and better accommodation is available our tourist traffic will not improve. The National Park kiosk is to be rebuilt. The Leader of the Opposition said that the expenditure proposed should be included in the Loan Estimates because it is a capital work, but

it is not such a work because it is a replacement of a destroyed asset.

The Education Department is to supply additional buses for school transport services. This is always a difficult problem. The plans of the Government have grown with the demand which has increased to an astonishing degree. One reason for the increase is the satisfactory working of the transport branch of the department. In many cases, however, private buses are used and they lack quality in some respects. On all sides there is complaint that these operators are not receiving sufficient to enable better buses to be supplied. It is difficult to say whether or not that is true, but when they are compared with other passenger buses I think the operators have a point in their favour. I wonder whether the department might make use of outside transport experts when negotiating hire agreements. I do not think this advice is now sought but it would be a help in fixing fair charges. We want to see bus operators earn sufficient to give them a living and to permit them to provide more modern buses. I was impressed by the size of the school transport system. The Premier said that 85 Government buses now operate. The provision of another 12 will make the number 97. In addition, about 300 buses are operated by private contractors. This gives a total of about 400, a very large fleet indeed. Considering the difficulties, the department has coped with the problem well. It must also be remembered that there has been a large increase in school enrolments since the war.

The fruit fly campaign is undoubtedly justified and I cannot see why anyone should question it. The Leader of the Opposition had some doubts about it, but when asked what should have been done his only suggestion was that the householder should have been allowed to strip his own trees, and thereby reduce the cost to the department of providing strippers. If we are to undertake the task, which so far has cost about £1,000,000, we must do it thoroughly. If that is not done the expenditure will be wasted. It is useless to say that the position is fairly satisfactory, which has been claimed about Western Australia. It is all or nothing. We are now engaged in a battle with the pest and the outcome is not clear, but the authorities would not be justified in spending a large sum if the task were not being tackled thoroughly. For that reason I am wholeheartedly in support of the measures taken. It will interest members to know that never has

the fruit fly been eradicated where the outbreak has occurred in a metropolitan area, yet that is what we are trying to do here. We have a problem that is most difficult to solve. The outbreak in Florida was controlled by the American authorities, but it occurred in an orchard area, where most of the population was more alive to the dangers of the fruit fly than is the case with ordinary citizens. In addition, the area was not populated so densely as are our suburban areas. We have a difficult problem, yet each year there seems to be reasonable grounds for believing that the outbreak has been almost eradicated. I think there was no outbreak in one summer, but the fact that there have been succeeding outbreaks does not detract from the record of the authorities. We must not relax our efforts to eradicate the fruit fly; we should continue the spraying programme and the stripping of fruit by Government employees. It is fortunate that we have strong-minded and highly-qualified officers in the Horticulture Department and the Waite Institute who have laid the foundations of a campaign to get rid of the fruit fly.

I am very pleased that an amount of £5,000 is proposed for the erection of a chapel at Roseworthy College to the memory of the many former students who gave their lives during the last war. Many of the former students were lost in the various services, and South Australia can be proud of their record in the forces. I support the Estimates.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Goodwood).—Probably one has no option but to support the Estimates, but I wish to bring a few matters before Parliament. A grant of £33,000 is proposed for Calvary Hospital, which will have to find another £33,000 for capital extensions. It seems from reading the Treasurer's speech, however, that this expenditure will result in only another six beds, though it will also result in extensions to the nurses' block and the provision of additional toilet and bathroom facilities and kitchen accommodation. On a cost per bed basis the expenditure amounts to the colossal figure of £11,000, though future extensions may reduce this figure greatly. The subsidy of £30,000 for the Memorial Hospital will result in a further 22 maternity beds and, with the amount of £30,000 to be raised by the hospital, the cost per bed will be about £2,700, though I do not know whether this will cover the cost of furnishings. The Treasurer stated:—

The McBride Hospital is a very old building and both the east and west wings are in

a bad state. The west wing in particular is in poor condition and it is proposed to demolish this wing and replace it with a two-storey wing consisting of kitchens on the ground floor and wards on the first floor. The east wing, which is badly affected by salt damp, will be restored.

The grant of £13,000, plus a similar sum to be raised by the hospital, will result in an additional eight beds, or a cost of £3,250 a bed. I fully appreciate the necessity to demolish part of the building and to erect something more permanent so that the McBride Hospital can continue to carry out its valuable service to the community, but I know from personal knowledge of the area north of Adelaide that once a building is demolished on account of salt damp it must first be tommed and a concrete foundation must be laid. I should be pleased if the Treasurer would indicate how much of this work will be carried out. Various hospitals will be assisted under these Estimates, but we have not had much information about them.

It is proposed to grant the Central Mission Old Folks' Home £36,250, which will mean a total of £72,500 to be expended on this institution, but again I do not know whether this expenditure will cover the furnishings. The subsidy will permit the building of a self-contained infirmary which will provide accommodation for 41 beds and enable medical treatment for elderly people. The cost per bed will be £1,780. Even allowing for the grants to be made it seems that the Government will be getting out of the problem of providing hospital services very cheaply.

Mr. Brookman said it costs £400,000 a year to run the Adelaide Children's Hospital, and he commended the voluntary work carried on by many people to assist private hospitals. Button days are sometimes held for these institutions, but I do not know whether Mr. Brookman considered the valuable voluntary work carried on by certain organizations at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. The Adelaide Children's Hospital employs a staff to leave bags at people's homes in the hope that generous citizens will place old clothes or rags in the bags to assist the hospital. I endorse the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition in regard to the Children's Hospital, for it is time the Government did more to provide hospital services for the younger section of our community. The provision of hospital accommodation by our private hospitals is becoming most costly. Various grants are provided under the Estimates, but I wonder whether the Treasurer

will say to the Loan Council that his Government is subscribing an additional £150,000, or include the £150,000 to be raised by private institutions and then say that the Government has subscribed £300,000 for social services.

It is proposed to grant £3,850 for the Ashford Community Hospital. Speaking on the Address in Reply the member for Unley, Mr. Dunnage, said:—

The Ashford Community Hospital is controlled by the West Torrens, Mitcham, and Unley Councils through a board of businessmen who voluntarily devote much time to the conduct of its affairs.

This hospital is situated in territory attached to the West Torrens council area. The other corporation which should have been included is Marion, which was foremost in advocating its establishment. The hospital was bought about October, 1950, and was brought into being as a result of a telephone conversation on a Sunday morning between Dr. Downing and myself. As a consequence I rang the member for Glenelg, Mr. Pattinson, and we agreed that Dr. Downing, Dr. Turner, and I should proceed to Glenelg to Mr. Pattinson's residence, where we inaugurated this hospital at a cost of nearly £20,000. In the course of the conversation between Mr. Pattinson and myself I undertook to make certain representations to Mr. Dunnage. I reported back to Mr. Pattinson that it would appear that we would not have much hope of getting assistance from the Unley Council. As the member for Unley is an ex-mayor of that town and at present a councillor I asked if he thought his corporation would be interested and he said it would not as it already had the Unley Private Hospital and certain maternity hospitals to look after. After certain information was given to the ex-mayor of Unley, Mr. Coogan, who is now chairman of the Ashford Hospital, he got to know some of the things going on and then Unley came into the picture and provided its quota of £250 for the establishment of the hospital. When it came to the question of appeals to be launched for the hospital we did not get much assistance from the member for Unley.

The hospital has a very good board of management and is firmly established as an institution of some importance. The board is seeking a further grant from the Government on a pound for pound basis. Again, it will be a case of the Government getting out of it cheaply. If the hospital should repudiate its

obligations the property would go to the Government as an asset, but I hope that will never occur. The board members have set a high standard, and no doubt it will be continued by their successors. An additional amount is required to purchase another property. Two will have been purchased since the hospital was established. The board has raised by appeal more than £15,000 to liquidate liabilities and among other things has erected nurses' quarters at a cost of about £16,000. Over a period of 3½ years £15,000 has been raised, a wonderful effort. Mr. Cosgrove has been chairman of the appeals committee since the hospital's inception, and I pay a very high tribute to him for his organizing ability and the success of the appeals. I also compliment Mr. Coogan, chairman of the board, who is now abroad. If the board is successful in getting an additional amount from the Government another 24 beds could be provided, and another of its ambitions is to establish a casualty block to meet the needs of local industry.

An amount of £11,500 is provided in the Estimates for the purchase of land at Magill for a national pleasure resort and £14,152 for land for a similar purpose at Eden Hills. I should like the Treasurer to give more information on the areas involved and their actual position. For erecting a new kiosk at National Park, £5,000 is to be spent. I should like to know whether an inquiry into the fire which destroyed the old kiosk has been completed and whether the Treasurer can say if it indicated neglect on the part of the occupant. Can he also say whether it is the Government's intention to provide a structure which will meet the needs of patrons more effectively than the previous building? The old kiosk was like Topsy: it just grew up from a little building to something which was not as substantial as it should have been.

The sum of £6,000 is provided so that the Railways Department can construct flood openings and drains on the main north line and Dry Creek loopline in connection with the City of Enfield drainage scheme. Does this sum represent the total cost of the drainage in this area? At the moment it appears to be somewhat in the nature of an open cheque, and the Treasurer should say whether the Enfield council is expected to spend money on the completion of this drainage project. I draw the attention of the Committee to the plight of residents in the Marion district council area where efforts have been made to deal

with waters received from the higher ground in the Mitcham district. The proposed work in the Enfield area may result in the water being carried into the Port Adelaide district, and what will the residents in that district have to say then? I remember vividly controversies that have taken place in other areas where excess water has been drained from higher to lower levels. In reply to questions by the Leader of the Opposition, the Treasurer has said that a Town Planning Bill will be introduced this session; but will the proposed Bill help solve this problem, or will further amounts have to be provided in future Estimates for drainage purposes? The Railways Commissioner may spend this £6,000 on the proposed drainage scheme, and then the work may be completely nullified merely because of the Enfield council's inability to carry out its part of the work. This Committee is entitled to more information about these items of expenditure, and I hope to secure it when the lines are being considered.

Mr. TAPPING (Semaphore)—I support the Supplementary Estimates and wish to refer to two items. The first is the grant of £15,000 to the S.A. Spastic Welfare Association for a new building. From time to time Opposition members have condemned the Government because it has not carried out certain necessary projects, but today I express gratitude to the Government for providing this sum for such a worthy organization. Recently I introduced to the Minister of Health a deputation that advanced strong arguments in favour of Government assistance, and it is pleasing to learn that the Government has seen fit to help an organization that has rendered yeoman service for some years. The Spastic Welfare Association was first formed in 1945, being known in those days as the Spastic Parents' and Children's Group. It was a small body, but as people came to realize its importance it grew to its present proportions. It is a virile and well-organized body. Originally it received certain support from the Department of the Army, and its headquarters were in a Sunday School room adjacent to a city Lutheran Church. In 1952 the Woodville home was purchased and a second ambulance acquired. Although this is a metropolitan organization, it is pleasing to note that it receives State-wide support from businessmen and citizens generally, and that in return it gives a service to all South Australians who need it.

Because of the need for expansion to meet the needs of children awaiting admittance, a

second wing is being constructed and should be completed by November this year. The cost of that wing is £30,000, and the members of the deputation told the Minister that, although the Association had contracted to construct the wing, the cost might prove to be beyond its resources. Those in charge of the home, however, had entered into arrangements for an overdraft, having faith in the future and in the willingness of South Australians to help the organization. The grant in the Estimates is on a pound for pound basis, which will make it much easier for the organization to extend its activities among spastic children. The new wing will enable an additional 34 children to be accommodated, and this is necessary because of the huge number on the waiting list in this State. The new wing will give specialized treatment, such as physiotherapy and occupational therapy, as well as medical and dental care and pre-school education.

The organization is successfully conducted by men with business acumen who give their services voluntarily; but it has grown to such proportions that it has been found necessary to appoint a full-time secretary who is able to devote much time to organizing country contributions. Generally speaking, members of the board are parents of spastic children and therefore understand what is necessary. They devote considerable time to helping not only their own children but others who are stricken with spastic complaints. The principles and objectives of the organization are sound and conducive to the successful treatment of sufferers.

I wish to clear up one matter that has confused many people. Some think that a polio patient and a spastic patient are identical; but they are not as I will show. Cerebral palsy is the medical term for spastic paralysis. Children commonly called "spastics" suffer from loss or impaired muscular control, which may be severe or mild. The lack of control may be in the arms, legs, speech mechanism, eyes or hearing. Cerebral palsy is caused by injury either before, during or immediately after birth to that part of the brain controlling voluntary movement and posture. Spastics have been ignored and misunderstood for years, mainly because of inadequate knowledge. New methods of medical care, therapy, education and guidance are all contributing to the newly justified hope for the cerebral palsied. A spastic is incurable, whereas polio is a virus disease from which the majority of sufferers eventually recover.



Mr. Macgillivray—Polio patients receive certain concessions not available to spastics.

Mr. TAPPING—That is so.

Mr. Macgillivray—Do you think that the spastic is as much entitled to help as the polio patient?

Mr. TAPPING—Yes, but the spastic organization is only an infant compared with the polio organization, which has existed for many years. I believe that the fine work of the spastic organization must result in spastic patients eventually receiving the same concessions as polio patients. The spastic is incurable and therefore deserves greater consideration from the Government and the community generally.

The sum of £5,000 is provided as a payment to the Port Adelaide Corporation for the purpose of assisting in the provision of works and services in areas affected by recent acquisitions of properties by the Government. Some years ago the Government introduced a Bill under which it acquired certain property in the Port Adelaide district, particularly on LeFevre Peninsula, for greater harbour development and also for the creation of a garden suburb in the Osborne and Draper area. Immediately the Government acquired properties previously privately owned, the Port Adelaide Council lost revenue, because the Government was not obliged to pay rates on the land. This has resulted in financial embarrassment to the Port Adelaide Council in its efforts to provide roads and footpaths for residents in that area. About March, 1954, a deputation waited on the Minister of Marine pointing out the anomaly that existed because of the acquisition. I express gratitude on behalf of the people in my area and the Port Adelaide Council for the grant of £5,000 to the council for this year. This compensation will be paid for seven years, so a total of £35,000 will be received by the council, enabling it to keep its roads in good order until the Harbors Board carries out its developmental scheme.

The sum of £9,400 is provided towards the purchase of Estcourt House so that it may be attached to the Children's Hospital. For many years Estcourt House has served a worthy purpose. It is right on the seafront and free from industrial smoke, so it is ideal for convalescent children. For many years charitable bodies in the district have held button days and other functions to bolster up its finances. The Government is meeting its responsibilities

in buying Estcourt House, and I commend its action. I support the Estimates.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—These Estimates provide for expenditure totalling £704,147. Earlier today Mr. Brookman said that this is not a very substantial underestimation by the Treasurer, as it is only 1.4 per cent. However, he has overlooked the considerable expenditure, not included in the Estimates, for increased salaries and wages paid to Government employees. For this financial year the Treasury has had to pay increased salaries for 6½ months, because the Public Service Commissioner and the State Industrial Court decided that increases would be payable from December 20 last. The extra cost to the Government not foreseen by the Treasurer when he presented the Budget last year will approximate £500,000. This must be added to the amount in the Supplementary Estimates so the additional expenditure on last year's Budget is really £1,200,000—a difference of about 2.4 per cent. This percentage represents a considerable amount in a total of £53,000,000. I am not criticizing the Treasurer for the increase in wages or the additional expenditure contained in the Supplementary Estimates. However, when introducing these Estimates, the Treasurer said:—

There are also other urgent payments which it is necessary to effect this financial year. However, because of savings in other directions and buoyancy of revenues generally, the giving of approval to these Estimates will not substantially increase the Budget deficit for 1954-55, which I estimated last October to reach £1,933,000.

Despite the fact that this State is spending £1,200,000 more than last year, the Treasurer said that this will not substantially increase the deficit this year! An underestimation of over £1,000,000 in an expenditure of £53,000,000 is bad budgeting. The Treasurer also said:—

It is also proposed to grant a subsidy of £36,250 to the Central Mission Old Folks' Home Inc. towards the establishment of an old folks' infirmary. This subsidy will permit the building of a self-contained infirmary which will provide accommodation for 41 beds for old people who are sick, bedridden, or chronically ill, and in need of nursing care.

Although I do not oppose this expenditure, it is the wrong way to handle the problem. It is a negative policy in that no attempt has been made to provide sufficient accommodation for the aged. I have drawn the attention of this House to Dr. Birch's reports issued from year to year. Since 1932, he has drawn attention to the need for infirmaries for the aged.

Mr. Jennings—During the Address in Reply the Premier criticized you for criticizing Dr. Birch.

Mr. LAWN—I emphatically deny that I criticized him; I endeavoured to assist him. He has been drawing attention to the problem for 22 years. I have been a member for only five years but last year, if not the year before, I drew attention to his reports. I am not criticizing him or the staff of the mental or other hospitals, but I am criticizing the Government. Dr. Birch said that people have been placed in institutions because of age. I know the Premier takes exception to my use of the word “placed” because he said the Government has not placed them there. However, they are placed there by someone. If the police do not put them there their relatives do, and ultimately they reach mental institutions because they have nowhere else to go. A fortnight ago I was surprised to learn that two wards at Magill Home are vacant. Each year in the Budget a subsidy is provided to religious organizations to erect infirmaries, hospitals or homes for the aged, yet we now learn that accommodation is vacant at this home. Although I had every faith in my informant I could not credit the fact that two wards were vacant while there was such a shortage of homes for the aged so I went out there on Thursday morning to see for myself. I found, as I had been informed, that there were two unoccupied wards containing everything but staff and patients—electric light, hot and cold water, lockers, ice chests, ward-robes and even sisters’ chairs. In Verdun ward there were 57 beds and in Jellicoe ward 42, and outside the wards a considerable number of unassembled beds. No-one can say that there was a lack of staff quarters because at the rear of King George’s Hall there are six staff rooms fully furnished but locked up.

Mr. Macgillivray—Do you know why they were unoccupied?

Mr. LAWN—I think the honourable member knows why. Despite what the Government supporters did to the Opposition’s motion three years ago by turning it into a motion of commendation of the Government it had the effect of immediately afterwards causing the Government to commence subsidizing religious organizations.

Mr. Macgillivray—I still cannot understand why people had not been allowed to occupy those empty wards.

Mr. LAWN—Neither can I. I inquired how long they had been empty and was advised

that the Jellicoe ward had not been used for five years and Verdun ward for less than a fortnight and when I asked the reason I was told that there were enough empty beds in the other wards.

Mr. Macgillivray—You are not suggesting that the Government is less humanitarian than the Opposition?

Mr. LAWN—I am suggesting that it is not humane at all; it represents big business, the squatters, wheatgrowers, the market gardeners. They are the people who have been looked after by the Government and they are the people who are doing their best to further the gerrymander of the electorates in order to ensure that the dictatorship shall be preserved. They are not concerned about aged people sleeping in the parklands about which I shall have more to say.

After seeing the state of affairs at Magill I returned to the House and found the Treasurer was replying to my earlier remarks during the Address in Reply debate when I did not know what existed at Magill. I left the House while the Treasurer was speaking to go out again to Magill with press reporters and photographers. They made a note of all the things I have mentioned this afternoon, and took photographs of the empty wards, but not one word or one photograph was published by the *Mail* because of Government interference; because, in the words used to me, “of the fuss made by the Minister.” We were challenged by the man in charge at Magill and asked why we had not sought permission, and I told him I had not given it a thought and that is what I told the Minister of Health when he complained to me that what I had done showed lack of courtesy. I asked him why a member of Parliament should have to get permission to go out to the Old Folks’ Home to see for himself and tell the people what exists out there when any person in the State can go to the same place without permission and simply walk through the gates and go practically anywhere, even inside the wards, and see everything. People are visiting the institution from day to day and they see these empty wards and tell their friends about them as they told me, but because I went there and obtained this information I was told I should have sought the Minister’s permission. I know that the Minister has no power to prohibit the publication of anything, but in the words of the editor of the *Mail* “because of the fuss made by the Minister” not one line was published. This Government

does not represent the poor, the needy and the aged and I advise the new member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) that the longer he sits in this House the more he will learn of the ineptitude of this Government.

Mr. Macgillivray—Do you suggest that the Minister of Health is lacking in humanity?

Mr. LAWN—There is lack of humanity on the part of those who will not look after any section of the community except those they represent—the wealthy and privileged. They have their friends in the other place, and their predecessors gave away the people's rights by free grants of land, and the sale of some at 10s. a square mile for good pastoral country.

I have put questions on the Notice Paper regarding the number of wards vacant at Magill and received a reply that one has been vacant for several years and the other for a short period, but that it was intended to use them again. I have also asked why the Housing Trust is not making more provision for aged folk and have been informed that it was not the trust's responsibility to provide accommodation for the aged, but that of the Government or religious and philanthropic institutions. I have brought under the notice of the House the plight of a couple who had to use the whole of their fortnightly pension to obtain accommodation for four nights each fortnight and only yesterday on the air I heard Padre Strange relate that during the week someone had phoned him asking if he could take in an aged pensioner who had been for some time sleeping in the parklands. He took him in and said that he proved to be a most satisfactory person. We still do not know the number sleeping in the parklands, but we know that the Treasurer told me in 1950 that the Housing Trust had 11,000 applicants on its waiting list and that in 1955 he told Mr. Dunstan that the number of waiting applicants was 15,500 proving that there has been a drift in providing homes. However, there has been no drift on the part of the Government towards providing accommodation for the aged. I have been trying to ascertain from the Treasurer how many of those mentioned in Dr. Birch's report since 1932 who should have been cared for in an infirmary type of hospital are in mental institutions, and although I obtained the information for last year and this year, despite three attempts I have been unable to obtain any information from the Treasurer for the years from 1932 to 1953.

Mr. Jennings—Where is the Iron Curtain?

Mr. LAWN—The Liberal Party attempts to delude the people about what is going on behind the Iron Curtain, but does not tell them that the same things exist in our State. They cry about freedom of the press, but what description can be applied to what happened about the muzzling of the press concerning the vacant Magill wards? Of course this is a Police State, for the people of South Australia cannot elect a Government of their own choice and have to put up with lack of homes for themselves and the aged. Even this afternoon a woman came to see me to ascertain if I could assist her in securing possession of a house she purchased four months ago for the purpose of providing a home for her aged mother and father. She asked if I could help her to get them a Housing Trust home, for which they have had an application in for three years. I told her that that might be the stumbling block. She said that her father and mother are living in a house at Mile End owned by foreigners who have told them that other foreigners have obtained homes within four months of application. I know that they do, for people I have sent to the Treasurer have got a home in less than four months, but there is no attempt by the Government to legislate in the interests of the people. It believes in the survival of the fittest. The late Mr. Dunks told me years ago that he believed in that, and for years after that, when I asked him whether he still believed it, he said he did. How can these homeless people expect to get any consideration from a Government which believes in the survival of the fittest? The Treasurer went on to say that it is proposed to grant a subsidy of £36,250 to the Central Methodist Mission Old Folks' Home. I take it that that amount can be augmented by a similar subsidy from the Commonwealth Government, and the Central Mission must find a similar amount, but how far will £100,000 go?

Mr. Riches—The Commonwealth won't subsidize infirmaries.

Mr. LAWN—If the Commonwealth does not subscribe £36,000, so much less will be available. The Treasurer also said:—

The Government has agreed to assist in the provision of an old folks' home at Port Lincoln and £1,600 is included in these Estimates as a subsidy towards the purchase of land.

How long will it be before that building is erected? Recommendations before the Public Works Standing Committee frequently take years to finalize. If that happens in this

case people will have to continue living in unsatisfactory conditions.

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I was pleased to note that £15,000 is to be provided for additions to the Woodville Spastic Centre. I have no doubt that the member for Semaphore, Mr. Tapping, has already referred to the work of this organization. I have not read his remarks but I can imagine he made a worthy contribution to this debate because he has long been associated with the spastic centre. Of recent years I have been associated with this body, although to a lesser extent than he. Two years ago, while in New South Wales, I had an opportunity of seeing the spastic home at the Mosman centre. I realize that New South Wales has a greater population than South Australia and has greater resources from which to draw revenues to assist these institutions, but I was amazed at the wonderful work being done at that centre. I was most interested in the work being undertaken in the physiotherapy building. Large one-way vision windows were installed in that building and parents and those interested can watch the children receiving treatment without disturbing them. I was also thrilled to witness deaf and dumb children being taught by experts not only to lip read but to use their voices. Experts, who are paid by voluntary contributions to the centre, are teaching children of the ages of five and six to lip read and reply by voice to questions. The money spent on this type of work will be returned four-fold. Deaf and dumb children who normally would be a liability to the State are being taught to take their places in the community. Children who appear to be suffering from an acute form of Saint Vitus Dance are learning to read and write under the careful tuition of experts. I have no doubt that the people of this State will contribute in greater amounts to the work of the Woodville centre if they appreciate what is being done and their contributions will probably exceed those made by the general public of New South Wales. The Woodville centre has been working under difficulties but has achieved many wonderful things. Lack of facilities have prevented them from achieving more. The amount provided will be of great assistance, but I hope that further sums will be forthcoming.

An amount of £12,500 is provided for the purpose of extending ambulance services to country areas. I hope that in the process our existing ambulance services will be co-ordinated because by so doing it will be to the best

advantage. The extension of ambulance services to country areas is most desirable and will be of great benefit. The Tourist Bureau is to receive £25,652, most of which will be spent in advertising. In recent months I have witnessed the showing of a number of films relating to South Australia and I have been responsible for the screening of such films in some instances, but those who have seen them have expressed the regret that they have, to a great extent, been used for political propaganda. These films can be responsible for people spending their holidays in resorts in South Australia and their money is thus retained in the State. Although the films are excellent they should not be used for political purposes. It is unfortunate that the one Party has been in power so long in this State. It rests on its laurels until the eve of elections and then spends Government money to assist its campaigns. Cabinet Ministers and other prominent members of the Government appear in the excellent productions of the Tourist Bureau, but people do not want to see them: they prefer to see the area the film relates to. I hope that the film of the new Loxton irrigation scheme will not follow the old formula, but will be restricted to revealing the advantages of this scheme.

Money is to be devoted to the cleaning of water mains. I compliment the Engineering and Water Supply Department on the work it has done. Not long ago I sought the provision of a better water service to part of my district, particularly to the highly industrialized area. I realized the difficulty of having the work performed speedily but I was amazed at how soon it was undertaken. I express my appreciation of the work performed by the engineers and the workers on that job. We have in South Australia a body of workers second to none in the world. We should give credit to the workers and not keep from them their dues. I congratulate the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) on their remarks on the need of homes for our aged. In South Australia we have over 30,000 aged pensioners. These are the men and women who gathered the mallee stumps, who carried sugar bags to markets to obtain their provisions to feed young families, who pioneered the country and provided the men and women to fight in both world wars. Today they are forced on to a pension which is no more than a pittance and has not been increased by the Federal Government in accordance with the rising cost of living. It is so much lower a

percentage of the basic wage than it was in 1948 that many of them are at starvation point, and they cannot afford to pay the rents demanded of them by landlords. Many of them are living in most unsatisfactory conditions.

I entirely agree with Mr. Lawn's remarks on this matter. The old age pensioners deserve every consideration and they have the right to live in the areas where they can have a close association with their sons and daughters. Because of conditions brought about by the desires of the Government, and the rejection by the Government of Opposition proposals, many aged people are confined to institutions. I am not making excuses, but there are some people who have no consideration for their aged parents. They do not appreciate what their parents have done for them, and could well afford to care for them in their old age. Hundreds of decent citizens would love to help their parents in their old age but cannot do so, which means that the parents have to live just where they can, as was mentioned by one member. The Government proposes to make grants to worthy institutions. At one time some of my remarks were misinterpreted, and I now make it clear that I have the highest regard for the work of these institutions. They are now receiving grants in prosperous times, but they might find themselves in financial difficulties if we have less prosperous days. It behoves the Government to care for every section of the community and to see that none of our people is in need. Because of the shortsightedness of the Government, aged people are not being cared for. The Government will be brought down if it does not adopt a proper plan and provide comfort for these old folk.

First line passed.

#### TREASURER AND MINISTER OF IMMIGRATION.

Publicity and Tourist Bureau and Immigration Department, £25,652.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Can the Treasurer say where the land to be purchased at Eden Hills is situated? Is it at the junction of Shepherds Hill Road and South Road?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think that is correct. I understand it is a piece of land alongside the area being developed by the association of women athletes. It was recommended by the Tourist Bureau as being suitable for acquisition.

Line passed.

Miscellaneous, £35,000—passed.

#### MINISTER OF LANDS AND MINISTER OF REPATRIATION.

Miscellaneous, £5,000.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Can the Treasurer say whether an inquiry was held when the National Park kiosk was burned, and does he know whether, if a new kiosk is erected, fresh tenders will be called in connection with the lease?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I believe the kiosk was burned down on the very last day of the lease. As the honourable member knows National Park is controlled by a board. I am not sure, but I believe there was a proposal to give the lease to another person. I will get a report on the matter. The board applied to the Government for financial assistance. The park is used by many people who do not ordinarily have an opportunity to spend a day in the hills. Railway excursion fares are made available for the purpose. A kiosk is necessary and under the circumstances I felt that the assistance sought by the board was justified.

Mr. RICHES—Northern pleasure resorts are becoming more popular. They will become even more popular if facilities similar to those at National Park are provided. Can the Premier say what procedure has to be followed in order to get them in the lower Flinders Ranges? Must an application be made to the Tourist Bureau or should an approach be made to the Treasurer?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Under legislation a board has been set up to control National Park. The Government recognizes that if country tourist attractions are to be helped there must be some other way of getting assistance than the passing of legislation. Therefore, for some years a sum of money has been placed on the Estimates so that councils may be assisted to improve tourist attractions. Despite what one member said about money being spent by the Government for propaganda purposes, as Minister in charge of this matter I know that the handling of the tourist attractions is left to the Director of the Tourist Bureau. Councils should apply to it if they require assistance. The basis of the aid is normally a 50 per cent subsidy on approved projects, and the money must be obtained before the project is commenced. There is scarcely a district in the State that does not get assistance under the present set-up.

Line passed.

## MINISTER OF WORKS.

Engineering and Water Supply Department, £212,000—passed.

## MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

Education Department, £50,000.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Under "Contingencies" there is a proposal to provide the department with 12 buses. Under the Appropriation Act of 1954 the sum of £30,000 was to be spent and another £50,000 is now required. That shows that in the year 1954-55, £80,000 is to be spent on providing buses for the department. Earlier I commended it for providing school buses where possible. I know the many problems encountered in getting private contractors to provide the necessary services, mainly because of the difficulty in getting satisfactory buses. Does this item indicate that the policy of the Government will be to progressively provide its own vehicles for school bus services?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think it is correct to say that the policy has always been to get the maximum number of buses approved for the department.

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

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Education Department has been anxious to get additional buses to augment the services provided by contractors. I found I could make some further funds available to purchase more buses, hence this line on the Estimates. The 300 bus contractors are doing a good job, but as finance becomes available the department will purchase additional buses to provide further services. Last year the Supplementary Estimates contained an amount for the purchase of buses because I found that we had money available, and I point out that when the Estimates are framed at the beginning of each year it is impossible to say, in an estimated expenditure of over £40,000,000, how much finance will be available at the end of each year. For instance, Mr. Tapping mentioned the amount now granted to the South Australian Spastic Welfare Association. The Government received a request from this body only three weeks ago, so it was impossible to forecast that requirement when the Estimates were framed; and the same applies to the line for the Central Mission Old Folks' Home.

Mr. John Clark—Are the school buses being driven by teachers, or are other drivers being engaged?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—In many instances the drivers are the teachers themselves. When a school is closed down the teacher frequently continues to use the school residence and it is convenient for him to drive the children in the neighbourhood to the central school. One of the problems of private buses is that they require the attendance of a driver to transport the children, but this is obviated if the teacher drives a school bus.

Line passed.

Miscellaneous, £12,000—passed.

## MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF FORESTS.

Agriculture Department, £67,000; miscellaneous, £55,000—passed.

## MINISTER OF MINES.

Mines Department, £60,000.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Is the item "Cost of providing police guards" something outside the duties of the police force?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This is not an additional cost, but a cross entry. The police guards are provided for the security of the uranium department, but the amount in the Estimates is to recoup the Police Department for the cost of its services. If the police did not charge the uranium department for this service we would not get the true costs of the Mines Department.

Line passed.

## MINISTER OF MARINE.

Miscellaneous, £5,000.

Mr. STEPHENS—Will the Treasurer explain the reason for this line?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The sum of £5,000 is being paid to the Port Adelaide Corporation because the Harbors Board has taken over several properties in the Port Adelaide area, so they are now not subject to the payment of council rates.

Line passed.

## MINISTER OF RAILWAYS.

Miscellaneous, £6,000—passed.

## APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1).

The Supplementary Estimates having been adopted by the House, an Appropriation Bill for £704,147 was founded in Committee of Ways and Means, introduced by the Hon. T. Playford and read a first time.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill is based on the Supplementary Estimates which have been dealt with by the House. Clause 3 provides for the appropriation of £704,147, which is the total amount provided for in the Estimates. Clause 4 provides that the Treasurer shall have available to him, for payments, only such amounts as are first authorized by His Excellency the Governor by warrant, and that the receipts of the payees shall be evidence of the payments made, and the Treasurer shall be allowed credit accordingly.

Clause 5 provides for payments in lieu of leave to officers of the Public Service, or teachers in the Education Department, who retired during the period from December 20, 1954, to the time when the marginal increases were fixed by the Public Service Board and the Teachers Salaries Board, at the increased rates prescribed by those boards. This clause also provides for payments to dependants of deceased officers at rates of pay calculated to include the marginal increases which would have been received by an officer during the period of leave due to him had he lived.

Members will see that the only unusual feature in the Bill is the provision which enables the Government to meet certain deferred payments arising out of the marginal increases and awards by various tribunals which provided for increased payments as from December. In some instances officers had actually retired and accepted a lump sum in lieu of long service leave, and in others had died and there had been supplementary adjustments. Although they could not legally be demanded from the State, the Government believed that on general grounds of equity the amounts should be paid in certain instances. The Bill gives the Government the authority to make these payments; otherwise it is on similar lines to those of previous years.

Bill read a second time and taken through remaining stages.

#### BULK HANDLING OF GRAIN BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from June 8. Page 276.)

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN (Minister of Agriculture)—I ask leave of the House to exhibit on the board a plan indicating the zones into which the State is to be divided under the Bill.

Leave granted.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—The action just taken by the Minister is a clear indication of the ill-considered haste with which this Bill was produced in the House. I have to speak on the second reading and to express to some extent the opinions of the Opposition, although on this matter, as on many others of vital importance which come before the House, the Opposition is not bound to accept my views. The plan would have been an additional item of information amongst the many additional items I desired to have before I expressed a definite opinion on the Bill. It comes at a time when I have no opportunity to consider it or the implications it might have on my remarks. There is another very important matter which has been pending for a long time, namely, the report of the Public Works Committee, particularly in relation to the installation of the bulk handling system in the Wallaroo zone. The only information we have had is the letter read by the Minister of Agriculture this afternoon, and to say the least it was a very inconclusive document indeed.

This question of bulk handling has been before the South Australian Parliament to the best of my knowledge since about 1916, and has been the subject of a great deal of investigation and inquiry, more particularly in recent years, by the Public Works Committee. I have heard much criticism of that committee, because it has been considering the matter for about seven years without producing a final report. I was a member of that committee in the early stages of inquiry, and I say positively that there is no desire by the committee or any member of it to hold up the establishment of bulk handling in South Australia if it can be shown on the evidence available that such a system is in the interests of South Australian farmers. Difficulties were encountered by the committee, particularly in relation to finding an economical method of loading ships through terminal installations at the outports. These difficulties were particularly related to the comparatively small quantity of wheat loaded from our various outports, with perhaps the exception of Wallaroo.

That was the position when I resigned from the committee to accept my present office. Since then proposals have been submitted to the committee for the co-operative method of handling grain, which is the subject of this Bill. It has been the subject of two reports by the Public Works Committee, neither of which contains any information which would resolve

some of the doubts in my mind, and I believe doubts are also held by other members of the House. Regarding the broad general principles of bulk handling I can say the Opposition agrees with a properly considered implemented system that would benefit our primary producers. I realize that Opposition members have been charged with being opposed to bulk handling because of its effect on the labor force at various country centres, and particularly at shipping ports; but that movement is a humanitarian movement. We believe that man is destined for a better destiny than carrying bags of wheat on his back, whether it be at a country siding or a shipping port, and, that, if any method can be devised that will confer a benefit on primary producers in the first instance, and take the load of wheat off the lumper's back in the second instance, it should be encouraged.

We, in South Australia, have had bag handling of wheat since the beginning of wheat production here, and I believe that we first became exporters about 70 years ago. Since that time in the various shipping ports, particularly the older ports such as Wallaroo, a labour force has been encouraged to become domiciled for the particular purpose of loading the wheat into ships. Although I agree that we should not perpetuate a system that after all is beneath the dignity of man, there is a responsibility on this Parliament to try to provide some other means of livelihood for those men in their home town. I believe that could be done. After all, they have been encouraged to make their homes there; they have raised families there, and in some cases the second and even the third generation of waterside workers are handling the wheat today. This applies also to such ports as Port Pirie, Port Lincoln, Thevenard, and, to a lesser extent, Port Adelaide. With their personal roots embedded in the locality, surely such men are entitled to consideration by this Parliament in providing them with an alternative means of livelihood if in the march of progress wheat is taken off their backs and handled by some mechanical means.

I deplore the fact that this important Bill has been introduced with such a lack of information in the Minister's second reading explanation and the Public Works Standing Committee's report on this first zone (for I take it from what has been said that Wallaroo will be the zone first provided with these installations). The final report of the Committee has not been presented to Parliament and there should be, and I believe there will

be, a wealth of information in it that would guide members in determining whether they should pass this Bill in its present form or whether they should amend or reject it as an indication to the Government that it should introduce a more comprehensive and better measure.

We are told, however, that time is the essence of the contract and that we must deny ourselves this vital information that we should have before coming to a decision, merely because it is essential that the Bill should pass to allow the Wallaroo zone to be equipped in time to handle in bulk the wheat from the next harvest. Further, we are told that because the farmers want it they should have it. I venture to speak for some farmers and for the South Australian taxpayers generally, and I say there is more to it than that. It is not merely a question of a consistent demand by a section of farmers for this scheme merely because they believe it is in their interests. Although I admit that, as disclosed by the Minister, there has been a demand from a substantial section, this Parliament must be satisfied that it is in the interests of South Australian farmers, firstly, that bulk handling should be provided at this stage, and secondly, that the system to be provided is the best that can be devised at present.

The farmers, however, have not been fully informed on this matter; they do not fully understand all the implications of the scheme they are asking Parliament to ratify in this Bill. For instance, I have met farmers who assert that the toll of 6d., 3d., or 2d. a bushel, which is sought to be imposed in accordance with the various facets of the scheme, is the only charge they will be called upon to bear; but that is not the real position because as I understand the scheme, the toll system is to provide merely for the capital cost of the scheme. The Wheat Board has agreed to hire from the proposed bulk handling company its bulk handling installation on the basis of 7½ per cent per annum, but in addition the board will have to charge handling expenses; therefore, instead of being up for only 2d., 3d., or 6d. a bushel, the farmer will be up for the particular toll operating at the time he delivers his wheat, his percentage of the 7½ per cent contributed by the Wheat Board, plus the actual cost to the Wheat Board of handling wheat through the bulk handling installation. That will amount to a considerable figure.

I have been looking into this subject for many years, and I still think that the farmer



will be better off financially as the result of this system than he would be under the bagged handling system, provided that certain contingencies not already provided for are provided before the Bill leaves this House. The farmers of South Australia must realize, however, that there is no magic formula that would enable a costly scheme, estimated by its sponsors to cost between £4,250,000 and £5,000,000, to work cheaply. Indeed, having regard to our recent experience in South Australia the capital cost of the scheme will probably be greater than that estimated by its sponsors. When the establishment of bulk handling at Ardrossan was being considered we were told that the Wheat Board's part of the expenditure would be about £70,000, but we subsequently learned that it was £220,000.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—It was £250,000.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I accept that correction, which makes the comparison £30,000 worse than my figure. In this case we may find after a year or two, when this project is under way, that a similar increase in expenditure may be required to meet the cost of these installations. On general principles I consider bulk handling to be to the advantage of the South Australian farmer, and one of the strong reasons that impels me to that belief is the fact that in recent years the method of receiving wheat in the ports of our overseas customers has changed. At one time bulk wheat had to be sold at a discount compared with bagged wheat, but, because most of our overseas customers have equipped their ports with bulk installations for unloading ships, it has now become necessary for us to export wheat to them in bulk. That is a big factor we have to consider in determining whether the bulk system is better than the bagged system for South Australia.

Then we come to the question of whether the proposed scheme—if we can call it a scheme—is the best one for South Australia. The Bill provides that South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. will be empowered to establish bulk handling facilities at country sidings and to establish terminal bins at the five shipping ports that serve various zones. The major question that has to be resolved before I will support this measure is how wheat can be taken from the shore bins owned by the company over to the wharves or jetties owned by the Harbors Board and loaded into the ships. There is not one iota of information in the Minister's speech as to how this can be accomplished, yet it is one of the most important facets of the operation. Whether

that can be done economically at all or any of our ports, and whether a satisfactory method has been evolved to handle the small quantities of wheat that will be available for export at most of our ports without incurring a large capital expenditure, is something about which we have not been told, although that question might have been answered if the report of the Public Works Committee had been made available to Parliament before we were asked to discuss this Bill.

Another point of considerable moment is whether the proposed system at country receiving centres is the best that can be adopted. I understand it is based on the unorthodox handling system of Western Australia under which the old idea of vertical silos, the time-honoured practice of every country in the world that has adopted bulk handling, is to be discarded and the bin or warehouse type is to be used. This has some disadvantages here that are not so apparent in Western Australia; for instance, the wheatgrowing areas of Western Australia are not so subject to heavy summer rain as ours. During the receiving period it is not possible to adequately protect the wheat in those bins from a sudden fall of rain because the elevator system requires that a fairly considerable aperture be left in the roof. This introduces an element of risk that is greater here than in Western Australia.

Next is the question of the durability of these installations. We know that some of the bins erected earlier in Western Australia have outlived their useful lives and have to be replaced. Whether in the long run there will be any greater economy from the adoption of the unorthodox system instead of the orthodox system is a question that I have not been able to answer to my own satisfaction. The vertical concrete silo is virtually everlasting and it permits wheat to be handled in the most economical way—up by power and down by gravitation. It also permits of greater isolation of damaged wheat than the horizontal or warehouse type bin. None of these things have been resolved by the Public Works Committee and no evidence has been furnished to Parliament that we are adopting the best method under the circumstances.

One other aspect that should be seriously considered now is not whether we should ultimately establish the system or not, but whether we should proceed with great haste to establish it. As every member knows, there is a glut of wheat in the markets of the world. Between 90,000,000 and 100,000,000

bushels of unsown wheat, the product of former harvests, is stored in Australia today. It is obvious that we should sell as much of that wheat as possible before we start to sell the incoming harvest, and if we have to provide storage for considerable quantities of wheat over a long period it is obvious that the bagged system would be the most economical and satisfactory. That is a matter on which we have had no information. Nobody has told us how much storage we shall be asked to provide, even in the Wallaroo district, the first to be provided with an installation.

Finally, there are two very important questions to be determined, and they should be determined by this House; firstly, the cost to the Harbors Board of providing loading facilities from the company's bin to the ships, and secondly, the cost to the Railways Department in adapting rolling stock for the bulk carriage of wheat. Years ago Mr. Webb, a former Railways Commissioner, equipped the railways with flat-topped trucks capable of carrying 50 tons of grain, plus, I think, a 10 per cent overload, and they have been found to be the most economical method of transporting grain by rail in South Australia, if not in the whole of Australia. However, they will not be of any use at all for transporting grain in bulk, as they would have to be provided with sides of considerable height to carry the same quantity of grain in bulk as they now carry in bags. Nobody has told us what will be the impact of the adoption of this scheme on the Harbors Board revenue, the Railways Department revenue and ultimately on the Budget of this State. That is a matter on which we were entitled to information before being asked to vote on the second reading.

I now turn to some of the propaganda that I have heard and read. We are asked to adopt this system because it is said that the South Australian average crop for the last 10 years was about 26,000,000 bushels. That is a considerable figure, but when we examine the position we find that approximately 13,500,000 bushels of that figure was used for local purposes and only the balance shipped to overseas markets through five ports.

Mr. Shannon—Possibly five.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I thank the member for his correction. Possibly I have been wrong all the time, because I had forgotten that one port has already been converted. The point is that about 12,500,000 bushels of wheat has to be shipped through six ports, one of them

being Wallaroo, which I understand ships an average of about 5,000,000 bushels.

Mr. Shannon—Four million.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—No doubt the honourable member's figures are more accurate than mine. However, this leaves only 8,500,000 bushels to be shipped from the other ports, and this matter has not been fully considered by the farmers. I do not blame them for their enthusiasm for the scheme, because it will enable savings and an easier method of handling the grain. However, we have the right to consider every aspect of the matter to determine whether the present is the right time for this scheme, because costs are at their absolute peak and some of the methods may be out-of-date before the installations are completed.

The only information I have on the financial aspect is from the first progress report of the Public Works Committee, and the evidence given by Mr. Stott, the member for Ridley, who has played a very prominent part in organizing this scheme. I give him full marks for his work, and I do not criticize him in any way. However, not many of the farmers understand the method of financing the scheme as he does. The proposal for raising finance is outlined on page 4 of the report. In the first year the company would receive 3d. a bushel on every bushel of wheat delivered for sale and would borrow from the Commonwealth Bank sufficient to complete the installations in the Wallaroo division. Unless I am mistaken there will be a levy of 3d. a bushel imposed on these 13,000,000 bushels of wheat belonging to farmers in all parts of South Australia who have agreed to become members of this co-operative company. In subsequent years there would be a levy of 6d. a bushel on wheat delivered in bulk and 2d. a bushel on bagged wheat. When all installations are completed the levy would be reduced to no more than 3d. a bushel. All levies would be recorded in a toll register. In a paragraph headed "Revolving Finance" the system of repayment is outlined. In the thirteenth and subsequent years it is proposed each year to redeem one-twelfth of the debentures. If a farmer lives long enough, in the thirteenth year he will be repaid one-twelfth of the tolls he has paid in the preceding years. I take it that that will probably be out of the toll he pays in that year because he must keep on paying tolls as the evidence in the report reveals. In the twenty-fourth year the growers will have been completely repaid the total tolls they lend in

the first twelve-year period. The toll system goes on under these conditions for 24 years and the farmers are repaid in the same manner during the third period of 12 years. According to this evidence the toll system will continue for at least 36 years.

I must admit that £1,000,000 is to be borrowed from the Commonwealth Bank, but if we pass this Bill the Government guarantees £500,000 of that amount. In other words, the taxpayers in South Australia become responsible for half of the loan. The evidence refers to the receipt of 3d. a bushel on 27,000,000 bushels, but there will only be 13,000,000 bushels according to my figures. The farmers not remotely associated with this scheme cannot be compelled—

The Hon. T. Playford—I think the toll applies to all wheat grown.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—No, it applies only to wheat put into the system. When a farmer uses the system he must pay the toll.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The home consumption wheat would, of necessity, go through the system.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes, once it has been established, but I am referring to the first year before the whole system is established. The evidence refers to levies of 3d. a bushel on 27,000,000 bushels of wheat. It is obvious that there will not be a levy on 27,000,000 bushels. The toll would not be more than half of what was mentioned in the evidence and, with the Commonwealth Bank loan, would provide £1,249,100, which would be sufficient to install the Wallaroo division. In the second year funds would start to build up and at the end of the fifth year out of profits and tolls there would be sufficient to install the Port Lincoln division. At the end of the seventh year there would be enough to install the Port Pirie division and in the ninth year sufficient to install the important Port Adelaide division. I wonder if the farmers who signed their contracts to become shareholders of the company know that if they live in the Port Adelaide division they will have to wait nine years or more before they get the benefit of a bulk handling system and that they will be paying tolls all the time. These are some of the matters we should have been given information on. There may be a reply to them. I agree with the raw general principles of the scheme, but at the moment I am asked to accept a pig in a poke and I am normally not guilty of doing that. I like to see the pig in the day-

light so that I can ascertain whether he has mange, swine fever or other diseases that a pig may have.

The use of horizontal bins rules out the possibility of segregating our wheats in the future. Dr. Callaghan and other eminent experts have said that we must encourage the growing of a strong wheat in order to foster its sale in the markets of the world. If we are to have the type of bin which does not enable the segregation of wheat—and I understand the horizontal bin makes it difficult—we are ruling out the possibility of encouraging that type of improvement in our wheat production. I am not stupid enough to believe that we can adopt the practices applying in the great wheatgrowing countries of Canada and the United States where four or more different grades of wheat are grown, but we may have two grades in South Australia—strong and standard grades.

Mr. Shannon—Have you thought of the difficulties at sidings where two grades of wheat are coming in?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The principle of vertical storage is that there must be at least two bins, irrespective of the quantity received, so that the wheat can be changed from one bin to another in order to protect it from the ravages of weevil and other pests. Of course, if there are a dozen bins only one spare bin is required in the same way as if there were two bins. With the vertical system of storage the wheat can be rotated. Weevil can be dealt with much more efficiently than with the horizontal system. I raise these points in the hope that either the Minister, the member for Ridley or the Public Works Committee—if and when its report is ready—may be able to resolve them. If my doubts are resolved I will support the scheme. It may be possible to amend this Bill in Committee to establish some of the safeguards that I suggest should be incorporated, but if my doubts are not resolved and the necessary amendments are not acceptable then I must seriously consider opposing the third reading.

Mr. STOTT (Ridley)—I welcome the Leader of the Opposition's critical survey of the Bill and the opportunity of being able to answer some of his doubts. I can appreciate his anxiety to establish a proper system of bulk handling in South Australia. I admit that the Minister was labouring under grave difficulties when he introduced this Bill. He was trying to beat the clock. Had he had more time he would have been able to answer some of the Leader's queries. I understand the anxiety of

the Minister and the Government to have this system established to prevent a repetition of the debacle that occurred at Ardrossan last year. I propose to give a full history of the negotiations that have taken place in connection with this matter. One of the points raised by the Leader was that farmers were not fully informed of or did not understand the scheme. I reject that suggestion. Farmers have been fully informed over a period of four or five years and numerous meetings have been held throughout the State. They have been well and adequately advertised and there have been excellent attendances at all meetings when the whole proposition of the toll finance was explained fully to every farmer, and I think the great majority understand the revolving system of finance.

Mr. Riches—Do they think that is all they will have to contribute?

Mr. STOTT—Yes, but it has no relation to the criticism of the scheme. The toll will provide the money for the installation work. Today the farmer pays the wheat handling charges and under the scheme he will still pay them. Later I will show that when we have bulk handling here the charges will be reduced, and the farmers understand that clearly. That is why there is so much support for the scheme. Many meetings were held and there was only one man—a Scotchman—who voted against the resolution.

Mr. Riches—I noticed there was criticism at Bordertown.

Mr. STOTT—Yes, but not in regard to the financing of the company. There has been criticism in the press and from other places, but once an explanation was made the criticism disappeared. The resolution would not have been carried at so many places with such wonderful support if the criticism had not been answered. Every opportunity was taken to let the farmers know what they were contracting for. We did not approach the Government until we were sure that we had the support of the growers. We first approached the Premier because of a unanimous resolution carried at a central council conference. It requested that we create a 100 per cent growers' co-operative company. The idea was to have a company owned, controlled and financed by the growers themselves. When we approached the Premier for a charter he said, "Before the Government can entertain such an idea it must know whether the scheme has the support of the growers, how the operations of the Harbors Board and the railways will be affected, how it

is proposed to finance the scheme and whether adequate finance can be obtained." He said that when we could answer the questions satisfactorily we could approach him again.

A committee of growers went to Western Australia and whilst there had the benefit of the excellent assistance of Mr. Allan Stephenson, who is, in my opinion, the most competent engineer on bulk handling anywhere in the world. He was with C.B.H. in Western Australia since 1936. So confident of his ability was the company that it sent him to the Argentine, Canada and the Continent to learn the latest bulk handling methods. In 1942 he was commissioned by the Commonwealth Government, through the Australian Wheat Board, to inquire into the proper way to store wheat at South Australian ports. After investigations at Wallaroo, Port Pirie, and Port Lincoln he presented a report. In view of all this members will agree that he has outstanding qualifications in connection with bulk handling. We considered ourselves fortunate in having his services. At Albany and Fremantle we saw the latest bulk handling equipment. At Midlands we saw the warehouse system of handling grain as against the vertical type. The Leader of the Opposition was concerned at the vertical type being rejected in favour of the warehouse type, but New South Wales and Victoria are now going in for the warehouse idea.

Mr. O'Halloran—As adjuncts to the vertical type?

Mr. STOTT—Yes. They have been found to be more economical. They have more unloading points for farmers. It has been proved that they can do a good job. Mr. O'Halloran said that the Western Australian type may not be suitable for South Australian conditions because a section of the roof is open when the elevator is put in. There are two types of silos in Western Australia—the unorthodox and the orthodox or permanent roof type. The company proposes to install the more modern Western Australian equipment and have the permanent roof type. Under it no wheat will be exposed except through the small aperture that is required for loading wheat on to trucks, but it can be covered quickly at any time. The Western Australian unorthodox type is a temporary structure where the roof is removed entirely when loading into rail trucks. We have rejected that type. The engineer was instructed to prepare estimates for South Australia, having in mind the permanent roof type. The Leader of the Opposition has correctly said that the toll is necessary to

provide capital. In the first year all the members of the company that have signed the application form will pay 3d. a bushel toll, whether the wheat is in bulk or in bags. Everybody knows that the Australian Wheat Board is the central selling authority in Australia. As soon as the wheat is delivered it becomes the property of the board. The toll of 3d. in the early stages will provide the capital to enable the company to commence activities. The Commonwealth Trading Bank has agreed to advance £1,000,000 to the company on the security of an exclusive charter being given by the passage of legislation in this State.

Mr. O'Halloran—There is a matter of £500,000.

Mr. STOTT—There is a Government guarantee of £500,000, but there is no danger that the Government will have to put up that sum of money. The toll system is based on a 27,000,000 bushel average. It has been examined by officers of the Commonwealth Trading Bank and departmental officers who can find no fault in it. The Leader of the Opposition said that it will apply only to members of the company and that is correct. He kept mentioning 13,000,000 bushels and wondered whether that quantity would be enough to provide the necessary finance. It is obvious that there will be more than 13,000,000 bushels because as the company grows and additional silos are built every grower will want to deliver his wheat to the company.

Mr. O'Halloran—It will take some time to put up the installations.

Mr. STOTT—Yes, but that cannot destroy the scheme.

Mr. Shannon—The growers will be compelled to join the company.

Mr. STOTT—No. We tried to get a 100 per cent scheme but it was ruled out as unconstitutional.

Mr. Shannon—Yes, but earlier you said that the idea was to have a 100 per cent growers' co-operative company.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—You mean that the scheme will be so attractive that all growers will want to come in.

Mr. STOTT—Yes. Once the bins are installed at country sidings it goes without saying that soon all the growers will be delivering wheat in bulk, because they will not be able to deliver in bags. The growers who

are not members of the company will have to pay the charge fixed by the Auditor-General. We are not worried about this matter, and the Leader of the Opposition need not be worried.

Mr. O'Halloran—It destroys the voluntary basis of the scheme.

Mr. STOTT—No, because a farmer would be foolish not to be a member of the company. If he were not a member and paid handling charges for making use of the silo he would not get it back under the revolving system of finance, but as a member he would.

Mr. Davis—He would have to come in.

Mr. STOTT—Yes. It would be a matter of common-sense. The Leader of the Opposition referred to a quantity of 13,000,000 bushels of wheat. I have already spoken about this. The quantity will grow because as the bins are installed all growers will come in, and that will give the 27,000,000 bushels average. The sooner all South Australian growers join the company the sooner it will be able to build the necessary installations, and I think that the Leader of the Opposition made that point. He said that if only growers producing 13,000,000 bushels join the company it will be some time before the installations are provided, but the growers understand that. They are sensible enough to realize that if they do not join the company for many years they will never get bulk handling. The other point the Leader of the Opposition made was that if growers join the company in 1955 they will receive a one-twelfth repayment of their tolls in the thirteenth year under the revolving system of finance, but if they do not join until, say, 1960 they will get no repayment until 1972. This means that the scheme will be so attractive for the growers that they will want to join the company now.

Mr. William Jenkins—And they will save money because they will not have to buy bags.

Mr. STOTT—Yes, and they will save the cost of sewing.

Mr. Shannon—You give the growers the option to remain out of the company, but they will have to pay a special charge for the use of the installations.

Mr. STOTT—That is so. There is no compulsion to join. Even when the silos are built at country sidings the farmers will not have to become members of the company.

Mr. Corcoran—What advantage would that give them?

Mr. STOTT—None whatever. If a farmer wants to use the company's facilities he will have to approach the local agent, who will tell him it will pay him to become a member. The Government said the company must receive all wheat, whether it comes from members or non-members, but a non-member will have to pay for the use of the company's facilities. He will have to pay a handling charge and, in addition, make some contribution towards the capital cost of the system.

Mr. Riches—What about a farmer who still wants to deliver wheat in bags?

Mr. STOTT—There is nothing to prevent him; but he will have to make his own arrangement with any firm dealing in bagged wheat. There is a provision that the company may handle wheat delivered in bags by a non-member.

Mr. Riches—Then all your talk about all farmers coming into the scheme is pure assumption.

Mr. STOTT—No. I have more confidence in South Australian farmers than the honourable member has, for I believe that when they find how attractive the scheme is they will all join the company.

Mr. Riches—I know some of the criticism by farmers in the South-East who could not get their wheat into the silos across the border.

Mr. STOTT—I know that argument, and that is why we are not adopting the Victorian vertical system of handling. There are still some farmers who do not want to join the company. I stress that they are not compelled to do so. I have here figures issued by the Australian Wheat Board showing the comparative costs of handling bulk wheat and bagged wheat. The average operating expenses for bulk wheat in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia was 2.863d. a bushel for the seasons 1950-51, 1951-52, and 1952-53. The capital charges averaged 2.511d. a bushel, making a total charge of 5.374d. a bushel. The operating expenses cover handling from the country siding to the ship's hold.

Mr. O'Halloran—What is the position in Western Australia?

Mr. STOTT—The total operating expenses for the three years were 4.002d. For handling in bags in South Australia, including shipping and storages, it works out at 8.236d. To the average of 2.289d. which I have already mentioned you have to add capital charges for the use of the system, which brings the average to 4.198d.

as against 7.175d. If the bulk handling system is installed in South Australia the company will reduce the charges from the 8.236d. a bushel to the figure I have already shown.

Mr. Shannon—The only comparative figure would be that for Western Australia, where the position is more in keeping with that in South Australia.

Mr. STOTT—The honourable member will understand that the Wheat Board handles the wheat in South Australia as it does in the other States, and all the operating and capital charges are levied by that board.

Mr. Shannon—The farmer pays.

Mr. STOTT—The honourable member said that we should compare South Australia with Western Australia.

Mr. Shannon—That is the only figure that would be of any value to us.

Mr. STOTT—The figure which is of value is that for capital charges, which the board debits against the wheat accounts. It takes the average all over Australia and that figure becomes a deduction from every individual grower's account. The Wheat Board's accounts and not Western Australia, should be taken as a guide. The board handles the wheat throughout Australia and takes the average, which is the price the South Australian farmer will have to pay. Today every South Australian grower is contributing to the capital handling costs of the bulk handling systems in the other States. So, the South Australian grower is making his contribution toward the 4.289d. of the bulk handling systems of the other States, and *vice versa* growers in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia are making their contributions to the dearer bag handling system in this State. The criticism you hear in the other States is, "You dreamy-eyed farmers in South Australia want to wake up, because we will not continue to make this contribution to your dearer bag handling system"; and I think that is justified.

Mr. Davis—Did I understand you to say that you are not adopting the Western Australian system at all?

Mr. STOTT—I said that this company proposed to adopt the modern, permanent roof type system at country receival centres but that does not apply to terminal ports.

Mr. McAlees—You said that it costs approximately 4d. a bushel in Western Australia. Would that cover all the cost of the plant?

Mr. STOTT—No. The honourable member is confusing two different figures. The total

capital cost will be a deduction from the grower by the toll. That takes care of building the installations in South Australia and has nothing to do with the figures I have just related. The toll which the farmer will pay as a member of the company will be additional to the handling charges. That is exactly the same as has been operating in Western Australia since 1936. I defy anyone to go to Western Australia and find a single farmer who is against the co-operative system of bulk handling in that State.

Mr. Davis—You said the overall charge is 10d. a bushel.

Mr. STOTT—It could approximate that. Even if it were 10d. under the bulk handling system, it would be more under the bag handling system. By adopting the bulk handling system, the South Australian farmer will cheapen his operating costs by approximately 3d. a bushel. I suggest that the success of the scheme rests entirely with those who are supporting it. The Treasurer said that we had to get the support of growers and the railways. Members will recollect that Cabinet said to us, "We will have a look at your scheme." We presented a Bill prepared by a leading firm of Adelaide solicitors. The articles of association were drafted and we communicated with the Railways Department. In our original application to the Government we did not want the Harbors Board to become involved in the erection of the galleries or the endless belts at any of the ports, but the Government said that as the board owned the jetties it should install the equipment on them; therefore it was agreed that the board would build that part of the installation from the company's silo to the hold of the ship. The original plan provided that every grower, whether a member of the company or not, would pay a toll.

That proposal was referred by Cabinet to the Public Works Committee, and as it was a proposal for the creation of a growers' co-operative bulk handling company entirely financed by the growers, the reference before the Public Works Committee was entirely changed because previously the committee had been inquiring into a Government financed scheme. Under the Public Works Standing Committee Act every project costing £30,000 or more must be the subject of a report before the Minister can act, but under our original proposal not even a penny of Government money was involved. The Public Works Committee examined our proposal, and the question of the toll was referred to the Crown Solicitor who said that it represented an excise or a

tax that could not be imposed because its imposition was the exclusive right of the Commonwealth. We immediately answered that by saying, in effect, "If you raise the constitutional bar, we will get the members to sign up for the tolls voluntarily."

The Public Works Committee examined this proposal, and in a second report said it was constitutionally valid. The essence of that second report by the committee was that, if Parliament in its wisdom sought to grant a charter to the company, it should see that the company had adequate finance to carry the scheme through and that, if the Government were involved in any guarantee, it should have some say in the control of the company. I remind honourable members that it was only last session that the committee reported in that strain; therefore, the criticism of the committee because its report on this subject is not before Parliament has nothing to do with this Bill.

Mr. Riches—Do you know what is in the report?

Mr. STOTT—No.

Mr. Riches—Then how do you know it has nothing to do with this Bill?

Mr. STOTT—Because the original terms of reference related to a scheme entirely financed by the Government, whereas this scheme is a growers' co-operative scheme entirely financed, except for the jetty installations, by the growers. True, I have criticized the committee in the past because of its delay in bringing down its report on bulk handling, but in fairness I must concede that the committee has far too much to do. The general bulk handling scheme should have never been referred to the committee; it should have been the subject of an investigation by a Royal Commission which would have brought down a report years ago, whereas the Public Works Committee has been handicapped by the necessity to inquire into nurses' quarters, sewerage schemes, bridges, and other projects. Further, one could not expect any member of the committee to know all the details and costs involved in a colossal bulk handling scheme. The Public Works Standing Committee Act should be amended so that the limit is raised from £30,000 to, say, £100,000.

Mr. Riches—Should not members have the committee's report before voting on this Bill?

Mr. STOTT—The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) are entitled to take their own stand on this Bill, but I am here to give my opinion on the facts.

Even if the Public Works Committee made its report on its original terms of reference, that report would have to be printed and it would be some weeks before members were in a position to get a complete grip on it and some months before a Bill could be introduced; therefore, the farmers would not get a bulk handling scheme in time for next year's harvest, let alone this year's.

Mr. Riches—Members have been promised a report this week.

Mr. STOTT—But it will not be available for them to read for some time, and even then it will not assist them because it will deal with a project financed entirely by the Government; whereas this Bill provides for a scheme financed entirely by the growers. After the constitutional issue had been cleared up by the committee I said to the Premier, "Where do we go from here? As I understand the Public Works Standing Committee Act, now that the committee has made a report the Government is free to introduce a Bill." The Premier replied, "It is not as easy as all that. The position has altered because of the voluntary contribution by the grower. If Parliament in its wisdom grants an exclusive charter to this company and we carry out our part of the contract as the Government in power, what guarantee have we that the growers will carry out their part of the contract?" That was a very sensible, logical and prudent question. My answer was, "My organization will use all its power to get the growers to sign the application forms." The Premier said, "All right, go ahead and see if you can get support. The Government cannot act until it sees whether you have the support." We did, and the response right from the start was surprising.

The Premier then said, "Cabinet will examine it again." Cabinet did so and then laid down the conditions under which it would grant the charter—that the Harbors Board would build the equipment on the jetties and that we must have sufficient applications signed to cover 12,000,000 bushels of wheat at not less than 3d. a bushel for twelve years. That did two very important things; firstly, it gave to the Government, and also to Parliament, the significant approval of the growers themselves and, secondly, it provided a prudent Government with a guarantee of not less than 3d. a bushel on 12 million bushels. This represents £150,000 a year, and provides the necessary backing for the guarantee of £500,000. That was a proper backing for any Government to ask. The company applied some pressure. Meetings were called and eventually a certificate

for 12 million bushels was given; the auditor's certificate has been given to the House. In addition, the Auditor-General's department sent two officers to examine the books, and they could find no fault at all. Parliament must be convinced that the company has the support of the growers and that there is no need to worry about the Government's guarantee.

One of the conditions laid down by the Government is that the design of the installations at the country sidings shall be approved by the Minister, and the company has no objection to that because once he has approved of a design it will be installed at all country sidings. However, if the company happens to discover some improvement it has to submit the plans to the Minister before it can carry it out, and the company does not object to that, but there is also a provision that the company was not happy about in the early stages. This provision is that the type of elevator at the terminal bins shall be subject to the plans and specifications as agreed to by the Public Works Committee. The company objected to that in the early stages on the ground that not one penny of Government money is involved in their erection. The company felt that it had nothing to do with the Public Works Committee and objected to its being referred to the committee. However, we eventually approved of this provision, but I hope that the Government in Committee will reconsider this aspect. I agree with the Minister that there must be some co-ordinated authority to decide where the Harbors Board will put its equipment and the company its terminal.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—There can be no removal of that stipulation. It was agreed upon by the Government and the company.

Mr. STOTT—I know that, but I cannot see why the Government could not agree to the Minister's doing it.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—It is futile to do that now.

Mr. STOTT—It may be, but that was in the original proposal of the company, although it agreed to the alteration because the Government insisted on it. In its original application the company offered to build all the loading equipment at the jetties at no expense to the Government, but the Government would not agree because the jetties are owned by the Harbors Board. An analogy can be drawn between this company and the Broken Hill Proprietary, which, under its charter, can build jetties, piers or wharves in its area.



Under its indenture the Broken Hill Proprietary Company has a free hand, but under this scheme the company is not allowed to build any equipment on the jetties. However, the company has agreed to this condition.

It would appear from the speech of the Leader of the Opposition that there are some points worrying members. The scheme will be financed by the Commonwealth Trading Bank to the extent of £1,000,000 on the security of assets and the pledging of future tolls. In the first year the growers will pay 3d. a bushel when they deliver in bags. In subsequent years, when the company builds bulk bins at receival sidings, the farmers will pay 6d. a bushel. If the farmer delivers in bags to, say, a siding at Snowtown he will pay the bag toll; if he delivers in bulk at the siding he will pay 6d. a bushel. I think the Leader of the Opposition misunderstood that point. If the bulk receiving bin is at the farmer's receival point he pays 6d., but if he delivers in bags he pays only 2d. When the scheme is completely installed throughout the State the toll will drop to 3d. and at that stage I think all growers will be in the scheme because I cannot visualize any farmer being so foolish as to remain a non-member and pay a charge that will never be refunded.

If 27,000,000 bushels at 3d. a bushel goes through the company's installations, £337,500 will be received annually in tolls, and obviously the company will reach that stage. This was given in evidence on the original nine-year plan that was ruled to be unconstitutional. If all wheatgrowers were members of the company a 27,000,000 bushel harvest would be worth £337,500 to the company. Whether all farmers are members or not will not materially alter that figure because the farmer who is not a member will still contribute to the company. The charges he must pay will be fixed by the Auditor-General and, in my opinion, it would not be less than 3d. a bushel.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—I think you may be wrong there.

Mr. STOTT—If the Auditor-General takes into consideration interest charges, storage and operating costs I doubt whether it will be less than 3d. a bushel. This year the harvest was 28,500,000 bushels and the income to the company last year would have exceeded the figure I mentioned. The sooner there is 100 per cent membership of wheatgrowers the sooner the silos will be built. If within two or three years there is 100 per cent membership it obviously will not take nine years to complete the scheme. Quite obviously if all farmers in

a particular area said they would have nothing to do with the company and would not pay tolls there would never be a bulk handling scheme. Under this proposal in the thirteenth year the farmers would start to get repaid. At the end of the 12 year period the company would have completely repaid the Commonwealth Bank and would have built up sufficient funds to enable it to commence repayments to farmers. This scheme differs from the Western Australian scheme in that in Western Australia all tolls a grower pays are credited to him in the toll register and at the end of 12 years his name, with the name of all other growers, is numbered and that number put on a marble. All marbles are placed in a barrel and one-twelfth of the total are rolled out and the farmers whose numbers they represent are repaid in full.

Mr. Fred Walsh—That is a type of lottery.

Mr. STOTT—It is a lottery. The marbles rolled out at the end of the twelfth year are put aside and at the end of the next year another twelfth of the marbles are extracted and those farmers paid. Under our system in the thirteenth year every grower would be paid one-twelfth of the tolls he has paid. When this system was explained, one of the delegates at a conference said "I prefer this system of everyone participating because if we had the Western Australian system my neighbour who is always lucky would be sure to have his marble rolled out first and he would be riding in a Jaguar motor car while I would wait for 12 years before I got anything and would have to use my T-model Ford."

A question that may bother members concerns what would happen if a farmer who had been paying tolls for five years died. There is a special clause in the company's articles of association relating to that. If the estate is to be wound up the trustees can elect to collect the one-twelfth of the tolls as they become due or if the beneficiaries would suffer hardship the directors of the company can arrange for the repayment of the whole amount of tolls. A similar provision relates to a farmer who sells out and retires. He can collect his payments as they fall due or if he can prove hardship—which would be extremely doubtful if he had sold his farm—the directors can pay him in full. In both cases, it is left to the discretion of the company's directors. The cost of the scheme has concerned some members. I have been criticized in the daily press and some country papers for suggesting that this scheme will only cost £4,850,000. They are not my figures. They were prepared by a much more competent man than myself.

Based on the improved permanent type system Mr. Stephenson estimates that the cost will be £4,850,000, which envisages terminal points at Wallaroo, Port Pirie, Port Lincoln and Thevenard. There is also provision for a storage silo at Port Adelaide. At this stage there is no need to establish a terminal point at Port Adelaide because all the wheat there goes into the local trade. Later, if there is wheat for export from Port Adelaide the necessary installation can be made. The company will take over the Ardrossan silo, and I hope it will be done as quickly as possible. Then negotiations will take place between the Australian Wheat Board and the company.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—Is the Ardrossan cost included in the £4,850,000?

Mr. STOTT—No. The Ardrossan installation will be taken over at the depreciated value on the day of taking over. Growers have been paying 2½d. a bushel at Ardrossan towards the cost of the installation by the Australian Wheat Board. It will be repaid in accordance with the negotiation results. Then the growers delivering at Ardrossan will pay 6d. a bushel until the whole scheme is completed, when the charge will fall to 3d. A few growers at Ardrossan have said that they do not mind paying 6d. a bushel to the company, and would not mind paying more if it meant that silos were built at other places, leaving them free to deliver at Ardrossan without delay. If these additional silos are not built there will still be congestion at Ardrossan. In addition to the revenue from the 3d. a bushel average toll the company will receive a rental charge from the Australian Wheat Board. It could be more than 7½ per cent a bushel. It is a matter for the Wheat Board and the company to determine. Let us say that it will be 7½ per cent. That means that 7½ per cent will be paid on the capital cost of installing facilities at Wallaroo. Then the 7½ per cent will continue until the company has established silos all over South Australia. Seven and a half per cent on, say, £4,500,000 gives £337,500.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—The Harbors Board will get its share of the 7½ per cent.

Mr. STOTT—I doubt it. The Minister had better have a look at what happens in the other States. If the Wheat Board does not pay it there I cannot see it doing so in South Australia.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—The board is paying the 7½ per cent on the whole installation, including shipping facilities.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—To whom will the 7½ per cent go?

Mr. STOTT—It will become a debit charge against the balance-sheet of the Australian Wheat Board, and the amount will be deducted from the advance account of each grower.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—The growers will pay it on top of all the tolls.

Mr. STOTT—Yes. It is a debit charged against all the growers in Australia. It means that growers in Queensland and Western Australia will be contributing towards the cost of the South Australian scheme.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—It will be to the advantage of South Australia if Queensland does not have bulk handling.

Mr. STOTT—That may be so, but they are slowly putting in bulk handling in that State. On a capital outlay of £5,000,000 7½ per cent will return an income from the Australian Wheat Board of £375,000. If the scheme is completed in six or seven years at a cost of from £4,500,000 to £4,750,000, and there is 100 per cent membership of the company, the total income on a 27,000,000 bushels average will be the £337,500, plus the income from the Australian Wheat Board of £337,500. This will provide a total income of £675,000 per annum. Some farmers are worried about whether there will be sufficient finance from the tolls to start the scheme. The matter has been investigated by top-ranking economists of the Commonwealth Bank and they can find no fault in it. Not only are they prepared to recommend it to Parliament and to the growers, but they are willing to back the scheme with £1,000,000. Then how can members criticize the scheme?

Mr. Riches—Why is there the need to have the £500,000 guarantee by the State Government?

Mr. STOTT—In the original submissions we told the Commonwealth Bank we did not want to have a guarantee from the State Government. When I interviewed the General Manager of the Commonwealth Bank in Sydney he told me he thought the State Government should be in it. He remarked that if we got the Government to give a guarantee it would create more confidence and the growers would come in more quickly. I think he had something there. He told me the other day that he did not think the Government would ever have to put up the £500,000, so I asked why he insisted on the State Government giving the guarantee. The point is that there are some growers who are critical of a scheme

of this character. They would rather wait and see what the Government is prepared to do before becoming members of the company. The Treasury officers have examined all the figures relating to the tolls, the repayable loans, and the income to be derived from the Wheat Board. They could not find any fault with the scheme, so the Government was prepared not only to recommend the scheme, but to back it to the extent of £500,000.

Some growers are worried that there seems to be no provision for depreciation, but I point out that there is no need to worry about depreciation as long as the company gets an income from the Australian Wheat Board. One grower said to me that he would not be worried as long as the Wheat Board remained in existence, but that depreciation would become a problem if it went out of existence. I replied that the company will not become a wheat selling firm but only a bulk handling firm, and that if the Wheat Board went out of existence Louis Dreyfus, John Darling & Coy., and other agents would use the company's facilities, and they would have to pay for the use of the installation.

The company will have power to handle grain other than wheat. It has negotiated with the Australian Barley Board to load barley at Wallaroo, or other ports, under instructions from the board. The company will not presume to dictate to the Barley Board or the Wheat Board. When the Barley Board is ready to negotiate with the company to load barley, consultations will be held and charges will be fixed. I understand that last year, and the year before, 90 per cent of the barley loaded at Wallaroo was loaded in bulk. If in the future the Barley Board wants to experiment with receiving barley in bulk at country sidings the company will be pleased to co-operate. Barley growers will not have to pay any toll to the company as long as barley is delivered in bags, but if the Barley Board wants to receive barley in bulk at country sidings the growers will have to pay tolls the same as the wheatgrowers.

The Bill provides for the alteration of the company's constitution in order that the grower members may elect seven directors. Originally the company wanted to allow the growers to elect nine directors, but the Government, in consideration of its guarantee of £500,000, thought it should have two nominees on the directorate, which was agreed to. Immediately the Bill passes the company will proceed to the election of three State directors. Nominations will be called from grower members for three

directors to represent the whole State. When the election is over nominations will be called for directors to represent the four zones. The grower members in each zone will vote for their respective representatives. When the State and zone directors have been elected the provisional directors will retire. Eyre Peninsula will constitute one zone; the second zone will be the area north of the 34th parallel of latitude; the third zone will be the area south of the 34th parallel to the Murray Mouth, the east boundary being the River Murray as far north as Morgan; and the fourth zone will be the area east and south of the River Murray.

The directors' fees will be fixed by the Minister in the first instance, and then they cannot be altered except at a general meeting of the company. The company can hold an extraordinary meeting, and at the ordinary general meeting once a year the balance-sheet and statement of accounts will be presented in accordance with the Companies Act. At that meeting grower members will have the power to alter the remuneration paid to directors. The company has been incorporated under the Companies Act. In effect, the Premier said to the promoters of the scheme, "How do you know you will get the support of growers?" and suggested that we should go out and see what we could do. My reply was, "If you made a statement on behalf of the Government that if sufficient growers supported the scheme the Government would bring in a charter it would make it easier." The Government said it wanted to be convinced that we had sufficient support first. So it became necessary for the provisional directors to incorporate the company. The articles of association were registered with the Registrar of Companies and approved. The provisional directors were elected and they will carry on until the elected directors take over. It is their desire that as soon as the Bill passes nominations will close within 14 days for the election of the three State directors. That indicates that as soon as possible after the Bill becomes law the directors will take over the company. That is a wise provision. The fact that the company is registered under the Companies Act is a sufficient safeguard to Parliament concerning the company. The articles of association are not included in the Bill as the Parliamentary Draftsman does not think that is necessary. They are at the company's registered office, where any honourable member can see them.

The charges to be paid by non-members for the handling of wheat will be fixed by the

Auditor-General. Power is given to him under the Bill. Some honourable members may object to such a charge, but the farmer has his remedy. If he does not want to deliver bulk wheat to the company he can deliver in bags. The Bill only gives the company an exclusive charter for the handling of wheat in bulk. He is not compelled to become a member of the company. If we attempted to compel him, that would be against the constitutional position. The opinion of the Crown Law authorities is that if you compel a man to pay a toll it becomes an excise and that is unconstitutional. To get over that we made it purely voluntary.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—You say the charge is fixed by the Auditor-General. The Bill does not say that, but that he may approve the charge the company suggests.

Mr. STOTT—That gives him complete power to reject it. He will take into account all the operating costs, depreciation and so on and allow for a fair margin of profit. The charge finally approved by the Auditor-General will have to be paid by the non-member, and he will not be able to participate in the revolving finance system.

Mr. Corcoran—He would then wake up.

Mr. STOTT—And it would not be long before he joined the company, and then we

would have 100 per cent membership. The passing of this Bill will lead to very important progress in the history of the South Australian wheatgrower. It can be honestly recommended to this Parliament. We do not want any further delay as we have been humbugged over this question for years. This is the only place in the whole world that sells its wheat in bags. I welcome the criticism by the Leader of the Opposition; I hope that I have cleared up most of the points that have been worrying him and some other members. It has been said that members do not know enough about this Bill, but I remind members that, on behalf of the company, I wrote to them twice explaining the proposals and offering any further information; yet some members have not approached me, and some have not even had the courtesy to reply. Members had their opportunity to come to me months ago and ask for details, so there is no excuse for their saying that they have had no opportunity to learn about the scheme. I commend the Bill to members and hope that it will be passed without a division.

Mr. PEARSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 10.23 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, June 15, at 2 p.m.