

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, August 23, 1955.

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

### QUESTIONS.

#### GRASSHOPPER INFESTATION.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I heard in today's midday news broadcast by the Australian Broadcasting Commission that the Minister of Agriculture stated that yesterday there was a possibility of a grasshopper infestation in some parts of South Australia, and that certain poisons and other materials for the destruction of grasshoppers would be made available free to local government bodies. As there are frequently infestations in outside districts not under the control of local government bodies, has consideration been given to assisting in the destruction of the pests in those areas or any policy devised to assist in their destruction?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—So far detailed plans have not been worked out for the outside areas. The position inside is that the district councils will be reimbursed the cost of the materials actually used to prevent unnecessary stock piling of materials that might not be required later. There must be a curb on this matter. The onus is on them to secure the necessary materials and we are assured that they are available in large quantities at short notice, so there should be no difficulty in getting supplies. In regard to the outside country, I will have the matter examined to see what is the best plan to adopt.

Mr. HEASLIP—What is the position concerning holders of land where grasshoppers have already hatched out? I have been informed by landholders in the hills adjacent to Wirrara that grasshoppers have already hatched out there, and are in the hopping stage, but no action has been taken. Should not those landholders advise the district councils of the position so that action can be taken?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The landholders concerned have the following obligations under the Noxious Insects Act passed some years ago:—To mark egg beds on his property; to report the location and size of beds to the district council or Pastoral Board; to report commencement of hatching, and to apply control measures as required by the district council. Councils throughout the State have been advised of these requirements, and the department has a good and approximately

accurate map indicating all the egg beds in the State. That preliminary work has been done. I point out, however, that the obligation to destroy the hoppers after hatching rests on the landholder and he has been notified to that effect. The obligation is on the councils to secure the materials, enforce control measures, issue poison materials, inspect unoccupied land for presence of egg beds, inspect reported egg beds, check application of control measures, and report monthly to the Director of Agriculture on the progress of control measures and the general survey of results. The effectiveness of this machinery depends entirely on the landholder and the district council in each case.

#### LUNG CANCER FROM SMOKING.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—Will the Premier ask the Minister of Health to consider publishing in *Health Notes* opinions on the relationship between lung cancer and excessive smoking?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will refer the question to the Minister of Health.

#### BUILDERS' RIGHTS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Recently it was reported to me that, after entering into a contract with a client to build a home, a builder was requested to complete a couple of rooms so that furniture could be stored. He did this and had sewerage connections made and other matters attended to quickly, and soon after, before the building was completed, an action for possession was taken against him by the client. The builder was told to get off the premises entirely or action for trespass would be taken against him. I do not know the conditions of the contract, but I ask the Premier whether protection against similar action can be given to builders in the future?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Obviously this question involves the rights of two conflicting parties, and as I have not the agreement before me I hesitate to express any opinion on the rights. In such cases it is advisable for the party who feels his rights are being transgressed to consult a solicitor.

#### ABATTOIRS STRIKE.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—Can the Minister of Agriculture give any information about the abattoirs strike, and say whether it is likely to finish soon?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The President of the Industrial Court, Mr. Pellew,

called another conference of the parties at 9 a.m. today, but it proved abortive, and there appears to be no sign of any settlement. Regarding the general situation, considerable numbers of lambs are being slaughtered under the plan operated by the master butchers at the Abattoirs and in outside works for the supply of meat to the metropolitan area. Apart from that slight relief of the very serious situation, Victorian buyers are now operating in this State, and considerable numbers of lambs have been railed to Victoria for treatment. If that develops substantially we can look for some relief of the situation from that source. Nevertheless, it is urgent that the strike be settled at the earliest possible moment because this year we shall probably have more lambs to treat than were treated last year, and they will be growing beyond the weights required and be down-graded appreciably. This will affect their values and the return to the producer and the State.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The strike at the metropolitan abattoirs has lasted for three weeks and the Minister of Agriculture has informed us that a conference that was held today broke down. It appears to me therefore that it could last indefinitely, because neither the board nor the workers are materially affected, most of the workers having found employment in other places, and I imagine that it would not be very difficult to find a more congenial way of earning a livelihood than by working at the abattoirs. As the public welfare, as well as that of the primary producers, is at stake, can the Premier say what steps the Government is taking, or proposes to take, to end this unfortunate strike, which is of benefit to no one?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There is a properly constituted wages board which governs this industry and the strike is against conditions which have been laid down by an industrial tribunal duly appointed and which has considered the matter at issue. The abortive conference held this morning took place before Mr. Pellew, the President of the Industrial Court, and obviously it would be highly improper for the Government to interfere with a matter which is the subject of a dispute between employer and employee where there is a properly constituted tribunal to deal with it.

Mr. Macgillivray—What is the primary producer to do in the meantime?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Minister of Agriculture stated that there is fairly free

movement of stock. Fortunately for the industry the season has been favourable and the grass seeds have not yet become prevalent and, although it is unfortunate that the strike is continuing, the fact remains that up to the present serious losses have been avoided. The remedy under the Industrial Code would be a prosecution launched against those who are on strike, but I do not think that any honourable member would ever consider that a strike could be solved by a prosecution. I think wiser counsels will prevail in due course, but it may take some time to work out a compromise.

#### CONVENIENCE FOR OSBORNE BUS TERMINUS.

Mr. TAPPING—About two years ago I asked the Municipal Tramways Trust whether it would provide a lavatory at the Osborne bus terminus, but the request was rejected. A fortnight ago the Taperoo Progress Association asked me to make further representations to the trust, which I did, its reply of August 8 saying that there was a toilet at the Cheltenham tram terminus, the Port Adelaide bus depot, and Whitehorn's shop at Fletcher Road, Birkenhead. Whitehorn's is nearest the Osborne bus terminus, but it is three miles away, and I think that, with a one-man bus, it is unfair to expect the operator to take his bus to the terminus and stay there perhaps five or seven minutes without a toilet being provided, for this may undermine health. I am perturbed because none of the representations I have made to the trust since 1946 has been successful. Will the Minister of Works ask the trust to review the request and see whether a lavatory can be constructed at the terminus at Osborne?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will take the matter up with the trust, and I think I may be helpful in adding that in the past the claim has been made from the point of view of the people boarding or leaving the trams and buses rather than from the point of view of the trust's employees. I will take it up from the point of view that the trust's employees have to stay at the terminus during their waiting time.

#### DRIVING LICENCES.

Mr. DUNNAGE—Some time ago I asked the Premier a question about a South Australian who was disqualified for driving in this State obtaining a driver's licence in another State, then being able to return to South Australia and drive a motor car. Has he a reply to that question?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member asked a question on this subject on May 24. I followed up the case, but I could find no loophole in our legislation. When a driver is disqualified in another State the Registrar of Motor Vehicles is instructed that he is not to issue a licence to him during the period of his disqualification. As far as I know, that general arrangement is honoured by all States, and I could find no case where a disqualified driver was able to use a road.

#### POORAKA SEWERAGE.

Mr. JENNINGS—When I have previously asked the Minister of Works for extensions of sewers to portions of Pooraka the reply has been that the cost would be so great and the population to be served so small that the extensions would not be justifiable, but the population of the area is growing rapidly and I ask him whether he will again take up the question with his department and bring down a further reply?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will do that.

#### DIESEL RAIL CARS.

Mr. MICHAEL—On Tuesday last I asked whether the new diesel rail car service on the Morgan line was running satisfactorily, and the Minister of Works promised to obtain a report. Has he any information to give today?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The train started on its first routine run on that day and I would think that, having heard no complaints, it must be entirely satisfactory. However, I will ask the Commissioner of Railways as to what degree patrons are satisfied or otherwise with the new service.

#### DAMAGE TO SOUTH-EASTERN FORESHORES.

Mr. CORCORAN—Has the Minister of Marine a further reply to my question of last Tuesday concerning repairs to the Kingston jetty and to South-Eastern foreshores damaged by recent storms?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Fortunately, there was little damage to jetties. The serviceable portion of the Kingston jetty will be repaired but the other part will be left for the time being because more urgent work requires attention. The foreshore is outside the province of the Harbors Board because it is beyond the high water mark. I understand that various district councils throughout the State will wait upon the Premier on Thursday as to whether the Government should in future assume control or it should be the

responsibility of the district councils concerned. That question has not yet been determined by Cabinet and I cannot make further comment. Although the storm was severe no serious damage occurred along the southern coast. Boats and jetty at Beachport remained intact, and there was minor damage at Robe, but the result showed the wisdom of the Harbors Board in not attempting to provide boat havens at every port along the coast.

#### LIME INDUSTRY FOR MOUNT GAMBIER.

Mr. FLETCHER—I understand that a firm contemplates establishing a large lime producing works at Mount Gambier to supply the requirements of the South-East and other districts. Can the Premier say whether he has been approached to ascertain whether the Electricity Trust can supply electricity for this project?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I cannot give any specific information on this matter but an investigation was undertaken some time ago by one of the Government departments which proved that the building stone from Mount Gambier is capable of producing dehydrated lime of the highest quality. That lime has come into almost universal use in the building and other manufacturing industries because of its economy and its keeping qualities. This information was made available to certain firms interested in the production of dehydrated lime and they told me they were interested, but I have no knowledge of negotiations beyond that point. I will make inquiries and advise the honourable member in due course.

#### WATER ASSESSMENTS.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I have been reliably informed that the Engineering and Water Supply Department is making reassessments in the various rating districts and that all reassessments which have been issued disclose considerable increases. In respect of most of the towns supplied with water from the Mannum-Whyalla pipeline, the practice of fixing one and a half times the standard rate and charging one and a half times the standard charge for water was adopted. Can the Minister of Works indicate whether these places will be reassessed in the same manner as those areas that still derive water at standard charges?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—In the first place the rate has not been altered in any way in respect of the price of rebate or

excess. water. In Adelaide we have, as usual, adopted the assessment of the Adelaide City Council. As to country lands, we recently adopted a new assessment and 99.5 per cent of the ratepayers, I understand, have paid without objection. The number objecting could be counted on the fingers of one hand. As to the suburbs and country townships, the basis of assessments has been two-thirds of the capital value, and as this seemed to give us a little more revenue than we thought was required it was lowered, and the present assessment is less than two-thirds of the capital value ascertained as the result of sales of contiguous properties. As to the increased assessment for those already paying one and a half times the rate, the assessments have not been raised above what would have been the position had the ordinary assessments applied. Some had agreed to pay a considerable amount in excess of the ordinary rate and their assessments remain unaltered. If the honourable member has any particular case he would like considered, I will be glad to investigate it.

#### FIRE PRECAUTIONS IN SCHOOLS.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Has the Minister of Education a reply to my recent question regarding the precautions taken to protect children in the event of fires in public schools?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I very much appreciated the manner in which the honourable member raised the question, because it is a matter which might have caused some fear in the public mind. I am now in a position to amplify the report that I made to him. Safety precautions are observed in the design of schools to ensure that there are wide corridors, particularly in upstairs buildings. Children are drilled daily in an orderly and rapid procedure in entering and leaving rooms and the building and are always under the control of teachers. Instruction in the dangers of fire and in fire fighting form part of the course of instruction, and includes such elementary features as methods of overcoming fire hazards, care in the use of matches, dangers of curtains near fires, and of embers being left in the room. Fire extinguishers are placed in rooms where moving films are exhibited, in all laboratories, and where trades using heating units or welding apparatus are taught. Fire buckets, filled with sand, are provided in domestic arts centres, wooden schools, and corridors, particularly in upstairs rooms. The general policy on fire precautions was adopted after a report had been received from the Inspector of Places of Public Entertainment. The department is

conscious of its responsibility and the entire absence of serious burning accidents in its long history is an indication of the success of its policy.

#### DUPLICATION OF WOODVILLE-HENLEY BEACH RAILWAY.

Mr. FRED WALSH—In September, 1949, the Public Works Committee had referred to it a project that provided for the duplication of the railway line between Woodville and Henley Beach and its removal to a point further east of the existing alignment. A number of public bodies tendered evidence to the committee, in addition to the then Railway Commissioner (Mr. Chapman) and his assistant (Mr. Fargher). Representatives of the Henley and Grange council (Messrs. Gurner and Winwood) said:—

The council had for many years been asking that this should be done. Disadvantages associated with the present open line were the closely spaced level crossings, insufficient room for other traffic and parked vehicles, difficulty of draining the street effectively, and damage to walls of buildings due to vibrations.

The committee inspected the track and satisfied itself that the arguments advanced by Mr. Fargher and the council for the removal of the line that runs along Military Road to another site were well grounded. The same objection that existed then exists today, if not to a more exaggerated degree. The recommendations of the committee were:—

1. The removal of the existing single line of railway between the 7½ miles post, *via* Military Road, to Henley Beach station, and the construction of a new line of railway from the 7½ mile post to the Henley Beach Road on the alignment shown on the plan.

2. That land be acquired on the said alignment of sufficient width to enable a double track to be constructed should such ultimately be approved.

Can the Minister of Works say whether the Government intends to implement the recommendations of the committee regarding the removal of the railway line in Military Road to a new alignment further east, and, if so, when can a start on the work be expected?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Several points are at issue, some policy and some detail. I will have the matter submitted to the Minister of Railways and to Cabinet, and then bring down a reply.

#### EVICTON CASES.

Mr. LAWN—Each week for several months I have had brought to my notice one or more cases of families in the city of Adelaide who have had eviction orders issued against them.

and have had to vacate their premises. Today my attention was drawn to a case where an eviction order was put into operation a fortnight ago. This is the position of the family. One boy is staying with friends at Ovingham, another is with friends at Kent Town and the father, mother and a girl aged 11 are sleeping in a motor car in the city of Adelaide. The trust has been unable to provide them with accommodation. Is the Premier aware of the cases that are happening each week, and what does the Government propose to do to meet the position? In the case I have mentioned can the Premier do anything to provide the family with shelter?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I am aware of the extremely difficult cases which crop up from day to day. In fact, I see quite a few of them myself, and I have become conversant with the position through the operations of the Housing Trust. The Government spends on housing every penny it has available, subject to maintaining existing services necessary in any community. We are building houses through Government activity at a greater rate per head of population than any other State. We will continue that policy and do our utmost to alleviate the position. In regard to the case mentioned by the honourable member, if he will give me the name of the family concerned I shall do my utmost to see if some alleviation can be found.

#### MORGAN-WHYALLA PIPELINE DUPLICATION.

Mr. RICHES—Can the Premier indicate the progress made with the proposal to duplicate the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline, give further information concerning the proposal, and assure members that the existing pipeline will be sufficient to meet the requirements of Woomera, Port Augusta, Whyalla and towns along the route in this coming summer?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—As a long-term project, it will be necessary to duplicate certain parts of the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline if the development in the northern parts of the State that we expect comes about. The Government has considered the problem, and it has been informed by the Engineer-in-Chief that certain sections of the pipeline will have to be duplicated if that expansion eventuates. Some work has been done in examining the problem and in getting the best methods of applying that duplication so as to obtain the benefit of a new pipeline running through new country. There is no intention to start the

work immediately; in fact, a number of works prior in emergency have already commenced. I think every principal reservoir in the State is full, and I have heard no suggestion that we will not be able to meet water requirements for the coming summer.

#### CLOTHING PRICES.

Mr. TAPPING—Last Thursday the Premier, in reply to a question by the member for Burnside, indicated that a check would be made by the Prices Branch on the price of clothing in Adelaide. The statement appeared in the press and caused some consternation amongst suburban storekeepers, because many of them believed they were not involved. Can the Premier state whether that investigation is confined to the departmental stores in Adelaide, or whether it extends to the suburbs?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is not confined to the departmental stores in Adelaide. Investigations have taken place and a careful check is being made in any stores where it is considered overcharging might have taken place. I can assure the honourable member it is not an Adelaide matter, but a general matter of the administration of the Prices Branch which covers, not only the metropolitan area, but country towns as well.

#### LICENSING OF TAXICABS.

Mr. JENNINGS—Last year a Bill was introduced into this House to provide for uniform control of taxicabs. Although it was unanimously supported in so far as it provided for uniform control, there was some disagreement as to who should be the licensing authority, and as a result of that disagreement the Bill was not proceeded with. The irregularities that that Bill was designed to overcome are still going on, and the Adelaide City Council has, I believe, disagreed on the proper way to control taxis. Can the Premier inform the House whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill to provide that the Commissioner of Police shall be the licensing authority for all taxicabs in the metropolitan area?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The cost of the administration as proposed would involve the State in fairly heavy expenditure, possibly £30,000, and the Government has not the finance at present to undertake heavy additional financial obligations. It has been looking at alternatives, of which there are a number. More recently the metropolitan councils have, I understand, established an advisory committee to get some uniformity in the issue of

licences. I believe that has been approved by the Adelaide City Council and metropolitan councils. I can assure the honourable member that if that move goes forward the councils can rely upon every assistance from Government departments, including the Police Department. Taxis are a local matter and I would hesitate to assume a financial responsibility for the whole of the State for something that applies only to the metropolitan area.

#### ROAD TRANSPORT.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Now that the Road Transport Administration (Barring of Claims) Act has been proved unnecessary and probably would be proved invalid, will the Premier take steps to have it expunged from the Statute Book? I remind him that one of his most ardent supporters, the honourable member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) said during the second reading:—

It is not worth risking the State's good name to pass legislation such as this.

Has the Premier considered the advisability of having this Act repealed?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I hope the honourable member in future will not make me responsible for every opinion expressed by the honourable member for Onkaparinga. That quite obviously is something that I could not accept, nor could I accept all the opinions of the honourable member for Chaffey. I do not accept his opinion in this matter, nor in fact did Parliament accept it when the matter was before it. I cannot give the assurances asked for. I believe that if the Act were expunged some claims that are without any justification, morally or otherwise, would undoubtedly arise, and in those circumstances I do not propose to ask Parliament to repeal this legislation.

#### GLADSTONE-ADELAIDE RAILWAY LINE.

Mr. HEASLIP—I am very pleased to hear that diesel engines are evidently operating satisfactorily in certain parts of the State. However, there is no diesel operating on the Gladstone-Adelaide line, and this morning it took me about six and three-quarter hours to travel the 130 miles from Gladstone to Adelaide. Will the Minister of Works endeavour to ascertain whether diesel engines will be used on that line to improve the service and thereby bring about added patronage?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I shall obtain a report from the Minister of Railways on this matter. Quite a number of diesel engines were ordered because it was the desire of the Government and the department to give

better services. Where they will operate will depend on past traffic and what can be expected in the future.

#### ROYAL SHOW ADMISSION PRICES.

Mr. HUTCHENS—The Royal Show will be held next month, and as many citizens desire to attend that educational function with their families on a number of occasions, they are concerned whether any alteration has been made in the proposed admission prices. Can the Premier inform me whether a decision has been reached, and if so, what the prices will be?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The admission charges for the Show have not been controlled, nor does the Government intend to control them. The Prices Department made an investigation and its report has been submitted to the Royal Show Society for its consideration. Speaking generally, the ground admission charges that the society proposes are in line with those made in other States, but the charges it proposes for the grandstand are somewhat higher than those in some other States. I have discussed the matter generally with Mr. Finnis, the society's secretary, and I have no doubt that in the near future it will announce what action it proposes to take arising out of the comprehensive report I was able to furnish from the Prices Department.

#### NATIONAL TRUST.

Mr. SHANNON—It was reported in the press not long ago that a conference of organizations interested in the formation of a National Trust would be held. I think one body was headed by Major-General Symes and another by Mr. Basil Harford, and I believe there were members of other societies with similar objectives who waited on the Premier. As a result of the conference, can we expect legislation to be introduced this session to give effect to the requests of these people and, if so, will it provide for some representatives on the trust to be elected by the people who take an active interest in its formation?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—About two years ago the Government announced it intended to introduce legislation to enable a National Trust to be established and the Parliamentary Draftsman proceeded to draw up the legislation, but towards the end of the session he had a report that there were many conflicting views on the question of representation upon the trust and on what the trust's duties should be. The conference mentioned by the

honourable member was held in my office for the purpose of attempting to reach some agreement on those matters so that there would be considerable unanimity amongst those interested, and I am pleased to say that that has been established. In the first place, it was made clear to the Government that existing authorities were not to be relieved of any of their present duties. Those who desire to establish the National Trust do not propose to take over any of the functions of any existing authority that has been established by Parliament and is carrying out those functions, usually with some finance being provided by Parliament. The National Trust desires to be established as a non-Government enterprise, under its own rules, electing its own members, maintaining itself, and to be the repository of any matter which any person believes should be bequeathed to it and which the trust believes is suitable to be preserved as a national asset. The composition of the trust is being worked out by the people who are foremost in this activity, though I cannot tell the honourable member precisely what the membership will be.

At the conference there was a request from the directors of the National Park that the National Park Act be amended to enable them to undertake some further obligation if the Minister considered it necessary. We have some lands belonging to the Government which the National Park Board thinks it can administer, and the Government proposes to extend the powers of the board to enable it to administer any activity that may be referred to it specifically. That is outside the province of the National Trust, but sponsors of the proposed trust said that they desired to work as an independent body and, in many respects, that is a wise decision and in accordance with the views of the trust successfully established in Great Britain.

Mr. Macgillivray—Will the trust administer Younghusband Peninsula?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No, nor could it under the terms of Sir James Gosse's bequest, for he bequeathed that area to the State for the express purpose of experiments in soil conservation and rehabilitation in conjunction with the Waite Research Institute. The trust will administer only those assets reserved to it by the owners of the properties concerned. The Government will assist it by making the trust's properties free from certain taxation and succession duties and granting it immunity from certain obligations that

normally are fairly costly, but apart from that it will be a non-Government activity run by the support of private people.

#### LANDS DEPARTMENT MAP PRINTER.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Has the Minister of Lands a reply to my recent question about the resignation of an officer of the map printing section of the Lands Department?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—A report dated August 18<sup>th</sup> from the Director of Lands states:—

The officer concerned was a senior pressman in the Photolithographic Branch of this department. He applied for long service leave in February, 1955, and at the same time applied for permission under section 72 of the Public Service Act to engage in other employment during the period of his long service leave. It was understood that he had received an offer of employment from an outside firm on better conditions than he enjoyed here, and intended trying out the job during his leave. If he were satisfied with the position he would then, at the end of his leave, tender his resignation, but if not, he would then return to his position in the department. The circumstances were referred to the Public Service Commissioner and the request for permission to accept other employment during his leave was not approved. The officer concerned then tendered his resignation and received a cash payment for 117 days of long service leave which were due to him. His resignation was accepted and became effective as from the close of business on March 29.

His position has not yet been filled.

#### WATER RATES IN IRRIGATION AREAS.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The Minister of Irrigation will recall that a few weeks ago I discussed with him the question of water rates in irrigation areas and asked several questions in the House. The settlers are under the impression that water rates are paid before water is supplied, and I thought so too, whereas the Minister evidently assumes that they are paid after water has been delivered. Can the Minister make a statement on this matter?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The question is really whether or not water rates are paid in advance, and the reply is that they are not. The rates which are declared in April of each year, following completion of the general irrigations, are due and payable on May 1. In reclaimed areas the rates are gazetted in June of each year for the following 12 months commencing July 1, and they are payable quarterly in advance.

LEIGH CREEK COALFIELD.

Mr. LAWN (on notice)—

1. What is the total cost of establishment and development of Leigh Creek coalfield?
2. What are the total receipts as a result of these works having been established?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The replies are:—

1. £4,604,595.
2. £6,872,278.

NOARLUNGA MEAT COMPANY CASE.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY (on notice)—

1. What legal costs have been incurred by taxpayers up to the present in the Noarlunga Meat Company case?
2. What is it estimated the total costs will be?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The replies are:—

1. £2,006 15s. 9d.
2. £2,700.

STATE URANIUM MINES.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (on notice)—

1. What is the total cost of developing the Radium Hill uranium mine and establishing treatment plants at Radium Hill and Port Pirie, including the cost of providing water and any other services associated with these projects?
2. From what sources has the finance to meet this cost been derived?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The replies are:—

1. Expenditure to June 30, 1955, £6,838,559.
2. State revenue . . . . . £764,171
- United Kingdom . . . . . £A1,294,332
- U.S.A. . . . . £A2,586,781
- State loans . . . . . £1,543,275
- Electricity Trust . . . . . £650,000

£6,838,559

Mr. O'HALLORAN (on notice)—What is the total cost of—(a) prospecting; and (b) developmental work carried out by the Mines Department in the Crocker's Well and Mount Victoria Hut uranium areas?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The total expenditure by the Mines Department to June 30, 1955, was £107,669. This includes all expenditure incurred on the field including preliminary ground surveys, establishment and maintenance of camp facilities, diamond drilling, test mining shafts and other expenditure associated with the programme of exploratory work in the area. The department regards the whole of the expenditure as falling within the category of prospecting or preliminary investigations.

REPORTS OF PUBLIC WORKS  
STANDING COMMITTEE.

The SPEAKER laid on the table reports by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works on the Royal Adelaide Hospital radiotherapy treatment block and Port Adelaide wharf reconstruction.

Ordered that reports be printed.

MOTOR VEHICLES REGISTRATION  
(REFUNDS) BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

DRAUGHT STALLIONS ACT REPEAL  
BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 18. Page 580.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I approach the consideration of this Bill in somewhat the same frame of mind as that of the Minister who introduced it. Undoubtedly this legislation in its early stages conferred a benefit on the State and particularly on primary producers, and it is regrettable that because of changed circumstances farmers are not prepared to avail themselves of it; so it is suggested that we should repeal it and provide for disposal of surplus funds. I can understand, of course, that the horse has gradually ceased to exist as a means of traction on the farm because of the much greater comfort and considerably shorter hours associated with mechanical traction, but I sometimes wonder whether at some future date many of our primary producers may not bitterly regret the elimination of the horse from the farm. At the moment prices are reasonably good and cost of production does not enter into the scheme of things to the same extent as if prices were to recede even to a basis comparable with what was considered normal prior to World War II, but if they did I doubt very much whether we would be able to carry on farming profitably with the completely mechanized methods in general use today. Members may ask, "Where do we go from here?" There can be only one alternative to complete failure and that is in farms of increasing size, worked in shifts so that the machinery could be used to its full advantage. That would be the first, if not the complete, step to large communal farms. I do not like that type of farming; I like to think that our people will look to the land as a way of life and earn their living from it and not off it as so many are seeking to do today.

I have spoken in this strain before, however, and my words have gone unheeded; doubtless



they will go unheeded again today. Consequently, I can only join with the Minister in expressing great regret at the necessity for this legislation. My research over the week-end reveals that the number of horses in South Australia has fallen from 197,000 in 1934 to 52,000 in 1954—a reduction of 145,000 in 20 years. In Australia the number has fallen from 1,763,000 in 1934 to 823,000 in 1954—a reduction of 940,000. The reduction in South Australia represents almost 75 per cent of the 1934 figure, and the reduction for the whole of Australia about 55 per cent; therefore, we in South Australia have abandoned the use of horses to a greater extent than have primary producers in other States. Concurrently with the decrease in the number of horses there has been a correspondingly greater increase in the number of tractors in South Australia: from 4,122 in 1934 to 20,742 in 1954. Although the number of horses fell by 75 per cent during that period the number of tractors rose by over 300 per cent.

We have no guarantee that the price of wheat will not fall in the foreseeable future to half its present figure, and it must be realized that today we are finding it increasingly difficult to sell wheat in what were formerly our more reliable markets, particularly in Europe, solely because we have priced ourselves out of those markets; the local people there are planting wheat under much more primitive conditions than we are and growing more than they ever grew before in order to reduce the necessity for the importation of considerable quantities. I saw some of these countries when I passed through Europe a few years ago, and I have no reason to believe that that practice is not gathering momentum. We must look at this matter from the educational standpoint. Indeed, after another 15 or 20 years when the land of this State is properly classified and subdivided into living areas for suitable types of production, many producers may be willing to use horses rather than tractors.

In this respect I was struck by an article I read recently in an Indian magazine, which reported that in one of the more progressive Indian states there was co-operation between Federal and State Governments to introduce tractors into cultivation work. After a trial of three years the State Director of Agriculture reported that tractors would have to be abandoned as elephants were much more economical because no trouble was experienced in

procuring elephants or supplying their fodder whereas tractors and tractor oil had to be imported. There is a lesson in that for a country such as Australia. We have seen an almost complete change in the form of traction used not only on our farms and stations, but also on our railways (from coal to diesel traction) and on our tramways (from electric traction to diesel and oil-driven vehicles). Because of this change we have become almost entirely dependent on overseas oil supplies, and although some people fondly hope that oil in payable quantities will ultimately be discovered in Australia, it has not been discovered yet, and I shudder to think what the fate of this country would be if we became involved in a war against a country with sufficient sea or air power to cut off our overseas oil supplies. These warnings have been issued before, however, and have gone unheeded. We take the line of least resistance; indeed, I must admit that if I were working on the land today I would rather throw a tarpaulin over a tractor at knock-off time and enjoy myself for the rest of the evening—

Mr. Quirke—Even that is not necessary today.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Apparently not. One of the appalling features of mechanization, apparently, is that machines costing large sums do not get any protection from the elements.

Mr. Shannon—They looked after their horses better than they do their tractors.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes. It is much easier to spend a little time on the care of a tractor than to take a horse home, unharness, groom, and feed it, and then feed and groom it again in the morning. Perhaps if our agriculture had been organized on proper lines in days gone by we could, by providing a better standard of living, have encouraged agricultural labour to a great extent. Had we done so the farmer might still have been able to sit on his front verandah and watch men working his farm with horses instead of having to invest in costly tractors in order to do the work himself. However, these remarks are outside the scope of the Bill. With reluctance, I support the second reading.

Mr. BROOKMAN (Alexandra)—This Bill merely repeals an Act which has outlived its usefulness. We are apparently at the end of the period during which animals were used for draught purposes. The figures supplied by the Minister of Agriculture were astonishing. They indicate a rapid decline in the number

of horses during the last few years, principally since the war. In the last few years there has been a tremendous sale of tractors of all sizes. People now regard them as they do motor cars. They become obsolete after a few years and are replaced by new models. Until the end of the war the man who purchased a tractor did so with the object of retaining it for about 20 years.

It is not so long since bullocks were used for draught purposes. In my district they were used for hauling logs. They were considered more suitable than horses for that work, because they moved more slowly and did not break chains. The days of draught horses extend back a long way. I remember reading that in the early days of our colonization the exploration of the southern areas, at least to Willunga, was brought about because two horses escaped and they were so valuable that a search was organized. I do not regret the disappearance of horses. While man uses animals for his convenience he does not respect them as he should. It is only when horses cease to be used for useful purposes that they receive the care and attention they deserve. A few years ago horses were plentiful in the city, but I am not sorry they have disappeared. Many of them were not properly cared for and were not suited to the hard roads.

The only working animal left to any extent on farms is the sheep dog. I wish they were looked after as well as household pets. The old story that one must not spoil a sheep dog is still used as an excuse in many cases for tying it on a chain and leaving it there most of its life. Convenience is the principal reason for the disappearance of the draught horse. Farmers find that tractors are much more convenient. The Leader of the Opposition said that a farmer need only throw a cover over his tractor at night, but as a matter of fact plenty of tractors are never covered. Frequently the operator merely places a jam tin over the exhaust to prevent water getting in and, if the seat is movable, turns that upside down. Horses cannot be treated so casually if efficiency is to result. A big draught horse would eat as much grass as 15 merino wethers and that would cost about £40 a year. A working draught horse would require more feed. There are still areas where horses are used. Between McLaren Vale and Willunga members may have noticed a few square miles of very black soil. That area is sticky and is difficult to negotiate with wheeled vehicles. Some of the farmers in that district believe

that horses are better for working that soil than tractors and one can still see teams of horses working there.

I believe many arguments can be advanced for the retention of the horse. It is a fact that in war-time our supplies of oil could be cut off and oil, at the moment, is apparently the source of all agricultural power. A man with limited capital could acquire a few horses and he would find them considerably cheaper to keep than tractors. I do not refer to cropping areas but there are many people on small grazing farms who could do all their work with two horses. As the horse is on the way out, there seems no good purpose in retaining the Act. It therefore seems only right that the money now remaining in the fund should be used for scholarships or to assist someone to gain more knowledge of animal husbandry. I support the second reading.

Mr. QUIRKE (Stanley)—I also support the Bill, and take this opportunity to pay my respects to the horse, which is rapidly on the way out. Most of my active life on the land was in association with horses. I have a deep and abiding respect for the big teams that are now passed. It would be safe to say that very few men under 30 if given a heap of swings, chains and equalizers would have the faintest idea of how to yoke up a 10-horse tandem team. Even if they were yoked one would possibly not get any of these young men to drive them. I remember the pride which horse masters took in breeding and managing their teams, also their intense competitive spirit and the interest they took in the capacity of their teams to cultivate or sow a certain number of acres daily without unduly straining their horses.

We can look with a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction at what has been done by the horse in developing the State. The tractor is something comparatively new in our history, but when one considers the enormous amount of work done by horses in the past 100 years in clearing and cultivating the land, one then realizes what an important part they have played in our development. Because of this I advocate the erection of a fitting memorial to the horse. Their passing fills me with regret, but I know it is inevitable. My regrets are those of a man who not only managed horses but loved them. I do not say that a horse team is a more efficient unit than a tractor, or that we should continue solely with horses, although I know there is a danger of going entirely out of horses. The

fact remains that if you suggest to the farm worker that he drive a team of horses, you will have no farm worker. I believe that some inexpensive memorial to the horse should be erected over the Institute of Veterinary Science or whatever organization benefits from the fund created under the Act—something which will be a recognition of the work done by the horse in the early development of the State, to be handed down to posterity when it is relegated to the limbo. My support of the Bill is tinged with regret at the passing of an animal which did not only so much for me, but also so much for the development of the State.

Mr. MICHAEL (Light)—I also express my regret at the passing of the horse. I do not think it will return again, although, as the Leader of the Opposition said, we might be glad to have it back. However, I hope we do not get to that stage. I am pleased that the Government has decided that the money remaining in the fund shall be used to advance veterinary services and for other useful purposes associated with agriculture. We are in need of increased veterinary services, as diseases are now more prevalent among stock than a few years ago, due among other things, to increased stocking. Ample use can therefore be made of the money. I spent many of my earlier years on the land working a team of horses, and have also driven bullocks. Now, we have made a further advance from the horse to the tractor. The Leader of the Opposition said that the way things were going it was likely we would have only big farms. I think the number of small properties has increased because of the use of tractors. We are living in days of great advances and more amenities are available now. Recently I had a trip to the Barclay Tablelands and I found in the isolated homes many of the amenities enjoyed by people in the city. The Government has done the right thing in repealing the Act and providing for the money available to be used in extending agricultural services and making progress in veterinary science.

Mr. WHITE (Murray)—I support the Bill. It is necessary from time to time to repeal legislation in the interests of progress. Members who have spoken have expressed regret at the passing of the horse and paid a tribute to its work in developing our country. I join with them in their remarks. I have used both horses and tractors in clearing scrub land. Although we regret the passing of the horse, for this type of work the use of the

tractor has proved to be a big step forward. I feel that frequently the use of horses in the development of land in the early stages was an act of cruelty, for I have seen horses staked and nothing could be done but shoot them. That was common in the new districts in which I farmed. The tractor can be equipped to provide protection against such dangers. I do not agree with the Leader of the Opposition that the passing of the horse is a retrograde step. We are living in a mechanical age and if we are to keep level with other countries we must adopt mechanical means. In agriculture the use of the rubber tyred tractor has been a great help.

Mr. Macgillivray—Do you think there is a greater danger of spreading noxious weeds by using rubber tyred tractors?

Mr. WHITE—No. The horses used to spread the seeds.

Mr. Macgillivray—What about the steel tyred tractor?

Mr. WHITE—They were never a success. They picked up too much mud and could not be worked in sand. We have now had 10 seasons when farmers have had good crops. They have not been the result entirely of climatic conditions but to some extent of the use of rubber tyred tractors. They enable crops to be put in at the right time because they are fitted with headlights and can be used at night. This could not be done with horses and the farmers had to start their cropping early, probably too early for good results. The average yield was lowered because good use could not be made of moisture and other conditions. The crawler tractor is an advantage. It enables work to be done which some years ago was not considered. It is useful for clearing land, as has been proved by the Government in clearing land for returned soldiers. Our young people are not accustomed to horses and if they had to drive them I am sure it would keep them off the land. They are induced to stay on the land because of the mechanical devices available. Tractors have meant increased production. I am pleased that the money in the fund will be used to the benefit of animal husbandry and I have pleasure in supporting this Bill.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—I think that the members who have spoken have not done so with a truly sorrowful note in their voices. It has been more a matter of laziness. Prosperity and the opportunity to avoid certain jobs have made it possible to dispense with horses, which probably have been the

most useful animals in the life of man. As the honourable member for Alexandra pointed out, the decline in the horse population has been more noticeable since the war than in the years just before it. For anyone taking notice of the trend of events, I point out that during the war petrol was not easy to acquire, nor were tractors easy to come by, as our interests were directed into other channels. We were then making engines of war rather than engines of production, and consuming our fuel supplies to defeat our enemies. They are two obvious reasons why the use of draught horses did not decline so much during the war, but since the war we have had inflationary prices for primary produce of all kinds and at the same time, good seasons, with bumper harvests in all seasons except 1944-45. That has brought about prosperity in our various primary industries never before experienced in this State over such a long period, and that has been one of the major contributing factors to the decline of the horse as a power unit on the farm.

It is said with some justification that young men cannot be kept on farms if teams of horses are used, because men today are mechanically minded, but we shall not always have good seasons or high prices. If these two factors suddenly took a turn for the worse many farmers would wonder how to make ends meet, and that would be one of the excuses for seeking Federal aid to keep them solvent. It has happened before, and it is bound to happen again. They would not think of cutting costs by discontinuing expensive methods in their own industry; they would say it could not be done.

Mr. Pearson—Can you prove that it is more expensive to run tractors than horses?

Mr. SHANNON—Many farmers made profitable sidelines of horse sales. They brought into the Adelaide market regular yardings of horses surplus to their own requirements, and took home handsome cheques.

Mr. Pearson—They cannot do that today.

Mr. SHANNON—I agree, because there is a change of outlook that has been brought about by prosperity and high wages. I deny that it is economy that has brought it about. The honourable member for Alexandra said that about £40 a head could be charged against each horse for the grazing it would do, but it would probably cost much more to run a tractor. I have had experience of farm accounts, and before the war the major claimants against farmers were oil companies, with claims of

hundreds, sometimes thousands, of pounds, for fuel consumed by the farmer and not paid for.

Mr. Pearson—For oil or petrol?

Mr. SHANNON—Power kerosene, lubricating oil and sometimes a little petrol for running the farmer's car.

The SPEAKER—Honourable members will realize that this Bill has to do only with the removal of the subsidy, not the removal of the horse.

Mr. SHANNON—If those who have taken part in this debate have spoken for the rank and file of people in this State, the poor old horse will not be here even for crayfish bait in a year or two, and we shall not have the nucleus to start another era of horse transport unless someone takes the bull by the horns. I suggest to the Minister that there are farms in South Australia, such as Roseworthy, where it would be a good idea to have one or two really good types of draught horse kept for posterity, even if only to enable people to see what a horse looks like. As the amount to the credit of the fund is very small, an amount of £2,465, and would not go very far towards financing scholarships, I suggest that it be used to assist in giving directions to farmers how to attack the grasshopper nuisance that the Minister of Agriculture has told us will be worse than usual in the coming harvest. I have no doubt that the Minister, being a competent farmer, will realize that we should make the maximum use of this small sum and not fritter it away on something that will not help the industry. After all, the industry found this money and I am sure the Minister will find the right channel for its use.

I support the Bill, but I regret that we have reached the stage where little use will be made of one of our greatest friends. Even today many farmers find the horse more efficient and economical than power equipment. It is more reliable because there are many occasions when a farmer cannot take a tractor on his land, whereas horses do not get bogged down or have to be left in a paddock for weeks until the weather fines up. I noticed in the press recently that one firm having many short hauls in the metropolitan area is still sticking to horses as the cheapest form of transport, and that applies to many industries, though if long distances have to be covered for deliveries the propelled vehicle is more efficient.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment; Committee's report adopted.

DAIRY CATTLE IMPROVEMENT ACT  
AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 18. Page 580.)

Mr. JOHN CLARK (Gawler)—I offer my unqualified support to this Bill because the additional money to be raised will assist the good work being done in improving dairy stock. I believe the dairy, cattle fund was established as a result of a report made by a committee which inquired into agriculture generally in 1921. Certain recommendations were made with regard to the improvement of dairy stock, and they were embodied in a Bill introduced in 1921. Licence fees were levied with the object of discouraging farmers from keeping mongrel bulls which lowered the standard of dairy herds. The legislation did not, and does not now, apply to beef cattle. When the Hon. G. R. Laffer, who was Commissioner of Crown Lands, made his second reading speech in 1921 he said that South Australia did not stand very high in dairy cow production, and as no other member tried to correct him I assume that his statement was correct. Of course, we have a different story today. Our dairy cows are good producers, and I believe this is the result of herd testing and the payment of bull subsidies from the funds accruing from the licence fees, and also the hard work of dairy farmers who are to be congratulated on what they have achieved. These increased fees cannot be regarded as increased taxation on dairy farmers, for they are the people who will chiefly benefit, though the general public will benefit indirectly. Obviously, what could be done with 5s. or 10s. received in licence fees in 1921 cannot be done today, and I support the Bill because the fund has more than proved its worth over the last 35 years.

Mr. BROOKMAN (Alexandra)—I, too, support the Bill. On the face of it, the Bill merely doubles the licence fees, thereby doubling the revenue of the dairy cattle fund from that source. I cannot imagine people not applying for a licence simply because of the increased fee of 10s. a year, but the Bill deserves some examination because dairy farmers all over Australia are worried about increasing costs and have been told frequently to reduce them. They do not quite know where to turn as often costs are increased by circumstances quite beyond their control, and this is just another very small increased cost that they have to bear.

There were a few things that the Minister did not tell us when introducing the Bill. For example, he did not explain fully the uses to which this fund is put, and I feel that he might well have given us a little more detail. He did say that the fund is used to meet the expenses of herd testing and for the payment of the bull subsidy. I have made a few inquiries and find that the payment of the bull subsidy does not involve very great expense, but the cost of herd testing is very much greater, and it would seem that this fund is largely used for that purpose. I understand that herd testing is a service for which every dairy farmer who is a member of an association is eligible, and the cost is subsidized by both the Commonwealth and the State Governments. I believe the Commonwealth Government pays 6s. a cow, the State about 12s. and the farmer has to provide the remainder, about 10s. 9d.

The increase in the bull licence fee will apparently cover the cost of herd testing today, but as only 12 per cent of the herds in the State are being tested I wonder what will happen if there is a big increase in the number of applications for testing. The present fund apparently covers the cost today. Every dairy farmer with 30 or 40 cows perhaps has a bull, but the bull licence will not go far towards meeting the cost of herd testing if it is more universally adopted, so it would appear that the fund would become completely inadequate.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—New herds coming in have to contribute.

Mr. BROOKMAN—I take it that farmers have to pay their 10s. 9d. per cow, but there is still a considerable balance to be made up which the State has provided hitherto. Herd testing is an undeniable benefit to the dairy farmer as it provides a scientific method of culling unprofitable cows, and I imagine that it will be taken up more and more by farmers as time goes on. It is an interesting point as to whether bull owners should be responsible for paying these fees. I take it that some dairy farmers have too few cows to worry about keeping a bull, and they escape paying this fee. The sum is so small that it would hardly seem worth arguing about, but it is a point of interest to note that the farmer is asked to pay a fee per cow for testing and also pays through the bull licence.

The other thing I would like to know is what will be the future of dairying with the inevitable coming of artificial insemination of dairy herds. Although the matter is not

specially provided for in this Act I would like to know what the Government has in mind when it becomes the common practice in South Australia as it is in many parts of the world. With those reservations I support the second reading.

Mr. FLETCHER (Mount Gambier)—I, too, support the Bill, but I should like to know what has been the effect of this legislation on the dairy industry. Have all stud breeders who have received the bull subsidy raised the standard of their herds? I have been informed that in some cases it has not been raised one iota, whereas other breeders have built up their studs and their production to very high standards. The conscientious herd master who is out to improve his stock is an asset to the State and the dairy industry generally, but I would like the Minister to tell us what has been the result over the years and how many men have improved their herds and how many have remained static. Certain breeds of dairy stock will show increased production as time goes on. Only this morning I discussed with another member the production of a certain breed of cattle. He said it was impossible to raise the standard of a certain breed, but I said it was not, because a certain line of that breed had for years produced cows capable of producing a "four two" test and they were in very great demand. That standard has not been reached easily by those breeders; it has been the result of severe culling. South Australian dairy herds are equal to, if not better than, those of other States.

The Hon. A. W. Christian—Their production is higher.

Mr. FLETCHER—Yes. At present there is an agitation in certain quarters for an increased production of margarine, but I oppose that suggestion. If we are to build up our dairy herds, what will the reaction of the average dairy man be to this threat? He will not be encouraged one iota. Today the dairy man is one of the hardest working of our primary producers, and in the face of vicissitudes, such as labor shortages and diseases, he has done his best. The average Australian is not interested in working in the dairy industry because the returns are not commensurate with the work entailed. I have been a dairy man and I know what I am talking about. Mr. Brookman referred to artificial insemination, and I consider that to be the answer to the problem facing the small dairy farmer who is unable to spend much money to procure a high

class stud animal. Further, it would help the State from the point of view of increased production.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment; Committee's report adopted.

#### TOWN PLANNING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 18. Page 583.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This Bill is practically the same as that passed by this House last year and shelved by the Legislative Council. The only new provision is that land whose subdivision is delayed through the operation of the legislation shall be rated in accordance with the use to which it is put during the period involved. Personally, I have no objection to that new provision because it would obviously be an injustice to the owner of the land if his land were rated on a subdivisational basis when in fact, after mature consideration, permission to subdivide were denied him.

The general principle of the Bill is consistent with Labor policy in that it expresses the need for orderly development in new areas and the correction, as far as possible, of the errors made in the areas that have already been subdivided. The Government's own erratic policy in metropolitan development has accentuated the service difficulties concerning the supply of water, sewers, electricity, etc., associated with an expanding metropolitan area, and probably for that reason we have this belated attempt to do something before the difficulties become too great. Last year I referred to the fact that for many years—I think about 30—the Labor Party had had as part of its policy a scheme for a greater Adelaide, namely, complete co-ordination of local government and of all the services that could properly be controlled by local government. These would include transport and this would solve a major headache regarding policy on the Municipal Tramways Trust. This problem involves the questions of where the newly appointed trust is heading, whether legislation will shortly be needed to change its name to the "Municipal Bus Trust," and whether, perhaps, shortly afterwards we might find that the newly formed bus trust was really "bust."

One or two general issues are raised by the Bill. One is that subdivisions are to be subject to the committee's consideration (and,

possibly, veto) while the committee is evolving a general development plan, but as hitherto there has been no planning, this difficulty cannot be avoided; and it may be that the development plan will be so long in the making that the difficulty will not be as great as it seems theoretically. If it takes some years to create the plan considerable hardship may result to the owners of land which they consider should be subdivided, but which cannot be subdivided until a satisfactory plan of subdivision has been submitted to and approved by the committee in accordance with the terms set out in the Bill.

I find it difficult to understand why the legislation is restricted to the metropolitan area. I hope that in the not distant future there will be much greater progress and development in country towns. I must admit that my hope is based upon what would appear to be not only the possible but probable results of next year's elections when a Labor Party that believes in decentralization will be in power. Why it should be necessary to restrict this legislation to the metropolitan area is beyond my comprehension. It is one of the characteristics of the Liberal Party that legislation is passed piecemeal. The metropolitan area is regarded as a test tube in which certain experiments can be made and if they prove satisfactory the result can then be extended *ad lib*.

Mr. Hutchens—Sometimes the experiments are forgotten, as was the Housing Improvement Act.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes. In legislation of this nature provision is usually made for its extension by proclamation, but clause 2 (b) defines "metropolitan area" as meaning:—

- (a) The area comprised within the municipalities of Adelaide, Brighton, Burnside, Campbelltown, Enfield, Glenelg, Henley and Grange, Hindmarsh, Kensington and Norwood, Marion, Mitcham, Payneham, Port Adelaide, Prospect, St. Peters, Thebarton, Unley, Walkerville, West Torrens and Woodville and the area comprised within the Garden Suburb:
- (b) such other parts of the State as the Governor by proclamation from time to time declares to be within the metropolitan area:

My interpretation of that provision is that it is intended to provide for extensions of the metropolitan area which may spread beyond the boundaries of any of the councils mentioned.

Mr. Travers—Oodlawirra could be proclaimed within the metropolitan area.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I would not think so.

Mr. Travers—Why not?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—There is other legislation which clearly defines the metropolitan area. If Oodlawirra could be proclaimed to be within the metropolitan area, so could Fowler's Bay, Oodnadatta, Rumbalara and other places, and it would be just too silly. With great respect to the member for Torrens I suggest that the law would not permit it and that my interpretation is correct. If Mount Gambier, Port Augusta, Whyalla or Murray Bridge required the benefit of town planning then it would be necessary to amend this legislation.

Another general issue is the complexity of the machinery to be set up for the purpose of determining whether proposed subdivisions are satisfactory and, as a corollary, divided powers of the committee and local government authorities. It is to be hoped that there will be no need to have recourse to all the appeals and reconsiderations provided for in the Bill. On the other hand, the Bill provides that Parliament will be the ultimate judge of any fundamental problem associated with metropolitan town planning. A great deal will depend upon the administrative machinery provided in this legislation. A new town planning committee is to be established under this legislation, but we have to act more or less without knowledge because we do not know the Government's intentions concerning appointments. We do not know whether the committee will be representative of interests that it should represent or whether it will be appointed on the basis of suitability for ensuring that the viewpoint of any section of the community be adequately considered. In this respect if it takes as long to pass this Bill through the House of Assembly as the one last year and it ultimately passes in the Legislative Council, which it failed to do last year, probably the Government that will be giving effect to the appointment of the committee will be one led by myself. I hasten to assure all concerned that we will give just consideration to their rights.

The Hon. T. Playford—You will do the proper thing?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes. Although the Bill refers to a review by the committee of existing facilities and amenities, such as roads, reserves, etc., it does not seem likely that such wholesale remodelling of the metropolitan area will be attempted as in Cumberland county, New South Wales. If, however, fundamental replanning of the settled areas does

eventually form part of the development plan, no doubt Parliament will have the task of dealing with such problems as compensation and rehousing, which would inevitably arise under those circumstances. Nevertheless, there is bound to be a certain amount of doubt and confusion in the minds of some people—especially landowners—during the period in which the development plan is being evolved.

We have all read statements in the press as to what occurred in connection with the master plan for Cumberland county which I understand was to provide for the orderly and planned extension of the Sydney metropolitan area. According to the press information certain lands were included in the master plan and were sold by their owners at bargain prices because they felt they might have to wait many years before permission was given to subdivide, or might never obtain permission to subdivide because the land might be finally and irrevocably placed within the green belt, which was one of the features of that plan. There was a great deal of futile effort to place the blame on the shoulders of the present New South Wales Labor Government, but that Government was in no way responsible for any scandal which may have crept into the administration of the grand plan referred to. According to the press, handsome profits were made by one or two individuals who apparently knew that the land was going to be released from control and were able to purchase it prior to its release. Although on broad general principles I favour this idea of seeing that future subdivisions are controlled in order that they shall fit in with the ultimate pattern, we should not keep the owners of land in suspense indefinitely. Either one of two things should be done. One is to place a limit on the time that this plan shall take to evolve. In other words, we should say to the committee, "In two years you must have produced this plan, otherwise all the land held while you are making up your minds will be released from control." The alternative, which I prefer, is that once it had been provisionally determined that permission to subdivide certain lands will be withheld whilst the grand plan is being considered, then the Government should acquire that land on a reasonable basis and hold it until the grand plan is ultimately considered. That would overcome quite a few other difficulties to which I shall refer later.

Some particular provisions in the Bill deserve special mention. The provision that the subdivider shall make roadways or enter

into a binding agreement to make them is, from an economic point of view, a reversal of the usual procedure. Except where it is known beforehand that people will occupy allotments in a subdivided area, as in the case of a Housing Trust scheme, it is usual to provide roads, etc., after occupation. The provision referred to will therefore act as a brake on subdivision and, in making it necessary for subdividers to give attention to this matter in arranging for subdivision, may have a salutary effect. But a practical difficulty seems to be inherent in compelling a subdivider to make financial provision for roads before a plan will be approved. That merits mature consideration. It is probably desirable in a broad sense to insist that the person who subdivides land and makes a profit shall be responsible for the roads and footpaths which will ultimately make the area habitable. For certain subdivisions considerable expenditure may be required to provide roads, which may not be used for many years and may have deteriorated to such an extent as to become part of the landscape before the subdivision is built on. It will also add to the cost of the subdivisional blocks which is a very important factor to the working man who desires to purchase a block on which to erect his home. I know that many of these difficulties I am referring to can be dispelled by wise administration and reasonable and proper control, but without such administration I can see inherent difficulties in this scheme. I well remember what happened to many subdivisional projects during the depression in the late 1920's and the early 1930's, when thousands of acres of subdivided land were relinquished by those who had purchased it on time payment, and this Parliament had to pass special legislation to protect the people who had made firm contracts from being forced into insolvency by conditions in those contracts which had become impossible because of the changed circumstances of the country. That could easily happen again, and is something which will have to be guarded against by the administration. The subdivider will be involved in the expense of making roads before he submits his plan, and will not even have a guarantee that the plan will be accepted. In that event his expenditure will result in a very substantial loss. There does not appear to be a provision for the orderly planning of subdivisions. It should be possible to say that within the next few years a certain part of the metropolitan area will be subdivided so that the cost of



providing services can be minimized. Then attention could be given to other areas. Councils are to have the responsibility of providing for reserves and, presumably, for their maintenance. One part of the Bill makes it mandatory on the subdivider to provide areas for reserves or, if this is not possible, to make a contribution of 5 per cent of the value of the subdivided land to the local council for the establishment of reserves, but the provision of land is not the final cost in their establishment. A recurring cost will be the annual charge for maintenance and that may be considerable, and it will have to be borne by a council, with the reserve being used by people in other council areas. If we are to have reserves and a green belt, which are desirable, there ought to be a comprehensive plan for the taking over of required land. As I pointed out last year, something further is needed in connection with reserves. Most people regard them as places where sporting grounds are provided for adults and teenagers who can afford to engage in the sport, but I am concerned about the younger children in the closer settled areas where there is difficulty in finding room to kick a football or knock a cricket ball around.

There is one redeeming feature in the scheme of town planning which will make me vote for the second reading of this Bill. We will not have the spectacle of land being subdivided far away from existing water and sewerage services and transport, and unsuspecting people will not be buying land in the belief that later these sources will be provided. The other day when in the Mount Lofty Ranges I saw a subdivision at a high point, probably half the altitude of Mount Lofty. A notice said that they were desirable residential sites with magnificent views of the city and the gulf. The views were certainly magnificent but I shudder to think how water and sewerage services could be provided.

One portion of the Bill says that a certificate must be given by the Engineer-in-Chief that it is practicable to provide subdivided land with these services. Of course, the Minister has the final power and he may ignore the certificate and approve plans, but I do not think that would be done by the present Minister, except in exceptional circumstances. I support the Bill.

Mr. TRAVERS (Torrens)—As the Premier said, this Bill is in substance the same as the one introduced last session. Personally I regret that, because in substance last session's Bill was not acceptable to me, nor is this one. Last year I opposed the Bill and I

oppose this measure. In the debate last year certain things were brought to the notice of the Premier. Then we were told that the matter was urgent and that something had to be done immediately. Members will recall that complaints were made by me and other members because the Bill did not contain a town planning scheme, but provided only for things to come. We were told that it was urgent to pass the Bill and that later a scheme would be worked out by a team of planners. A year has gone by and one would have thought that in that period the planners would be selected so that we would know their names and their qualifications. The team could have gone to work and produced the plan, which would have given us the opportunity this session to consider its practicability and cost. Before dealing with the details of the Bill, I wish to point out one or two very specific things. The first is that I have no objection whatever to, but on the contrary I support very wholeheartedly, any scheme that seems to me on examination to provide a proper workable Town Planning Act. This Bill does not provide for such; we have not even an embryo of it. Secondly, I have no objection to, but on the contrary I would welcome, expert advice from expert town planners on town planning subjects that might help this House to decide what is best to be done from the viewpoint of town planning in the metropolitan area. This Bill does not provide that. The Premier, when explaining this Bill, did not furnish us with any such advice from expert town planners. All that is in the future.

Last year I suggested that the Bill be withdrawn and remodelled, and that a Town Planning Bill be introduced. By a Town Planning Bill I had in mind something that presented a solution to town planning matters, not a mere Bill to transfer the responsibility from our backs on to the backs of someone not elected for that responsibility. Last year I complained, and I complain again, that we are being asked to sign a blank cheque, an extremely blank cheque, blank as to all its essentials. It is blank as to who the members of the committee shall be; blank as to what their qualifications, if any, shall be; blank as to the area in which they shall operate; blank as to what they shall do in the area; blank as to who will provide, and how, the cost of the scheme, as there is no mention of money matters except the salaries of the planners; blank as to how long they will take; blank as to what they will do.

to property owners; and blank as to the rights to obtain compensation if property is expropriated or if in any way damage is caused by the scheme. I protest from the viewpoint of vague generalities.

It is all very fine to say we have reached the stage when we must have a Town Planning Bill. To that I say "Hear, hear," but I add "Let us proceed to get a Town Planning Bill and let us get rid of what we have, which is not a Town Planning Bill." My objections to this Bill, which I wish to put as succinctly as I can, may be summarized in this way. Firstly, on examination it is clear that the Bill serves no purpose except to enable Parliament, whose responsibility it is to provide laws to deal with town planning, in effect to shirk its responsibility and pass it over to a committee whose report is, under the Bill, to become *prima facie* the law of the country. Secondly, it commits this responsibility to the hands of an unknown committee with unknown qualifications. Thirdly, it provides no town planning scheme at all. Fourthly, it places no limits on the powers of the unknown committee of unknown qualifications.

Fifthly, it places no limits on the area in which it will apply, because the area can be enlarged by proclamation to coincide with the boundaries of this State, and, notwithstanding the view on the law taken by the Leader of the Opposition, it places no limits on the area. Sixthly, it contains no provision for compensating owners whose property may be either resumed or in part resumed and thus rendered more or less valueless or damaged by the mode of user being restricted that is to say, the owner being told he may use it for one purpose and not for another; and seventhly, it will have the inevitable result of steeply increasing the cost of home building land within the chosen area, and what is the natural corollary to this, ruining the value of equally good home building land outside the chosen area. If land is outside the chosen area, and it is said that it shall not be used for sub-divisional purposes and therefore for home building, it will of necessity lose its value to a very great degree, and in the converse ratio so will the land left within the chosen area increase in value because there will be less of it, the demand will be greater, so the price will go up. Home building land in circumstances of this kind will increase fivefold.

Mr. Macgillivray—Are you suggesting that if land outside is not suitable it should be brought in?

Mr. TRAVERS—No, I am pointing out that the Bill does not face up to those problems. It is little use my putting forward a proposition at this stage as to what should be done with land outside the area because there is nothing in the Bill for that land; the Bill does not envisage it. I am pointing out what will become the inevitable result if this Bill becomes law. A certain area will be put under what we might call an interim order under, I think, section 36, with which I will deal later. That land will be frozen for all practical purposes. How long it will remain frozen no one knows; that will be dealt with by the committee. Quite naturally, it will have no use on the market because people will not buy land unless they know they will eventually be able to build on it. They will not be able to mortgage it because its value will be an unknown quantity.

Mr. Macgillivray—Assuming land has no value as building land, why bring it in?

Mr. TRAVERS—I am not talking about land that is no good for home building, but about land that can be subdivided in the ordinary course unless it is blocked by the provisions of this Bill. I shall deal with the question of urgency advocated as the reason for having to get on with this rather unusual approach in making a matter *prima facie* law and leaving it to Parliament to reject it, a unique approach in my experience and the converse of the usual. I mention two things. My first acquaintance with this matter indicates that there has been some activity for quite a long time, which seemed to have drifted along at a leisurely speed, because as long ago as September, 1953, a lady living in my electorate, who apparently had some interest in the question of the green belt, raised the matter with me, and as a result I submitted her letter to the then Minister of Local Government. On September 15, 1953, I received this letter from the Minister:—

In reply to a letter dated September 1, 1953, received by you from Miss — in respect of the provision of a co-ordinated plan for the development of the metropolitan area, a committee consisting of members of Government departments, municipal and town planning associations, was appointed to inquire into what steps should be taken to provide a co-ordinated plan of development of the metropolitan area. This committee has submitted a report, together with a draft Bill, to the Government, which has the matter under consideration.

We have not seen that report. If this committee was inquiring into the matter for so

long before this Bill (which on the face of it is designed to initiate an inquiry) was introduced one would have thought it would be relevant for us to know what that inquiry, which proceeded apparently for upwards of a year, had brought forward. That would have appeared to be some useful starting point, and possibly we could have discussed that report, but we have not seen it. There does not seem to have been a great urgency in September, 1953. One would think that that committee could have put forth a proposal and Parliament would then have had something to put its teeth into last year when a Town Planning Bill was introduced. On the question of urgency, I shall now refer to a resolution passed by the Adelaide Chamber of Commerce on August 27, 1954, which was about a year later than the date of the letter I have just referred to, and about the time the Bill was under discussion last year. The resolution reads:—

Whilst members of this Chamber of Commerce are in favour of orderly town planning, they protest against the proposed Act in its present form and recommend that a select committee be appointed to invite evidence from all interested in this very important legislation and that, after all such evidence has been collated the matter should then, and not until then, be brought before Parliament for its careful consideration and decision as to the type and kind of Town Planning Act necessary for the orderly development of Adelaide and of the greatest benefit to the people of our State.

That was a year ago, and still we have, to my regret, practically the same Bill as that produced last year, and it presents no town planning scheme at all. The committee is defined in clauses 2 and 3. It would not be asking too much in a matter as important as this—important to the community, to councils, and to the citizens of this State (particularly those who are landholders in the areas likely to be affected)—that if a grandiose scheme of town planning is to be embarked upon and if members of Parliament are to be asked to surrender their judgment almost completely into the hands of other people, those people should be the foremost town planners available. I believe that to be the minimum for which we should ask, but are we to be guaranteed that? Suppose a town planning scheme were produced that was good in part, but, for the sake of argument, extremely bad in the district of the member for Hindmarsh. When the scheme is produced it will become law unless the House rejects it, but who will raise a voice to reject it if

the bad part is limited to the district of one member? That is where the mischief lies in approaching this problem from the reverse direction to that of the ordinary method, which is to let us have a plan and then decide on a majority decision whether it is to become law. Under this Bill, provided the scheme suits the district of Torrens, what interest will I have in coming to the rescue of the member for Hindmarsh? Members can see what chance there will be of amending any defect in the district of one particular member.

Mr. Fletcher—What will happen if the plan is extended to the country?

Mr. TRAVERS—It will be extended to the country if the planners so decide, and I shall come to that point later. Town planning has become a profession with an advanced course of study. Current rumour has it that there are a few town clerks in the suburbs who are looking forward rather eagerly to appointments under this legislation. In the main, town clerks give careful attention to their jobs and are very assiduous in carrying out their duties, but does any metropolitan member think he should surrender his municipalities into the hands of the town clerk of an adjoining municipality whose main interests are to help his own municipality? I firmly believe it would be very wrong to submit the problem of town planning to a committee consisting of any people except independent, expert town planners. Whether we ask the committee to bring down a scheme that will be *prima facie* law or to bring down a scheme for us to consider first on its merits, or whatever way we approach this question, we should have an independent committee, and I am concerned that the Bill does not say that people such as town clerks shall not be members of the committee. It should be an independent body composed of men of skill in these matters. I would hate to have anyone think that I am unduly suspicious when I look at clause 3 (2), which may possibly be for the purpose of keeping the jobs for those gentlemen I have mentioned. It says, "Any members appointed by the Governor may be persons who . . . are members or officers of the councils." I think one can fairly say that Parliament ought never be asked to surrender its own powers into the hands of a committee of unknown men whose qualifications and independence are not stipulated for, and whose knowledge of town planning may be even less than that of members of the House.

Now let us consider what is meant by the term "metropolitan area." In my view there can be no doubt that "metropolitan area" as defined in clause 2 (b) (b), can be extended to include any part or the whole of the State; it says so in the plainest of terms too clear to permit of argument. As indicating that it does not simply mean contiguous parts—

Mr. Shannon—Would not that naturally apply, though?

Mr. TRAVERS—If a definition in an Act says "black" shall mean "white" then it means "white." To indicate that it does not merely mean contiguous parts I point to clause 2 (b) (d) (2)—"The Governor may, by proclamation, declare that any part of the State which is contiguous to any part of the metropolitan area . . . shall be included in the metropolitan area." One paragraph refers only to that which is contiguous, and the other to "such other parts of the State" so, whilst joining issue with the Leader of the Opposition as to what the clause means, we reach the curious situation that my complaint about the Bill is that it could be too far-reaching in its operation, whereas Mr. O'Halloran complains that it does not go far enough.

And now we come to clause 6 which deals with the grounds upon which the committee shall withhold its approval to individual subdivision—not the part which deals with the master plan. The committee shall withhold approval to any plan of subdivision unless it is satisfied as to a number of provisions (a) to (j) as enumerated, and it is to be noted that the word "shall" means "must"; it is given no discretion. So, for any of the things which appear in paragraphs (a) to (j) inclusive, the committee must reject a particular subdivision. I shall not refer to all of them, but the first is that the area to be subdivided, or any part thereof, is not liable to inundation by drainage waters or flood waters. Consider the hills area or any other undulating locality: even if one per cent of the total subdivision is liable to inundation, as it must be having regard to the contour of the land, the committee is left with no alternative—it must withhold approval. Under (f) the committee has to be satisfied that the proposed mode of subdivision would not destroy any natural beauty spot. We all know of dreamers who see natural

beauty spots in parts where others do not see much beauty, and if members of the committee take the view that certain spots are natural beauty spots there is no one to apply any other measure; they are the judges and they must reject the subdivision. Then we get to (i) to which the Leader of the Opposition referred and which deals with roadways. The committee must withhold approval unless it is satisfied that the roadway of every proposed street or road is paved to a width of at least 24ft. and all necessary bridges and culverts have been made, or satisfactory arrangements made with the council concerned to do this work. Let us have a close look at this. The scheme envisages that there are not yet any water or sewer mains, or electricity or gas, and we get this extraordinary situation—that the committee shall reject the subdivision unless the roads are there. Therefore, the owner has to indulge in the exercise of putting down a road and then the waterworks and sewers people come along in due course and dig it up again. That is the sort of thing that happens when we lay down rules of this kind.

Mr. Pearson—A man could even find himself in the position, having constructed roads, of having the approval withheld.

Mr. TRAVERS—That might happen, although there is some provision for getting over such an eventuality. Subparagraph (j) provides that the plan shall provide for reasonably adequate reserves for public gardens and public reserves. Who is going to pay for these? Why, the individual home builder, not the man who is selling the land. It simply means that the price of these things is added and the home builder will build the public reserves. But why should he? He is one member of the public, but the reserves are available to all. That is not the way public reserves ordinarily are constructed. Is there any reason for the changed policy? However, there it is. Someone has to do it and the price of the article is obviously going to be increased accordingly. I ask leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.36 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, August 24, at 2 p.m.