

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, June 21, 1955.

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

QUESTIONS.**SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Can the Minister of Lands, as Acting Leader of the House, say whether it is intended that the House shall sit tomorrow night?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I discussed this matter this morning with the Leader of the Opposition and the Minister of Agriculture, who is in charge of the Bulk Handling of Grain Bill, and as it appears that it will be impossible for the report of the Public Works Committee to be laid on the table until some time in the afternoon I feel that it would not be fair to members who wish to peruse that report to continue with the Bill in the afternoon. Therefore the House will not sit tomorrow night.

ABATTOIRS BOARD'S CONTRACTS.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—Has the Minister of Agriculture obtained an answer to a question I asked on June 14 regarding contracts for the sale of casings at the Metropolitan Abattoirs?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I have received the following report from the Secretary of the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs Board:—

I am directed by my board's chairman to reply to your request of the 15th instant seeking information concerning the disposal of casings from this establishment. You are advised as follows:—

1. A new contract operating from August 6 next has been signed with the present contractor for a minimum period of 12 months subject to the right by either party at the expiration of the first 12 months' period to give 12 months' notice of termination of contract. This, in effect, gives a contract period of two years compared with the previous contract period of five years.

2. Before the contract was finalized exhaustive inquiries extending over a considerable period were made into the matter and in view of the satisfactory arrangement reached with the present contractor concerning prices my board deemed it inadvisable to call tenders in this instance.

3. The contract provides for the prices to be adjusted quarterly in relation to current Victorian market prices.

TEA PRICE.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—As all honourable members know, there has been a variation in the price of tea and housewives and others are concerned as to when the decrease will take place. Can the Minister of Lands say when the Government expects effect to be given to the variation in South Australia? Will the Prices Department determine the matter or is it to be left to individual traders to decide?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The honourable member knows that the tea price is controlled. A report has been obtained on stocks held by firms and it shows that there are about 2.6 weeks' supply on hand. It is reported that some storekeepers have reduced the price, whereas others have not. The Prices Department will make a further investigation in the near future.

SWIMMING TUITION.

Mr. TAPPING—On a number of occasions I have suggested that the teaching of swimming be part of the school curriculum, but the suggestion appears to have been rejected because of the lack of pools. Will the Minister of Education consider making swimming tuition part of the school curriculum where pools exist?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes.

IRRIGATION SETTLEMENT AT LYRUP.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Has the Minister of Lands had an opportunity to place before Cabinet the report of the Land Settlement Committee on the proposed new irrigation settlement at Lyrup and, if so, what was the reaction of Cabinet to the report?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The report from the Land Settlement Committee was favourable to the planting of an area at Lyrup. I placed it before Cabinet on Monday, when it was approved, and it will be forwarded immediately to the Federal authorities for their approval to continue with the development of the area.

LANDLORD AND TENANT ACT.

Mr. HUTCHENS—How many applications were filed in the Local Court under the provisions of the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act, in which the landlord sought possession of a dwelling, in the years 1952, 1953, 1954 and 1955? In how many cases each year was the landlord granted possession?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The honourable member was good enough to give previous

notice of his question, and through my colleague, the Attorney-General, I have been supplied with the following information from His Honour Local Court Judge Mr. Sanderson:—

	Applications made.	Orders granted.
1952	514	300
1953	443	248
1954	454	318
1955 to date	258	153

MARINE STORE COLLECTORS.

Mr. JENNINGS—Has the Minister of Lands a reply to the question I asked on June 7 regarding marine store collectors?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have received the following reply from the Commissioner of Police:—

No complaints have come under notice that part-time licensed marine store collectors are interfering with the business of full-time collectors. Although this may well be so, there is no statutory provision which makes such activities illegal. The Marine Stores Act, 1898-1947, provides that a licensed collector may carry on his business of collecting marine stores between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on any day, which would include week-ends. It is probably a fact that marine store collectors licences have been issued to shift workers and it would be quite lawful for these individuals to operate under their licences provided that statutory requirements of the Act were complied with. There are no ready means of ascertaining the relative extent of the business activities of the respective classes of licensee to enable a reliable comparison to be drawn.

BARMERA HOSPITAL CHARGES.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Recently I was approached by two men who had received accounts from the Barmera public hospital for maternity patients. They were both upset at the increased charges, especially as the public wards used for medical and other benefits are still free, the only increases evidently being for maternity cases. They feel that the Government gives only lip service to the contention that children born of Australian parents are still Australia's best immigrants, and as it costs a good deal to bring migrants to this country, at least the Government should be sympathetic towards them, especially as most new parents are young people faced with the cost of furnishing their homes and bringing up their children. One letter that I have summarizes the position as follows:—

The fees for maternity cases are as follows:—Ward, £2 5s. per day less 12s. Government Benefit. Private room, £3 3s. per day less 12s. Government Benefit. Theatre fee, £1 11s. 6d. Doctor's fee, £10 10s. Added to this the patient is obliged to take to hospital bandages, antiseptics, etc., to the value of £3 3s.

In view of the fees charged one would assume that the hospital would supply those things, but the patient has to supply them. The letter continues:—

As the average confinement, excluding complications, is 10 days these charges are a heavy burden for any young couple anxious to have a family.

The writer states that his total costs were £31 14s. 6d. I ask the Minister representing the Minister of Health whether the Government will consider relaxing these imposts on maternity cases?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I shall be pleased to take up the question with the Minister of Health and bring down a reply.

HOUSING TRUST PURCHASE HOMES.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Recently it was reported to me, and a similar case was reported to another member, that applicants for Housing Trust purchase houses are requested to meet an inspector at a stated location to inspect the houses which it is expected will be allocated to them, and on meeting the inspector they are asked whether they have any liabilities. One man had the necessary deposit of £500 and sufficient money in the bank to meet his liabilities, but because he had some liabilities the inspector told him that he could not be considered for a purchase home. I ask the Minister in charge of the House whether he will ask the trust whether it will ascertain the liabilities of applicants before they are asked to lose time in inspecting homes?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yes.

TIMBER LICENCES.

Mr. FLETCHER—Can the Minister of Forests say whether the long-standing policy as regards the granting of yearly licences to private companies receiving timber from the Forestry Department still obtains?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—Yes, private firms still obtain their timber on annual licences.

RISDON PARK SCHOOL.

Mr. DAVIS—Has the Minister of Education obtained the information I desire about the conveniences at the Risdon Park School?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes, but it is not as satisfactory as either the honourable member or I would desire. As long ago as November 12, 1954, the Architect-in-Chief let a contract to a Solomontown contractor, the contract being for composite brick lavatories and shelter sheds and also for ground formation and filling over the site and a bitumen

roadway and bitumen paths. There has been a long delay in carrying out this work, but I say with great respect to the contractor that the fault has not been with either the Education Department or the Architect-in-Chief's Department, but with the local contractor. He contended:—

(1) He had misinterpreted the plans and specification as to the area required for ground formation and filling as the plans showed buildings not yet erected over which filling had to be provided.

(2) He had misinterpreted the width of bitumen paths as shown on the plan. The plans clearly showed the pathway to be 10ft. wide with a 3ft. 6in. gateway. He contended that this had been interpreted as requiring only a 3ft. 6in. wide path.

(3) He was not able to procure certain materials for the erection of the lavatories.

Temporary lavatories were erected to give immediate lavatory provision for the school. Subsequently, the contractor submitted prices which he required for the variations from his tendered figure. These were faulted by the Construction Officer and the contractor agreed that they were wrong and agreed to review them and resubmit his claim. These revised prices were received yesterday and are being examined. The construction officer directed him to advise what materials he was finding it difficult to obtain and assured him that he would see that these were supplied to him from the trade. This list was received yesterday and arrangements for supply will be made. On behalf of the department, I express regret for the inconvenience which has been caused to the children attending this school.

PETROL PRICES.

Mr. JENNINGS—Today's *News* reports that on Friday next "super" petrol will be available at 3s. 7d. a gallon—4d. dearer than ordinary petrol. Although I have no objection to people paying 4d. a gallon more if they want to, can the Acting Leader of the Government, representing the Minister in charge of prices, say whether the Prices Department has made sure that sufficient of the standard type petrol will still be available to those who prefer it and that companies will not be able to charge the higher price for all petrol sold merely by saying that the standard type is not available?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I had not heard of the proposed increase of 4d. on the new high octane petrol, but in discussing the matter with an officer of the Government motor garage in connection with the lodging of certain forms I asked whether both classes of petrol would be available, and he said they would be;

therefore, if there is sufficient of the standard type on hand customers will have the opportunity of selecting the petrol they require.

PORT AUGUSTA—WOOMERA ROAD.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Minister of Works a report on the construction of an all-weather road between Port Augusta and Woomera, about which I asked a question previously?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Minister of Roads has supplied the following report by the Chief Engineer, which is endorsed by the Commissioner of Highways:—

This department has no programme for the Port Augusta—Woomera Road. Funds are specifically provided for this work by Federal authorities and the decision regarding what improvements shall be made on this road rests entirely with them.

MOUNT GAMBIER GAS.

Mr. FLETCHER—Since the amendment of the Gas Act last session to bring Mount Gambier under the Act I have received a few complaints regarding the quality of the gas in that district. Can the Minister representing the Minister of Industry say how recently the Mount Gambier gas was tested and what was the result of that test?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to refer the matter to the Minister of Industry, and obtain a reply as soon as possible.

RAILWAY CARRIAGE OF TOMATOES.

Mr. STOTT—I have received the following letter from the Minister of Railways:—

With further reference to your letter of the 31st ult. with regard to compensation in connection with the hold-up of a consignment of tomatoes from the Loxton area, I have to inform you that the conditions of carriage of the tomatoes referred to are prescribed in the Freight Rates By-law, Clause 38, page 34, reading as follows:—

"The Commissioner does not guarantee, under any circumstances, the arrival or delivery of any freight (perishable or otherwise) at any particular time, by any particular train, or for any particular market; neither does he undertake to advise consignees of the arrival of freight; and the Commissioner will not be responsible for the non-arrival or non-delivery of freight by any particular time or train, or for any particular market, or by reason of any consignee not having been advised of the arrival of freight, or for any loss in consequence thereof."

In view of the above I regret that I am unable to approve of any claim.

Will the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Railways, ask the Minister of Railways to reconsider this just claim for compensation, which is absolutely due to the

negligence of the railways employees at Taillem Bend, or ask Cabinet to bring down a by-law to provide for justice to Loxton people when they consign tomatoes by rail?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—As the Queen's Counsel sitting behind me and the honourable member for Norwood opposite will agree, at common law, if the loss is due to the negligence of any employee, as the honourable member alleges is the case at Taillem Bend, and that can be shown, then the Railways Commissioner is liable, irrespective of the by-law quoted. In fact, neither I nor, I am sure, the member opposite, would suggest that the railways employees at Taillem Bend are more negligent than those on any other type of transport.

Mr. STOTT—Will the Minister ascertain from the Minister of Railways whether there is a remedy under common law and advise me when the claim will be paid under common law?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—A claim under common law can only be established when it is a claim. People clamour for these services but when they get them try to decry them and place railway employees in a different category from other persons. If someone is held up because a road transport does not reach its destination in time nothing is said about that, but if the Railways Department does something untoward it becomes a matter for the House to discuss. If, because of seasonal conditions, an aeroplane does not leave on time it is regarded as an act of God, but with the Railways Department it is always the fault of the railway employees.

Mr. Stott—The Minister admitted in his letter to me that the railway employees omitted to connect the carriage to the train at Taillem Bend.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—If there is a remedy it is available at law. I am not here to give further advice thereon.

IMPURE PENICILLIN.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Has the Acting Leader of the Government a reply to my question of June 9 regarding impure penicillin?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The Director-General of Public Health reports:—

Investigations were made and they indicated that the troublesome effects from some of the injections of procaine penicillin preparations arose from the presence of residual caustic soda in the plastic syringes issued by one of the manufacturers. Most of the contaminated

syringes were found to belong to one batch of the syringes, and even in that batch only a small proportion of the syringes contained a significant amount of the soda. The conclusion arrived at was that the free soda would combine with the procaine of the preparation to form an irritating substance. Reports of trouble came from the metropolitan area and from several country centres. As soon as practicable a circular was issued to doctors throughout the State. The Adelaide representative of the manufacturer stated that the whole of the batch which showed contamination was promptly recalled from the retailers (who normally supply the doctors). The trouble occurring in patients who received the injections consisted generally of a painful swelling of the injection-site. At least one case of abscess occurred. In some cases generalized reactions, such as feverishness and sweating, were reported, but it was sometimes difficult to exclude the initial illness as a cause of those symptoms. No reports of any further trouble have come to the department.

ANDAMOOKA OPAL FIELDS ROADS.

Mr. RICHES—Will the Minister of Works obtain from the responsible department the following information for the Andamooka Opal Fields Progress Association:—

1. When will the grader be due at Andamooka as the roads are in a very bad state?
2. When the grader does arrive will the crew grade a road out to the air strip?
3. If so, can a gutter be cut along the side of the air strip for a distance of about 1,100 yards for drainage purposes?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will certainly get that information. I might add that the state of the roads is due to the extraordinarily fine season. One cannot have omelets without cracking eggs. The wonderful rains we have enjoyed have adversely affected the roads.

GEPPS CROSS FEEDER SERVICE.

Mr. JENNINGS—Will the Minister of Works ascertain from the Tramways Trust its intentions concerning the private bus service from Gepps Cross connecting at the Enfield tram terminus? Because it is a private service people have to purchase two tickets and consequently pay more than other people travelling on routes east and west of this route. Moreover, if the trust takes over this feeder service it may extend it from Gepps Cross to Parooka, for which there appears to be justification. The private operator will not extend it.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will take that matter up with the general manager of the trust and make any report available.

MORTGAGES ON HOMES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (on notice)—

1. How many advances by way of first mortgage were made by State instrumentalities for the purchase of homes during each of the years 1952-53 and 1953-54?

2. What was the total amount of these mortgages?

3. Of these first mortgages how many required second mortgages to enable purchases to be made?

4. What was the total amount of these second mortgages?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The replies are:—

1. 1952-53, 3,455; 1953-54, 3,692.

2. 1952-53, £5,361,381; 1953-54, £5,791,333.

3. As far as is known—1952-53, 887; 1953-54, 835.

4. 1952-53, £519,545; 1953-54, £571,740. In addition there were known to be in 1952-53, 192, and in 1953-54, 85 second mortgages, the amounts of which are unknown.

PETROL TAX AND ROADMAKING.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY (on notice)—

1. Was petrol tax imposed by the Commonwealth Parliament to provide finance for road-making?

2. Have large sums of these moneys been diverted to Commonwealth general revenue?

3. Would the entire proceeds of petrol tax since its inception have solved State road problems?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The replies are:—

1. The petrol tax was first imposed in 1902, but it was not until 1923 that any amount was paid towards maintaining roads.

2. Yes.

3. No.

VICTORIA AND OUTER HARBOUR ROADS.

Mr. TAPPING (on notice)—

1. Will the Victoria and Outer Harbour Roads be completed at an early date?

2. If not, what is the reason for the delay?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The replies are:—

1. The departmental programme will not include further reconstruction work on the Port Adelaide-Draper or Outer Harbour main roads during 1955-56.

2. All work comprised in the original approval having been completed, there is no delay.

MENTAL INSTITUTION PATIENTS.

Mr. LAWN (on notice)—How many patients according to the Superintendent of Mental Institutions, who could have been cared for more appropriately in their homes by relatives or in an infirmary type of hospital, were in mental institutions during each of the years from 1932 to 1953?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The Superintendent of Mental Institutions is on annual recreation leave until Monday, June 27, 1955, and for that reason the answer to this question cannot be supplied.

NURSES' SALARIES.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (on notice)—

1. Is there any award, determination or agreement covering salaries and working conditions of nursing staff at—(a) the Royal Adelaide Hospital; (b) other Government Hospitals in South Australia?

2. If so, what are the salaries and conditions prescribed?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The replies are:—

1. The salaries and conditions of employment of the nursing staffs in the Royal Adelaide Hospital and other Government Hospitals in South Australia are based on agreements between the Public Service Commissioner and the Public Service Association of South Australia, and are subject to the approval of the Minister of Industry and Employment before being implemented.

2. A copy of such conditions and salaries applicable to each hospital is available.

SEWERAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH (Minister of Works) moved:—

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Sewerage Act, 1929-1953.

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

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I move:—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

I thank members for granting me the privilege of giving the second reading explanation this afternoon. It is desired to have the Bill before the House as soon as possible. It is based on the recommendations of a committee that was appointed following on suggestions last session

when legislation was before Parliament. Instead of passing it then it was decided to reserve the measure for consideration later so that a decision could be made whether to have powers of fixation or to have a limitation of 1s. 9d. or a figure above that. I pay a tribute to the non-Party committee which considered the matter. A mass of information had to be dealt with and the committee applied itself earnestly to the task. It was difficult indeed to establish a fair rate to apply all over the State. In other States no such scheme has been attempted. There the water and sewerage authorities do not have a State-wide obligation as they do here. Each has the responsibility of handling water or sewerage, and sometimes both, in its own area. In South Australia there is a State-wide obligation. That is why it was difficult to fix a rate that would be fair all round. It has been done in relation to some water supplies. Originally the rate of 1s. 9d. was fixed for sewerage in 1946, although the Government at that time asked for a higher rate. The Government's desire was genuine. The fixing of this rate made it almost impossible for any Government to proceed with country sewerage schemes unless they were heavily subsidized by the general taxpayer, who would object to that. There has been the same experience in country towns in New South Wales and Victoria. I have a keen appreciation of the difficulties in this matter and I want to see something done. If I were to talk *ad libitum* on the matter I would take a long time, so I will read the explanation prepared by the Parliamentary Draftsman, and then add a few words of my own.

The object of the Bill is to carry out the recommendations of a committee appointed early this year by the Government to consider country sewerage charges. Sewerage rates in country drainage areas are at present fixed by section 75a of the principal Act. This section was enacted in 1946, and provides that a flat rate of 1s. 9d. in the pound of assessed annual value shall be payable on land in country drainage areas, and also provides for minimum rates of £2 12s. per annum where the land is connected with a sewerage system, and 12s. where the land is not so connected. These rates are out of line with present-day price levels and last year the Government introduced a Bill enabling increased rates to be levied. The Bill did not fix new rates, but provided that the Minister of Works could fix the sewerage rate in each country drainage area in the same way as in the Adelaide drainage area. The Bill thus

proposed to abandon the principle adopted in 1946 of fixing a single rate applicable in all country drainage areas. It was suggested to the Government that before this principle was abandoned the whole question should be further considered. As a result, the Government agreed to appoint a committee of five, consisting of the Minister of Works and two representatives of each Party.

A committee was accordingly appointed in February of this year with the following terms of reference—"To consider a fair basis of charges for any country sewerage scheme." The committee carefully examined all the evidence produced and the factors affecting sewerage of country towns, and unanimously agreed to the following resolution:—

The committee is satisfied that the economics of country sewerage must be placed on a more realistic basis by deriving increased revenue either by way of an increased rate or increased assessment. The committee has gone thoroughly into these two alternatives. Evidence before the committee shows that after relating up-to-date assessments with present-day values and costs, the revenue derivable from the rate of 1s. 9d. fixed in the Act of 1946 is not now a practicable basis of charges for any country sewerage scheme. The Committee therefore recommends:

(1) That the rate for country sewerage schemes be increased from 1s. 9d. to an amount not exceeding 2s. 6d. in the pound.

(2) That the minimum rate on sewered properties be £4 per annum.

(3) That the minimum rate on vacant land be fixed at £1.

The Government has decided to give effect to the recommendation of the committee, and is accordingly introducing this Bill. Clause 4 provides that the Minister may annually by notice in the *Gazette* fix a flat rate of not more than 2s. 6d. in the pound as the sewerage rate for all country drainage areas. Clause 4 also fixes minimum rates for country drainage areas of £4 per annum where the land is drained by the sewers and £1 where the land is not so drained. I point out that it is feasible for a sewer to be taken right up to a block of land but sealed off there and not drain the land; therefore we have made a distinction under this Bill. It will be noticed that the Bill refers to land being "drained by" the sewers, whereas the Act of 1946 referred to land being "connected with" the sewers. In some cases a sewerage pipe is taken up to the boundary of land and sealed at the boundary. It could be argued that in these circumstances the land is connected with the sewers, notwithstanding that it is not drained by the sewers. As it is not desired to impose the higher minimum rate where land is connected to the sewers by a sealed pipe only,

the wording has been altered to make it clear that the higher minimum rate is only payable where the land is in fact drained by the sewers.

Clause 7 provides that the Bill will operate as from July 1, 1955. Clause 5 makes a consequential amendment to section 75 of the principal Act. This section at present enables the Minister to fix minimum rates in any drainage area, whether in Adelaide or in the country. But as the fixing of minimum rates for country drainage areas is specially provided for in this Bill, it is now necessary that the Minister's powers under section 75 of the principal Act should be restricted to fixing minimum rates in the Adelaide drainage area. Clause 5 accordingly limits the operation of section 75 to the Adelaide drainage area. Clauses 3 and 6 make other consequential amendments to the principal Act which do not require explanation.

I hope the House will bear with me now while I give some information which I am sure will be helpful to members in considering this Bill. Country sewerage schemes in New South Wales and Victoria are not constructed by the respective Governments, but by local authorities, and are subsidized on a formula basis. Government assistance is given to country towns in Victoria by making capital grants of 50 per cent of the capital cost, less 1 per cent for each 40 tenements in the town. The capital cost of assistance given in Victoria varies from 50 per cent in the case of a town of 400 tenements (about 1,500 population) down to zero for towns having

a population of 9,000 or 10,000 persons. Consequently, the cities of Port Pirie and Mount Gambier would not participate in any capital grant if the Victorian basis were adopted. They would be thrown entirely upon their own resources to raise the necessary money to design, construct, and supervise the schemes and maintain them, with a subsequent subsidy towards the annual maintenance cost. After they had done all this work the net result would be that towns of commensurate size would have to pay rates on the basis now suggested by this amendment. The committee applied itself very thoroughly to this aspect and, as far as it could see, even applying the most favourable construction to any country town in either Victoria or New South Wales, the minimum rate would remain at 2s. 6d. in the pound, and this was the basis finally recommended by the committee.

The Victorian Government makes a subsidy equal to the difference between 3 per cent and the actual rate paid on money borrowed by the sewerage authorities. In no case is a subsidy greater than 50 per cent of the capital cost made. There the rates vary from 2s. 4d. to as high as 5s. Maryborough, with a population of over 8,000, has net annual charges of £14,400, the rate being 2s. 4d. in the pound. I have here a schedule of charges relating to several Victorian country towns, and I ask permission to have it incorporated in *Hansard* without reading it.

Leave granted.

The schedule was as follows:—

Town.	Population, 1954 Census.	Est. Capital Cost. £	Govt. Grant. £	Net Annual Charges. £	Tenements Served.	Rate, A.A.V. s. d.
Maryborough	8,626	394,000	112,000	14,400	1,563	2 4
Stawell	5,456	316,000	86,000	14,250	1,380	3 6
Tallangatta	1,000	75,000	37,500	3,093	296	4 6
Springvale	3,500	216,000	33,300	18,000	1,006	2 4
			11,900		579	
Sale	6,542	390,000	145,000	13,900	1,400	2 9
Werribee	4,342	270,000	109,000	8,250	920	3 1
St. Arnaud	3,038	200,000	77,000	8,130	700	2 10
Mooroopna	1,796	171,000	85,000	5,000	400	4 8
Tatura	1,912	182,000	91,000	5,150	400	5 1
Leongatta	2,303	126,500	50,000	7,500	560	2 5
Traralgon	8,830	400,000	38,200	—	—	to 3 0

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Members will see that the highest rate under that table is for Tatura, which has a population of 1,912, and the estimated capital cost for the scheme there was £182,000. The number of tenements served is shown as 400, and the town has a rate of 5s. 1d. in the pound. The rates for those

towns vary from as low as 2s. 4d. to as high as 5s. 1d.

Mr. Quirke—Are those schemes in operation, or are they proposed?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—They are all in operation. It should be noted that the minimum charges for most of these towns are £5

for houses as against £4 under this Bill, and £2 for vacant lots as against 20s. As regards New South Wales, it is difficult to make a comparative basis as rates are levied on unimproved values as against our assessed annual values. In that State they vary from 3d. to 2s. 4d. in the pound on the unimproved values. At Kyogle, which is on the border of New South Wales and Queensland, the rate is 3d. in the pound, but they adopt an occupied mini-

mum charge of £4, the minimum for unoccupied land being £2. In Boggabri the rate is 1s. in the pound, the minimum charge for occupied land being £12 and for unoccupied land £4. I have a schedule of charges in New South Wales and I ask permission to have it incorporated in *Hansard* without reading it.

Leave granted.

The schedule was as follows:—

Town.	Rate in £.	Rated on.	Minimum Charges.	
			Occupied Land.	Unoccupied Land.
	s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Kyogle	0 3	U.C.V.	4 0 0	2 0 0
Condobolin	0 3½	U.C.V.	6 0 0	2 10 0
Moree	0 10½	U.C.V.	2 0 0	2 0 0
Manilla	0 9	U.C.V.	4 0 0	1 15 0
Barraba	2 4	U.C.V.	4 0 0	1 0 0
Inverell	0 6½	U.C.V.	6 0 0	1 0 0
Boggabri	1 0	U.C.V.	12 0 0	4 0 0

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—As a general principle, the authority concerned in New South Wales is given a subsidy sufficient to keep the annual cost of the scheme down to 44s. a head, with the proviso that the Government subsidy is not to exceed 50 per cent of the capital cost. The minimum rates for occupied land in New South Wales vary from £2 to £12, and for unoccupied lots from £1 to £4. Since the original estimates were taken out and submitted to the various local government bodies concerned in South Australia, a great alteration has taken place in two directions. On the one hand costs have greatly increased, and tied up with this and inherent therein remains the fact that the values of premises have correspondingly increased. Consequently, before any council is asked to approve or disapprove of a scheme on behalf of its ratepayers, when the Public Works Committee has submitted a report, such council will have submitted to it a new schedule based on current costs and revenues, the latter of which will, in turn, be determined by up to date assessments. Within the next week or two a new assessment will be made for the purposes of water supply assessments. Therefore, we shall have data on what, on present-day values, properties will be assessed at. Then we will see the considerable difference effected by the increased rates. I am assured by the Government valuator that in no case has he assessed property valuations at more than 75 per cent of their saleable value. For instance, a property valued on sales of nearby properties at £4,000 would be assessed at about £3,000. The new assessment, however, will make a considerable difference in

the rate to be paid, therefore members will agree that, before asking councils to decide whether they will agree to have sewerage schemes, it would be wise to supply a new schedule based on the current rates and assessments, and it is proposed that that shall be done.

I hope to have those schedules ready for submission to the local governing bodies within a very short time, but obviously at this stage I cannot say what the overall subsidy by the community will be. It can be taken for granted, however, that although the rate will, under the Bill, be increased from 1s. 9d. to 2s. 6d. in the pound, costs have correspondingly increased, and despite the increased value of those premises existing at the time of valuation and the new premises since erected in the respective towns, the returns therefrom will still fall far short of meeting interest and maintenance costs. The general taxpayer will therefore be called upon to meet this deficiency. Personally speaking (and I know the House will agree with me), I feel that this should be done because, as a result, the communal life and health in the country towns will be so benefited that it will be really worth while. It will therefore add something towards bringing the amenities of city life to country towns.

Speaking generally, because of the density of population, the sewerage of the metropolitan area has been profitable, and although over the last few years there has been a slight deficit, over the years there has been an accumulated profit of about £1,000,000. Many metropolitan districts that are now being sewered would, taken individually, show a loss. There is nothing wrong in suggesting that the State is

amply justified in extending sewerage to country towns even if such schemes do show a loss, especially when we can say that over a period of years up to the present we have shown a profit from our enterprise in this direction.

One phase of development in the city and the country will have to be safeguarded, namely the ribbon or spread-out development that has taken place in such places as Darlington, Shepherds Hill, Glen Osmond and Hope Valley. Without a proper sense of the limitation of the public purse, certain subdivisions are taking place and land is being sold and houses built in areas that make it almost physically impossible and often not economically feasible to serve them with sewers. Therefore, in both the city and the country, prospective buyers of subdivided areas should firstly ascertain whether they are likely to be sewered and supplied with other amenities.

Mr. O'Halloran—How can that be done without an effective town planning Bill?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Government indicated its intention in that direction last year. I am pleased to say that the warning given by the Premier and others regarding this matter has had some good effect, and I have been told by the Engineer for Sewerage that many people, prior to buying land and erecting a home on it, seek advice about the possibilities of sewerage. Ribbon development is unsatisfactory; it has occurred in England and other countries where it has caused difficulties to local councils in their efforts to supply electricity and gas and to construct roads and footpaths. Yet in South Australia, in spite of warnings given from time to time, these subdivisions have taken place and land has been bought cheaply, because of the lack of these amenities, and subsequently built on. Immediately a few houses are erected, the residents in the area clamour for extension of Government utilities, not only sewers, but also transport, electricity, gas, water mains, roads, footpaths, etc. I therefore feel compelled to repeat the warning issued by the Premier, that people contemplating buying land in newly subdivided areas should first of all ascertain whether these facilities will be available when they build their homes there. If after these inquiries they still desire to build, the responsibility is theirs. The legal phrase, *caveat emptor* (let the buyer beware), applies in full force to such subdivisions. While such applies perhaps more to the metropolitan area, it also applies to some larger country towns that we have in view for sewerage. There are thousands of vacant blocks in the metropolitan

area and in country towns served by water and all other facilities that should be built on before we extend *ad lib* into newer areas. This is one of the problems that a growing community has to face: should there be a limitation beyond which such facilities as sewers, lighting, modern transport, etc., cannot be expected, or should we extend beyond these limits and so enhance the values of the land within that area to the benefit of the individual (but at the cost of the country as a whole), and thus increase the values of land bought cheaply by speculators or householders who will immediately demand the same amenities for those outside reasonable extensions as for those who buy, at a higher rate, building blocks where these amenities are already in existence or readily available?

About 12 months ago in a public address delivered in Adelaide, the chairman of the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works indicated that there was in that city a lag of about two years in the supply of water and five years in the supply of sewerage facilities from the time the house was built. Unfortunately, I have no more recent details, but I doubt whether the position has improved, whereas in Adelaide we have kept pace to a large degree with our growing population. According to the latest information available Adelaide is the most completely sewered city in the Commonwealth. In Sydney, for example, 85,000 dwellings are unsewered. This represents about 350,000 persons, whereas about 97 per cent of Adelaide's population has sewerage facilities. Since the war, very little was done by way of sewerage for country towns in eastern States until recently, when schemes were approved for the sewerage of several small towns in New South Wales and Victoria under their respective subsidy schemes on the basis previously explained by me.

I must say how much I appreciate the industry, thought and time given by the committee in an effort to solve the very difficult problem of country sewerage facilities. At least £2,000,000 will be involved in sewerage of our four leading towns, and the annual maintenance cost of those services will not nearly be met, even by the new rates. The public purse will have to be drawn upon to meet that deficiency. Country sewerage is a worthy project, and the passing of this Bill will make it more feasible for any Government to proceed with such a scheme. If during the course of this debate any further information is required I shall be glad to supply it.

The member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) has previously asked that consideration be given by the committee and by the Government to a suggestion that many country towns could be better and more cheaply served by a septic tank system installed with the assistance of a subsidy, but that subject cannot be dealt with in this Bill, which is a sewerage Bill.

Mr. Quirke—Is that a hint that members may not refer to it?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—They may refer to it, but it would have to be dealt with separately.

Mr. Quirke—Is there a chance that such a project may be implemented?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The limitation is obvious: where will you end? It can be taken for granted that there is a hard core in each country town that cannot be efficiently served by a septic tank system. Therefore, there cannot be a complete scheme because towns such as Port Pirie, Mount Gambier and Port Augusta cannot be served properly by a septic tank system, and the problem is whether we are to have an overall scheme or part of

one and part of the other. The proposed sewerage scheme is the cheapest in the Commonwealth and we should give effect to it.

Mr. RICHES secured the adjournment of the debate.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (PUBLIC SALARIES) BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONTROL OF RENTS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from June 16. Page 364.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—As this Bill contains much that I have not had an opportunity to consider, particularly one or two clauses that may require some amendment in order to meet my wishes, I ask leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.16 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, June 22, at 2 p.m.