

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, August 31, 1955.

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

### DEATH OF MRS. W. MACGILLIVRAY.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS (Minister of Lands)—It is my sad duty to report to the House the death of Mrs. Macgillivray, wife of the honourable member for Chaffey. I move:—

That the House of Assembly expresses its deep regret at the death of Mrs. W. Macgillivray and requests the Speaker to send a letter of sympathy to Mr. Macgillivray and his relatives; and that the sittings of the House be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I second the motion, with great regret for the circumstances that give rise to it. The sorrowful occasions on which motions of this nature become necessary occur all too frequently in this Parliament. They bring home to us the mortality of man but while reflecting on that aspect we can all unite in asking you, Sir, to convey our heartfelt sympathy to our colleague, Mr. Macgillivray, his family and his relatives.

The motion was carried by members standing in their places in silence.

*Sitting suspended from 2.5 p.m. to 2.12 p.m.*

## QUESTIONS.

### MARION HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Will the Minister of Education obtain a report regarding the number of children expected to be enrolled next year at Marion High School in first year classes, whether the building programme will be carried out in time to meet the expected influx, and whether the schoolyard can be graded so that the children can assemble there?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to comply with the honourable member's request. As he knows, the Marion high school, or the temporary portion of it, was erected in a great hurry last year and at the beginning of this year so that it would be open at the commencement of this school year, because the Education Department and its research officer realized that there would be a rapid influx of scholars. I have some information which will be of interest to the honourable member and to the public generally. During the last 10 years the number of students attending schools within the boundaries of the corporation of the City of Marion has shown easily the most outstanding increase in the

State. The number of pupils has grown from 206 at the Sturt and Ascot Park schools to 4,293 in seven schools, including the Marion high school. The increase in the 10-year period is no less than 1,984 per cent, whereas the overall increase for the State in the same period has been slightly less than 100 per cent. I think about 150 pupils have been accommodated in the temporary buildings up to the present. They are all in the first-year class, and it is expected that in the next year and the following years there will be established second-year, Intermediate and Leaving classes. Nine wooden classrooms have been erected up to the present. It is expected that there will be a rapid increase in the numbers at the beginning of next year. In view of the honourable member's request I shall have made a more exact survey of the probable numbers for next year, see how far the building programme has advanced and whether it can be speeded up, and particularly the grading of the yard. As the honourable members knows, we have 20 acres there, and much work is required to be done to it. I will bring down a report for the honourable member as soon as possible.

### METROPOLITAN ABATTOIRS STOCKS.

Mr. QUIRKE—Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to the question I asked yesterday regarding the quantity of meat held in cold stores at the Abattoirs?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The secretary of the Metropolitan Export Abattoirs Board has informed me as follows:—

1. Total quantity of meat held in cold store before the strike was 142 tons, which consisted of 66 tons for local consumption (butchers' meat) and 76 tons for export (exporters' meat).

2. Present stocks:—63 tons, comprising 39 tons of meat for local consumption and 24 tons of export meat.

3. The board is not in a position to indicate how long existing stocks will last.

Obviously the latter depends on the extent to which the master butchers can continue their killing rate and supply meat for home consumption. It seems clear from the figures given that the stocks held have been drawn on to some extent. I take it that the remaining stocks will be used to augment the quantity killed by the butchers to meet the demand.

### WHEAT PAYMENTS.

Mr. HEASLIP—In the reply the Minister of Agriculture gave me yesterday about wheat payments he quoted the following from a report submitted by the local superintendent of the Australian Wheat Board—

Indications are that the average return from 17 Pool wheat sold for human consumption and export will be approximately 13s. 11d. per bushel. Adjustments in bagged wheat premium would bring this to 12s. 10d. per bushel on a bulk basis. Board costs are about 10d. per bushel, which reduces it to 12s. per bushel, less freight.

I was always under the impression that we had a guaranteed price for that pool, and that under the guaranteed price the growers were to receive the cost of production figure. It seems now that they are to receive only 12s., which is 7d. below cost of production figure. Since then another harvest has been reaped and the price of wheat overseas has dropped considerably, and the realizations of the No. 18 pool will be so much less. Can the Minister set out the position in regard to the guaranteed price? In my opinion a guaranteed price is useless unless the grower gets that price. What will the growers get from the No. 18 pool, seeing that overseas prices have dropped considerably from those for the No. 17 pool?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I think the position is that the guarantee would not come into effect until all the wheat from any particular pool had been realized. If then the total realizations fall short of the guaranteed price the difference would be made up from the stabilization fund or, if there was not sufficient money in that fund, by the Commonwealth Government from the Commonwealth Treasury. I think the figure indicated by Mr. Watson is only the calculation of what the realization of sales will be, and obviously he has not taken into account what may have to be made up, under the guarantee, from the stabilization fund.

#### HILTON AND RICHMOND TRAM SERVICE.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked last week about the replacement with buses of trams running to Hilton and Richmond?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The general manager of the Municipal Tramways Trust reports:—

It is planned to replace trams on the Hilton-Richmond line by buses in December, 1955. The route will follow the existing tram route from Currie Street, Glover Avenue, Henley Beach Road, Fisher Terrace, Rowlands Road, Cowandilla Road, Marion Road, and will link up with the present Kingswood bus service.

#### BRIDGE OVER RIVER BREMER.

Mr. WHITE—Several landholders in the Callington area have complained to me about the condition of the Junction Bridge over the

River Bremer on the Callington-Woodchester main road. I do not imply that the bridge is unsafe, for this is something on which an engineer would have to report. I am sure the Highways Department would not allow a bridge to be used if it were not in a satisfactory condition, but the condition of this bridge is worrying people in the locality who have to use it. The width of the bridge and its approaches seem to be unsuitable for the large vehicles that now use our roads, and I ask the Minister representing the Minister of Roads whether he will supply me with a report on the general condition of the bridge, whether the building of a new bridge is contemplated and, if so, when will the work be commenced? If a new bridge is not contemplated will the existing bridge be renovated, and when?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will bring down a reply from my colleague as early as possible.

#### TRANSPORT FOR KLEMZIG AREA.

Mr. JENNINGS—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked a few weeks ago about the inadequate transport facilities for the Klemzig area?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The general manager of the Municipal Tramways Trust reports:—

With regard to the inquiry by Mr. Jennings on the matter of transport to the Klemzig area, we desire to advise that this and other nearby districts are served by tram and bus services as follows:—

Districts south of River Torrens—Paradise tram.

Districts north of River Torrens—Walkerville North tram. Gilles Plains feeder bus.

The Glen Osmond-North Walkerville licensed bus service along Felixstowe Road, O.G. Road and Main North-East Road also assists in serving the Klemzig area.

We further advise that investigations into other requests for a bus service to the Klemzig area with vehicles running from intersection of Smith Street and Walkerville Terrace, Walkerville via Walkerville Terrace, Harris Road, Wilpena Avenue, O.G. Road and Fourth Avenue, to Windsor Road, have disclosed that the suggested route is approximately only  $\frac{1}{2}$  a mile and at some points less than this distance, away from the service along Main North-East Road to Gilles Plains, and that likely patronage would be far below that needed to cover operating expense.

#### RAILWAY SLEEPERS.

Mr. PEARSON—In recent months I have been advised that the Railways Commissioner has stated he is prepared to use local gum timber, of which there are large quantities in the southern part of Eyre Peninsula, for rail-

way sleepers on that division. I understand that the timber experts of the railways are satisfied, from tests, that this timber would be durable and quite satisfactory, but I am concerned about the price that the Commissioner is able to offer and whether it will be sufficient to get the timber on a large scale. Will the Minister representing the Minister of Railways get a report from his colleague on the price of jarrah sleepers obtained from other States as compared with the price offered for gum sleepers, and on the quantities of gum sleepers that have already been cut and delivered to the Port Lincoln division?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will get that information, but I point out that generally we do not offer prices in the Government service. We usually call for tenders; therefore, it is the supplier's obligation to quote his price. However, in this case there may be some deviation from the ordinary rule, but usually tenders are called for sleepers. It then becomes the obligation of the tenderer to specify type and price.

#### DRUNKEN DRIVING.

Mr. HUTCHENS—From recent press statements, and broadcasts by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, I have noticed that during the week-end prior to last there was a record number of arrests for what is known as drunken driving. As these people are potential murderers on the road and a real menace, I ask the Minister representing the Attorney-General whether the Government has considered amending the Act to provide a more effective deterrent?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I heard the broadcasts and I read the news item, but I know of no impending legislation to amend the relevant sections of the Road Traffic Act. However, I shall be pleased to take the matter up with my colleague and get a reply.

#### EVICITION CASES.

Mr. LAWN—Has the Minister representing the Premier a reply to the question I asked last week about a family having to sleep in a motor car in the city of Adelaide because they were evicted from their former home?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have received the following report from the Chairman of the Housing Trust:—

The — family was evicted from the last of a row of cottages at Hampstead Place (off Carrington Street), Adelaide, by Grasby & Co., wholesale grocers. The family consists of Mr. and Mrs. —, two sons aged 26 and 24 years, and a daughter of 11 years. For some years the husband and the two sons have

been earning between them from £48 to £50 a week. Mr. — applied to the South Australian Housing Trust for emergency accommodation in February, 1955. Since their eviction some little while ago some of the family are stated to have been sleeping in a motor car. It is known, however, that an offer of temporary accommodation was made to the family, but this, apparently, was declined. The reports the trust has had with respect to the family are such that the trust is of opinion that, at the present juncture, this family's claim to an emergency dwelling should not be preferred over many other applications before the trust.

Mr. LAWN—A lady rang me from Woodville Gardens offering accommodation for this family and assuring me that she would also take in the two boys, who were staying elsewhere. The mother of the family went to Woodville Gardens and interviewed the lady offering the accommodation, only to find that it consisted of one room for the father and mother, that her daughter (aged 11) would be required to share a room with a boy aged 8 years, and that the family would be required to take full board there. The lady said that she was unable to quote a price, as she had been told to quote a price only for two persons, and that as there were more to be accommodated she would have to make other inquiries. Will the Minister inquire whether that is the offer referred to in the report by the chairman of the Housing Trust, or whether the trust knows of another offer?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yes.

#### PAINT ON SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Recently, as is usual at this time of the year, I have had the opportunity of visiting several schools for their Arbor Day celebrations and have been perturbed about the exterior condition of some of the temporary wooden buildings there. I do not oppose the construction of those buildings, but the paint seems to have suffered much from the severe winter and I am inclined to think that some of the paint used is not the best. Will the Minister of Education make certain that only first-class paint is used for this work?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I, too, am not very pleased with the exterior appearance of many school buildings I have visited, but I know that the upkeep of these temporary classrooms is very heavy. This is the first time, however, I have heard any question about the quality of paint used. I shall be pleased to have the matter investigated and let the honourable member and the House have a report.

## STEELWORKS FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I move—

That in the opinion of this House, in view of the urgency of the need for the establishment of a steelworks at or near Whyalla in the interests of the people of South Australia, in view of the failure of the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited to establish such steelworks within reasonable time in accordance with undertakings given in consideration of being granted leases of areas containing high grade iron ore on Eyre Peninsula, and in view of the necessity of developing the low grade ore deposits elsewhere on Eyre Peninsula in conjunction with the high grade ore contained in those areas for the economic operation of such steelworks and in order to ensure an adequate and continuous supply of ore thereto, the said leases should be terminated, the mining, transport and crushing plant operated by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited in association with such leases should be acquired by the State and a joint committee of both Houses, with equal representation of the Government and the Opposition, should be appointed to advise the Parliament on the future use and disposal of all iron ore on Eyre Peninsula so that all interests may be fully considered and fairly served in the distribution of same.

I do not propose to labour the necessity of establishing a steelworks near Whyalla because that subject was adequately debated in this Chamber in 1953, when the member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) moved:—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the desirability of establishing a steelworks in the vicinity of Whyalla and to report to Parliament on steps to be taken to implement recommendations made by the Director of Mines on such an undertaking.

That motion was amended by a Government member (the late Mr. Dunks) and carried unanimously in the following form:—

That this House believes in the desirability of establishing a steelworks in the vicinity of Whyalla.

Therefore, it was made abundantly clear in 1953 that this House believed in the desirability of a steelworks at or near Whyalla. The second part of the motion deals with the question of whether there was any undertaking to establish a steelworks given by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company when the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Indenture Bill was being considered by Parliament in 1937. I do not suggest that any legal obligation was accepted by the company on that occasion, but I say definitely that there was an understanding between the company and the Government of the day that a steelworks would be established by the company at Whyalla within a reasonable time. That understanding was con-

veyed to Parliament by the then Premier (the Hon. R. L. Butler) and undoubtedly borne in mind by members in voting for the Bill that gave the B.H.P. what was virtually the monopoly for all time of the richer iron ore deposits on Eyre Peninsula.

In his second reading speech on the Bill in 1937, Mr.—now Sir Richard—Butler said:—

Members are conversant with the attitude my Government has taken in regard to the establishment of secondary industries in South Australia and in that attitude we have the support of the whole of the members of the House irrespective of party. The Government felt that a policy of decentralization of industries would not only be beneficial to South Australia but would be in the interests of the Commonwealth as a whole. The smaller States believe, and rightly so, that they have not benefited to the same extent as the other States under the fiscal policy of Australia.

It is quite clear that at the time he visualized that there should be greatly increased secondary industrial activity in South Australia and that a prerequisite to the development of such activity was a steelworks. He was recommending to Parliament that the necessary security of tenure provided in the Indenture Bill should be granted to the B.H.P. Company so that within a reasonable time it could proceed with the establishment of such steelworks. He said then—and rightly so—that he spoke for the whole Parliament in that regard. If he were speaking here this afternoon he could speak for the whole Parliament again. I hope that opinion will be reflected when Parliament comes to the final decision on this motion. He continued:—

Because certain works had already been established in other States, the Defence Department felt that it was economical in the manufacture of new materials to make such new projects adjuncts of the existing works . . . but the South Australian Government has no intention of relinquishing its efforts in any way in the hope that wiser counsels will prevail in the Commonwealth sphere.

He was pointing out that because there were steelworks in New South Wales the Commonwealth Government had the tendency to establish munition works there. We all know the weakness of a policy of establishing all great undertakings associated with the defence of a country in highly vulnerable areas. The necessity for dispersing all these industries, including steelworks, which provide the primary requisites of defence, has been abundantly proved. The then Premier continued:—

I have only one regret and that is that our old friend, the late Mr. J. C. Fitzgerald, is not alive to see the realization of one of his dreams. Hardly a session went by when he

did not make some reference to the necessity of iron and steel being manufactured in South Australia.

Mr. Fitzgerald was consistent over the years in his advocacy of the establishment of an iron and steel industry at Whyalla, and the Premier's expression of regret that he was not in the House at that time to see the realization of his dreams proves conclusively that the Premier then believed that the passing of the Indenture Bill was the forerunner of the establishment of a steelworks at Whyalla within a reasonable time. He continued:—

The directors of the B.H.P. have always expressed the hope that some day they would be able to do something on a large scale for this State. It was that desire which led me to write to them asking whether they would be prepared to establish a branch of their works here.

Members are no doubt familiar with the correspondence which took place at that time and with the reply of the company that it would be prepared to establish further undertakings at Whyalla, including a blast furnace and steelworks. Mr. Butler continued:—

Ultimately we can look for the establishment of steelworks. No matter to what part of any country we may go, it will be found that once a blast furnace has been established for the manufacture of pig iron, steelworks ultimately follow. That is a natural corollary. The company directors said that if the company were prepared to start a branch of its works in South Australia, it must be given greater security. In negotiating the terms of the agreement the object of the Ministry has been to secure an arrangement which would at the same time give the company that security of tenure without which it could not be expected to expend large amounts of capital. Blast furnaces for producing pig iron do not of themselves require a great deal of water and no large Government water schemes are demanded for this purpose, in fact, none. But it has been found in practice that the establishment of blast furnaces is commonly followed by the installation of coke ovens and steelworks, and these latter establishments require large quantities of water.

If, therefore, the State is to receive the maximum amount of benefit from the establishment of the blast furnace, we must be in a position later on to supply large quantities of water to the company at an economic price. It is therefore desirable that the Public Works Committee should investigate the possibility of doing this as early as possible.

He proceeded to explain clause 13 of that Bill, and said:—

Clause 13 is the only clause in the agreement that deals with water, and it is somewhat nebulous in its operation. It reads:—

“In order to assist the Company to further extend its works by the establishment in the vicinity of Whyalla of coke oven plant and/or

works for the production of steel, rolling mills and other plant, the Government on being notified by the Company that it is prepared to establish any such works will use every endeavour to provide the Company with a supply of fresh water at the site of such works sufficient for the full requirements of the Company at such fair and reasonable price as may be mutually agreed upon.”

It is absurd to think that any company would establish steelworks, spending millions of pounds, when, because of a low rainfall, we might at periods not be able to supply any water.

He pointed out that an investigation by the Public Works Committee was authorized by the Bill. After that investigation a favourable recommendation was made for the construction of a pipeline from Morgan to Whyalla and that was ultimately adopted by the Government of the day and the water which the Premier in 1937 said was essential for the establishment of a steelworks was provided for Whyalla. Another point that was subsequently agreed upon was a satisfactory price for water. In that regard the then Premier said:—

The price is quite all right, and we said, and I think members will agree, that if we were to ask Parliament to guarantee the supply of water, then the company should guarantee to establish steelworks in a given time. That is necessary.

The then member for Burra—now the member for Newcastle, Sir George Jenkins—interjected:—

If we carry out our part of the undertaking, the company should carry out its part.

During the negotiations it was suggested that a time limit should be set in relation to the undertaking by the company to establish steelworks but the company, I think properly, pointed out that if there were a time limit the fulfilling of the requirement might occur at a time when economic circumstances made it embarrassing and difficult for the company. It asked that it be not tied to a definite time, but, according to the speech of the then Premier, an undertaking was given that steelworks would be established at Whyalla in a reasonable time. Time went on and a ship building yard was established but it had no relation to a steelworks. There was a suggestion that a tinplate industry would be established at Whyalla, but now, 18 years after the Indenture Act and the undertaking about the establishment of steelworks and a rolling mill within a reasonable time, we are still awaiting action by the company in this regard. In 1953, when the matter was last before the House, many extracts from a report by Mr.

Dickinson, Director of Mines, were quoted. Some of them were so valuable that I will quote them again. Mr. Dickinson said:—

Most other steel producing countries have increased their production since 1939 more than Australia has.

He pointed out that between 1939 and 1951, although the demand for steel had increased generally throughout the world, Australia's production increase had been considerably less than that of other countries. For instance, Canada had an increase of 132 per cent, U.S.A. 99 per cent, Belgium 68 per cent, and Russia 51 per cent. Australia's increase was only 21 per cent. Mr. Dickinson also said:—

The Indenture Act is expressed in terms of unalterable conditions but mining legislation generally provides for adjustments according to circumstances.

It has been said that because the Indenture Act gave the company certain rights and privileges in perpetuity over our high grade ore deposits there could be no change in the position. However, there have been changes in the mining laws in various States. Alterations have been made in this State in order that the production and distribution of certain types of minerals may be stepped up to cope with progress. Mr. Dickinson also said:—

The industrial future of South Australia is very largely related to the greatest and most efficient use within the State of its iron ore resources. Without conservation reserves could be exhausted within 15 to 20 years instead of lasting for 40 to 50 years.

I shall have more to say later about the use of our iron ore deposits and what should be done to conserve them for the benefit of the nation. Mr. Dickinson said:—

B.H.P. activity in South Australia, through the establishment of steelworks, would conduce to the efficient and planned development of reserves of ore. The best solution of the problem would be for the B.H.P. to establish steelworks in South Australia. The B.H.P. has the technique, experience, etc.

I agree entirely with that proposition. Undoubtedly the best solution of the problem would be for the company to establish steelworks here, but it seems that instead of getting closer to the realization of such a policy we are getting farther away as the years go by. It has become necessary for this Parliament to seriously consider the position in order to find a way out of the impasse. I have the greatest admiration for the company. I think it is one of the greatest industrial concerns in the world and it is a credit to those great Australians who were responsible for developing this organization which has done so much to develop heavy industry in Australia. But

although the company has done great things for the Australian nation it has done little if anything for South Australia, which provides the raw materials to permit of the company's development. That is what we complain about and why we say that if the company is not prepared to do something in this respect a method should be evolved whereby, either by partnership or in some other way, steelworks can be established here and a continuous use of our iron ore resources maintained over a long period of years. Mr. Dickinson's report went on:—

If the Broken Hill Proprietary Company is not prepared to take action (and it is clear that it will not do so perhaps until too late, for the known reserves of high-grade ore on Eyre Peninsula have a limited life at the present rate of extraction) the South Australian Government should give serious consideration to taking over the iron ore leases and iron ore production of the company and so regulate production development as to safeguard the interests of South Australia.

I whole-heartedly agree with those remarks. He also said that there were many economic arguments in favour of establishing steelworks at Whyalla, namely, proximity of raw materials, proximity to sea for transport to and from sources and markets, the proximity of a local market, and the availability of water. He also stressed the strategic advantages of a steelworks at Whyalla, for they would have relative immunity from enemy attack and would assist decentralization generally and the distribution of production as between States. All those points, which were based upon an irrefutably sound foundation, stress the urgent necessity of a steelworks being established at Whyalla without delay.

Expansion by the B.H.P. Co. is still confined to New South Wales, and apparently the company has a natural disinclination to expand elsewhere, so the position calls for strong action by the South Australian Government. The Director of Mines' general conclusions are, firstly, that our high grade ore reserves are not unlimited. If they are exploited at the rate of 2,000,000 or 3,000,000 tons a year they will be ample to supply an integrated steelworks in South Australia for 50 years. Secondly, it is highly desirable to equate production of and demand for steel as soon as possible. Thirdly, production of steel at Whyalla could be achieved relatively quickly by the addition of open hearth furnaces and coke ovens to utilize the type of small blast furnace already operating. This plant could be gradually expanded.

Fourthly, the Government would be fully justified in taking over the leases of the B.H.P. Co. and its iron production plant and equipment if the company were unable to give any guarantee on the establishment of a steelworks at Whyalla. The Government would then be able to control supplies to the B.H.P. Co. and other plants. I think that suggestion was made by Mr. Dickinson about three years ago, yet no action, apart from some desultory negotiations between the Government and the company, has been taken. Mr. Dickinson also said that additional high-grade ore is not likely to be discovered in significant quantities.

Despite remarks by the Premier at the Commercial Travellers' Club, meetings of the Liberal Union at Glenelg, and other places, the facts are that outside the leases of the B.H.P. Co. no great quantities of high-grade iron ore have been discovered. Although intensive boring and prospecting have been carried out by the Mines Department during recent years, the position remains the same as it was when Mr. Dickinson furnished his report to the Government three years ago. Argument in this Chamber in 1953 on the motion moved by Mr. Riches for the appointment of a Select Committee to consider this question largely hinged around Mr. Dickinson's report, and the member for Eyre, who is now Minister of Agriculture, said:—

I do not blame the company for taking leases over all known deposits, but our Governments should retain control over the destination of steel products because we cannot afford to dissipate them. As a State we have certain rights in this regard, for we furnish most of the raw materials out of which steel is made for Australia's requirements. Our own needs should be met by the B.H.P. and its associated companies and, if they are not, there should be some Government action to ensure that we are not starved.

I entirely agree with those remarks and I hope that now the honourable member is a member of the Government something effective will be done to translate those statements into accomplishment. Australian steel production is far short of requirements and is likely to lag further behind. This State has been importing steel from overseas for a considerable time; and we have been paying £20 to £25 a ton more for it than for steel produced in Australia. In other words, if the capacity of the B.H.P. Co.'s works had been sufficient to meet the Australian demand and if steelworks had been established at Whyalla as was intended when the Indenture Bill was passed in 1937 we would have saved

large sums. The B.H.P. Co.'s existing and planned establishments elsewhere are not capable of overtaking the demand for steel, which is increasing each year. The company's development programme is confined to the eastern States. It has been reported that it proposes spending £67,000,000 on this programme during the next five years, but it is apparently not prepared to accede to the claims of South Australia.

As a result of the boring by the Mines Department on Eyre Peninsula tremendous deposits of low-grade iron ore have been found on Eyre Peninsula. They are not particularly low-grade, but they are of considerably lower grade than the ore contained in the B.H.P. Co.'s leases. I think the figure quoted, which is more or less an intelligent guess, was 5,000,000,000 tons, whereas there are about 170,000,000 tons of high-grade ore in the area. Obviously, the proper thing to do is to begin immediately to exploit the low-grade deposits while we still have substantial quantities of high-grade ore, for this would assist in the economics of working the low-grade deposits. I recently read a geological survey of South Australia, which is contained in Bulletin No. 33 of 1954, issued by the Mines Department. This survey referred to the difficulties that are being encountered in the United States of America owing to the fact that they had used considerable quantities of their high-grade deposits and now have to resort to what they call beneficiation of low-grade ore. The article pointed out that one-quarter of all iron ore raised in America (25,000,000 tons) is beneficiated in some manner. It said that this does not include agglomeration, which would raise the total to one third. The article also referred to the problems of low-grade ore utilization, and said that sooner or later development of the low-grade banded iron ore formations must be undertaken in Australia in order that a continuous supply of raw materials necessary for vital steel manufacture may be available. A most interesting statement appeared in the press of March 27, 1955. It stated that the Minister of Mines said a detailed survey of the Middle-back ranges had been made by Dr. Miles, who was the author of the article from which I have just quoted. The press statement says:—

Dr. Miles says that unless sensational discoveries of high-grade iron ore are made in Australia during the next few years the initial steps should be taken in the gradual change-over to the use of low-grade iron ore. This would cushion the effects of the inevitable

increase in production costs when the industry was ultimately dependent mainly on low-grade ore. Dr. Miles says that further developments in the Middleback Range depend upon the future expansion of the Australian steel industry. The present annual steel-making capacity of Australia is 1,950,000 tons. This represents less than 70 per cent of current requirements, while actual steel production is only 40 per cent of the demand. Plans are in hand to increase Australia's ingot-steel capacity to 3,000,000 tons a year by 1960, though this probably will still be well below local requirements. It has been estimated that in less than 20 years, Australia's annual steel consumption may rise to 5,000,000 tons.

Therefore, it becomes increasingly necessary that we should begin to use these lower grade deposits now, and the way to cushion the economic impact of their use on the Australian consumers of steel products is to use them in association with the high grade ore deposits controlled by the B.H.P. If we do not do that what does the future hold for us? In years to come when the high grade iron ore has all been extracted and used, Australia will have to fall back on beneficiation of the low grade deposits referred to by Dr. Miles. Therefore, in taking no positive steps now we are prejudicially affecting posterity and destroying the heritage that we should be prepared to hand on to it. Of course, it will be difficult for those representatives of posterity who suffer to get at any members of the present Parliament or the present Government, but we can at least be sure that we will not be remembered in their prayers.

Mr. Riches' motion of 1953 was watered down in this House, but the resultant resolution was a unanimous expression of opinion that the establishment of a steel industry near Whyalla was essential. South Australian industrial development, through the use of local coal and the generation of electricity, is now much more advanced than it was 20 years ago; therefore, it is imperative that we should have within our borders a plant for the production of the steel that has become increasingly essential to industry. Only last Thursday, when the Treasurer was explaining the Loan Estimates, we learned of the drastic impact of the shortage of steel on our public works programme. The Treasurer pointed out that the construction of the Yorke Peninsula water scheme—a scheme necessary for the proper development of mixed farming where formerly wheat farming was the only industry—was likely to be hampered by the shortage of steel. The establishment near Whyalla of a steelworks that could use both low and high

grade iron ore would be of great benefit in helping to eliminate the shortage of steel which is handicapping industry throughout Australia.

The Government has conducted some negotiations with the B.H.P. Company in this matter. At one stage it appeared that those negotiations might be successful, but later that prospect receded and finally was dispelled altogether. The time has arrived when a definite stand must be taken. I may be told that, if we terminate the leases in accordance with the terms of this motion, that will be an act of repudiation; but it frequently becomes necessary to change various titles and contracts with the passage of time. For instance, when Parliament found it necessary to acquire the property of the Adelaide Electric Supply Company and to create a nationalized electricity undertaking under the control of a trust, the Premier did not hesitate to use his persuasive eloquence to get both Houses of Parliament to approve of the enabling legislation. I point out, however, that that was a violation of the existing conditions that were provided in the original Adelaide Electricity Supply Company's Act. Further, in a Bill relating to town planning now before the House the indefeasibility of title to freehold land, which is supposed to be a sacrosanct thing, is seriously interfered with. I can quote other instances, but those two will suffice.

Neither I nor any other member on this side desires to do an injustice to the B.H.P. Company: we say that the leases should be terminated, the company adequately compensated for its plant and machinery, and a Select Committee comprising members of both Houses appointed to determine future policy. The B.H.P. Company is entitled to sufficient iron ore from the Eyre Peninsula resources to maintain its works at Port Kembla and Newcastle, but, if it is not prepared to establish a steel industry at Whyalla, it should be willing to make available sufficient iron ore to somebody who is willing to establish it. That is my approach to the problem and I hope that, as a result of that approach, the problem will be solved, either by the B.H.P. Company and the Government readily agreeing to some proper deal with regard to those resources or by the Government taking steps in the terms of this motion, which I believe to be essential in the interests not only of South Australia but of the Australian nation.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD secured the adjournment of the debate.

HIRE-PURCHASE AGREEMENTS ACT  
AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 24. Page 616.)

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I listened with much interest to the second reading explanation of this Bill by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. O'Halloran). I judged from his remarks that he is not opposed to hire-purchase agreements as such, for he said that the purpose of his Bill was not to curtail, but rather to control and regulate such agreements.

Mr. O'Halloran—That is so.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Mr. O'Halloran does not desire to restrict hire-purchase agreements, and I agree that it is the credit facility which is most used by people on the lower income ranges and enables them to enjoy many amenities that they probably could not afford if they were required to pay cash. The Bill contains two principal provisions. The first is in respect of the signatures to agreements and states that no hire-purchase agreement which relates to certain specified commodities shall be enforceable unless such agreement "bears the signatures of both hirer and the hirer's spouse or includes a statutory declaration by the hirer that he or she is not married or that, if married, he or she has been deserted by or judicially separated from his or her spouse." In other words, the Bill imposes a limitation in requiring the consent of the signatory's spouse to a hire-purchase agreement.

The second principal provision is that certain information shall be set out in connection with every hire-purchase agreement and that such agreement shall have a general characteristic concerning repayments. The second schedule sets out the information to be included in hire-purchase agreements. The cash price, deposit, net cash price, insurance, net credit price, accommodation charge, eleven monthly payments, final monthly payment and compounded percentage must be shown. I do not agree that it should be necessary for a woman to obtain her husband's signature to a hire-purchase transaction. It implies that wives cannot trust their husbands or *vice versa*, and that each needs to be protected from the other.

Mr. Riches—It does not imply that at all.

Mr. Pearson—It is a direct interference with the conduct of the domestic circle.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That is so. It is unnecessary and unwise. In the course

of our public life we receive correspondence upon all manner of topics. Our advice is sought on matters which have no bearing on Government activities. If a person is homeless, has received an eviction order, believes his income tax assessment is incorrect, that his rates have been wrongly computed or his roads are bad, he immediately writes to the member for his district. I believe I can fairly claim to receive as much correspondence on these matters as any member. I frequently have correspondence passed on to me by members who have not an answer readily available. It is rather strange that not once have I received correspondence suggesting that either the purchaser or a seller has repudiated an agreement, or that the agreement had resulted in difficulty, because a spouse had not an understanding with his or her partner.

Mr. O'Halloran—I have received requests from both parties concerned.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I would be interested to see them. Every member should study the Acts Interpretation Act, which should be his text book. One of the prime considerations set out in that Act is that all Acts should be remedial, but what does this Bill seek to remedy? Many complications could arise if it were necessary for a married person to obtain his or her spouse's signature to a transaction. It could be that a wife is living in Adelaide and her husband at Woomera; it would be difficult then to obtain his signature. If a husband were serving in the armed forces his signature could not be obtained. In my opinion that provision is a needless interference with the domestic circle and is of no consequence and would put a husband and wife on a totally wrong basis. While the Bill contains such a provision I cannot support it. The Leader of the Opposition said it was not his purpose to hinder hire-purchase, but the insertion of such a provision would have that effect.

The other provisions set out the information that has to be computed in connection with a hire-purchase agreement. In order that one may know how to work out the details the method is shown in the first schedule, which reads:—

The compounded percentage referred to in paragraph (d) of subsection (1) of this section shall be calculated in the following manner:—

Where periodical payments are weekly: multiply the accommodation charge (in terms of pounds) by 10,400 and divide the result by the product of the net credit price (in terms of pounds) and one more than the number of periodical payments to be made.

Where the periodical payments are fortnightly, monthly or quarterly, substitute the numbers 5,200, 2,400 and 800 respectively for the number 10,400 in the above rule for weekly periodical payments.

How could anyone without the Bill in front of him and without a ready reckoner ever compute the 'amounts in a reasonable time? If he could he should not be selling in a hire-purchase shop but working in the Taxation Department computing income tax returns and earning far more. I have not taken the trouble to work out the formula, but I assume it provides the correct answer. The formula suggested in last year's Bill certainly did not provide the correct answer.

Mr. Riches—This is the formula you said you would accept last year.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—What I said last year was that I would have no objection to the correct interest rate being shown on a hire-purchase agreement.

Mr. Riches—You mentioned the formula in the Money-Lender's Act.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A money-lender has much more skill in making computations than the ordinary person engaged in hire purchase; and a money-lender conducts relatively few transactions, whereas hundreds of thousands of transactions apply in hire-purchase. I have no objection to the correct rate of interest being shown upon a hire-purchase agreement. It has been pointed out on many occasions that where the rate of interest on a reducing amount is nominally set out as 5 per cent, before the transaction is concluded the effective rate of interest is probably nearer 9 per cent. It would be fair and reasonable to set out the rate of interest, but I do not know what all the other rigmarole suggested in the Bill is designed to do.

Mr. O'Halloran—It is designed to set out what you said should be set out.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It sets out a hundred things I did not say anything about. The Leader of the Opposition said he was not opposed to hire-purchase but if he insists upon this formula and upon the provisions of clause 4 he will impose severe and needless restrictions upon persons using the hire-purchase system and greatly increased costs upon the persons conducting hire-purchase businesses.

Mr. O'Halloran—These two points have been accepted by reputable people conducting hire purchase businesses.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—They are not accepted by me. Like the Leader of the Opposition and his valiant supporters I have some freedom and can vote as I see fit on

this Bill. It provides for an unnecessary obligation and I will not support it.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—As usual, the Premier gets up in this House, or goes to the Commercial Travellers Association, and says just what comes into his head, without its meaning anything. He said that the provision for the husband and wife to sign an agreement in relation to hire purchase business was one of the worst that could be imagined, yet as Treasurer of this State he applies the same principle to the administration of his department. The State Bank requires the spouse of the purchaser of a home to sign an agreement before money is advanced, yet today the Premier said that such a thing is unwarranted interference. When he was speaking I wondered what the officers of the State Bank would think of his remarks.

Mr. Dunstan—When things are different they are not the same.

Mr. LAWN—No. When Bills have been introduced by Opposition members the Premier always says that the Acts Interpretation Act provides for new legislation being remedial in character. That is said only when Opposition Bills are introduced. Of course, all Government legislation is remedial in character! It took the Premier a long time last session to remedy one of the greatest injustices ever inflicted on the people, and then it was only partially remedial. The Premier opposed a Bill introduced from this side giving rural workers the right to go to the Arbitration Court. He has always opposed moves by Opposition members to remove the grave injustices that exist under our electoral legislation. The Workmen's Compensation Act amendments introduced by members on this side were remedial in character, but the Premier found an excuse to oppose them. He said today that if a member, after receiving correspondence or approaches from constituents, drew attention to the need to alter legislation it could be brought forward and the alteration made. He has had his attention drawn to the fact that hundreds of people are being evicted from their homes, but he makes no attempt to remedy the position. As the years go by he amends the law in favour of the landlord with the object of causing more evictions. Yesterday, in reply to a question on notice, the Minister of Lands in the absence of the Premier gave me some information about evictions since January, 1954, and it shows a considerable increase. The Premier has received correspondence on the matter,

had personal interviews and been approached by members on this side, but his actions will cause more evictions. His attention has been drawn to anomalies in much of our legislation. He received recently a deputation from the Trades and Labor Council, and has received deputations from other people, yet he takes no notice of what they say. He has pointed out that if there were anything wrong with hire purchase business his attention would have been drawn to it and then attention could have been given to amending the law. I point out that whilst a person against whom an eviction order has been obtained will do anything to stay in a house, and will set out his position to members, persons associated with hire purchase business do not want everybody to know their position, and many sacrifice greatly in order to meet weekly commitments.

Mr. Hutehens—Commitments they have been trapped into by a smart salesman.

Mr. LAWN—Yes. The salesman like to talk to the women, many of whom can be talked into buying anything. They are always ready to sign when no deposit is required. When the husband comes home and learns the position he finds that much of the weekly wage has been mortgaged. I challenge Government members, many of whom come from the country, to deny this statement. Country business people say that after a representative of a hire purchase company has been through the district their business falls off. I challenge Mr. Pearson, who is smiling, and any other country member to deny it.

Mr. Pearson—I have never heard of it.

Mr. LAWN—I have, and it applies in the district represented by the honourable member. If country members do not know that it is so, let them go to their local storekeepers and they will soon find out. I do not suppose any member would agree that the husband should go to the races and lose his weekly wages, or go to the local hotel and spend all his wages in drink.

Mr. Pearson—Why not legislate to prevent it?

Mr. LAWN—The honourable member heard what the Premier said, and if he makes a suggestion no doubt he would get more consideration than I would. If it is wrong for these two things to happen, is it not wrong for the husband or wife to commit practically all the weekly wage on hire-purchase? Last year I spoke at length on the advertisements in newspapers showing what could be done in connection with hire purchase transactions. Here are some cases brought to my attention.

Before I came here I was secretary of a trades union and I know what happens. People who had committed themselves to hire-purchase were so embarrassed that they did not want to tell their story, but eventually they had to do so. The wife will agree to getting something on hire-purchase and the husband will learn that she has bought some waste land at Victor Harbour or a large photograph of himself, which, when it comes home, costs double or treble the price quoted. In other instances the wife wants to buy a washing machine. She tells the husband that no deposit is necessary and that only so much a week has to be paid out, and he usually agrees. That happens in the purchase of refrigerators and other goods. Often a difficult position arises. A husband may say, "We have reached the limit that we can pay out weekly for these articles." However, there is a continual temptation to buy more and more, and finally the husband may give way to save an argument. In other cases a woman may purchase an article under a hire-purchase agreement behind her husband's back.

Mr. Shannon—Wouldn't the husband sign the agreement to save an argument?

Mr. LAWN—Perhaps in some cases, but the purchase could not be made behind his back. He may be able to show his wife that the interest rate is too high and that it would be better to save some money and pay cash for the article. I am sure that in many cases the husband would not be prepared to sign. The Opposition is not putting this Bill forward as something new. Recently we heard a diatribe by the member for Torrens in trying to justify something which had existed for 100 years, namely, our Constitution. Slavery existed for more than 100 years, so I suppose the member for Torrens would say that slavery could be justified today. If there was anything in his argument last week we should look at what has been done to control hire-purchase in other countries, such as Great Britain and America. Legislation in the United States goes further than the provisions of this Bill, for there they control the length of the period during which repayments take place and the interest rate charged. The same applies in Great Britain, where hire-purchase is used in the national interests. If that country is going through a period of inflation the period of the repayments is shortened and the minimum deposit increased. On the other hand, if Great Britain is going through a recession the Legislature encourages business to absorb more workers in employment and terms under hire-purchase agreements

are made more favourable to the purchaser, the period of repayment being lengthened. In Australia hire-purchase is used solely in the interests of people engaged in the hire-purchase business.

Mr. CORCORAN—New South Wales has passed legislation on the lines of this Bill.

Mr. LAWN—Yes, and it controls the rate of interest that may be charged. Prominent Australian citizens, not members of the Labor Party, have been advocating some control over hire-purchase.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Not forgetting Sir Arthur Fadden.

Mr. LAWN—I believe he advocates control. I wonder whether the Treasurer had in mind the views of Sir Arthur Fadden when he was talking this afternoon. Sir Arthur would not advocate the abolition of hire-purchase, but that is not envisaged in this Bill. Members on this side of the House believe it should not be abolished, but controlled in the interests of the national economy and of the purchaser. The Treasurer said that the Bill would not be effective in many instances. He asked how the wife of a serviceman could obtain the signature of her husband to an agreement. I have heard all that sort of sob stuff from the Treasurer before. He is not concerned for the welfare of wives and children of servicemen, for he is having those people evicted from their homes. Owners of homes are able to get eviction orders against the wives and children of men serving in the forces. The Treasurer is not concerned for the welfare of human beings.

Mr. DAVIS—He is more concerned about motor cars and their owners.

Mr. LAWN—Yes. The Liberal Party represents goods and capital. Most of the people are represented in Parliament by members on this side of the House. I believe that later the Premier will try to open the gate still further so that landlords can force the wives of servicemen into an agreement to double the rent of their houses, although from listening to him one would think his heart bled for servicemen and their wives. It is time more sincerity was shown in this House. Certainly our legislation should be remedial, but there should also be a just case for bringing down legislation to the House. If members are sincere and honest in considering legislation on behalf of the people they represent I am sure all will support the Bill.

Mr. CORCORAN obtained the adjournment of the debate.

# CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT (LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL FRANCHISE) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 24. Page 620.)

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I deeply regret that I find it necessary to argue for justice in the year of grace 1955. One would think that in our advanced civilization human rights would receive due consideration, so that there would be no need for a Bill of this kind. The Bill is a simple one and has been adequately explained by the Leader of the Opposition. It contains only two fundamental clauses. Firstly, it repeals section 12 of the Constitution to enable people under the age of 30, but over 21, to stand for election to the Legislative Council; secondly, it repeals sections 20, 20 (a), 21 and 22 so as to abolish the property qualifications for voting for Legislative Council elections. There is no adequate reason for condemnation of the Bill. Any condemnation should be of those who wish to retain the present system. It is interesting to note the little interest displayed in this Bill by members opposite. We have heard only three speakers from the Government benches, and I do not think they talked at any length or said much about the measure.

Mr. John Clark—They didn't put forward one sound argument.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I agree. The Premier spoke very briefly and dealt with only a few points. The members for Alexandra and Torrens also spoke, but there have already been seven speakers from the Opposition, namely, the Leader of the Opposition, and the members for Adelaide, Gawler, Norwood, Victoria, Port Pirie and Prospect, as well as myself. Members of the Government find little pleasure in trying to justify an injustice on the eve of an election. Therefore, in their wisdom, they believe that silence is golden. I do not blame them for not speaking if they intend to vote for the retention of electoral injustice, but the Leader of the Opposition anticipated the arguments advanced by some, for they are as old as history. It seems that his anticipations were warranted, for some members opposite have endeavoured to argue the matter. The Premier did not try to justify the minimum age of 30 years; he left it to the greater brains of the Liberal Party, in particular the learned member for Alexandra (Mr. Brookman), who after six weeks of studious research spoke in this debate.

When he rose I was reminded of the Pharisee who said, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men." He admitted his ignorance of Labor policy, saying he would like to see a copy of it. I assure him that Labor's policy is as free as the words of the Liberal Party about the freedom of the individual are loose. This noble advocate of Liberal policy violently criticized members of the Opposition for interjecting so rudely when he was speaking, but I wish he would influence some of his colleagues in that regard. I agree with him that some changes have been made in Labor policy. Indeed, the Labor Party changes its platform at times because it is a reform Party and, as some reforms are achieved, new reforms are sought. Unlike the Liberal Party, which is bogged down by the domination of aged and conservative minds, the Labor Party has a progressive policy.

Mr. Brookman—Are you satisfied with the present set-up of State Parliaments?

Mr. HUTCHENS—The honourable member is condemned out of his own mouth by interjecting so rudely. If he will be patient I will deal with State Parliaments later. In speaking of the minimum age of 30 for election to the Legislative Council Mr. Brookman said:—

Several members of this House whose age is below 30 have been held up as patterns, and we have been asked why they could not become members of the Legislative Council. It seems to me that no great harm is done by their being prevented. In the course of a few short years they will become eligible for the Legislative Council if they wish to stand for election, but I doubt whether any one of those members would deny that by the age of 30 his wisdom will have been increased and he will have formed many opinions on subjects on which, perhaps, he had no opinion whatever before. We must not forget that a younger man has scarcely had time to form opinions on a great variety of subjects with which he may never have been confronted. In this Parliament we deal with all sorts of subjects from the school-leaving age to notification of foot rot in sheep, from public finance to pawn-brokers, and hundreds of other subjects, and men below the age of 30 are scarcely likely to have opinions on all those subjects when they come here. If they do they are rather extraordinary. For that reason I say that this age qualification in the Constitution is by no means an unwise one.

That statement is the greatest condemnation of the present system of election of the Legislative Council that I have ever heard in this place. Mr. Brookman says that members of the Legislative Council are required to be experts on every matter under the sun, but I suggest that a member of Parliament should not be an expert, but rather a citizen who, with an

open mind, can examine the evidence of experts and would be experts. He should be wise, and it is well to remember that wisdom may be found in the most unexpected places. Mr. Brookman would have members believe that honourable members in the Legislative Council have of necessity a closed mind.

Mr. McAlees—Isn't it supposed to be a House of second thought?

Mr. HUTCHENS—Possibly, but Mr. Brookman says that members there have formed their opinions before being elected, merely because they have attained the age of 30 years. He says they have formed correct opinions about medical science, engineering, economics, physics, psychology, sexology, foot rot and mental decay. I say, however, that a person's qualifications for election to Parliament should be his ability to serve, to investigate, to reason, and to make decisions as a result of his research. If a member's decision is proved wrong he should be strong enough to admit his error. The fundamental qualities required of a member are a sincere desire to serve, a full appreciation of the value of human life and its relation to the Divine, a realization of the temporal needs of his or her fellow creatures, an alert mind and an upright character. Are these qualifications the prerogative of any one age group? They are found in few people, and to narrow the field of potential entrants to the Legislative Council is a reflection on the people's judgment and a bar against many who wish to serve. Yet Mr. Brookman would impose such a bar on many honourable citizens of this State and make more possible the election of self-seekers who are considered in some quarters to be experts. All those who believe in a true democracy know it is desirable to have honest men with common sense in the Legislative Council; the experts should be on tap to be consulted. The greater the number of citizens from whom members of the Legislative Council may be chosen the greater will tend to be the ability of the men elected. For these reasons the present minimum age of 30 years can only have detrimental results.

The Bill provides for the abolition of the property qualification for Legislative Council franchise. In dealing with this provision the Premier travelled all over the universe in trying to justify his opposition to it; but I remind him that the South Australian Parliament is charged with the responsibility of legislating only in respect of this State, and to try to draw morals from the evils and alleged evils existing in other parts is only to evade his responsibilities as a member. The Premier

paid much attention to New South Wales and the attitude of the Labor Party to the electoral set-up there. He rather suggested that that set-up was the result of the Labor Party's action, but I remind him that it was a Liberal Government that legislated for that system. The Bill on that matter was introduced in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly on December 14, 1932, by the then Premier (Mr. Stevens), and I wish to quote his remarks on that occasion, as recorded in *Hansard*.

Mr. Hawker—Which *Hansard* is that?

Mr. HUTCHENS—The New South Wales *Hansard*.

Mr. Hawker—When things are different they are not the same.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I am replying to the Premier's remarks about the New South Wales electoral system, and if he made such an abominable job of his speech I should be able to refute his statements by referring to the original debate.

Mr. Dunstan—The member for Burra is so completely confused that he does not know what it is all about.

Mr. HUTCHENS—That is obvious. Mr. Stevens said:—

The Government believes that once again the Upper House must be raised to the high standard which it has held in the past. It should be reduced in size, and its influence as a House of review should be substantially enlarged. It should be removed altogether from the realm of partisan politics, and should function as a House representative of all classes in the community; not to be swayed by anything but a feeling of its responsibilities and duty to the community as a whole. We propose to press on with the necessary reforms to achieve that end, which we believe is considered to be desirable and necessary by the vast majority of the people of this State. The Bill was introduced into the Legislative Council by no less a person than the then Attorney-General, Mr. Manning. It was believed and argued by the Opposition that the Government was moving to retain possession of the upper House for its Party for time immemorial. The Government was warned by the Labor Party that the day might not be far distant when it would be in Opposition under this system. Immediately the Labor Party obtained a majority in the upper House the Liberal Party argued against the system. The New South Wales Liberal Party regretted its actions and I predict that the South Australian Liberal Party may regret its actions before long. The Premier said that the property qualifications for our Legislative Council were fairly low. I do not know what

he means by "fairly low," but I will agree with whatever he meant in that respect. In value the property qualifications are low, but that is not important. What matters is the effect it has.

In 1953 there were 449,630 people enrolled for the House of Assembly, but only 168,758 for the Legislative Council. About two thirds of the electors are disenfranchised because of these property qualifications and five-sixths of the women have no vote at all for the Legislative Council. This afternoon, when debating another matter, the Premier pleaded for the rights of women. Such audacity and hypocrisy have never been exceeded, for under this unjust system five-sixths of the women are deprived of a voice in electing the Legislative Council. Standing Orders 341 to 349 demand that before any Bill can become law it must pass both Houses in exactly the same form. What does that mean in the final analysis? Some people who have inherited wealth—and certainly not brains or ability—have the right to say who shall be their representative and make the laws, but two-thirds of the people have no voice. Is it right that those who have long since died should have an influence on the laws of this State? That is what it means if the present system is retained and this Bill rejected. It would be well for the Premier and those who support the retention of this unjust system to read the *Rights of Man* by Thomas Paine. He wrote:—

Every age and generation must be as free to act for itself in all cases as the ages and generations which preceded it. The vanity and presumption of governing beyond the grave is the most ridiculous and insolent of all tyrannies. Man has no property in man; neither has any generation a property in the generations which are to follow . . . Every generation is, and must be, competent to all the purposes which its occasions require. It is the living, and not the dead, that are to be accommodated. When man ceases to be, his power and his wants cease with him; and having no longer any participation in the concerns of this world, he has no longer any authority in directing who shall be its governors, or how its government shall be organized, or how administered.

Members opposite would allow those who have died to govern and direct the affairs of this State. The dead hand of the past has ruled us for a century. The member for Torrens was the only member opposite, with the exception of the Premier, who had the courage to rise and defend the present unjust system.

Mr. O'Halloran—Not courage—audacity.

Mr. HUTCHENS—It was audacity to present arguments that are as old as history. He said

it was this system under which South Australia commenced and under which it has progressed magnificently for 100 years. It is interesting to read the debates in the House of Commons in connection with the abolition of slavery. The following appears in Volume 27 of *Cobbett's Parliamentary History*:—

Lord Penrhyn contended against depriving persons, so interested as his constituents were in the Slave Trade, of their rightful advantages by an "ex post facto" law. The measure would abolish the Trade, as far as the present traders were concerned in it. On the African Trade, it ought to be remembered, that two-thirds of the commerce of this country depended.

Mr. O'Halloran—They are the people who lost us America.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Yes. They are the same sentiments as were expressed by Mr. Travers. Mr. Wilberforce said:—

To emancipate the negroes would not be to add to their happiness even if the legislature had a right to interfere with the property of the colonies. All that could be done by this country with safety and effect had already been done.

In Volume 9 of *Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates* the following appears, attributed to the Earl of Westmorland:—

He would even venture to say that it was to the existence of the slave trade that their lordships were indebted for their being now sitting in that House. Our existence depended on the strength of our navy, and the strength of our navy was chiefly derived from the slave trade. Their lordships must be convinced of it, if they but reflected that the town of Liverpool alone now sent out a greater number of privateers than were employed by the whole of the country against the enemy, in the time of Queen Elizabeth.

Mr. Travers expressed similar sentiments. Slavery had been practised for 1,000 years, but

England is now proud that she remedied that injustice. Those who opposed the reforms are regarded today as the villains of society in those times. It could well be written, "When I was a villain I spoke as a villain, but now I have become a responsible citizen I have put away villainous things." If everyone adopted that principle everyone would support this measure which provides for greater justice. Those men who have fought for reforms have, in the main, been men of humble origin—men who have put forward first the interests of their fellow men. In this mood the Opposition has moved to establish justice for the individual. The individual should have the right to say what type of Government he wants. Men who have fought for equality have been condemned, but the Labor Party has always been a reform party and every reform that has come into being in Australia has done so through the advocacy of the Labor Party. While I feel that our hopes of achieving anything at this juncture are remote, I am pleased to be associated with those who advocate justice for humanity, and I am confident that in the long run we will win out. Accordingly, I give my wholehearted support to the Bill.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### METROPOLITAN AND EXPORT ABATTOIRS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the Hon. A. W. Christian (Minister of Agriculture) and read a first time.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.47 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, September 1, at 2 p.m.