

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, June 15, 1955.

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

QUESTIONS.

ELECTORAL COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Can the Premier say what progress has been made by the Electoral Districts Redivision Committee, appointed under legislation passed last session, in redrafting the electoral districts of the House of Assembly, and when its report is likely to be presented?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I cannot give any more information than I gave on this matter last week, which I admit was rather negative. I have no knowledge of how far the committee has gone in its deliberations, but to enable the committee to concentrate on the work Sir Geoffrey Reed was relieved of other duties and a commissioner appointed to take certain of his court work. The Government hopes that the committee's report will be available to be dealt with this session.

RIVER MURRAY RESEARCH STATION.

Mr. WHITE—Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to my question of May 19 regarding the establishment of a research station in the reclaimed areas contiguous to the River Murray?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The Director of Agriculture reports:—

Between 20 and 30 acres were reserved for the Department of Agriculture's use when the swamps were reclaimed and an officer was appointed to supervise the work in 1905. Work to explore the best methods for sweetening the freshly drained soils was carried out and finished about 1915. In 1926 an experimental farm was established on an area of 80-100 acres of swamp at Swanport, but this scheme was abandoned after a change in Government the following year. The answer to the first question, therefore, is yes. Pasture research work was carried out by the Waite Research Institute at Woods Point for about three years in the early 1930's and the Department of Agriculture has provided advisory services in agriculture and dairying continuously for many years. This latter work has been greatly assisted by the Pasture Improvement Committee and through the Commonwealth dairy industry efficiency grant. Lack of trained personnel is the chief limiting factor to the expansion of the Department's work in the area, and this unfortunately is likely to prevail for some time. Because of this the answer to the second question, for the time being at least, is no.

RISDON PARK SCHOOL.

Mr. DAVIS—Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked yesterday concerning improvements at the Risdon Park School?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Unfortunately, I have not the detailed information desired by the honourable member. There has been some delay between the Education Department and the Architect-in-Chief's Department, and I am still trying to secure it this afternoon. I have, however, an earlier report that a contract for the erection of permanent lavatories was let on November 12, 1954, that the Architect-in-Chief has advised that ground formation is included in that contract, and that efforts are being made to expedite the work. I hope later in the afternoon to have a more up-to-date and detailed reply for the honourable member, and, if it arrives during question time, I will let him know.

GRAPE-GROWING INDUSTRY SURVEY.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Last week when I sought information from the Minister of Agriculture concerning a survey of plantings in the grape-growing industry, he said that he had a report, but that it was on the secret list and he could not make it available. He promised, however, to ascertain whether he could make it available. Is he yet in a position to do so?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—Following on the honourable member's previous question, I took the matter further and can now say that we have available a revised report, which arrived subsequently. It is available to the honourable member and any other honourable member who wishes to see it. The honourable member suggested that it be tabled in the House, but it is a Federal document and therefore we cannot table it.

HILTON BRIDGE ROADWAY.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked recently regarding the roadway over the Hilton bridge?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Commissioner of Highways has reported to the Minister of Roads as follows:—

The Hilton Bridge approaches were constructed many years ago of inferior material. Recent test holes sunk by this Department revealed the fact that the material had a high liquid limit and a low bearing value. As a result, the bank has subsided gradually and regularly over the years. This Department at intervals has filled in the depressions in an attempt to maintain a reasonable running surface. Apart from completely removing the

old material and reconstructing the bank, there is no alternative to continuing to fill in the depressions as before. At present, the pavement is again in a very uneven condition, and it will be necessary in the very near future to again add material to the pavement. The matter has been discussed with the Chief Engineer of the South Australian Railways, who stated that his Department proposes in the near future to repair one of the bridges, the abutments of which have moved. He stated, however, that the repairs would be restricted to replacing the steel work and decking. To remove the bank would mean the closing of that road for some considerable period, which appears to be out of the question at the moment.

INTERSTATE TRANSPORT.

Mr. TRAVERS—I notice that many interstate transport vehicles are still using our main State roads. Can the Premier say whether they are using the roads entirely free of cost or making some contribution?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—As soon as the road hauliers' case was listed for hearing in the High Court a number of interstate carriers refused to pay licence fees and for some time we have had the position that some were observing the State law and paying registration fees while others were defying that law pending the High Court decision upon the constitutional aspects of the case. The Government now believes that it is necessary to introduce legislation to enable the repayment of registration fees to those who observed the law. One interstate passenger firm defied the law which the High Court ultimately held to be invalid, whereas a competing firm paid the full registration fees and expressed no objection because it considered the amount levied to be reasonable. We do not consider it fair that the latter firm should not receive payment. I expect to introduce legislation within the next few days to enable repayment to those who have complied with the law. The amount involved would not exceed £9,000, which clearly indicates the reasonableness of the law.

Mr. Travers—Whereas our local people are paying for the use of the roads some of the interstate carriers are using them entirely free of charge?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That is so. Nevertheless, we have examined the High Court's decision and there are some hopeful signs in it. Parliament may have an opportunity to look further into the matter in due course.

TUNA FISHING.

Mr. TAPPING—Under the heading "Tuna Fishing requires Big Finance" the following article appears in this morning's *Advertiser*:—

Development work in a South Australian tuna fishing industry needed sufficient finance to encourage the right men and provide good equipment, otherwise the work would be greatly handicapped. This is the opinion of the Haldane brothers, of Port Lincoln, who operate the purse seine fishing boat Tacoma. The Tacoma was designed for tuna fishing, but has not yet been used for that work. The men state that lack of Government backing in the experimental stages of the new type of fishing has kept them on bare wages.

Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether that statement is based on fact?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I would say not. The Government has actively interested itself in furthering the tuna fishing venture in this State, so much so that during the term of office of my predecessor, Sir George Jenkins, Haldane Brothers were given £30,000 to help finance the building of their vessel. More recently the Government agreed to guarantee a large proportion of the cost involved in the experimental work to be undertaken in prospecting the tuna fields in the vicinity of Port Lincoln. That venture was to have commenced early this year but unfortunately the American experts who were coming here found it impossible to do so at that time and the work has been postponed, we think, until next season. The £9,000 guarantee the Government undertook in respect of this experimental work is still in force. We are still prepared to spend that money in fully exploring the possibilities of tuna fishing in these waters. I do not think that the implied criticism in the statement is correct. The State Government has stood admirably behind any experimental work in connection with this venture.

FLAXMAN'S VALLEY ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

Mr. TEUSNER—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked recently relating to the electricity supply for residents of Flaxman's Valley near Angaston?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The General Manager of the Electricity Trust reports as follows:—

When the possibility of supplying electricity in Flaxman's Valley was investigated by the Electricity Trust of South Australia in 1952, the Government's subsidy scheme was not in operation. The extension of mains could not be economically justified and the matter was deferred. Now that the Government's subsidy scheme is in operation the trust has taken the matter up again and is now making a new investigation of the cost of the extension and the electricity requirements in the area. This investigation is not yet complete but when the full information is obtained the applicants

will be advised. The operation of the Government's subsidy will, of course, be taken into account.

MOUNT GAMBIER SEWERAGE.

Mr. FLETCHER—Can the Minister of Works outline the reasons for the delay in putting into operation the minor sewerage scheme designed for the Reidy Park school and the Mount Gambier hospital? I understand the scheme was to have been operating about last February.

The Hon. M. MCINTOSH—I am informed by the Engineer-in-Chief that the delay in putting this scheme to serve the Reidy Park school and the Mount Gambier hospital into operation has been brought about by the difficulty in obtaining deliveries of suitable stone for the filters for the treatment works. Efforts have been made to expedite the work by using whatever stone is available, but this stone was condemned by the Engineer for Water and Sewage Treatment, and it was removed. It is being replaced as deliveries of the specified stone are received. The Engineer for Construction inspected the plant last week and it is hoped to place it in commission this week to serve the Reidy Park school. Owing to enlarged building proposals, much excavation work has to be done at the Mount Gambier hospital. As soon as this is completed, the hospital will be connected with the sewers.

CONGESTION ON ROADS.

Mr. DUNNAGE—On Sundays a large number of people travel for pleasure through the Adelaide hills. Has the Government considered placing restrictions on the use of roads in the hills districts, especially by heavy road hauliers? Members on this side of the House are not keen on restrictions of any sort, but people in my district have prompted me to ask whether the Government has considered the matter.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government has received a number of requests along these lines but it has decided to take no action, although there is a good deal of congestion on the roads. It is hoped that alternative roads will be opened through the hills and some work may be done on them in the near future. When they are in use it will reduce the congestion. I agree that members on this side do not desire to impose restrictions if they can be possibly avoided, and for that reason it is not proposed to take any restrictive action.

Mr. STEPHENS—A few days ago I asked the Premier whether the High Court judgment

in the road hauliers' case would affect local government bodies in regard to limiting the weight of loads on certain roads. Could he arrange for police protection for people who use the hills roads, mostly the Mount Barker Road, on Sundays and holidays? Last Sunday week when I travelled on the road 16 vehicles were held up in front of me because they could not pass a large vehicle. On Monday last I travelled on the road again and about 40 vehicles were held up for some miles until we reached the Eagle-on-the-Hill, where the front vehicle pulled to one side and allowed the stream of traffic to go through. Coming back the same thing happened. On Easter Monday police protection is provided to keep heavy vehicles off the road to assist racegoers. Can we not have similar protection for people who use the road on Sundays and holidays? If the protection were available the heavy vehicles would be pulled to the side of the road to allow other vehicles to go through.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There are a limited number of places where heavy vehicles can be taken off the road to allow other traffic to pass. Under the circumstances I think it is inevitable that there will be a slowing down of traffic on the steep grades when travelling as far as the Eagle-on-the-Hill. This is not the only road through the hills. The Greenhill Road is a good one and heavy vehicles do not use it. If people wanting to go to the hills on Sunday used that road they could, without travelling more than half a mile further, go straight through without interruption, but if everybody uses the one road it is inevitable that there will be traffic blocks.

SOLDIER SETTLEMENT.

Mr. STOTT—Can the Minister of Irrigation give any information regarding the allocation of blocks in soldier settlement areas, more particularly in the new areas? Can he say when settlement will take place and give the names of the successful applicants?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I will have to get the names for the honourable member. Thirty-four applicants have been advised that blocks in the new area have been allotted to them. They must report on July 4, when they will take up their residence, and they will plant about 15 acres on their allotments this year.

BRIDGE OVER MARION ROAD.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Will the Minister of Works take up with the Minister of Roads the question of erecting a bridge across the

Marion Road? A piece of land at the corner of Oaklands and Marion Roads has been set aside by the Marion Corporation as a civic centre. I understand the Highways Department intends to erect an overway bridge over the Brighton railway line. Is it true that this is intended, and, if so, taking the Brighton line as the centre of the bridge, what length of the roadway will be used to make the necessary approaches on the northern and southern sides of the line?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The honourable member was good enough to tell me he intended to ask this question and I obtained some information, but it is not all that he requires. Any points unanswered now I will take up later. The Commissioner of Highways has forwarded the following report:—

Grade separation of road and railway at the Marion Road-Brighton line crossing will only be necessary if in the future Marion Road becomes a through traffic Road instead of a road serving local areas, as it is at present. One method of grade separation at this point would be the provision of an overway road traffic bridge. If such a bridge were provided to maintain railway clearance, the bridge would have to be approximately 24ft. above road level. This would require approaches extending approximately 800ft. in each direction along Marion Road from the centre line of the railway.

CONSOLIDATION OF STATUTES.

Mr. TRAVERS—Has the Minister of Education obtained a reply from the Attorney-General regarding the consolidation of the South Australian Statutes, which were consolidated some 20 years ago and badly need attention again?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—At the request of the honourable member I consulted the Attorney-General and he has supplied the following report:—

The position with regard to the consolidation of the State Statutes is that as far as the Crown Law Department is concerned, the matter would not involve a tremendous amount of work. However, the reprinting would involve much work as far as the Government Printing Department is concerned and it would not be practicable for this additional work to be carried out by them at the present time. However, it is recognized that many of the Statutes which have been extensively amended do need reprinting, and every effort will be made to see that this is done at the earliest opportunity. An accelerated programme of reprinting may be possible after the end of this year.

ENCROACHMENT ON PARKLANDS.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked

yesterday concerning a general encroachment on the western parklands near the Adelaide Boys' High School?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—As I informed the honourable member yesterday, a few years ago, before I was Minister of Education, an agreement was entered into between the Corporation of the City of Adelaide and the Education Department concerning a lease of portion of the parklands, but I did not think that any further arrangement had been made because I would have heard of it. I have received the following report from the Superintendent of High Schools:—

The Adelaide Boys' High School buildings are not erected on parklands. The old observatory buildings once occupied this site and the land itself is and always has been vested in the Government. The Adelaide City Council leases on a terminable lease an area of the parklands for playing grounds for the Adelaide Boys' High School. It is not intended to extend these grounds but, with the consent of the City Council, improvements are being carried out on the leased area.

BUSH FIRE RELIEF.

Mr. CORCORAN—Several homes in the Rendelsham township and district were devastated by the disastrous bush fires that occurred on January 2. Can the Minister of Agriculture say what progress has been made in the distribution of the funds of the Bush Fire Relief Committee and whether rebuilding activities have been commenced?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I cannot say how many cases have been dealt with and finalized for the rebuilding of homes, but the proposal put up to the applicants for relief was that they should endeavour to arrange finance with some bank or other financial institution for the rebuilding of their homes and that if such a proposal were agreed upon we would consider providing the necessary deposit, which might amount to £700, £800 or £900, according to circumstances. A few applicants have notified us of definite proposals, but we are still waiting for a number to do so. I believe we shall be able to provide a substantial deposit as is normally required when a person has to provide his own initial deposit and arrange the rest of the finance by way of a bank advance. If the honourable member wants more specific details on how many have applied and have met the requirements of the Bush Fire Relief Committee I will bring the information down tomorrow.

MAINTENANCE OF ROADS.

Mr. DUNNAGE—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked some

time ago relating to damage caused to roads in the metropolitan area by Tramways Trust buses?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I think the honourable member raised the question of compensation for damage to the roads as well as the question of the damage itself. The Minister of Roads has reported to me as follows:—

It is correct to say that the Government has arranged to grant certain assistance to bus routes replacing tram routes that have been abandoned. The trust defrays the cost of removing a track and restoring the roadway, and since July 1, 1954, has been paying a Highways tax of 1d. per bus mile run over public streets. It is from this fund that the Highways Department reimburses itself, to some extent, for the assistance given to a council. The Highways Department is not aware of any extensive damage to main roads. Apart from the Kingswood route, which has been finalized, assistance must depend upon receipts from this road tax.

PORT PIRIE WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. DAVIS—Last week I asked the Minister of Works two questions about Port Pirie's water supply. One was about the odour from the water, and the other was about low pressures. Has he now a reply to those questions?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Regarding low pressures, the growth of many country towns, as I indicated before, is beyond the present capacity of the mains, and, in addition, many of those mains have been corroded over a period of years and will need replacing. A thorough investigation is being made into the work necessary at Port Pirie and I expect to receive a report in the next week or so. The expenditure will be very considerable and the work will probably have to be carried out over a period of years. I will bring down the report when I get it. In regard to odour the Engineer for Water Supply states:—

Following complaints from residents of Port Pirie regarding the odour of the water supplied from the department's mains, arrangements were made for a senior analyst of the Glenelg Treatment Works Laboratory to visit Port Pirie and Baroota Reservoir on May 13, 1955. The investigation showed that the taste and odour were of algal origin, the trouble being at the reservoir, which was infested with a bloom of blue-green algae, namely microcystis. The Chief Chemist visited the reservoir on Sunday afternoon, May 15, 1955, and arrangements were then finalized for the reservoir to be treated with three tons of copper sulphate on the following day. Subsequent samples have shown that the treatment has been effective. This is the first occasion since the inauguration of the examination of the water supplies from country centres that

trouble of this nature has been encountered. The Chief Chemist reports that shortly before the trouble occurred aerial dusting with superphosphate was carried out on the hilly land adjacent to the reservoir. It appears that some actual dusting of portions of the reservoir itself occurred and rain which fell immediately after operations had finished no doubt washed further quantities of superphosphate into the water. The Chief Chemist considers this increase in nitrogen and phosphate in the reservoir to be the probable explanation of the extremely rapid growth of algae which then occurred.

TEACHING ON MONETARY SYSTEM.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Last week, in answer to my question, the Minister of Education promised to bring down a report on what the Education Department taught regarding Sir Reginald McKenna's views on the monetary system. Is that report available?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—No. The matter has been engaging the attention of the Deputy Director of Education for some time.

Mr. Macgillivray—If the Minister wishes I can help him.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I would be grateful for the assistance of the honourable member, although I can accept it only on an honorary basis for the time being.

WALKERVILLE-GLEN OSMOND BUS SERVICE.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Has the Premier a further reply to my recent question on the Walkerville-Glen Osmond bus service?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The General Manager of the Tramways Trust reports:—

The restricted service now operated by Metro Bus Company (S.A.) Ltd. is slightly superior to that offered by Lewis Bros. Secondly, the licensee has assured me that he has sufficient resources to finance the purchase of buses necessary for these services, and has undertaken to secure them before August 31 next. Thirdly, the inspection fees will commence to operate as from April 1, 1955.

RAILWAY WORKSHOP AT WALLAROO.

Mr. McALEES—Yesterday the member for Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip) complained about the poor condition of rolling stock, and I have previously complained bitterly about it on a number of occasions. Will the Premier ask the Railways Commissioner to investigate the possibility of opening a railway workshop at Wallaroo to relieve the congestion at the Islington workshop?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Past experience has been rather the opposite of the suggestion of the honourable member. It is not practicable to have a workshop that is not com-

pletely set up, and this involves hundreds of thousands of pounds. Further, the establishment of a workshop at Wallaroo would duplicate plant and equipment that is already adequate for the needs of our rail services. I will, however, obtain a report from the Railways Commissioner.

SOLDIER SETTLEMENT PROPERTIES.

Mr. FLETCHER—On April 14 I wrote to the Minister of Repatriation, telling him of complaints I had received from soldier settlers at Mount Schank and Parem about the condition of their homes and sheds. I asked him whether his officers had inspected these homes, which had been built five years ago, to see whether they were standing up to the standard expected of them. Some settlers have told me that they have pointed out to departmental inspectors leaky roofs and doors and windows that let in nearly as much rain and wind when closed as they do when open. Can the Minister say whether a revaluation of these properties is to be made and whether they will be inspected before such valuation?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The honourable member wrote to the department in April and previously mentioned the matter to me when I was in Mount Gambier. For the first three months of occupation the settler has the opportunity to report any constructional faults and the Housing Trust will repair them; but we have had difficulty in getting contractors to carry out minor repairs. Some homes have been attended to and others are awaiting contractors to do the work. Departmental officers have inspected some of the sheds, and in some cases I have approved of the replacement of black iron by new galvanized iron. If the honourable member has any individual case he would like the department to examine, I shall be pleased to arrange an examination.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR TEACHER.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked yesterday about leave of absence for a teacher at the Whyalla Technical High School to enable him to attend a Y.M.C.A. conference in Paris?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The application was first referred to me on June 6 with a recommendation from the Acting Superintendent of Technical Schools (Mr. Bone), supported by the Deputy Director of Education (Mr. McDonald), that Mr. Pearce be granted three months leave from June 24 and that, should he obtain the services of a suitable exchange teacher (such suitability, of course, to be approved by the department) a further

period of leave would be considered. I approved those two recommendations, and notice of my approval was forwarded to Mr. Pearce by letter dated June 8. Mr. Pearce wrote to me on June 8 from Whyalla, and apparently the letters crossed. Mr. Pearce's most recent request to me is contained in the last paragraph of his letter which states:—

I am very anxious that I should not have to resign from the department but I feel that I cannot afford to spend less than one year teaching in the United Kingdom. I therefore request that you grant me leave of absence from June 25, 1955, until approximately September, 1956.

Following on that letter and the honourable member's representations in this House yesterday, I conferred this morning with the Director of Education (Mr. Mander Jones) and the Superintendent of Technical Schools (Mr. Walker), and I feel that in all the circumstances I cannot alter my decision of June 6.

POLICE OFFICER'S EVIDENCE.

Mr. STOTT—Has the attention of the Premier been drawn to an article in the press concerning the evidence of a certain police officer, the magistrate's comments, and a statement by a leading solicitor? Is it the intention of the Chief Secretary to institute an inquiry into the matter?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have no doubts that the Police Department will examine the matter and take the necessary action.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON CONSOLIDATION BILLS.

The Legislative Council intimated its concurrence in the appointment of a Joint Committee on Consolidation Bills.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. O'HALLORAN, having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1934-1953.

Read a first time.

BULK HANDLING OF GRAIN BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from June 14. Page 324.)

Mr. PEARSON (Flinders)—I do not think it necessary for members, even those possibly more directly interested in these proposals, to make unduly long comments upon them, and in view of the explanations which have already been given I do not propose to take up much of the time of the House. This is an

important step as it applies to primary industries, particularly the cereal growers, and this is a Bill which has been awaited for a long time with a great deal of expectancy and interest on the part of all concerned. An enormous amount of work has been done by many people in order to bring this Bill forward. Much criticism has been levelled, particularly in recent months, at the Public Works Committee for its delay in presenting a report. I suppose it can be said with every justification that the committee has never had, in all its history, a more difficult or knotty problem to solve. Of course, it may be true that at times other things have intervened to take precedence in the committee's time. There may have been good reasons for that and I am not unduly critical, but the fact remains that it has taken a long time and some people have become very restive, perhaps with some reason. I believe that the committee has at least covered the major part of the problem and I imagine its members will be very glad when they are finished with it.

Much work has been done by others and it is only right that their work should be acknowledged. The South Australian Wheat and Woolgrowers Association, with which I was associated for many years, instigated this project and has ever since been in the forefront of the effort to bring it about. The executive officers of that organization deserve due thanks from the wheatgrowers for their work, particularly the president, Mr. Day, with whom I have been associated in this matter, and the general secretary, Mr. Stott, a member of this Chamber. It cannot be denied that, whatever else may be evident, there is a strong desire on the part of wheatgrowers for a bulk handling system. I am aware that this was not always the case. There were people of my acquaintance on Yorke Peninsula who were sharply critical of the proposal to introduce bulk handling at Ardrossan. They said, "This is an experiment and we have been made the guinea pigs. Why should we be used to test this thing out?" We know now, after only two years' experience, that the most severe of those critics complained last year that the capacity of the Ardrossan facilities was inadequate. In other words, after two years' experience, instead of wanting less bulk handling they want more. I think that can be taken by the Government and members of this House as a fair criterion of the attitude of farmers towards this proposition.

Much has been said in years gone by about the economics of bulk handling, but I think we would be wise not to try to work out the economics. I say that, not because I have any light regard for facts and figures, but in a proposal such as this, which contains so many uncontrollable variables in the matter of costs, it is patently impossible to start working out the costs in pence per bushel and relating them to the costs of some other type of scheme, such as bag handling, and attempt to make worthwhile comparisons. It cannot be done; the value of grain constantly rises and falls; the value of cornsacks varies between wide limits; there are variations in the costs of labour and in the capital cost of establishing schemes and the cost of their maintenance. Therefore I venture the opinion that, although we may get some rough idea of the situation by making economic comparisons between the existing method and the proposed method, no satisfactory conclusion can be reached as to which is best from a sheer pounds, shillings and pence point of view. We are sometimes forced into adopting certain courses because of factors involved and I believe this is a case where that has, to some extent, applied. From the farmers' point of view there are considerable advantages involved. The farmer must consider the cost of equipment on his own farm to enable him to take full advantage of a bulk system. In this regard I believe that some farmers have converted on a grandiose scale to bulk systems at great cost but there are others, with perhaps more adaptability, who have made solid and satisfactory vehicles for the transport of their grain in bulk at much less cost. It is the farmer's concern whether he makes costly improvements or confines himself to utilitarian improvements. As a result there is a wide variation of opinion as to what the change from bags to bulk would cost.

The question of seasonal labour for harvest work has worried farmers over the years. This problem applies in the fruit industry and in all industries where large additional labour forces are required for short-period seasonal work. On a farm where two headers are employed—and that would be an average farm in South Australia where barley, which must be reaped quickly, is handled—the saving in labour would be five men. Let me explain that contention. On two headers there would be two platforms with a man on each. Under a bulk system the services of those men would be eliminated. At least two bag sewers would be required to keep up with the output of the headers and in order to cart the grain from the paddock in

reasonable time two truck men would be needed. I suggest that two platform men, two bag sewers and one truck driver will be eliminated.

Mr. O'Halloran—The other truck would be kept busy taking the bulk grain away from the headers.

Mr. PEARSON—That would depend entirely on the distance from the siding. If it were a heavy crop and the headers were reaping large quantities of grain it might be necessary to employ two trucks. However, if the crop were as good as that the farmer would not mind employing an extra truck. I regard this as a reasonable assessment of the labour-saving. It is not so much the cost of labour that enters into this picture because farmers are willing to meet those costs on a generous basis these days. The real problem is the virtual impossibility of obtaining the labour at the time it is required. In the course of discussions the price of cornsacks has been mentioned. At present the farmer who delivers wheat in bags receives a differential payment from the Wheat Board in respect of cornsacks. That varies annually according to the landed cost of sacks. I have never been able to satisfy myself whether that is a realistic payment or not. However, it is not necessary to argue that point. If that policy is to continue the farmer must, in computing his relative costs, consider that additional payment made as an offset against the cost of his cornsacks.

Another question to be considered is the saving on overseas freight and the chartering of vessels for bulk grain as against bagged grain. Those matters can be fairly accurately assessed, but various factors are again involved. There is the question of demurrage on the one hand and dispatch money on the other. They have to be guessed at. If we get 100 per cent bulk freight I do not know whether the shipping companies will continue to allow the same period of lay days in our ports as at present or whether they will say, "You are earning too much dispatch money and we will reduce the number of lay days."

Mr. Shannon—That seems to be an obvious approach.

Mr. PEARSON—It would appear to be a possibility. These matters are governed by charter terms. At present there are two charters in existence for the conveyance of wheat: one which was negotiated by the Wheat Board with London shipowners and the other, the old Austral charter, which has been the basis of chartering for many years by the Australian Barley Board.

Mr. Shannon—You would be happy about using that system.

Mr. PEARSON—The Barley Board considers that the Austral charter has many useful advantages over the Wheat Board charter. However, I will not go into that matter at the moment. Obviously there are savings to be made at all points in handling costs, deliveries at sidings and at ports. I emphasize that I do not approach this problem on the basis of economics. I think that would be an unsound approach and although we might make intelligent guesses at what the savings would be there is no method of arriving at an exact answer. The Leader of the Opposition and the member for Ridley (Mr. Stott), spoke at some length on the financial proposals involved in the articles of association of the company with regard to the provision of capital finance. I am referring now to the revolving system of finance. I do not know whether it is revolving or revolutionary. I do not suggest that it is not sound nor do I criticize it from that angle, but it is a system that has perhaps been misunderstood for some time by some people. I do not think it is necessary to add to the explanations that have already been offered. I think it might be described as a shift work method of providing capital because the capital will be involved in the project for all time. That capital will be provided by the farmers as an interest free loan to the company.

The Leader of the Opposition made a pertinent point when he queried how enthusiastic farmers would be who normally pass their wheat through the Port Adelaide railway system when they understood they might have to wait years before they got a service while, at the same time, they were obliged to pay tolls. The sharpness of the position is somewhat softened by the knowledge that, after all, it is not money down the drain. The tolls they are paying are being credited to their accounts in the company's books and although the money is not earning interest, it is money in the bank. I do not suggest that they could draw it out when they wanted to, but they do know that if they leave the industry or are incapacitated and hardship can be proved the company directors can order the repayment of the tolls. Similar conditions apply in respect of a deceased estate. I do not know how the Commissioner of Taxation will regard these tolls. I think the Act lays it down that income is taxable in the year it is earned. If that is so I imagine that these tolls will be treated as income earned in the year they

are paid and will be taxed then. I would not quarrel with that because it might be better to pay the tax on this interest free investment each year than to pay it on amounts that are repaid in later years.

The Leader of the Opposition said that the taxpayers of the State would be responsible for the £500,000 guarantee the State Government is making to the company as backing for its loan from the Commonwealth Bank. In the last analysis that may be correct, but by and large the taxpayers will not be called upon for that amount because the Government has recourse against the company for any default. The people who will actually foot the bill for bulk handling in this State are not the taxpayers but the primary producers. I think that is quite just. I have never maintained any other view. This is a farmers' scheme and they should pay for it and they are willing to do so.

I am not directly concerned with the position at Wallaroo, but during this debate we shall require a clear statement on the position there. There has been a controversy within Parliament and outside centreing on two aspects; firstly, whether the truck jetty method proposed by the Public Works Committee is the best scheme in the long run. In the short run it probably is because there are sound reasons for getting the Wallaroo installation operating in this next cereal year. Taking the long view, it is desirable to get Wallaroo out of the way so that we can get on with Port Lincoln which, so far as I am concerned is more to the point. I could logically be an ardent advocate of the truck-jetty method at Wallaroo. When facilities are installed at Port Lincoln we could then deal with Port Pirie and so on. By cutting short the installation work at Wallaroo we could get a year ahead with the rest of the scheme. I want to be satisfied that in the long run the method proposed for Wallaroo is the right one. I am not saying whether I favour one method or the other. After all, the thing that matters is not the initial capital cost but the cost of operation over a period of years. That will be an annual charge. Of course, interest and amortization charges will come up every year, but we must reckon on a long rather than a short run, and there the thing that matters is the cost per bushel.

Mr. Shannon—You are interested in economics?

Mr. PEARSON—Yes, and it is possible to get an arithmetical answer. I want a mathematically calculated answer to give me the right one. I want to be assured that whatever

scheme is installed at Wallaroo provides for the bulk loading of barley, and that the bin or bins put there will have sufficient space to enable that to be done. I want to be assured also that, though the truck-jetty method may be put there in the first instance, if in years to come it becomes necessary to withdraw the suction units for installation elsewhere, the bins will be so placed that a belt gallery can be installed if desired. I do not want to say more about Wallaroo at this stage.

I noted with interest the comments by the Leader of the Opposition on one or two matters. I appreciated his examination of the Bill. As usual, with perspicacity he sought out and put his finger on some of the problems, and I commend him for it. He was concerned about the cost of the scheme and referred to the ever mounting costs in the construction of the Ardrossan bin. He pointed out how they multiplied a number of times above the original concept. There were peculiar circumstances operating during the period, which caused costs to sky-rocket. One of them, and not the least, was the tremendously steep increase in all costs in the years while the bin was being constructed.

Mr. O'Halloran—It is still out of line with the increase.

Mr. PEARSON—I have not worked it out and I will not argue the point with the honourable member. He expressed much concern about the cost of the installation, not only at terminals but at country sidings, and it was a proper query to raise. Later he wondered whether we should have vertical or horizontal silos, and I think he came down strongly in favour of the vertical type. I wonder whether we realize what the cost will be if we build concrete bins at country sidings. Not only must wheat be provided for, but there must be an extra bin at every siding for the turning of wheat. I think the Leader of the Opposition was under a misapprehension when he spoke about turning wheat. He said it was necessary to turn it to deal with weevil and other pests. We do not turn wheat to combat weevil. We fumigate it.

Mr. O'Halloran—We turn the wheat to avoid the incidence of weevil.

Mr. PEARSON—We turn the wheat to aerate it and keep the moisture content down. It is done to avoid pockets of moisture developing. Back in Egyptian days they stored wheat under the soil for years and it came out in perfect condition, and still viable because the air had been excluded.

Mr. Quirke—It was an extremely dry climate.

Mr. PEARSON—That is not the point. During World War I we put some parcels of wheat underground at Kadina as a test. Owing to the extremely porous nature of the subsoil we found it necessary to enclose the holes with galvanized iron. The wheat was covered with earth. Several years later the test pockets were re-opened and it was found that the wheat was in perfect condition, from the points of view of appearance, colour, smell and other aspects. The only parts affected were small portions at the junctions of the pieces of galvanized iron, because a little air got in. The intrusion of a little oxygen at these points allowed weevil to develop. After they had developed in a small seam they sealed off the air and made everything airtight, and the wheat was therefore kept in perfect condition. I have that from the ex-Director of Agriculture, Mr. Spafford, who was associated with the tests.

Mr. Stott—They have made extensive underground tests in the Argentine.

Mr. PEARSON—I think that what I have said on this matter is accepted by the authorities. I now want to raise several points in the hope that they may be clarified by the Minister. Clause 12 sets out who may handle wheat in bulk. I do not want to go into details but it looks as though everybody, except the man who grows it, may handle wheat in bulk. There are exemptions for all sorts of people who may handle wheat in bulk without penalty, but there is no mention of the grower unless he is included in paragraph (f) of subclause (2). A farmer may grow wheat and desire to handle it in bulk for seed purposes, not desiring to deliver it to the Wheat Board's installation. I do not know whether this is a valid interpretation but I would like some information on the matter. Clause 14 sets out the places where it is the duty of the company to construct bulk handling facilities. I do not see any specific mention of coastal ports, such as Tumby Bay and Arno Bay on Eyre Peninsula, and those on Yorke Peninsula. There is a reference to railway stations, railway sidings and depots. I do not know whether coastal ports are to be considered as depots. I think there is an omission here and I draw the Minister's attention to it.

Mr. O'Halloran—I think Arno Bay was mentioned in connection with the Wallaroo zone.

Mr. PEARSON—That is problematical. It is possible for Arno Bay wheat to go to either Port Lincoln or Wallaroo.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—I think "depot" would cover them.

Mr. PEARSON—I would be satisfied if I had an assurance on it, but I thought there was an omission and that I should raise the matter. The Wheat and Barley Boards have places which they call small depots, and when we speak of depots we think of something of a substantial nature. Clause 33 gives the company the right to handle grain other than wheat in bulk. That is a proper and necessary provision. What charges will the company be entitled to make for handling grain other than wheat through its system? The Bill provides for the charges to be made to non-members for the handling of wheat to be examined and approved by the Auditor-General. The clause does not provide a protection to any other person who may desire to have his cereal handled through the company's installations. I do not want to be misunderstood. I understand that this is a farmers' company and that it will handle for reward the produce of its members, although it may not necessarily be wheat. I do not suggest that it will want to, or be permitted to, make a charge higher than is justified. There are other considerations. By virtue of the fact that there is to be a monopoly for the handling of grain in bulk it is proper that the monopoly should be controlled in some way.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—It does not get the sole rights to handle grain. It has a monopoly only for wheat.

Mr. PEARSON—Although the company is not being granted an absolute monopoly for the handling of grain, in actual practice it will become a monopoly. It would not be practicable for the Barley Board to set up its own terminal bins, also country depots if we ever get that far in bulk handling of barley, and duplicate a system already in existence.

Mr. Shannon—You would want a separate bin at the shipping terminal.

Mr. PEARSON—I suggest that there could be provision for an appeal against the charges fixed by the company. I want to be fair in this matter, and I do not suggest that anyone wants to be unfair, but we are legislating for a long period and circumstances and personalities may change. It is the business of Parliament to see that these matters are considered. It is possible that there may be some people who want to handle oats in bulk. A private merchant company or a co-operative pool may go to the company for its grain to be handled in bulk. There again there is no protection over the charge that may be made. Under clause 34 the Governor may, on the recommendation of the company, make

certain regulations provided they are not inconsistent with the Act. As I read it, that rather preserves to the company the sole right to initiate any regulation—unless the company suggests it, the Minister has no power to invoke a regulation. I can understand the views of the company on this matter, namely, that it feels the running of its business is its business and should be left alone. With that point I cannot but agree. There is one respect in which regulations may be made that rather concerns me. It is in paragraph (c) of subclause (2), which relates to the defining or describing of the grades of wheat. We can all describe wheat, but I do not like the defining provision.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—That would come into operation only in the event of the Wheat Board going out.

Mr. PEARSON—Not necessarily.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—The board now determines the matter.

Mr. PEARSON—I do not know how the company's regulations made under this provision would tie in with the board's present arrangement.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—This would not operate unless the merchant system of buying came back.

Mr. PEARSON—The Minister is probably right, but I feel that this is a clause which stands on its own in the Bill and does not relate to the system now in vogue. It might result in some clash of opinion between two people who may make regulations as to whose regulation shall prevail. Perhaps that aspect can be examined so that the company shall not have the sole power to initiate regulations of any kind.

Mr. Shannon—Generally regulations under an Act come within the province of the Governor.

Mr. PEARSON—I do not agree that the Minister should have such control over the company as would make it subservient to him. We give the company a charter under the Bill, and it is given in good faith. Having given it a charter, we should allow the company to conduct its business untrammelled as far as possible.

I want to make it clear that the possibilities of bulk handling of barley from the farm to the terminal bin are as yet undetermined. We have not reached the stage, because of the peculiarities of barley and its storage habits, where we can with any confidence predict the time when we can store barley in bulk. Some members may say, they do it in

Western Australia. In that State they have a proverb somewhat on the lines of "See no weevil, have no weevil" and so on. The fact remains that they reap barley there with an average moisture content of $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent lower than our barley when it goes into store. It is a critical factor in assessing whether or not you can store the grain safely in bulk. Heating in a heap of barley does very much more damage to the grain than heating in a heap of wheat, because the viability of barley is so easily upset. That is one of the basic problems we are up against in storing barley in bulk. We would be glad to assure the company that the Barley Board would be pleased to use the terminal facilities for the shipment of barley in bulk as sales permit.

Much has been said about the effect on the economics of the scheme in relation to the handling of barley through the terminal bins. I thought it would be of interest to the House if I gave some figures of the throughput of barley at the various outports in recent years. I will use figures for the years 1952-53 and 1953-54 and give an estimate for the 1954-55 season, which is not yet complete. The average number of bushels each year shipped in bulk for those three years from Port Adelaide was 2,644,320; from Port Lincoln, 1,048,320; Port Pirie, 365,827, and Wallaroo, 2,262,027, and the average total quantity a year from all ports for the three years was 6,320,533. That is the quantity the board has actually shipped in bulk ex-bags for overseas destinations.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—Have you the figures for the barley shipped in bags?

Mr. PEARSON—The quantity shipped in bulk related to the total quantity shipped is 56 per cent.

Mr. Shannon—Does your board expect a continuance of some overseas trade in bags?

Mr. PEARSON—That is difficult to answer. The figures show that the quantity shipped either in bulk or in bags varies widely from season to season. Taking the summary for the season 1953-54, we shipped 14,479,280 bushels in bulk and for the season in which we are now engaged we estimate we will ship only 4,464,000. This was due to circumstances we were told about in Japan, where their bulk storages are almost fully taxed. They could store further quantities in bags more easily than in bulk. Secondly, the position was materially affected by the smaller barley harvest in this State this year when we received 10,000,000 bushels less than last year, owing, no doubt, to the adverse

weather conditions. Those figures may be useful in considering just what income might be derived by the company, and incidentally by the Harbors Board and other people interested in the handling and loading of barley in bulk. I hope the Bill will receive a prompt and speedy passage. I am sure that growers in the main are quite solid on bulk handling and want it as soon as it can be provided. I therefore have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Mr. McALEES (Wallaroo)—This is a Bill I cannot allow to pass without comment. I have been a member of this House now for a few years and I have never heard Wallaroo mentioned so much as during yesterday and today. I do not know whether it has any application to the fact that we generally speak well of the dead. I take it that this Bill could be the beginning of the end of Wallaroo. I am not opposed to bulk handling, and know of no-one who is, because we must progress with the machine age, but what I am opposed to is that the Government is prepared to guarantee £500,000 to the company to introduce bulk handling at Wallaroo. This would result in crushing out the only industry there. When I have asked from time to time for another industry to be established at Wallaroo I have been told by the Government that it is going to consult someone or other and see what could be done. That has been continuing for five years. The Leader of the Opposition mentioned that the people at Wallaroo depend for their livelihood solely on the handling of grain. It is the only shipment from that port. If the grain trade is removed from Wallaroo, there will be nothing left. An occasional phosphate rock boat from Nauru calls with 10,000 or 12,000 tons, but this can be handled by a very few men and amounts to practically nothing. Overseas ships which call at Wallaroo unload their full cargoes at Port Adelaide or interstate first and then come to Wallaroo empty. If bulk handling is introduced at Wallaroo, could not it be arranged for these ships to unload their full cargoes there? The Premier, and possibly Mr. Stott, may say, "You are too far from the metropolitan area," but 350 families at Wallaroo depend on waterside work. Can the member for Ridley (Mr. Stott), the member for Flinders (Mr. Pearson), or the Premier say what is to become of those families that will have to leave Wallaroo? If adequate provision is to be made for them I shall be happy to see bulk handling adopted at Wallaroo tomorrow, but from experience I expect nothing from this Government, which

has taken everything out of the district and put nothing in. Those 350 families, who are dependent on the handling of grain for their living, will have to come to Adelaide for work. They are not tortoises, so they cannot carry their homes on their back. They will have to come to Adelaide for shelter and leave all their life earnings in the district they have built up. This Government does not care a halfpenny about them. I have asked for workshops to be established at Wallaroo in order to encourage the people to stay there, but the Government merely says, "We will see the Railways Commissioner or some other official to ascertain what we can do," and so it goes on.

After all, the Government is prepared to back the bulk handling company to the extent of £500,000, but it could not find even £1,000 for the people of Wallaroo. Moonta, Kadina, and Wallaroo were the backbone of the country for many years, but today they are on the spot. I deplore the attitude of the Government towards my district, for it has been left cold. I have attended meetings at which it was said that bulk handling would save a lot of money, but who will save all this money? It will go into the pockets of the wealthy, and the Government is prepared to let this happen, but will the price of bread be any lower? If anything, it will be dearer. I share the hope expressed by the Leader of the Opposition that the Bill will not be rushed through, because we should examine it closely and see where it will lead. Mr. Stott and Mr. Pearson gave us a lot of figures about the handling of grain, and I have a bunch of figures here, but if we put all these figures together there would not be enough room in *Hansard* for them.

The member for Port Pirie (Mr. Davis) told me there is a workshop in Port Pirie, but why could not some of the work be done at Wallaroo? This Bill will go down in history at Wallaroo, and the Government will carry the mark of Cain for its complete lack of assistance to that town. I want to make it clear that I am not opposed to the bulk handling of grain, but before the machinery is installed to throw 350 men out of work I want some guarantee from the Government that these people will not be driven into the city. The member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) has often told us what is happening to Quorn, another old town, as a result of the building of the new railway through Brachina. Both Wallaroo and Quorn will become ghost towns unless something is done for them. The Government will say it

has done a good job by bringing so many people into the metropolitan area, yet it says it supports decentralization. I have no bouquets to hand out to any Minister, for the Government has only encouraged centralization. I hope the Bill will not be passed until the Government sobers up and formulates a scheme to help those people who will be left in distress in Wallaroo.

Mr. HEASLIP (Rocky River)—I congratulate the Government on bringing down this Bill so soon after receiving an interim report from the Public Works Committee. I do not agree with the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Wallaroo that the Bill is being rushed through.

Mr. O'Halloran—Where can I get that interim report?

Mr. HEASLIP—I am referring to the report on the scheme put forward by the South Australian Wheat and Woolgrowers' Association, which was considered constitutional. That is the only report we have had from the committee, but the point is that we have been waiting for a report from the Public Works Committee for over seven years. If it were not for the efforts of the Wheat and Woolgrowers' Association we would still be waiting for a Bill on bulk handling. No credit is due to the Public Works Committee for what it has done. I am probably one of those that the Minister of Agriculture said had levelled unjust criticism at the committee, but I do not withdraw anything I have said, for I believe I was justified. This Parliament, the previous Parliament, and the one before that have waited for a report from the committee, and we are still waiting. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that we should have the committee's report before us, but if we go on waiting it will be another 12 months before the wheatgrowers can hope to have bulk handling. The Minister said that the inquiries of the Public Works Committee had been prolonged because of a hitherto insoluble problem. It has never been insoluble. It could have been solved eight years ago, and if a report had been furnished by the committee then the scheme would have cost wheatgrowers thousands of pounds less than it will cost them now for the same scheme. If the problem has been solved today it could have been solved then.

The credit for the scheme before us must be given to the Wheat and Woolgrowers' Association and its secretary, who has worked very hard and spent much money in planning

the scheme. He put forward a proposal to Parliament two years ago and, in part, it is now being acted upon. Originally the proposal was for the wheatgrowers to finance bulk handling, and the Government now proposes that the company will be responsible for financing country installations and the Government will be responsible for port installations.

Mr. Pearson compared truck loading with belt loading methods at Wallaroo. The only information we have from the Public Works Committee on this important question is the letter which the Minister of Agriculture read yesterday stating that bulk handling for Wallaroo was recommended, the method being truck loading. I would like to know on what grounds the committee arrived at that decision. We do not know what evidence was taken or who gave evidence. I have some figures here supplied by the Australian Wheat Board, but I do not know whether they were considered by the committee before recommending the truck loading method. The Wheat Board says that if two-thirds of the grain were loaded direct from the country and one-third from the terminal the cost would be 3s. 4½d. a ton at Wallaroo. If a half of the grain were loaded direct from the country and a half from the terminal the cost would be 3s. 7½d. a ton, and if the whole of the grain were loaded direct from the terminal the cost would be 4s. 7½d. a ton. However, if the conveyor belt method were adopted the cost would be only 1s. 2d. a ton. Those figures have been worked out on the basis of handling 8,000,000 bushels of grain at the port, but let us be conservative and halve that amount. Mr. Pearson said that last year about 6,000,000 bushels of barley were exported from South Australia, so it is reasonable to assume that at least 4,000,000 bushels will go over the Wallaroo jetty.

Mr. Stott—Much more than that.

Mr. HEASLIP—Yes, but let us be conservative and make sure that we do not overestimate. Assuming 4,000,000 bushels went over the Wallaroo jetty the cost would be 1s. 9d. a ton with the conveyor belt method, compared with the lowest figure possible under the truck loading method of 3s. 4½d. These figures have been provided by the Wheat Board so they must be substantially correct, and if they are the whole system of bulk handling could be broken down by the installation of inefficient plant to handle wheat after it has been received at terminals. I do not know how the recommendation has been arrived at, but before it is implemented I suggest that those figures be examined to ascertain whether the more expensive method would

not be a cheaper method to the growers over the years. In his second reading speech the Minister said:—

It would be simple, as has been advocated by many people, to embark on a great expenditure on this undertaking, but we have to remember—and it is peculiarly the Government's responsibility to remember—that we shall not always enjoy the present honeymoon prices for primary commodities. Someone has to consider the economics of any scheme having regard to the possibility that in the future there may be appreciable price declines.

If prices have reached their peak and are declining, this is the time to look around for a cheaper, more efficient method to handle grain that has to compete on world markets. We have been told repeatedly that we have to keep down prices. We know that is so, and bulk handling is one way to do it. It has been installed in all other countries, they have accepted the fact that it is cheaper than bag handling and that it is one of the methods by which costs can be reduced. If we do not bring about bulk handling we are not accepting our responsibilities, because, if the cost of production of wheat rises so that we cannot compete with the rest of the world, Australia will be in a bad way.

Some mention has been made about the financing of this scheme and the responsibility of the Government in connection with it. What is the true position? The company will obtain a loan of £1,000,000 from the Commonwealth Bank, provided the South Australian Government is prepared to guarantee half of it. That is the only way in which the Government is involved apart from the installations on the jetties. What security has the Government in return? A guarantee has been provided that 13 million bushels at 3d. a bushel will be supplied, and this will bring in £162,500 a year. This guarantee extends over a period of 12 years; the amount can be raised and as other members join it will be raised. For a guarantee of £500,000 for 12 years the Government has a security of £1,950,000, so there is no risk of losing any taxpayers' money on this scheme.

Clause 5 provides that two Government appointed directors are to be on the board. I agree entirely with the provision, and I believe that they can be of great assistance to the company. Clause 14 (4) provides:—

The company shall not erect a terminal bin except in accordance with plans and specifications approved by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, or by the Minister.

I am at a loss to understand why the approval of the committee has to be sought for spending private money subscribed by wheatgrowers. The function of the Public Works Committee are set out in section 24 of the Public Works Standing Committee Act which provides:—

The committee shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, consider and report upon all public works which are referred to it under this Act.

I realize that any public work exceeding £30,000 in value must be referred to the committee, but this is not a public work as it involves private money. The committee inquires into other matters and reports to Parliament. It does not approve or disapprove of anything, because that is the function of Parliament. I have never seen such a provision in any legislation since I have been a member of the House, and it is the only time that the committee is mentioned in this Bill. If this clause is allowed it will cause more delays, and I doubt very much whether the committee could be forced to give its approval. I would like a proper explanation from the Minister on the reason for this clause before it is passed. When introducing the measure, the Minister said:—

New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia are fortunate in one respect at least: they can concentrate their wheat shipments on one port, or at the most two.

I suppose one of the most successful bulk handling schemes in Australia is that in Western Australia which has four terminal points, one less than is proposed in South Australia. They are at Bunbury, Albany, Fremantle and Geraldton—all widely spread out—to handle a quantity approximately the same as ours. South Australia will ultimately have five ports, counting Port Adelaide, which will probably have bulk handling installations although I doubt whether it will ever export a large quantity and probably will never warrant a terminal bin or loading belt. In Western Australia there are four terminal ports and the scheme has undoubtedly been a great success, so I do not see why ours cannot be equally successful. Either we have a number of outports with a smaller amount of freight, or we have one outport with higher freights. We cannot have it both ways, and what we lose one way we gain in the other.

Clause 29 deals with handling charges, and provides that the Auditor-General shall fix a fair margin of profit after taking certain things into account. I hope due consideration will be given to the fact that perhaps some growers will ride on the backs of members who have

subscribed money to make the scheme possible, and as soon as facilities become available the non-members will come in, yet some people will have been members for years.

The member for Flinders mentioned the incidence of tax on the toll, but as the average wheatgrower would not have 6,000 bushels of wheat I do not think it really matters. The Leader of the Opposition said that bulk handling prevents the segregation of different types of wheat but I do not think we need worry about that because, after all, every country in the world has adopted the system. I am sure the huge majority of South Australian wheatgrowers want bulk handling and are prepared to pay for the installation of the facilities. For these reasons and because bulk handling will be a big factor in reducing the cost of production, I support the Bill.

Mr. JOHN CLARK (Gawler)—I have always strongly favoured bulk handling, and I support this Bill for two main reasons. Firstly, it provides for a truly co-operative scheme that will be non-profit-making, and a scheme of that type is, and always has been, Labor policy. It is one of those sections of our policy that the Premier, in giving us a digest of Labor policy a few days ago, forgot to mention, but it is still a plank in Labor's platform. Secondly, there are in my district many grain growers, and I am sure they desire bulk handling. It is interesting to note that the president of the South Australian Wheat and Woolgrowers' Federation is a constituent of mine, and I take this opportunity of congratulating him and the secretary, Mr. Stott, on the hard work they have put into this proposal.

I have gone to some trouble to canvass opinion throughout my district, and I have been happy to find that not only the big farmers, but also the small farmers desire bulk handling. It appears to me that the Government, primary producers, and the State generally are safeguarded by the provisions of the Bill. I believe that improved wheat handling methods should have been introduced into South Australia years ago. The farmers I have talked to think that this Bill is the complete answer to the cry for bulk handling. I, too, want to think that, but, although I am willing to support the second reading because I want to see bulk handling introduced, I wish to make a few reservations.

Together with many other members on both sides of the House I would like more information on the Bill, and I hope that that will be

given in Committee. From previous speeches in this debate it has been obvious that many questions remain unanswered and that there are still many doubts in the minds of members. Why was this Bill introduced in such haste? Mr. Stott would probably reply that it was because of the protracted inquiries into bulk handling by the Public Works Committee, but it seems to me that in any case the proposed scheme could not be introduced in time to deal with this season's crop. If that is correct, why could not the Government have waited for the Public Works Committee's report before introducing its Bill? Last evening Mr. Stott told us that the committee's report was not necessary to a consideration of this Bill, but I pointed out that the committee has put much time and energy into its inquiries, and surely a study of its report would have benefited members in considering this measure. I still hope we shall get the report shortly.

Mr. O'Halloran—Members have been told for the past fortnight that it is about to be presented.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Then I hope it will be available very soon. I would like to be certain that the proposed scheme is the most suitable for South Australian conditions. Can the Minister furnish details about how the company, which will own the shore bins, will co-operate in the loading of ships with the Harbors Board, which owns the jetties? What agreement has been reached on that matter? This afternoon the member for Wallaroo (Mr. McAlees), who made an excellent fighting speech on behalf of his constituents, asked how men who have for years earned their living by lumping wheat would be employed in future. When I inspected the bulk handling installation at Fremantle, I was interested to see the adjacent workshops, which employed about 100 men. I appreciate Mr. McAlees' concern for the plight of the people of Wallaroo, a town that has not been kindly treated over the years. Members should have been given information about the effect of bulk handling on the livelihoods of wheat lumpers and waterside workers there. It is the duty of the individual member to safeguard his constituents' interests, and if that is done by all members the interests of the State generally will be safeguarded. Although I think those interests are safeguarded in this Bill, I want to be completely certain they are. This is one of the most important Bills introduced into this House for

a long time, and I hope that in Committee members will be given answers to their many questions.

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—As a metropolitan member I feel it incumbent on me to explain my attitude on the Bill. I have listened with much interest to previous speakers, and was surprised to hear the member for Flinders (Mr. Pearson) say that the proposed scheme had been explained and it was therefore unnecessary for him to speak at length; I was even more surprised when he did. I refute his statement that the Bill has been fully explained; indeed, I have been confused by the explanations given by the Minister and other members who have given the measure outright support. Confusion has been worse confounded by their speeches.

Mr. Macgillivray—Whom do you blame for that?

Mr. HUTCHENS—The Government. I disagree forcibly with the member for Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip) when he condemns the Public Works Committee for delaying its report. The South Australian Public Works Committee is a unique body, and its members apply themselves to their duties in a most energetic and conscientious manner. I am sure that, because of the thoroughness of their inquiries, the Committee members are not willing to recommend anything to this Parliament until they feel confident it will be to the best advantage of this State, and that that is the only reason for the delay. Generally speaking, however, I believe that the establishment of a co-operative concern to implement bulk handling is desirable, and, if I could be sure that the proposed scheme would be an economic success, I would support it wholeheartedly for I would support any plan that would take the drudgery out of the wheat lumpers' job.

Mr. Heaslip said that this Bill was not being rushed through, but in the same breath he said that the report of the Public Works Committee should be before members. What a contradiction! He then went on to assure members that all parties concerned are confident that this is a good Bill. He referred to clause 14, which imposes on the company the duty of erecting adequate bulk handling facilities at terminal ports and railways sidings, and provides that certain plans must be approved by the Public Works Committee or by the Minister of Agriculture; but this clause proves conclusively that the Government is not satisfied that the company can make

an economic success of this project. Members on this side are concerned because they have no proof that the company will function soundly and not become a burden on the State later. Mr. Pearson, who has been a great advocate of the application of economics to all matters discussed in this House, said "Let us dismiss economics. Let us forget about figures and everything will be O.K." I well remember that when we were discussing the Bill sponsored by the Leader of the Opposition to provide homes for the aged Mr. Pearson asked whether it was sound economically, but this afternoon he asks us to forget economics. Is this just a guessing Chamber? We would be failing in our obligations to our constituents if we forgot.

Mr. Pearson—Be fair and quote me correctly.

Mr. HUTCHENS—We would be committing a grave error if we allowed the passing of this Bill before being perfectly satisfied that the scheme will be economically sound and will not impose a burden upon the State.

Mr. Pearson—Does the honourable member consider the economics of every proposition he puts before the House by way of question and argument?

Mr. HUTCHENS—There are some matters in which it is not necessary, but the topic we are discussing is one of the greatest ventures that Parliament has ever been called upon to deal with, and what I am concerned about is whether or not we will saddle the primary producers with something that will make their calling uneconomical. A little further delay until we have the evidence that will give us an opportunity to establish those facts can do not harm. Like the member for Gawler (Mr. John Clark) I believe in an efficient system of grain handling. I believe in co-operatives and would like to give the Bill my whole-hearted support. I do not propose to oppose the second reading, but I shall have to give serious consideration to my attitude on the third reading if satisfactory explanations are not given.

Mr. QUIRKE (Stanley)—I approach this question with a different outlook from that of Mr. Hutchens. The Bill is the outcome of a very close investigation and the fact that we have not the report of the Public Works Committee before us does not necessarily mean very much in this case because the State's liability is simply the guaranteeing of a loan by the Commonwealth Bank of £500,000. That is adequately covered by other provisions in

the Bill which impose a collection of 3d. a bushel on a minimum of 12,000,000 bushels, and this quantity has already been guaranteed by growers who are prepared to take their place in the scheme. All this will have a snow-balling effect because of our total crop of, say, 28,000,000 bushels, less than 50 per cent is exported, but with the growth of the bulk handling scheme more wheat will necessarily come in and more money accrue to the farmer.

It will be observed that this company is not to be registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act which governs co-operative companies in this State, but under the Companies Act, so I take it that it is a public company operating on a co-operative basis. I assume that the reason for this is that there is to be no distribution of profits to shareholders, and because of this there is no necessity to place it under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act under which all profits must be distributed to shareholders. Mr. Heaslip raised a point which ought to be carefully considered by the company, namely, the grading of wheat. Under existing circumstances the growers cannot be very proud of the condition in which their wheat is delivered. There was a time when every harvester was equipped with a drake screen for the elimination of small seeds; if there is a drake screen on a harvester today it will generally be found that a bag has been very carefully sown around it so that the small seeds go in with the wheat; they all weigh.

Mr. Pearson—We do not have any drake nowadays.

Mr. QUIRKE—There could be dock or melilotus and that sort of thing, and that seed particularly has a very detrimental effect on wheat; flour made from it smells badly and it is impossible to make a loaf of bread that anyone would willingly eat. I hope to see the time when, in conjunction with bulk silos, we will have cleaning plants so that we may be able to eliminate the reproach we constantly get from overseas buyers about the foreign matter in our wheat. If that were done, cracked grain, small seeds and foreign matter could be eliminated—

The Hon. A. W. Christian—I think bulk handling has the effect of improving the farmers' own samples.

Mr. QUIRKE—That could be the case, because when it all goes into a bag it cannot be seen, whereas if the wheat is delivered in bulk every bit of foreign matter is apparent, and probably it will have the automatic effect of

improving the sample of wheat sent overseas. If we are to continue to market our wheat abroad in competition with other countries and continue our present practice of lumping all wheat in one f.a.q. grade we are going to be on the outside looking in all the time, and I hope that the company will seriously consider improving the sample of wheat. If it is automatic on the part of the farmer because foreign matter will be disclosed, it should be automatic on the part of the company to see that the wheat is graded and placed on the world's markets in the best possible condition. I can visualise the time when there will be not one, but two silos at receiving points, as is the case in Canada. There they have Manitoba No. 1 and Manitoba No. 2 grades, and this has a very great effect on the markets of the world, for if one buys Manitoba No. 1 one may be practically assured of its high standard. In South Australia, however, one cannot be assured of anything in a bulk sample of wheat.

I am in total accord with bulk handling, but I appreciate the point brought forward by Mr. McAlees. I can well understand the perturbation in the minds of the people in his district who earn their living through the handling of wheat, for it is possible that a period of recession could be their lot. Generally speaking, however, all advances bring in their train other forms of employment. Whether the people of Wallaroo who now handle the wheat will be able to follow other forms of employment I cannot say, but Wallaroo already handles about 4,000,000 bushels of wheat a year, and in the case of Ardrossan, wheat came from as far afield as Kybunga by road in order to take advantage of bulk handling. Therefore, with Wallaroo a terminal point it is not difficult to visualise the large number of motor trucks that will be converging on the town when the scheme gets under way properly, and this in itself could bring a different type of employment to the town. It is seldom that vehicles that travel long distances, particularly over the roads that many of them will be called upon to use, will not be in need of some maintenance, and Wallaroo might benefit materially from that. I hope that the Government will, if it is in any way possible, give serious consideration to establishing a different type of employment in Wallaroo to offset any period of recession, and I am in sympathy with Mr. McAlees to that extent.

Nevertheless I look forward to the day when in South Australia men will cease to be camels and packhorses carrying heavy weights on their backs. In the day of the old four-bushel bags

of wheat I remember a doctor saying, "If you could only see the distortion that takes place inside a man's body when he walks with 300 lb. on his shoulders, you would drop it and never take it up again." I have carried 120 tons of wheat a day from the tail of the waggon to the stack, so I know just what it means to carry wheat out in the open, and the tremendous amount of physical exertion that is needed. Admittedly the work is not so heavy in these days with mechanical facilities available, but it is still strenuous work. Although it may be said that all labour is dignified, I am sure that at least there is something undignified in a man carrying heavy weights on his shoulders when there is no necessity for it. I look forward to the time when the wheat of this State will be handled in the best way made possible by technological advances. I trust that the scheme will result in an improvement in the quality of our wheat so that we will no longer have the continual reproaches we get from other countries of the world. I do not know how the baking qualities of wheat are going to be improved, for it looks as though bulk handling will for ever make it impossible to segregate the wheats on which a premium can be paid because of their higher quality.

Mr. Shannon—It might pay to bag such wheat.

Mr. QUIRKE—That is so. We should have a method whereby the higher quality wheat would have a premium as compensation for its lower yield. That already applies in respect of barley. It is advisable that the wheat be cleaned before it goes to the silos. We would then receive praise instead of reproaches for the quality of our grain. There is a current belief that Australia is the greatest wheatgrowing country in the world. On a population and acreage basis we are one of the greatest exporters, but Italy grows more wheat than we do.

Mr. Shannon—China, which is not regarded as a wheatgrowing country, grows more than we do.

Mr. QUIRKE—I do not know the present situation in China, but prior to Soviet interference it was the greatest wheat producing country in the world. We produce only a small quantity of wheat sold on the world market and that is an added reason for us to put the best possible grain on the market. I hope that the advances proposed by this legislation will represent the first step towards that end.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—Previous speakers from the Opposition have indicated the feelings of most members of the Opposition. I have always supported bulk handling and have regretted that South Australia has so lagged behind the other States in introducing this much needed reform. I realize that there have been great difficulties in the way of its introduction and I have listened with interest to the reports that have been presented to this House from time to time by the Public Works Committee. However, I am not at all happy with the procedure that has been followed in introducing this measure. Representatives of the farming community have been seeking bulk handling facilities for many years and most members of this House have agreed, over the years, that it is desirable, but that is not sufficient. It must be proved to the satisfaction of the House that the scheme is practicable. If approved it will grant a monopoly over the handling of wheat and experience has proved that one must be careful in granting a monopoly, even to a co-operative organization. This subject has been the basis of an inquiry by the Public Works Committee extending over several years. Its reports have outlined the difficulties to be encountered in attempting to establish a bulk handling scheme in South Australia and have emphasized that ultimately the farmer must bear the cost. In 1953 the present Minister of Agriculture, who was then chairman of the Public Works Committee, said that experts from all over the world had been working on this problem. He said:—

They are experts who have given their lives to the study of the problems of bulk handling. They have studied it with regard to our various ports and up to the present we have not had the answer. Those experts are not wishful thinkers or people wishing to stampede the committee into the adoption of any scheme irrespective of its cost. I am not prepared to support a scheme which will undoubtedly land the wheatgrowers in terrific over-capitalization which will have to be borne by the wheat industry when eventually the price of wheat comes back to a normal level, for any scheme formulated must have regard to normal prices in the wheat industry.

That is an indication of the difficulties in establishing bulk handling and surely, also, a warning to members that they should not endorse any scheme unless satisfied on those points raised. He continued:—

I can only point out that Parliament has given my committee the responsibility of investigating this matter, which it is doing, but, as I previously pointed out, it has to rely on experts to work out the details of any scheme, and those experts, some of world-wide

reputation, have not found the answer with regard to shipment from our various ports. That is the crux of the whole problem. With regard to the bulk installation at Ardrossan, I point out that the Wheat Board is levying a charge of 2½d. a bushel on farmers delivering wheat there, although at the official opening of the installation, Sir John Teasdale, the chairman of the board, said that the cost of running the show would be 9.6d. per bushel. This cautious note was struck by the then chairman of the committee making the investigation. In a little over 12 months, however, a scheme has been evolved which we are told is the complete answer to the bulk handling problem and we are asked to endorse it in its entirety without receiving the final report from the Public Works Committee. I am now seeking to support the interjection I made last evening that I would not vote on this matter until that report was in front of me. I protest strongly against the procedure that has been adopted. I have recollections of having been caught this way before, but I will not be led into casting a vote without seeing that report. The Minister said that the report could be expected this week or next week at the latest. I suggest that we should wait for it. Experts could not solve the difficulties after four years of investigation, but the Wheatgrowers Federation has evolved a scheme in a little over 12 months. We are expected to accept that *in globo* without having at our disposal the findings of the Public Works Committee. We have been assured that the failure of the committee to present its final report was not due to overwork but because the experts could not evolve a satisfactory scheme.

Mr. Quirke—How much Government money is involved that you should be so concerned?

Mr. RICHES—The member for Ridley (Mr. Stott) said that the Commonwealth Bank was satisfied as to the soundness of the scheme and was backing it to the extent of £1,000,000, but it is doing nothing of the kind. The State Government has to guarantee £500,000 and must accept the responsibility for the harbor installations and for conversion of railway rolling stock. The Commonwealth Bank is not taking any great risk. There is to be a toll on all wheat produced irrespective of whether or not the bulk handling scheme is a success. That is a further guarantee. I am not going to vote on this matter until I have the final report of the Public Works Committee.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN (Minister of Agriculture)—Firstly, I express my sincere appreciation of the fact that bulk handling has been supported generally by all members

of this House. I think it is particularly creditable on the part of the Opposition to lend their support to the Bill seeing that it involves a substantial displacement of labour. We are all concerned about that, but it affects one or two Opposition members more particularly. I assure Mr. Riches that I do not intend to proceed with the Bill once it reaches the Committee stage until the report of the Public Works Committee is to hand, which I am assured will be on Wednesday next. I appreciate that members are entitled to peruse the report and I expected that it would have been available during the second reading debate. However, I am glad to know that we will have it next week when the measure is further considered. The Bill was introduced because the matter is so urgent. We must go as far and as quickly as we can so that as soon as the Bill is passed work can be commenced on the scheme. It is hoped to relieve the severe congestion at Ardrossan if a start can be made at Wallaroo in time for the coming harvest.

Reference has been made to the matter of displaced labour, but we cannot hold up progress on that score. We must turn to more modern methods of handling our grain. No-one would think for a moment of going back to the coolie system of handling coal at Osborne, where we have now one of the most modern systems of handling coal in the world, and we are proud of it. It ensures that consumers of coal in this State pay £1 a ton below the Victorian price. On the score of progress we must continue to improve our methods of handling grain, particularly if we are to meet the demands of our customers. This has been mentioned by all the authorities who have spoken on this subject, particularly those who have given evidence to the committee. Our customers want wheat in bulk, not in bags.

We are no longer securing a premium for our bagged wheat. A substantial premium for it was obtained some years ago but it has now gone and it no longer pays to send wheat abroad in sacks. I am reminded of the criticism levelled at the Public Works Committee for not having previously reported on this matter. I can remember that a few years ago when tendering evidence to the committee the representatives of the wheat industry suggested there was no urgency about installing bulk handling facilities because a substantial premium was being received on the overseas market for our bagged wheat. However, as soon as we got into difficulties about getting

sacks everybody clamoured for action in the matter of installing bulk handling facilities. From that moment the committee applied itself to the task of trying to solve the problem that existed at our principal shipping ports. It has sought the answer without letting up in any way, and I believe it now has that answer. Its report will enlighten members as to the best method to be adopted in loading vessels with bulk wheat.

I propose to correct some statements made in this debate. It has been assumed that the volume of grain passing through our principal ports for shipment overseas will be sufficient to warrant the installation of the most expensive equipment—a belt gallery. I remind members that this is an expensive piece of equipment and in order to justify it there must be the volume of wheat. Figures taken out for Wallaroo show that the installation of a belt gallery there would cost at least £500,000. Barley was not in the picture then. The volume of wheat going over the jetty at that time for overseas and interstate shipment—long before Ardrossan—was only 3,700,000 bushels. To justify an expenditure of £500,000 a greater volume of grain is needed. I have some more recent figures on this subject. There has always been a controversy about the actual volume of grain shipped at Wallaroo, so I asked the Harbours Board to give me the latest figures. They relate to the years from 1942 to 1954, but I will leave out the three lean years of 1942, 1943 and 1944. Members know that in those years we had a drought and little wheat was shipped. I will also leave out last year, when the incidence of Ardrossan began to be felt. I have taken only the 11 year period from 1942-43 to 1952-53 and it gives an average of 4,073,000 bushels. No authority, not even the Wheat Board, can inflate those figures, because they are correct.

Mr. Stott—The Minister knows that 2,000,000 bushels went from Wallaroo to Ardrossan last year.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I am giving the best possible picture by leaving out the years since Ardrossan came into the matter.

Mr. Stott—Add the barley figures and what is the position?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I have figures relating to the total shipments of barley from Wallaroo. Again they are over the best possible period I could choose—the nine-year period from 1945-46 to 1953-54. The first of those years was a lean one, but then the position began to improve until last year the

figure was 138,000 tons. The average for the period was 67,335 tons or 2,500,000 bushels. That gives a total of about 6,500,000 bushels of grain shipped from Wallaroo. That is the best it would be possible to achieve, providing the trend to ship barley in bulk continues, but Mr. Pearson gave us some disturbing information this afternoon. He suggested that there is a move away from the acceptance by customers overseas of barley in bulk.

Mr. Pearson—I think it is a temporary move.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—It may be, but we cannot be sure. Be that as it may, the best possible picture we can get for Wallaroo is 6,500,000 bushels, providing everything is shipped in bulk. We must consider whether that warrants a costly belt gallery.

Mr. Quirke—Probably that quantity would be increased by getting grain from farther afield.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—No, I think Ardrossan will still function for most of the Yorke Peninsula grain. Port Pirie does not want to lose anything. The wheatgrowers on the Port Pirie railway division would object to any of their wheat going to Wallaroo. We will be faced with installing equipment at Port Pirie as well as at the other ports mentioned in the Bill. We cannot get anything more favourable than the figures I have given. I think the equipment recommended by the committee is the answer to the problem. The engineer of the company has applied himself to the matter of having a belt gallery. It would be easy to recommend one for each port, but the cost has to be considered on the basis of the volume of wheat handled. Figures have been presented as to the costs of the suction method and the belt gallery. Nevertheless, after seeing the analysis made by the committee on this matter members will be satisfied that its recommendation is the best, taking into account all circumstances.

I had Mr. Perrett, general manager of the Australian Wheat Board, in my office about a fortnight or three weeks ago and we discussed the matter. When it was made clear to him that a large amount of capital was involved, entailing large interest charges, in the installation of a belt gallery, and when he balanced up the two costs he admitted that there was not much between them, even after taking into account the factors allowed for in connection with the suction plant. However, there were some factors that had not been included. One was the railway shunting charges, which are considerable, but they apply in either case. He left feeling, I think, satisfied that the suction

method for the time being was the better method, because it could be in use for the forthcoming harvest, whereas it would be impossible to put in a belt system for two or three years. So, I think we are safe in planning for that method of handling the wheat, and if the time comes when a more efficient method is justified the suction units would not be wasted but could be transferred to the lesser ports and utilized there.

Mr. Stott—Where, for instance?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—At Port Pirie and Port Adelaide and at the lesser out-ports. Unless they are catered for by some such method, they have no hope of participating in the benefits of bulk handling. No other equipment could be employed on the small coastal jetties, of which we have a great number. The fact that barley has come into the field of bulk handling has greatly eased the problem with which the Public Works Standing Committee was faced, and provides us with the greater volume which is requisite in running the expensive equipment involved.

Mr. Stott—The Minister believes that 6,500,000 bushels through-put justifies the endless belt system?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I am not admitting that. If the suction method, which is recommended by the Public Works Standing Committee, is cheaper, then there is no warrant for the endless belt.

Mr. Stott—Cheaper in what respect?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—In operating costs. That is the test.

Mr. Stott—If it can be proved that the endless belt is cheaper in running costs, the Minister will consider it?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—There is always the opportunity for considering such matters. The Bill provides for this, but I do not think the honourable member or members of the company need be unduly worried about that matter. If they want bulk handling to function for the forthcoming harvest at any of our ports, suction is the only method by which it can function.

Mr. Stott—That is conceded.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—There is one other important matter to which I want to refer, because I do not wish the House or wheatgrowers to be under any misapprehension as to the financial proposals of the bulk handling company. Mr. Stott dealt last night very exhaustively with the toll system of raising finance. We are accepting that as being quite sound on a voluntary basis, but I cannot concede to his assumption

that the contributions of non-members would equal those of members who signed the contract. The toll is to be 3d. a bushel, once the whole State has been provided with bulk handling installations. It was assumed by the honourable member that an equivalent amount of revenue could be secured from the non-members by virtue of the increased charges they would be required to pay. The clause in the Bill is fairly clear as to what can be expected in the way of contributions from non-members. Obviously, it must be clear to everyone that the company, being given a monopoly and having the sole right, must receive wheat from non-members as well as from members. That is clear and right, and there can be no argument about it.

The Government felt that non-members, who had not subscribed capital to the company by virtue of the toll system, should be required to make some contribution in excess of that paid by those providing the capital, remembering that the latter will get no interest or profit out of it. It is entirely free money to the company. Those who do not elect to become members should be charged a little more for the services rendered to them, as well as to the members, so the Government agreed that the company should be entitled to collect the full cost entailed in handling their wheat, plus a reasonable profit. We cannot allow people to assume that the Government is in collusion in a scheme which could be misleading. The only assumption I can read into clause 29 is what it says, namely, that non-members will be required to pay the full costs of the services rendered, plus a reasonable profit. I do not think that can be construed to mean as much as the capital contribution involved in the toll from members of the company.

Mr. O'Halloran—It will not mean 3d. a bushel?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I do not think so.

Mr. Stott—All the costs of the Wheat Board today amount to more than that.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I am not now dealing with the general handling costs. The company will be entitled to recover these.

Mr. Stott—The clause refers to the operating costs of the company.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—We know what handling costs are involved and how they are made up. Over and above that, the company will be entitled to charge a reasonable amount, which will be sanctioned by the Auditor-General. That cannot be construed to

mean a charge equal to the toll of those contributing to the capital volume, but it should be sufficient to induce the non-members to contribute a share of the capital involved in this installation.

Mr. Stott—That is the whole point.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—It could be a sufficient inducement.

Mr. Shannon—If it were big enough, it would be sufficient to bring about compulsion.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—Some may wish to have it that way, but I feel certain that the Auditor-General could not be constrained to agree to a prohibitive charge, or a charge sufficient to provide more than a reasonable profit. I do not want any misunderstanding as to what is involved in that particular concession.

I think Mr. Pearson suggested that something should be laid down concerning the charges which the company could make to the Barley Board or to other customers. I suggest that that is largely a matter of agreement between the two concerns, although, as he pointed out, it could so develop that in due course the handling company would be the only channel through which barley or other grain could be handled at exporting places. If that is the case, then I agree it is perhaps desirable that we should have a provision requiring that the charges made by the company should be subject to some control. I am quite prepared to have a look at that, and feel sure that Mr. Stott would agree to something reasonable being inserted there if on further consideration it was found to be desirable or necessary. I thank honourable members for the facility they have afforded for this debate to be dealt with expeditiously and for the general support they have given. As promised earlier, I shall ask that progress be reported so that honourable members can have an opportunity to examine the Public Works Standing Committee's report.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from June 9. Page 285.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I do not propose to occupy much time in discussing this matter. As explained by the Premier, the Bill simply provides for the price control legislation in existence here to be extended for a further 12 months. For once

I agree with the very excellent argument adduced by the Premier in support of the recommendation that such an extension should be approved by the House. It is essential to keep prices down, and it is even more essential now than before as the wages of a very considerable section of the community have been pegged by the freezing of the cost of living adjustments by the Federal Arbitration Court. The time-honoured system of adjusting wages to provide for the ebb and flow in the cost of living is no longer available to protect workers from increases in prices, so it becomes increasingly necessary that prices, as far as can be achieved under legislation of this kind, should be pegged as well. The Premier said that in many respects the system of pegged prices was a dead letter, particularly as regards the prices of products for which overseas competition might be expected, and where the price in South Australia is lower than that of the overseas competitors. It would follow that if price control were abolished in this State the determining factor would not be what constitutes a fair profit to the manufacturer or the producer in South Australia, but the higher competitor price at which the commodity can be produced overseas. Although I do not agree that price fixing in this State has been eminently successful, and although I think that *in toto* it is subject to a deal of criticism, in the main it has achieved some measure of stability, so I am prepared to support the second reading.

I have adduced arguments on former occasions for the retention of price control, and they have been well supported by members on this side of the House, for they are sound and logical. The Premier admits that it is necessary to control prices in order to protect our industries from competition, to keep costs down, and to achieve a measure of stability that is most desirable, so why should this legislation be only a passing phase? Why not make it a permanent feature of our Statute Book? If we examine what has been done in Australia recently in fixing prices we find a most peculiar set of circumstances. Tasmania had prices legislation during the war and until a Bill for the extension of the Act was defeated in the Legislative Council in 1954. Likewise, Western Australia had price-fixing legislation during the war and until a Bill for its extension was defeated in the Legislative Council there in 1953.

Mr. John Clark—Legislative Councils seem to be the danger spots.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—In Victoria, for some reason, the Act which expired in December last was not renewed, but that was probably because of alarms in the political field in that State. As the member for Gawler just pertinently interjected, Legislative Councils in at least two States appear to be the danger spots, and I have yet to learn that this section of bicameral Parliaments is particularly keen to protect the interests of the ordinary man. In New South Wales there is a permanent Prices Regulation Act, but in recent months regulations decontrolling a large volume of goods have been issued, the latest in April, so that although many goods have been decontrolled in that State the Act still remains on the Statute Book, but if anything savouring of profiteering manifests itself prices can be recontrolled on the decision of the Minister. I want to refer particularly to Queensland, where there has been a Profiteering Prevention Act since about 1916. Prices are controlled by a board of three members. The Commissioner of Prices is president, the second member is an official of the Industrial Court, other than the President of the Court, and the third is the Director of the Bureau of Industry, who is also Under Secretary of the Department of Labour, or an officer of the Bureau of Industry. That board has complete power to declare goods, zones, prices, etc. The legislation has not resulted in many goods being declared and prices fixed, but has created a psychology amongst traders that they should deal fairly with the public and base their prices on reasonable profit margins. Statistics show that the cost of living in Queensland, despite certain natural disadvantages of that State, has been lower, down the years, than in South Australia. I hope the Government will consider bringing down something like the Profiteering Prevention Act as a permanent feature of our legislation. Of course, before the next session of Parliament there may be a change of Government and then we shall have such an Act.

Bill read a second time, and taken through Committee without amendment.

Committee's report adopted.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (PUBLIC SALARIES) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from June 9. Page 287.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—The principles of this Bill have been settled by various tribunals that have been

responsible for adjusting margins of the salaries of the different grades of public servants. This Bill seeks to bring into line the salaries of certain members of the Public Service, the judiciary, and last, but by no means least, members and officers of Parliament. By passing the Bill we shall be granting the same measure of justice to the persons affected as to those officers whose salaries have been fixed by various tribunals. In most instances the increases will operate retrospectively to December 20, but the increases to members of Parliament will operate only from the month in which the legislation is assented to. I would have thought that members would be entitled to the same consideration, but the Government has decided otherwise.

The increases for members are amply justified, and I have no compunction in supporting them. As the State's population increases and members have to give their time and attention to many more varied problems in order to organize the State upon the lines necessary to provide for the increased population and production, so the duties of members of Parliament and the expenses associated with their discharge are substantially increased. I support the second reading.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood)—I wish to speak very briefly on this Bill and to say that I think the Public Service Arbitrator, the Arbitration Court and Governments throughout Australia have recognized the justice of increases to persons in the Public Service and to those whose salaries are fixed by Parliament. That they have done so is an indication that something further should be done. Although this Parliament has no jurisdiction in relation to pensions, since all Governments have recognized the justice of what is contained in this Bill, how much more should Governments throughout Australia recognize the plight of pensioners.

The SPEAKER—I trust that the honourable member will not develop that line of argument.

Mr. DUNSTAN—No, Sir. I admit that this Government has no jurisdiction over pensions but it can do some things to help pensioners. For instance, allowances could be made by organizations under its control, such as the tramways and the railways, to assist their plight, which certainly calls for action by any governmental authority that can meet it. I press the Government to do what little it can in this regard so that eventually the authority that could provide fully for the pensioners will recognize the justice that everyone else in Australia sees in their cause.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY (Chaffey)—I am speaking in support of this measure lest it be thought that members of Parliament are frightened to discuss anything that affects them personally. As the Leader of the Opposition rightly pointed out, this is a routine matter because wages and salaries of all those mentioned in the Bill have been fixed by various tribunals and increases are now necessary due to the inflation, something to which we as a Parliament have not given sufficient consideration. If inflation is allowed to carry on there must be increased wages and prices right throughout the system, and heads of various departments and members of Parliament will naturally be looking for increased salaries to meet increased costs.

Some years ago I made a suggestion to this House that I believe would not only have made increases unnecessary but would have permitted reduced salaries to be paid to members of Parliament, Judges and others mentioned in this Bill, apart from the workers, without reducing the standard of living. However, it was turned down, and the House did not show much interest in the matter. What support I got was entirely of an academic nature. The Government's idea was that the whole scheme was mad. The member for Burnside (Mr. Clarke) said he did not see much virtue in my suggestion, but whether there is or not is not for me to say. I think it should be done because, if the goods and services are there, that is all that matters. As a matter of fact, we would help the economy very much more if everyone got an increase in wages provided that such increase did not bring about increased costs.

I agree that there are more unfortunate sections of the community who have insufficient purchasing power. These people have given a lifetime of service to the community and are now left with a miserable pittance. The war widow's pension is not a matter for this House, but it is the responsibility of every member who votes for the Commonwealth Parliament. Unless we can get a Government in power in Canberra that is prepared to give to the people a financial system comparable to our ability to produce goods and services we will always have the problem of increasing wages against rising costs. When I suggest an alteration I am told that I am unorthodox, and warned about what happened in Germany and China with unorthodox finance. However, what happened there was under orthodox finance, and it will happen in Australia. It is no use authorities at the University of Adelaide saying that it is only

a small increase so it does not affect the financial system very much. One small drop of poison might not affect an individual very much but if he keeps on taking it long enough he dies, and that is what will happen to our financial system if we keep on inflating it as we are at present.

Mr. QUIRKE (Stanley)—Although I support this measure, I do not wish to vote silently on it because, like the member for Chaffey, I believe we should indicate our support. That is our responsibility. On a previous occasion, when an attempt was made to sidetrack our responsibilities by delegating our authority to someone else, I was outspoken in my condemnation of such procedure. This Parliament is the supreme body in this State and it should not ask anyone else to do its job. I am very pleased to see the responsibility has come back where it belongs.

I think these increases are warranted. A member of Parliament does not only take his place in this House as a representative of his district, but finds that most of the work that he is requested to do, and gladly does for people in his district, has no relation to his representation here. The demands made on members are increasing. We are all glad to receive those demands and gratified that we are asked to do things, because it is a recognition of our status that people come to us for advice, which we give, and this is extremely valuable advice coming from those who have served in this House for a number of years. I have been a member for nearly 15 years and in that time it has become increasingly difficult for a constituent in my district to seek advice on something the like of which I have not had before. If it is not precisely the same, it is something like it, and I am able to give advice. I know that all members are accepted by their constituents as advisers in 101 different capacities, and there is an immense amount of work to do.

Although possibly the general public may not appreciate it, members are here day after day, whether the House is in session or not, applying themselves to their work as representatives of large or small numbers of people. It is not so much that members expect payment for those services, but they at least expect to recover their costs. If every member in this House made a statement after being here for a number of years on what has accrued to him financially through being a member, the whole of the State would be amazed. Being a member is certainly not a money spinner, and if people look upon reward

in terms of money they are inclined to ask why we stay here. There is an extreme satisfaction, apart altogether from the payment, in the minds of members that they have been elected and that the people are satisfied with their representation, which is something that no-one can discount lightly. I am very proud to be the member for the district of Stanley. I have heard you say, Sir, on many occasions, you stand in your place to represent your constituents, and that is the honour that I am proud to have.

When it comes down to actual payment that I should receive for my services, I am prepared to say that these increases will not do any more for me because, with the increased costs today, I will have no more goods after another 10 years' service than I have acquired in the last 15 years. There was a period when, if a member had no other income but his Parliamentary salary, he would have had to resign from this House. We hope that those days have gone. This is a measure of recognition by the State of the work and responsibility carried by every member who does his job. I do not think it can be said that any member of this House is not prepared at all times to do his job and represent his constituents worthily.

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

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS (Stirling)—I rise to speak only to let my constituents know where I stand in this matter. If we believe in the principle of payment for service we are perfectly justified in supporting the Bill. Some members have said that the public will take a dim view of any increase in members' salaries, but I am not so sure about that. If they do, their attitude probably springs from a lack of knowledge of what is entailed in our duties. For instance, from my salary I must find the money to pay for the cost of running my motor car over 20,000 miles a year around my district on my constituents' business; the cost of running and maintaining that vehicle is within a few pounds of £600 a year. Further, a member is expected to contribute towards the various charitable institutions and clubs in his district and this runs into between £200 and £250 a year. During session the country member must pay for board and lodging either at Parliament House or a city residence. My telephone account is about £80 a year, and the deduction of all these expenses from my annual salary means that little is left.

Mr. Lawn—This Bill also deals with the salaries of judges and others.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—Yes, but I am concerned here with letting my constituents know where I stand on the increase in members' salaries. I assure the honourable member that I agree with previous speakers in their remarks on increases in judges' salaries. Recently, I travelled over 70 miles in my district to talk to members of an agricultural bureau, and in proposing a vote of thanks one of the members said he and other members of the bureau were pleased to know that the Government now supplied members with motor cars and paid their expenses so that they might visit such organizations. That is an indication of how little the public knows about members' duties and the costs entailed in performing them. I support the Bill.

Mr. WHITE (Murray)—I, too, rise only to indicate to my constituents where I stand in the matter of increased salaries for members. The Bill increases the salaries of various public servants, members of the judiciary, and members of Parliament. The increases bring these salaries into line with those of public servants who have already benefited from the recent marginal increases. I believe that this is a proper action for the reasons advanced in the Minister's second reading explanation. After all, marginal increases should apply to members of Parliament as well as to civil servants. I realize some people are always willing to point the finger of scorn at the Parliamentarian who increases his own salary, but I often wonder whether some of those people have ever tried to gain some conception of the costs involved in holding a seat in this House.

The member for Stirling (Mr. Jenkins) has touched on some of these costs, but I would like to go a little further and deal with one or two other aspects. Firstly, a member has to win his seat, and an election campaign entails certain expenses. He must create for himself a background to enable him to be selected by his Party. Many political aspirants interest themselves in public affairs and are appointed to various committees and other bodies. They desire to serve the community, but certain costs are entailed in that service. It is from that section that political parties take their candidates; therefore, winning a seat in Parliament costs the successful man money. Entry into Parliament should give a certain amount of social status to a member, and in this connection a decent type of dress is necessary. Further, if he is a married man these remarks also apply to his wife. The member must do his best to keep

himself informed on all subjects, and, although he has the use of a good library, it is necessary for him to purchase some books and to subscribe to many newspapers and periodicals.

Each member receives a gold pass that enables him to travel free by rail, but it is difficult for many members, particularly country members, to travel far without the help of a motor car, and this entails further expense. Some entertainment seems to be part of the job. During session the country member is forced to live away from home for three days a week. Further, the country member who has a business must delegate some of his work to others, and his profits are reduced accordingly. The Parliamentarian probably has a bigger responsibility than any public servant, because the decisions he must make affect most people. These factors should be considered when members' salaries are being reviewed. Too often people say that members do not earn their salary, but have any of those critics tried to find out the actual hours they must work? Members must be available to their constituents at all times.

Mr. Lawn—Day and night.

Mr. WHITE—Yes. Attendance at functions in remote parts of a district means much travel and very often returning home in the early hours. The demand upon the politician's time is gradually increasing for people seem to be turning more and more to their Parliamentary representative for help and advice. For these reasons the Parliamentarian is justified in having his salary increased in the same proportion as the salaries of public servants following the recent marginal increases. I support the Bill because I believe the people I represent would not expect me to do otherwise.

Mr. DAVIS (Port Pirie)—I, too, support the Bill, although I am not happy about many aspects of it. Members of Parliament are entitled to an increase in salary, but I do not agree with the action of some judges and arbitration tribunals in freezing the wage of the basic wage earner. Marginal increases have been awarded only after a stiff fight by the workers concerned, and now we find that judges and other people consider they are also entitled to increased margins, whereas I consider they have been drawing a decent salary

for some time. I do not dispute the fact that public servants and probably the judges were entitled to certain increases, but I am concerned with the lot of the underdog, the basic wage earner who is not now entitled to the quarterly adjustments he once enjoyed. It is the duty of this Parliament to consider his position.

The SPEAKER—I think the honourable member will realize that he has made his point and that the basic wage does not come under this Bill.

Mr. DAVIS—It is the duty of this Government to unpeg the basic wage. Although I realize it has no power to vary Federal awards, this Parliament has the right to say that the workers under State awards shall enjoy quarterly adjustments.

The SPEAKER—Will the honourable member tell me what clause refers to his argument because it does not appear to be pertinent?

Mr. DAVIS—I am dealing with salaries.

The SPEAKER—This Bill relates only to specified salaries.

Mr. DAVIS—I admit the salaries with which I am dealing are not mentioned in the Bill but I think I have a perfect right to draw the attention of members to the position in which other wage earners are placed. However, if you rule that my remarks are not in order I have nothing more to say.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 18 inclusive passed.

Title.

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

In the eighth line to delete "and" and at the end of the ninth line to add "and for other purposes".

The amendment merely signifies that the matters included in the long title are not the only ones included in the Bill. There are one or two small items in the Bill which are not appropriate for inclusion in the title.

Amendments carried; title as amended passed.

Bill reported with amendments.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 7.55 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, June 15, at 2 p.m.