## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, November 15, 1955.

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

### QUESTIONS.

NEW STEEL WORKS IN AUSTRALIA.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—This morning's *Advertiser* contains the following report under the heading "Tasmanian Bid for Steel Industry":—

The Tasmanian Government is trying to attract British, American and German capital to set up an iron and steel industry in Tasmania. The Premier (Mr. Cosgrove) said today there were substantial deposits of iron ore in the north-west region of the State . . . There was keen competition among several States, including S.A., to attract a steel industry. "If Tasmanian iron deposits are found to be suitable, there is a good chance that the industry may be established in Tasmania," he said.

Has the Premier seen that report? Is he aware of "keen competition" among the States to attract overseas interests to establish steel works in Australia? Has the Government taken positive steps to see that the just claims of this State for a steel works will not be overlooked? Has he had any success in his efforts to obtain the assistance of the Federal Government to establish a steel works here?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I had seen the report mentioned. I was not aware that there was keen competition between the States. As far as I know, up to the present Tasmania has had little interest in this matter nor have the iron ore deposits there yet been proved, and before any substantial overseas capital would be attracted to any State a sufficient volume of raw materials would have to be assured to enable the industry to exist for a period long enough to successfully amortize construction costs. South Australia is pursuing its determination to secure a steel industry at Whyalla, and at present negotiations are taking place with overseas interests. In reply to the last question, I am not yet aware of the Commonwealth Government's attitude.

FROZEN FISH.

Mr. SHANNON—Recently I asked the Minister of Agriculture about the possibility of processing in this State deep frozen fish similar to the product now imported from South Africa. In Sunday's *Advertiser* I read that a Mr. Gurnsey, from South Africa, was in South Australia and had made the amazing statement that over several years South Africa had increased the value of its fishing industry from £1,000,000, to £57,000,000. Will the Minister take up with his counterpart in the South African Government the question of Mr. Gurnsey's *bona fides,* and, if they are proved, will he pursue the possibility of this State's reaping the apparently rich harvest now going to waste?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The gentleman mentioned called on me this morning and made certain proposals concerning the possible transfer of South African interests to this State to establish fish processing works and the fishing industry itself. I have asked him to give me written details of his proposals so that I may have them examined and, if necessary, bring them before Cabinet. In consideration of the establishment of his interests here he would want certain protection from this Government to ensure that there would not be detrimental competition. We are going into that matter with a view to getting full information.

TOWN PLANNING BILL DIVISION.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—On November 3, when a certain division was called for in the Committee stage of the Town Planning Act Amendment Bill, the member for Torrens (Mr. Travers) was appointed teller for the Ayes and I was appointed teller for the Noes. As a result of the count I indicated to the Chairman of Committees that I considered something was incorrect. I understood that the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) was in the Chamber at the time the vote was taken, whereas the *Hansard* account of the division does not report his name. Will the honourable member say whether he was present in the Chamber and took part in that division?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—I am not surprised that the honourable member desires some clarification about the division. The answers to his questions are: firstly, yes; secondly, yes: I supported the amendment.

HARBORS BOARD TUGS.

Mr. TAPPING—It has been reported that the overseas liner *Iberia* was delayed 40 minutes in leaving the wharf at Outer Harbour. Strong winds were blowing and towing was difficult although three tugs were engaged. I have been informed that because of the size of some liners—between 20,000 and 24,000 tons—our tugs are not capable of undertaking such a tow. Can the Minister of Marine assure the House that the tugs engaged in towing large steamers at Outer Harbour are equal to the task?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Obviously, I am not an expert on this question, but some years ago when it was suggested that certain steamers by-passed Adelaide because of the inadequacy of our tugs the Government, to overcome such a complaint, acquired the *Tancred,* the most powerful tug obtainable in Australia, and made it available for cases of emergency. Peculiarly, since then it has been seldom called upon. If the *Iberia* was delayed for 40 minutes I doubt whether the *Tancred's* services were utilized. In any case, even if the delay had not occurred, I doubt whether freights and fares in South Australia or Australia would have been reduced in consequence. As far as I know the Harbors Board has received no complaints relating to the capacity of the tugs but I will follow up the question and bring down a more detailed reply.

## APPRENTICES WEEK.

Mr. FLETCHER—Apprentices Week is being celebrated at present and is receiving much publicity. Those responsible for organizing this event are to be congratulated. In view of the obvious interest country members have in the teaching of apprentices, would it be possible for the Minister of Education to arrange for members to visit the Frome Road school to examine its activities?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes. I shall be delighted to provide an opportunity for members to do so and will take steps to make the necessary arrangements.

## EVICTION OF WORKMAN.

Mr. LAWN—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked on October 20 concerning the eviction of a workman by a firm which transferred him to Adelaide in connection with his work?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received a report from the firm concerned. I will omit names, but will let the member have them if he so desires. The reports is as follows:—

I thank you for your letter of the 3rd November and the enclosures which I have read. Early in December last year my company's Melbourne Office received a letter dated 1st December from Mr. —— saying that he had just been discharged from the R.A.A.F. and asking if the company could give him employment as a lift erector in or near Melbourne. The company replied that vacancies existed in its Lift Department in Melbourne, but no accommodation could be provided. However, it told him that there was a vacancy in Adelaide and a self-contained flat was available. After several talks with the Melbourne office, Mr. —— accepted the position in Adelaide, and it was arranged that he would move to Adelaide with his family as soon as the flat, which was being renovated by the company was available. Mr. —— and his family arrived in Adelaide on the 31st May, the fares having been paid by my company, and he commenced his employment with the company immediately afterwards. Mr. ——'s employment did not commence until after his arrival in Adelaide. He was not transferred by my company to Adelaide, and Mr. Lawn has been mis-informed on this point. I understand that immediately before he came to Adelaide Mr. —— was employed by Australian Paper Manufacturers at Morwell in Victoria as a rigger. Mr. —— occupied the flat which adjoins the company's offices rent free, and was paid his full wage. In addition to his normal duties he was required to answer any telephone calls made after hours and to attend to any necessary lift maintenance. However, the company found that his work was unsatisfactory and furthermore he was the cause of difficulties with other members of the staff. He was warned on more than one occasion. On the 5th September I terminated his employment and asked him to vacate the flat by 30th September. The flat was not vacated and as it was essential for the company to have a mechanic there who could attend to after hours emergency calls, I instructed the company's solicitors in the matter. Mr. —— was given notice to quit the flat by the 18th October which he did not do. Accordingly a writ for ejectment was issued and served on him on the 21st October. The date set down for the hearing of the action was 11th November, but Mr. —— vacated the flat on Saturday, October 29. The company has now employed another mechanic who is occupying the flat with his wife and two children, and is attending to the emergency calls. I hope that I have given you sufficient information to enable a reply to be made, and if I can be of further assistance or if you wish to see any of the relevant correspondence I shall be pleased if you will let me know.

## SEMAPHORE X-RAY SURVEY.

Mr. TAPPING—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked on November 8 regarding plans for a compulsory X-ray survey in the Semaphore district?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. I took up the matter with the Minister of Health and he states that, provided satisfactory accommodation can be obtained for the X-ray unit, tentative proposals are for a survey to be made in the electoral subdivision of Semaphore during the second half of 1956.

## CITY COUNCIL PROSECUTIONS.

Mr. LAWN—Last Monday's *News* contained a report by, I think, the Adelaide Town Clerk, on prosecutions for parking breaches. It said that over a period of three weeks £71 had been received in fines and £170

paid in counsel fees. This seems to be disproportionate because I understand that most of the cases are undefended, and the State provided the court and the set-up for the hearing. I believe a similar report is given every three weeks. Will the Minister of Works take up the matter, and inquire if the City Council cannot appoint its own inspectors in connection with undefended cases or appoint a prosecutor to conduct them?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will ask the Minister of Local Government to examine the matter.

## FIRE STATION AT ST. MARYS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (on notice)—Is it the intention of the Government to erect a fire station at South Road, St. Marys? If so, when?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The chairman, Fire Brigades Board, reports:—

Though land situated at South Road, St. Marys, was purchased by the board several years ago, no decision to erect a fire station on that site has yet been reached. The building of such a station is bound up with an over-all review of the locations of the existing stations in the metropolitan area. These stations were established before the advent of fast moving appliances and when the built-up area was much less extensive. The problem of re-locating stations is constantly under consideration by the board and while it is evident that a new station will ultimately be required to serve the expanded and expanding south-west area, it is not yet clear that the St. Marys site will be the most suitable for this purpose. Pending the adoption of the over-all plan of re-location the board is mindful of the expansion of the area in question and is of the opinion that it can meet present needs with its existing resources.

---

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION: MILLICENT BROAD GAUGE RAILWAY.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I ask leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Last Wednesday, in connection with the opening of the Millicent broad gauge, the member for Victoria (Mr. Corcoran) asked whether, in view of strong representations by local organizations, the Government would be "big enough to rise above political considerations and reconsider its decision in this matter." To this the Minister of Works replied:

It is not for the Government, as suggested, to rise above political considerations. It is for the Opposition to repudiate what it said about the opening of the broad gauge to Naracoorte.

In view of the Minister's obvious misinterpretation of what I said on that occasion, I draw attention to the full text of my remarks, which appear on page 123 of *Hansard* for 1953. I then said:—

The Government is pleased to announce that the broadening of the South-Eastern railway line to Mount Gambier has been completed—at long last! This is another of the Government's projects which, when it was first announced about 10 years ago, was always just going to be completed, but which has dragged on till now . . . I might also say that it was planned without regard to the comprehensive scheme for the development of the South-East which has since been suggested and taken up enthusiastically by the Premier. I need hardly remind honourable members that the project has been the means of political exploitation of the worst kind that the Government has ever indulged in. With what a flourish was the official opening of the line to Naracoorte celebrated, just before an election! That was three years ago, and in the meantime only another 50 miles or so have been completed.

It is clear from that statement, taken as a whole, that my criticism of the Naracoorte celebration was only part of the general, and well-founded, criticism of the Government's policy of publicity rather than public works. It was intended to convey the sense that the Government was more interested in making it known that something was being done, whether the public work involved was as valuable as it might have been, or not. As far as the Naracoorte celebration itself was concerned, I point out that at the time a supporter of the Government represented the district of Victoria, that the people of the South-East still believed in the Premier's deep sea port promise, and that the Government did not consult the Opposition on the possibility that the celebration might be open to criticism from the viewpoint which the Minister now seeks to stress.

## ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD moved:—

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—

That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Road Traffic Act, 1934-1954.

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

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I move—

*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

The Bill has one purpose only, and I believe it will have the support of all members. Its object is to provide that registration fees under the Road Traffic Act will be paid on vehicles owned by the Crown. The Act at present provides that the registrar must register vehicles of the Crown without payment of any fee. This exemption extends not only to vehicles used in Government Departments but also to vehicles of a number of other public authorities which are in law agencies or representatives of the Crown. It is proposed that in future they shall all pay the ordinary registration fees. It may be thought that the payment of such fees is merely transferring money from one public account into another but there is more in it than that. In the first place the registration fees paid pursuant to the Bill will be transferred into the Highways Fund and thus a substantial additional sum of money will be made available for roads.

Secondly, the amount of the fees will be shown as an expense of the department or public authority concerned and thus the real cost of its operations will be more accurately indicated in its accounts. The clauses of the Bill provide that the general rule that Acts do not bind the Crown will not apply in respect of motor vehicles owned by the Crown, and that the registration fees payable on Crown vehicles will be the same as those payable for vehicles owned by subjects. In order to ensure a quick settlement of any questions as to whether concessional rates apply to Crown vehicles, it is provided that any question as to the amount of the registration fee on a vehicle owned by the Crown shall be decided by the Treasurer. As a result of the Bill the exemption from the payment of registration fees that has been granted to Government vehicles and vehicles operated by Government agencies will no longer exist. As a consequence, a substantial sum will become available to the Highways Fund.

Mr. Shannon—Has an estimate been made of that amount?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have not an actual figure, but it will probably be about £80,000 a year. About two years ago when we made a direct payment from revenue to the Highways Fund it involved us in some difficulty with the Grants Commission. That has not yet been settled, but I do not think there can be any objection by the commission to the fact that Government vehicles will in future pay fees for using the roads.

Mr. Stephens—Does the Bill apply to semi-Governmental bodies?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It does not apply to local government bodies. It does not affect the exemptions that councils now have, but it will apply to the Electricity Trust and the Housing Trust, for instance, which are Government undertakings.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Does it apply to the Commonwealth?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No. I do not think that the State could bind the Commonwealth in this respect.

Mr. O'Halloran—Does it apply to the Tramways Trust?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No. The trust operates under a law that provides that it shall pay to the Highways Fund an amount equal to one penny a mile run by its vehicles. This works out at about the amount the trust would pay if its vehicles were registered in the normal way. I think the trust pays an average of about £120 or £130 a year to the Highways Fund on each vehicle.

Mr. Stephens—The Post Office would be exempt from registration fees?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Post Office is a Commonwealth instrumentality, so I do not think the State can tax that authority.

Mr. O'HALLORAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

## LIBRARIES (SUBSIDIES) BILL.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to empower the Treasurer to subsidize the cost of certain libraries, and for incidental purposes.

Motion carried.

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

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

*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

It provides for more adequate library accommodation, particularly outside the metropolitan area, and arises from deputations, including one introduced by the member for Alexandra (Mr. Brookman), requesting assistance to enable libraries to be established by district councils. Its purpose is to enable the Government to subsidize local government libraries. It provides that where a municipal or district council has a library in a council building which has been furnished by the council, the

Treasurer may, in any financial year, pay towards the cost of managing the library an amount which does not exceed the amount paid by the council towards the management of the library. Thus, the Treasurer may contribute towards the annual cost of a local government library pound for pound with the council.

It is provided by the Bill that, before a subsidy is paid by the Treasurer in any financial year, the Libraries Board of South Australia is to make a report upon the library and the Treasurer is to consider the report. The purpose of this provision is to secure that an examination of the library will be made by an expert library body with a view to securing that the subsidy will not be paid to a library which is not of a standard to justify a subsidy. The contribution of the Treasurer may be made subject to any conditions recommended by the Libraries Board and deemed fit by the Treasurer.

It is also provided that the Treasurer is not to subsidize a library unless he is satisfied that a substantial proportion of the books in the library are of an educational or literary nature and that the library is available to the public whether on the payment of fees or subscriptions or otherwise. It is proposed not to prevent libraries from carrying fiction, but rather to provide that they shall carry, in addition, educational and literary works.

Mr. Macgillivray—Don't you think country people need to be amused?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This is really an extension of the service provided by the Libraries Board in Adelaide. The Adelaide Public Library does not supply fiction, but the public, upon the payment of a quarterly fee, may get fiction from any circulating library. I believe that at present many libraries under the Institutes Association also cater for the readers of fiction. The amounts applied as subsidies are to be paid out of moneys voted by Parliament for the purpose.

A further provision is that the Libraries Board may set up a service for lending books to libraries subsidized under the Bill. The Libraries Board will, with the prior approval of the Treasurer, lay down the conditions upon which the service will be made available. The cost of the service is to be paid out of moneys provided by Parliament for the purpose. By that means we will get much better value because the books can be rotated through the central agency around to the various libraries. This legislation will be under the control of the Libraries Board, which in turn is responsible to the Minister of Education, who will receive reports from the board on the proposed expenditure under this legislation.

Mr. Macgillivray—Will libraries at present under the Institutes Association come within the scope of this Bill?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There is no mention of the Institutes Association in the Bill. As long as the association desires to carry on, the Government will continue to provide the present financial assistance. If, for the sake of illustration, a library in Glenelg conducted by the Institutes Association desired to come within this scheme, there would be no prohibition on such a transfer. That is a matter for local determination. If a library, with the concurrence of the local council, desires to participate in the heavier subsidy provided under this Bill, there is nothing to prevent it, provided the books are of a standard acceptable to the board.

Mr. John Clark—Would the library have to come under the control of the council?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Control is not the determining factor. The library has to be supported by the council. The subsidy provided by the Government is equivalent to the assistance provided by the council.

Mr. Riches—Does not the Act stipulate that a library has to be housed and controlled by the local governing body?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—If that is so, some slight amendment may be necessary. There are three main features in this legislation. The local council must be supporting the library, the standard of the library must be acceptable to the Libraries Board, and the board must be able to report that the subsidy is not being wasted. A reasonable proportion of the books in the library must be of literary or educational merit.

Mr. Macgillivray—A library in my district is being conducted by a community centre. Must it apply to the local council for support?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The local council must sponsor the library. The Government will not pay two subsidies to the same library. For instance, if a library is subsidized under the Institutes Association it cannot be subsidized under this scheme. This Bill enables half the effective cost of a library to be provided by the Treasurer. It also provides for a lending service from the central agency and will enable the interchange of books. Expert advice and assistance will be available to the libraries, for the board will furnish reports

upon the activities of the libraries which receive subsidies. Those reports will be most valuable to the libraries concerned as to their standard and effectiveness.

Mr. Stephens—Will the councils appoint the librarians?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It was suggested that the Libraries Board should staff the libraries, but that would restrict the number of libraries because it would be impossible to provide salaries for full-time librarians in any of our smaller country towns, or for that matter, in most country towns.

Mr. William Jenkins—Many big libraries have only part-time librarians.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That is so. The Bill opens up a much wider scope for library activities than would be possible if the Libraries Board had to provide staff for all libraries. Libraries staffed by the board would probably be more effectively maintained, but they would be extremely limited in number and would not be able to serve the areas we particularly desire to serve.

Mr. Macgillivray—Is it possible for councils to control the administration of the libraries?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—If a council sponsors a library it would, I am confident, exercise some control over it. I have no doubt that in many areas the district clerks take a personal interest in the libraries.

Mr. JOHN CLARK secured the adjournment of the debate.

## LAND SETTLEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

## THE NATIONAL TRUST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council with a suggested amendment and read a first time.

## HIGHWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 26. Page 1253.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This is only a small Bill but it contains an important principle to which reference must be made. In 1953 the sum of £620,000 was transferred from general revenue to the Highways Fund by way of Supplementary Estimates. Regardless of the urgency of road maintenance, which is not disputed, the Grants Commission treated this as an appropriation of a surplus. The commission said that moneys appropriated in the Supplementary Estimates towards the end of the financial year were not spent in that year and that if it were necessary for additional moneys to be spent on roads provision for it should have been made in the ordinary Estimates, so that the expenditure could be shown in the Treasurer's figures for that year. The Commonwealth Government also took a hand in the matter and according to information I have been able to collect it virtually directed the commission to disregard this sum in assessing the special grant for South Australia based on the financial position for that year. It is now proposed to transfer the money back to general revenue. We have been told that the Government knows of no reason why the commission should disapprove of this expenditure, but it would be better if the Government knew there would be no objection. I suggest that we should be cautious in this matter because if we are to be penalized subsequently for something done now our second position might be worse than our first. The Government proposes to regard the £620,000 as a revenue deficiency and add it to the National Debt. The Public Finance Act provides that revenue surpluses—and the £620,000 was originally part of one—should be credited to that debt, but here we have the application of the principle in reverse. Instead of the £620,000 being paid into the National Debt Redemption Fund it was spent on road works in the next year, and now that sum is to be added to the National Debt in order to make good the amount so spent and subsequently disallowed by the Commonwealth Government and the Grants Commission in assessing the State's financial grant for the year.

The Bill provides that the loan shall be repaid by instalments from time to time, at the discretion of the Government, but it is likely that it will not be repaid at all. In other words, it is likely that it will become permanently added to our National Debt. The bulk of road expenditure has always been from revenue and rightly so, but the appropriation of such a large amount from Loan sets a questionable precedent and at the same time involves a reduction of Loan allocations on other public works by that amount. We are establishing a doubtful precedent when we have deficits in road funds, make provision for them out of Loan, and then add them to the National Debt to be repaid if, when and how the Government of the day determines. It is time the whole question of road finance

was put on a better basis, as the result of consultation between the Commonwealth and the States. It is obvious that despite the huge sum we are now spending from revenue on roads their condition is deteriorating instead of improving. Herculean efforts will have to be made to maintain our highways even in their present condition. They are unsatisfactory, particularly in the area where I live and in the district I represent. Most of them are groups of large potholes strung together by short stretches of reasonably trafficable roads. I suggest we give more comprehensive consideration to the question of road finance rather than consider a Bill of this nature. However, we cannot do that today. We are asked to say whether or not we accept the Bill. As a matter of fact, we have no alternative but to accept it, and that opens up another question. The £620,000, if taken from the Loan fund this year, will mean a curtailment of our Loan works to that extent and it will be necessary to know which works are to be curtailed. We shall know the answer to that question in the near future. I support the second reading.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY (Chaffey)—I do not intend to deal with the matter of roads, but with the more important question of State rights and the way the States are "permitted" by an outside organization to spend moneys in their charge. The Premier said that in 1953 the sum of £620,000 had been transferred from general revenue to the Highways Fund, pursuant to a special appropriation by Parliament. That shows that this Parliament, which is supposed to be the Parliament of a sovereign State, decided to allocate moneys to be spent on developing our highways. I take it we are agreed that such development is one of our most important activities. The Premier said the Grants Commission rejected the State's submission that the transfer of the money to the Highways Fund was a proper and reasonable appropriation for road purposes, which would have had to be made whatever the state of the revenue at the time. What right has the commission to tell this Parliament—because the Government no longer comes into it after Parliament has voted the money—what it can or cannot do with the money? It seems that the power of the Commonwealth over finance is becoming very great. Instead of regarding this as a sovereign Parliament we should call it a subject Parliament, subject to the whims and fancies of any body the Commonwealth sets up to watch what we do with our money. Even if the taxpayers through Parliament say that money should be spent on the development of roads, this outside body can say that we are not to spend it that way. It seems that there must be some juggling of finance. I understand the Premier took up the matter strongly with the commission without getting any results. Like Molotov the commission has only one word, "No." We are in an impasse out of which we cannot get; therefore, there must be some financial juggling. Will the Premier give his views whether or not this Parliament should be dictated to by the Commonwealth in the expenditure of money? Unless we take a stand in this matter we may as well abolish State Parliaments and hand over the control of the whole country to the Commonwealth Government because those who control the finance of the State automatically control the State itself.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—The Leader of the Opposition asked whether I could indicate what adjustment will have to be made in the Loan programme to meet the money to be repaid to general revenue as a result of this Bill, but I am not yet in a position to answer him. In a big loan programme, such as the one we have this year of about £30,000,000, there will be fluctuations in the expenditure on the various lines. Some contractors to Government departments do better than meet their contract time, whereas others fail to achieve it. Again, some Government departments make better repayments than expected, so there is a certain amount of give and take in the Loan Estimates, not from any desire of the Government, but arising out of circumstances. Sometimes materials come to hand more promptly than expected, whereas others become more difficult to secure. Tomorrow week members will be visiting a plant at Port Pirie, and the amount to be repaid from that plant will be much greater than we expected, because it commenced operating without any serious teething troubles.

Mr. O'Halloran—You can use that sum to recoup the Loan Fund for the amount necessary under this Bill?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It will be sufficient for that, but there will be other fluctuations in the loan programme. I do not want members to think that we can appropriate about £600,000 from the Loan Fund without any disruption to the loan programme, though I do not think there will be any serious disruption if we get the full amount expected from the Commonwealth. At present we are guaranteed only about half that amount.

The member for Chaffey (Mr. Macgillivray) asked what right the Grants Commission had to query any appropriations made by this Parliament. South Australia may ask the Commonwealth Government for additional financial assistance under section 96 of the Constitution, and the Commonwealth appoints the commission to make inquiries and see whether assistance should be given. Therefore, if we do not seek relief from the Commonwealth the Grants Commission does not make any inquiries about South Australia. The commission examines this State's accounts and compares them with the accounts of the three non-claimant States. The commission held that the £620,000 that we are discussing today was an amount that should not be included in our accounts. I hold the view, and I stated it strongly before the commission, that when comparing our accounts with those of the eastern States a correction should only be made on two grounds: if we financed public works from general revenue, or if we deliberately wasted public money. We could get a substantial deficit in our revenue accounts if we financed public works from revenue, and I think the Grants Commission could rightly correct our financial statement if we did this or if we wasted money, but the commission did not suggest that we did either of those things. I submitted the strongest possible case to the commission for a review of this grant of £620,000 to the Highways fund, and it said it would carefully examine it. I said it was a proper and important function of government to provide roads, and I hope that the commission will eventually reimburse the State for the correction it has made.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages without amendment.

## COAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 8. Page 1445.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—The Bill extends the operation of the Act for a further five years. The Act is invoked only in times of coal shortages that may lead to difficulties in supplying steam power and gas and electricity, and it enables a committee to introduce rationing of coal, gas and electricity supplies when necessary. The moving spirit in the administration of this legislation has been the Chief Storekeeper (Mr. Bice) and I compliment him on the excellent service he has rendered to the community. However, coal shortages do not seem imminent, and they may never occur again because of the development of the Leigh Creek coalfield, the accumulation of huge surpluses of New South Wales coal in that State and here, and the cheapness and availability of fuel oil. Furthermore, I hope that fairly soon we shall be able to obtain power from our own uranium resources. Nevertheless, it is a valuable safeguard to have on the Statute Book, and I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages without amendment.

## DANGEROUS DRUGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 30. Page 665.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This Bill has already been scrutinized in another place, and I take it that that Chamber, with its usual perspicacity, has presented this House with a piece of legislation beyond criticism. So far as I can gather, the principles it establishes are worthy: it renders the Act more comprehensive and at the same time gives it a flexibility that it does not now possess. It makes possible the extension, by proclamation, of the prohibition on the use of certain drugs to any of their derivatives. That is an excellent provision for it prevents people from circumventing the Act by deriving something from a drug that may have all the evil properties of the drug itself without being covered by the rigid provisions of the legislation. It is now left to the Executive Council, by proclamation, to extend the Act as required.

The legislation is also an attempt to produce uniformity throughout Australia of legislation concerning narcotics, and in view of the tragic effects of the drug traffic, mainly in other countries although we have heard of some serious episodes in Australia, it is advisable that the Australian legislation should, as far as possible, be uniform so as to be effective in preventing trafficking in narcotics. For those reasons I support the Bill.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages without amendment.

## MINES AND WORKS INSPECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 27. Page 886.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This Bill, which comes from another place, gives the Mines Department control over

quarrying, with particular reference to the safeguarding of property and persons where blasting is carried out near built-up areas. I consider the Mines Department to be the appropriate authority to administer such legislation because it has expert officers qualified to determine the degree of danger resulting from blasting, and possessing the technical knowledge necessary to prescribe the type of blasting which may be done in certain areas. The Bill appears to be desirable and I support it.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages without amendment.

## HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 27. Page 888.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This Bill, which has been before the House for a long period, deals with three subjects that are important to public health. Firstly, it provides the necessary power for the making of regulations about notifiable diseases in accordance with the practice now adopted in the case of infectious diseases. I see no objection to that, because although some regulations could possibly exceed the limits provided, the following safeguards are available: firstly, such regulations must run the gamut of examination by the Joint Committee on Subordinate Legislation; and secondly, regulations not acceptable to Parliament may be disallowed by resolution of either House. For those reasons I see no objection to that provision.

The second matter is the provision of standards of qualification for inspectors of health. This is desirable, but I suggest that we go further and provide the machinery whereby inspectors with full qualifications can be permanently employed, and at the same time enabled to study and obtain higher qualifications in the interests of the proper administration of our health laws. Councils in sparsely populated areas find it difficult to get people to act as health inspectors and most of the necessary work falls on the Metropolitan County Board, which periodically sends inspectors to country districts. However, these inspections are necessarily infrequent, and there are long periods when these isolated communities must take care of themselves. Most of the people in the area I shall represent after the next elections have no local government body and have to depend on the Central Board for protection in health matters. Ultimately, we shall have to zone the State into health districts and appoint a properly qualified inspector in each. He would be responsible for the administration of the health laws in that zone, and it would render him free of the criticism of favouritism. I have known of instances in the past where local influences have prevented health inspectors from doing what they wanted to do because of the consequences. This is a matter, however, for full consideration at a future time.

The third matter deals with placing responsibility for the quality and type of septic tanks on the manufacturers instead of on the persons installing them. That is a vital weakness in our present law. Now the buyer of a septic tank believes the manufacturer when he says it is adequate for a number of people, but if it proves after installation to be inadequate the buyer is the responsible person. Under the Bill standards for septic tanks are to be laid down, and the responsibility is on the manufacturer. These are desirable provisions and I support the second reading.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Goodwood)—Metropolitan councils appoint a health officer, but frequently he is also the building inspector, or performs other duties. I wonder whether a class could be formed in connection with our health matters because health inspectors should be fully qualified. They should be capable men at their work and have no fear that they will be criticized for what they recommend. One metropolitan council burns household garbage in a disused quarry and objectionable smoke and fumes come from it. This is disturbing to residents half a mile away and it is time the health inspector told the council that it should adopt another method of disposing of the garbage, which often includes old rubber. Rat trouble is another matter to be considered. Our health inspectors should have proper qualifications and if an inspector makes a recommendation to his council it should be carried out in the interests of the ratepayers. Clause 3 deals with standards of septic tanks. The material used in their construction should be guaranteed. If a tank is installed for a family of four or five it should not be expected to cope with a family of seven or eight. In these health matters we should have standards and efficient inspectors. I support the second reading.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—Mr. Frank Walsh is a little off the track in connection with health inspection in the metropolitan

area. Some years ago I was a member of a committee of inquiry into health matters, and evidence tendered to it showed that there was a need for health inspections in country areas but not in the metropolitan area. At that time it was obvious that the persons employed in the metropolitan area had certain qualifications, but sometimes the country councils could not get persons with the qualifications required because they were not available. The Bill seeks to remedy the position. Because of the lack of finance most country councils are unable to employ full-time qualified health inspectors. One of the recommendations made by the committee of inquiry I mentioned was that an endeavour be made to encourage country councils to amalgamate for purposes of health inspection and to employ a qualified person on a full-time basis. A number of medical officers of health in South Australia and other States told the committee that one full-time qualified man could handle a large area, based on the assumption that there would not be dense population for him to control. When we get away from towns like Port Pirie, Mount Gambier and Whyalla, South Australia has places that should be called villages, places with 2,000 or 3,000 inhabitants, and a health inspector would not be able to do full-time work at any one of them. Some of the conditions prevailing in some country towns could be dealt with by one man if there were an amalgamation, and he could be paid by the councils that amalgamated. It was realized by the committee that because of distance perhaps only two councils could amalgamate in some areas, whereas in others three or more could. I understand there is a move in this matter, particularly in my electorate. I support the Leader of the Opposition's suggestion that the Government pursue more energetically a policy of encouraging country councils to carry out proper health inspections by employing properly qualified men.

I believe that some diseases that are not infectious should be notifiable under the Act, but I think that any difficulty here could be overcome by proclamation. Septic tanks are mentioned in the Bill, and ever since I have lived in the hills I have been the user of a septic tank. If ordinary care is taken by the householder septic tanks give little trouble. For years I have not even had to inspect mine because I see that no household waste gets into it. Most septic tanks are designed for eight people, and obviously if they are overloaded there will be trouble. The Glenelg sewage treatment works is, in effect, only a very big septic tank.

Mr. Riches—By accepting a certain report last week you virtually banned the manufacture of septic tanks.

Mr. SHANNON—No. In certain localities they serve an admirable purpose.

Mr. Riches—But you voted against my amendment last week.

Mr. SHANNON—The honourable member is trying to introduce red herrings. The installation of many septic tanks in a congested area may create much trouble, and this is supported by our chief sewerage engineers, Messrs. Murrell and Hodgson. The standardization of septic tanks is a desirable move and it will not result in any great hardship to manufacturers.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—I do not receive this Bill as enthusiastically as some other members. I ask the Government to postpone the consideration of it until it has been discussed by the Municipal Association and the Local Government Association. I do not see why it should be rushed through Parliament this session, for there is no great urgency about it. There is not a council that would not employ a qualified health inspector if one were available and if it could afford to pay his salary. The Bill could quite easily make the administration of public health in country council areas more difficult. Legislation somewhat similar to this was enacted in regard to the qualifications of building inspectors. Examinations were set of such a high standard that only qualified architects would have a chance of passing them, so few people were interested in sitting for them. As a result some metropolitan councils had to retain the services of officers of about 80 years of age. No country council could afford to pay a salary high enough to secure the services of a qualified building inspector. The same applies, to some extent, to the employment of council overseers. I do not know the last occasion when a council was able to engage a qualified overseer, though they can employ an overseer without the necessary qualifications if permission is obtained from the Minister. This Bill ensures that before long no country council will be able to get the services of a qualified health inspector. Unless this whole question is re-examined and the difficulties confronting local boards of health are more realistically considered, the measure could well make the work of policing public health in the country more difficult than it is at present.

Mr. John Clark—Do you know what the qualifications will be?

Mr. RICHES—Nobody knows. The standard will be set by the Central Board of Health. Some councils employ their clerks as health inspectors, and others have part-time health inspectors. Unless some means can be found of financing the scheme proposed by the Bill it will not be worth the paper it is written on. The Government should seriously consider the suggestion made by the member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) and the late Mr. Duncan, who was member for Gawler. There is a real need for qualified health inspectors in the country, but few councils can afford their services. It should not be difficult to divide the State into districts so that a qualified man could serve more than one council. The Leader of the Opposition pointed out that there would be tremendous advantages, from an administration point of view, in having independent inspectors. I do not accept some of the criticism made about local government, though in the past it may not have been uncommon for a health inspector to get the sack if he ordered a councillor to clean up his back yard. The great majority of councillors and council officers are anxious to put their own places in order nowadays. Only the larger councils can consider the employment of a full-time qualified health inspector.

The control of septic tanks is already vested in the Central Board of Health. That department does not advise the installation of septic tanks in Port Augusta, but the installation of an all-purpose tank which treats all waste water from the house. The legislation that we need is something designed to provide the machinery for inspecting these services as they are installed. These installations are not a manufactured article as is envisaged in this Bill. A pit is bricked in or concreted by the contractor on the spot, and the old practice of providing a circular tank serving one purpose only is fast dying out in Port Augusta. However, if such tanks are still being made some authority should be vested in the Central Board of Health to see that they are properly made of the best materials, but the more important aspect of septic tank installation is that the inspection shall be made on the site, therefore consideration of this Bill should be deferred as it is not necessary that it be passed immediately in its present form. I would like to see an opportunity given to the Municipal Association and the Local Government Association to comment on the Bill because they are the people most affected and their advice would be helpful. Consideration should be given to the suggestion made by the committee of which the member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) was a member. This matter has been discussed by the Local Government Association on Eyre Peninsula, but no finality on it has been reached although the suggestion has received support in country areas.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE (Burnside)—I strongly support this measure. In the Address in Reply debate I expressed views similar to those expressed by the member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) and suggested that a number of country district councils might combine to employ one health officer, because I knew that that was being done in certain parts. Indeed, you, Mr. Acting Speaker, agreed with the views I expressed on that occasion. The old idea that a health inspector is someone who, to use inelegant but descriptive language, deals with stinks and drains is outdated, for today he is a much more important person. The modern qualified health inspector deals with preventive hygiene and is not concerned only with the observance of the law, but also with educating people in the need to observe it. In these days we have a much different approach to this problem, and health laws, as far as possible, should be preventive rather than attempt to cure after the event. This Bill will provide the necessary impetus to district councils to engage, either singly or collectively, a qualified health inspector.

Mr. Riches—What provision will encourage that?

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—It provides the qualifications necessary for health inspectors and thus raises their status in the community. There will now be more persons than in the past prepared to qualify themselves as health inspectors and make their services available to district councils. The South Australian School of Mines and Industries has complete facilities for instruction in the necessary subjects, and health inspection will now become a recognized and accepted profession. Examinations are at present conducted by the Royal Society for the Promotion of Health, which was formerly known as the Royal Sanitary Institute, an institute enjoying acceptance throughout the Commonwealth of its educational standard. I hope the Bill will pass quickly as no valid reason exists for holding up the requirement that a person shall hold the necessary qualification before becoming a

health inspector. The Bill does not take away from any person already engaged as a health inspector the right to carry on in his job; it merely insists that the qualification shall be required in all future appointments. The inspection of septic tanks prior to their installation is necessary. In my electorate only a few of the people installing septic tanks sought the advice and assistance of the Central Board of Health, and in such cases the tanks are now functioning satisfactorily.

Mr. Riches—All septic tanks must be licensed by the Central Board of Health before use.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—It is provided that the Central Board of Health shall inspect installations, but a number of people were not aware of that. It is more desirable that septic tanks be approved for use before installation; it is no satisfaction to a person who has already installed a septic tank to find that it does not conform to the best specifications available, and a great deal of inconvenience can be avoided if septic tanks are approved before installation. Not even a water tap can be installed on a high pressure main until it has been approved by the Engineering and Water Supply Department, and although that regulation may be irksome to some manufacturers, it meets with the approval of most. I believe that a similar provision in respect of septic tanks would be welcomed by their manufacturers and vendors.

Mr. CORCORAN (Victoria)—I support the suggestion by the member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) that this Bill be referred to the Municipal Association for comment. I know the problems confronting country district councils because of lack of qualified inspectors and the lack of finance to pay them even if they were available. The only solution to this problem is the amalgamation of councils, but this Bill does nothing to bring about such amalgamation. I have heard this matter discussed at length by the South-East District Councils Association; some councils support amalgamation, but others oppose it. Even if a decision had been reached there was no law to enforce amalgamation. I believe the solution of the problem lies in compelling certain councils to amalgamate, which would enable them to employ qualified health inspectors and to relieve them of some of the financial strain involved in such an appointment. Some metropolitan councils find it possible to employ a health inspector, but the position is more difficult in the country. The member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Fletcher) knows of the difficulties in this respect. If this matter were referred to councils, they would have the opportunity to make suggestions, and I cannot see what harm would be done in deferring consideration of this measure until they have been given that opportunity.

Mr. QUIRKE (Stanley)—I am only concerned about the provision relating to septic tanks. Today it is realized that what was previously sold as a five-person tank is too small for almost any household purpose. That has been the experience in Clare where the tank usually sold is an eight-person tank, and that is small enough. I appreciate the fact that the Central Board of Health must have realized the limitations associated with the five-person tank, although the board has previously advocated its installation and in its tables described as adequate the cubic and liquid capacities of such tanks.

The adequacy of a septic tank depends firstly on the amount of liquid that it can contain to carry out sufficient activation to set up a bacteriological action. There must be enough liquid to take a certain quantity of solids so that the bacteriolytic action can operate immediately without choking the system. I have known of bacteriolytic tanks built of brick. A hole has been sunk in the ground, lined with bricks, and cemented on the inside, leaving the 2in. inlet and outlet fall. Such tanks are in every way as effective as an expensive tank purchased ready-made.

Mr. Riches—More than 50 per cent of the tanks in Port Augusta were built on that principle.

Mr. QUIRKE—There is nothing wrong with them, and a tank built out of available materials may be as effective as any ready-built tank.

Mr. John Clark—At one time no other type was made, and some have worked effectively for 50 years.

Mr. QUIRKE—Yes, but will this clause prevent the building of a septic tank out of available materials? Will a circular concrete tank be passed provided it has a certain volume capacity, but a square tank covered over with concrete slabs refused? Who will adjudicate in such cases? A school in Clare has an all-purpose tank of a large capacity covered with concrete slabs and it works admirably, but would that conform to the requirements of the Bill? Will hide-bound regulations be made concerning the tanks that

can be installed? Will people be able to build their own tanks if they comply to certain specifications? There is nothing complicated about the building of a septic tank if a certain fall is provided between the inlet and outlet holes. I would oppose any proposal that a man must install a septic tank that has been purchased. It has been suggested that some installations are objectionable, but purchased septic tanks can be just as objectionable as those that are ready-built. The best septic tank can be objectionable if the outfall from the cistern is too far from the tank or, in other words, if the pipe between the lavatory and the tank is too long. If it is too long the water which flushes the closet will travel faster than the solids and the pipe will inevitably choke. I would hesitate to accept legislation without knowing the full implications of the regulations which may be issued under it. I support the suggestion that this matter be referred back to the councils.

Mr. FLETCHER (Mount Gambier)—Mr. Corcoran mentioned that the South-Eastern District Council's Association has for many years discussed the question of the employment of health officers. Not every district council can afford to employ a full-time health officer. It would be desirable if district councils could amalgamate in permanently employing such a man. As our towns grow the need for qualified health officers is accentuated. I endorse Mr. Riches' suggestion that we enable the councils to consider this matter further before we vote on it. It has been suggested that because of the qualifications necessary, council inspectors, health officers, engineers and district clerks are a diminishing race. This is Apprentices Week in the city and it might be appropriate to suggest that our country high schools and technical schools encourage young men to consider appointments in district councils, because they are not dead-end jobs.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Provision as to sale and manufacture of bacteriolytic or septic tanks."

Mr. QUIRKE—Does this clause only relate to septic tanks which are sold by manufacturers and retailers? Will it debar people from building their own septic tanks which can be just as effective as any they may purchase? Will they be compelled to purchase septic tanks?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This will not debar any person from building his own septic tank. There are regulations which require any tank, before use, to be inspected by the Central Board of Health to ensure that it is satisfactory. This clause will ensure that every tank that is sold is up to specification. There have been occasions when persons have purchased tanks which they have believed to be of certain capacity because of what they have been told, but frequently they have discovered —usually too late—that they are inadequate and unsatisfactory and consequently they have wasted their money.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I wonder whether it is necessary to retain the paragraphs relating to any person who "sells or exposes for sale" septic tanks. Many storekeepers are not qualified to know whether the tanks they sell or offer for sale are of the required standard. If we controlled the manufacturers we should not need to worry about the sale or exposure for sale of tanks. The packing shed in my district has a stock of septic tanks which were purchased in good faith. Most of them may be satisfactory, but not necessarily all of them. The packing shed should not be liable for punishment if they are not of the required specification.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I appreciate the honourable member's point, but frequently the manufacture of the tanks is quite satisfactory. A person manufactures a tank of a certain capacity and sells it to an agent as being suitable for, say, six persons, but the agent may recommend it as being satisfactory for 12. Septic tanks are mainly of the same pattern and are constructed of the same materials but the problem is usually that a tank grossly inadequate for a purpose is recommended by a seller to bring it within the price range of the purchaser. An irresponsible seller could recommend a small tank of satisfactory design to some unsuspecting person as having a greater capacity than it really had.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Before a person can install a septic tank he must get permission from the Local Board of Health, which would advise him of the capacity required. He would then go to a seller and buy a tank of that capacity. I think it would be unfair in that case for the seller to be responsible. He would have sold what he was asked to supply, and be placed in an entirely false position. I think the buyer should be the person responsible.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Under this Bill regulations will be issued setting out the requirements in connection with septic tanks. Frequently today tanks are sold that are not of the capacity required and there is no law to compel their sale. I give my personal assurance that the person carrying on a legitimate trade today in septic tanks need have no fears. We do not want to condemn all septic tanks constructed prior to the passage of the legislation, or have a buyer installing a tank with a capacity for four or five persons and later having it condemned as inadequate.

Clause passed.

Title passed. Bill read a third time and passed.

## LOTTERY AND GAMING ACT AMENDMENT BILL (RACING DAYS AND TAXES).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 25. Page 1219.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This Bill contains three separate and distinct provisions, all of which may be regarded as largely administrative. In general, there is very little scope for criticism of the proposals themselves. Until recently, for several years there was widespread dissatisfaction among supporters of racing because there were a number of raceless Saturdays in the metropolitan area. The position has been remedied to the extent that now there is normally only one such raceless day a year. But for this amending Bill there would have been two this year, owing to the incidence of Saturdays and the occurrence of leap year.

My only observation on this particular matter is that from time to time we are called upon to pass amendments which have been rendered necessary by the discovery that circumstances have changed, or that the provisions in the Acts themselves do not express correctly the purpose intended to be expressed, or even that a drafting error has been made some time in the past. Much of the amending legislation brought before Parliament by the Government in recent years has been necessary because of some such inadequacy in existing legislation; and this particular instance suggests that a more comprehensive overhaul of the Lottery and Gaming Act should be made to bring it into line with present-day practice, and to render it more flexible to accommodate any changes that might take place in the future.

We are now being asked to make provision for an additional metropolitan racing day, but there will still be a vacant Saturday during the 1955-56 season. Perhaps the Act should be amended to meet all contingencies even although there may be 53 Saturdays in a year only very occasionally. There is no good reason why any Saturday should remain vacant, especially if it is because of some technicality in the Act. But this is really a matter of detail, and the Act should be comprehensive enough to enable the department or organization administering it, to deal with it. It is proposed that the extra day should be allotted to the S.A.J.C. because that club is the premier club of the State and bears the greater part of the expense involved in controlling racing here. But I remind members that the assumption of this role in racing affairs by the S.A.J.C. has been a purely voluntary act on the part of that club; and I am not sure that the system which has grown up as a result of its leadership in this connection is altogether satisfactory. Very many years ago, in fact, early in the history of racing in this State, the S.A.J.C. invited the other clubs to acknowledge it as the governing body, and, apparently, at the time the other clubs did not fully appreciate the significance of subordinating themselves to the S.A.J.C. In any case, they accepted the invitation, and I believe they have had occasion since to regret having done so.

Except for the prestige attaching to membership of the committee of the S.A.J.C. as the premier club, which would, of course, be lacking if it were not recognized as such, there would be very little to lose and very much to gain if a body representing the clubs were set up to control and organize racing in this State. Such a body would bring about much greater uniformity in practice. An example of the confusion that may be caused under the present system may be seen in the introduction of starting gates by one club apparently before the other clubs had given much thought to the matter, or at any rate before they had decided in favour of adopting them.

The fact that there is a South-Eastern District Racing Association ought to be an example to the racing clubs in the metropolitan area. The second proposal in the Bill is to the effect that the association may allot the available racing dates in the South-East to the various clubs constituting the association, and that seems to me to be a far more sensible basis than exists in the city.

The three course-owning clubs in the metropolitan area made very considerable profits

during the last financial year. In the aggregate it was about £40,000, or an average of about £13,000 each. Some years ago, it will be remembered, the Lottery and Gaming Act was amended at the instance of the Government to provide for the imposition of a so-called winnings bet tax, part of the proceeds of which was to go to the racing clubs for the purpose of increasing stake money. It would appear, however, that the metropolitan clubs, at least, could maintain their stake money without the aid of this subsidy from the Government. In any case, the proceeds of the winnings bet tax have far exceeded the original estimates, and it seems the time has come to review the basis on which this tax is calculated. With that end in view I propose to move an amendment that the bettor's stake be exempt from this tax. Such exemption would remove an injustice that should never have been imposed on the supporters of racing. When the proposal was first before Parliament I sought to exempt the bettor's stake from the tax, and whenever the opportunity has presented itself since I have done the same and I propose to act in that way again with confidence because the proceeds of the winning bets tax have far exceeded the amount expected. It was an impost more or less forced on us by the Commonwealth Grants Commission. Up to the time of the imposition of the tax, revenue derived from betting in this State was below that derived from betting in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. We adopted the expediency of imposing the tax on the unfortunate punter, who surely has enough to contend with in the vicissitudes of the weather, form, tipsters, trainers and jockeys, without, if by the merest chance he backs a winner, having a part of his winnings, and some of his stake, taken from him. With large bets on short-priced horses the amount paid by the bettor on his own stake is considerable.

I would like to say a few words about mid-week racing, which is referred to in the Bill to the extent that in the re-allocation of racing days in the South-East only those mid-week meetings customarily held are to be observed. Mid-week racing is really a relic of the mid-week half-holiday, and as this custom has almost died out and the South-East is a long way from the metropolitan area, no great hardship would be caused if race meetings in that district were all held on Saturdays. There is another point relating to the control of racing and the allocation of racing days. Two very popular and efficient racing clubs have been in existence for many years and have made a major contribution to the maintenance of racing on a high standard, particularly in times of depression. They are the Amateur Turf Club and the Licensed Victuallers Racing Club, but they will not be able to race because the powers that be have determined that no dates can be made available to them. It is not practicable to amend the Bill to solve their problems, and I agree that the South Australian Jockey Club, which is the premier racing body (though it did itself assume that role), is involved in much expense which other course-owning clubs do not have to meet. If we are to provide for an extra racing day in the metropolitan area it is proper that the S.A.J.C. should be granted that date, but it would be in the best interests of the sport if the course-owning clubs could get together and determine that the Amateur Turf Club and the Licensed Victuallers Club should be allotted at least one day a year each. These two clubs have to pay rent for the use of a course, and some course-owning clubs were glad to collect that rent in times of depression rather than run race meetings themselves. If those two clubs are not granted race dates they may be forced out of existence. I support the Bill.

Mr. PEARSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

## LAND AGENTS BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council with a suggested amendment, and read a first time.

## MAINTENANCE ORDERS (FACILITIES FOR ENFORCEMENT) ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 25. Page 1221.)

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood)—I support the Bill, which will improve the method of the enforcement of maintenance orders. I do not think any exception can be taken to any of its clauses.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages without amendment.

## METROPOLITAN MILK SUPPLY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Consideration in Committee of the Legislative Council's amendment:—

Page 4, line 11 (clause 5)—Add the following subsection:—

(3) This section shall not take away or restrict the duty of any person to comply with the provisions of, or the regulations made under, the Food and Drugs Act, 1908-1954.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN (Minister of Agriculture)—I move that the Legislative Council's amendment be agreed to. It makes it clear that the Metropolitan County Board will continue to be the licensing authority under the Act. The retail milk vendors' licences are issued by that board, which has some fears that under the zoning system it might be assumed that a vendor who obtained a permit to operate in any zone would not require a licence from the Metropolitan County Board. Any such fears will be completely dispelled by the amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

## PHYSIOTHERAPISTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Consideration in Committee of Legislative Council's amendment—

Page 2, line 37 (clause 4)—Leave out "twenty" and insert "fifty."

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—The amendment increases the maximum penalty for an offence to £50, and brings the legislation in this respect into conformity with the Pharmacy Act and the Veterinary Surgeons Act. It is considered that for unprofessional conduct, particularly where it is related, as in this instance, to the physical treatment of a patient, this penalty is reasonable and I ask that it be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

## WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 10. Page 1546.)

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood)—When this House debates workmen's compensation there seem to be two points of view stated, but I believe they should be stated unequivocally. The Government's attitude is that workmen's compensation is something handed out as a charity to workmen and an expense to employers, and that this is a necessary evil in an industrial community. The resultant attitude of the Government is that it provides as little as it can, consistently with the demands of the workmen and the force of their votes in this House. Unfortunately, workmen's votes do not in many instances count very much in this House because of its constitution, but surely that attitude is completely wrong because workmen's compensation is a part of the social security provisions of any modern industrial community and should be worked out as a part of the social security scheme and not as a charity. If it is to be worked out on a social security basis, then the present provisions in this State are totally inadequate, because in many instances of injury received in the course of employment workmen are not covered either by the provisions of this legislation or any other form of social security in our community.

At present this Act covers only those workmen injured by an accident in the course of their employment. Consequently, to collect benefits because of a personal injury sustained by accident, a worker must be able to point to some untoward happening in the course of his employment to justify payment by the insurance company, although many workers may be injured in the course of their employment whose injury does not arise from an accident. Although the latter may be the case, their employment is nevertheless responsible, but those workers cannot point to any untoward accident. For instance, owing to extreme pressure of work which he performs willingly and conscientiously a clerk may develop writer's cramp. That is a nervous affliction rather than a physical injury, and I have known of a case in which a man was so seriously afflicted that he was incapable of carrying on as a clerk as well as he was previously; therefore, his remuneration was consequently reduced because his employers considered his services were not as valuable as previously.

Although that man may be injured in the course of his employment he receives no workmen's compensation, and for the rest of his life he has to suffer. Surely that is not a satisfactory social security scheme, and in comparing South Australia with the other States in this respect, the Workmen's Compensation Committee should have considered the provisions in the New South Wales, Queensland and Victorian legislation, which provide that the basis of compensation shall be personal injury arising out of or in the course of employment, whereas at present our legislation provides for personal injury by accident arising out of and in the course of employment. The word "and" is used instead of "or," and that is significant because it limits the number of cases to which the Act may apply. In other States it is not necessary to suffer a personal accident; the worker must suffer personal injury arising out of his employment and need not point to any particular happening. Then there is the vexed

question of injury sustained in going to or coming home from work, and I cannot see why the legislation in South Australia should not cover workers in such circumstances, because surely the necessary travel involved is an activity that must follow in the course of employment. The worker cannot do his work at home and must go to the factory to do it, and if workmen's compensation is to be a social security provision he should be properly covered in this respect.

Mr. Davis—To all intents and purposes he starts work when he leaves home.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Yes, and that activity is vital to his work. He could not do his work unless he undertook that activity, and he must return home at night; then why doesn't our legislation cover that? It cannot be alleged that employers cannot afford it because it is covered in many other States. Under Commonwealth, New South Wales, Victorian, Queensland, and Tasmanian legislation the worker is covered in travelling to and from his place of employment, and that cover is provided not only in the capital territory and the Northern Territory, but also in Papua and New Guinea; therefore, there is not much of Australia left where it does not apply, and as other honourable members have pointed out, nobody has gone bankrupt because of its application. The employers are able to pay the premiums necessary, so why is such cover refused in South Australia? There can be only one answer: members opposite regard workmen's compensation not as a social security provision, but merely as something employers must pay but grudge paying. Further, because members opposite regard themselves as representing only the employers and the insurance companies, they try to keep the payments down to a minimum without any regard to the needs of the worker who is injured in the course of going to or coming from his place of employment, or his dependants.

Mr. Lawn—The idea is to keep costs down so that industries will be attracted to South Australia.

Mr. DUNSTAN—I do not doubt that. Our legislation is by far the worst in the Commonwealth, because the Government feels that it may be an inducement to people to come here and produce more cheaply than they can in other States where workmen's compensation is regarded as a social security provision. If that is the Government's idea it is a shameful matter for South Australia. In these days when lip service is paid by members opposite to social security, why will they not support a system providing proper social security to those people needing it? The proposals contained in this Bill are so niggardly as to be hardly worth introducing. They constitute some slight gain, but not much. Many people injured in the course of their employment are not covered. The scheduled diseases in our Act are quite insufficient. Mr. O'Connor makes full and satisfactory submissions to the committee. He is an authority on workmen's compensation in Australia and he has done much in pointing out what should be done in South Australia to bring our legislation into line as a proper social security measure. However, the committee ignores his submissions in the main in order, I suggest, to give colour to the Government's refusal to enact a proper social security provision. The Government says, in effect, "This is what the majority of the committee has recommended." No one can suggest that the reasons of the committee for their conclusions are in any way satisfactory. Our legislation is the most niggardly and miserly in Australia.

Mr. Jennings—What can you expect?

Mr. DUNSTAN—I agree. What can one expect from this Government? I find it amazing that members opposite have the audacity to come to this House and suggest that there is reasonable workmen's compensation legislation in South Australia. Our legislation is such that people in the other States are horrified when they hear about it. I went to Victoria and outlined to people there what we had in the way of workmen's compensation and they could not believe their ears nor could they understand how this could be in a modern industrial community. It happens principally because members opposite do not represent the majority of this community and have little regard for the needs of the ordinary working man who is concentrated in the metropolitan area and in urban country areas and whose vote up to the present time has not counted its proper weight in this House, but whose vote may well count after the next election.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Goodwood)—I agree that workmen's compensation in South Australia is lagging behind similar legislation in other States, but I do not base my opinions on this Bill on that aspect. I admit, however, that a comparison with legislation elsewhere indicates that ours is inadequate. We are told

—and frequently by the Premier—that this State has an industrial record second to none in Australia. When interviewing people interested in establishing businesses in South Australia the Premier quite rightly informs them that we are particularly free from industrial stoppages here. If we are so prominent in industrialization, why should we depend on other States to give us the lead in workmen's compensation legislation? Why not approach the problem from the point of view of showing appreciation to those who are responsible for our industrial achievements—those who, in the event of an accident during the course of their employment, come within the scope of this legislation?

Years ago, before the present methods of ensuring continuity of production were introduced, men worked to a great degree with their hands—digging trenches with picks and shovels; mixing concrete by hand or, if engaged in the metal trades, carrying heavy ladles of molten metal—and they were liable to physical exhaustion. Today, with our modern methods, they are more liable to suffer from fatigue arising from monotony. In the event of an accident in the old days not much damage resulted, but with our modern machinery today there is a greater risk to the employee.

Clause 5 increases the compensation payable to the dependant of a workman killed as the result of an accident from £2,250 to £2,350. Is that sufficient? Surely we would want his widow to be in a position to face the future without financial worry. She would no doubt desire to have a home in which to live and rear her children. If we believe she should, would £2,350 be sufficient? I doubt it, because I do not know of any solidly constructed trust home that has been sold for less than £3,000 or £3,500. If we believe that a widow should have the security of a home, we should seriously consider increasing the amount of compensation in the case of death. The Leader suggested fixing a maximum of £4,000. That is based on an income of slightly over £19 a week, which is much less than £35 a week which is the maximum a person can earn and come within the ambit of this legislation. There should be no limit on the income a man can earn and remain eligible for workmen's compensation. I suport the second reading in the hope that in Committee we may be able to further the interests of those who benefit from workmen's compensation.

Mr. FRED WALSH (Thebarton)—I support the second reading. This legislation is a hardy annual and every Parliament—if not every session—we are asked to consider amendments to the Workmen's Compensation Act. Despite views to the contrary, I believe it is right that we should, because it is legislation that must be changed from time to time to meet circumstances having regard to the trends of legislation in other States and, for that matter, in other countries. It must not be thought that Australia is the only country which makes provision for workmen's compensation. The matters we have to consider in this Bill are based on recommendations of a committee established by the Government to consider workmen's compensation. Last year there was a difference of opinion as to the efficacy of such a committee and comment was made on the fact that its recommendations were handed to the Government at a late hour and the Bill that was introduced as a result was considered in the dying hours of the session. The committee's recommendations—although not entirely acceptable to the Opposition—have been embodied in this Bill. It would be wrong if the Government, after setting up a committee, constituted as it is, to investigate all aspects of compensation, did not embody its recommendations in legislation. I had mixed views as to the efficacy of the appointment of such a committee because I believe that in the final analysis the matter of workmen's compensation is political. It is true, as the Premier said, that workmen's compensation should not be a political football. It should not be paid for the purpose of vote catching, and it should not be a matter sent outside Parliament for attention. The Labor Party had no say in setting up the committee. Its advice was not sought, nor did it have any say in the selection of the committee members. The Trades and Labor Council was asked to nominate a representative. There were mixed feelings at the beginning about the desirability of setting up the committee, but the majority of the delegates to the council decided to appoint a representative. This year the matter came up again and the council decided to continue its representation. Mr. O'Connor, who was re-elected, is responsible to the Trades and Labor Council for his attitude on the committee, and not to the Opposition in this Parliament. He determines his attitude in accordance with what he considers to be the view of the people he represents. The Labor

Party has no say in the appointment of the representative to the committee and is not associated directly or indirectly with its working. It reserves to itself the right to submit amendments to the legislation, and that is why certain amendments to the Bill will be moved in Committee. The committee considered provisions in the workmen's compensation legislation in other States and endeavoured to mould them together with a view to striking an average, both in regard to conditions and the payments in various directions. It appears that the committee followed that line on the previous occasion and again this time, but it was done only in certain instances. In others, provisions were entirely rejected, and I shall refer to them later. It is because of these rejections that the amendments are to be moved. They do not relate to new matters. They have been submitted from time to time ever since I have been a member of this Parliament. In a number of cases the committee did not accept provisions that are generally accepted in the other States. In this debate members have referred to the amendments to be moved by Mr. O'Halloran, and to some extent it would be repetition if I were to refer to them, but there are one or two that I shall mention. One concerns the extension of the definition of "workman" so as to cover employees whose average weekly earnings are up to £35. The present figure is £33. Under the Bill some workmen will not be covered in the event of injury whilst at work, but for those who occupy executive positions and receive a higher salary than £35 a week the chances of injury whilst at work are not so great. Because of the few persons who would receive such a salary it seems paltry not to include them. Clerks on the higher salary could injure themselves whilst at work when walking up or down stairs, but they would not be entitled to any compensation. Of course, their rights under common law would be another matter, but every workman should be covered for workmen's compensation.

I am pleased that it is proposed to provide for the workman to have the right to decide whether he will have his compensation assessed under the schedule to the Act or in the ordinary way, which I take to be court action. We must remember that in recent years particularly damages assessed by civil courts have been very high, and not forget it when fixing limitations. The committee recommended an increase of £100 in connection with the maximum amount of compensation payable to a widow. There is also to be an increase of £100 in the maximum amount allowable for total incapacity. I take it that this has been worked out on a mathematical basis. There should be no limitation in the weekly payments of compensation up to the amount of the employees' wages. At present a man would not get his full wages, if he had a wife only, but if he had a number of children as well his wages could be reached in the weekly payments. I think damages should be assessed in accordance with the actual loss of wages each week, and an injustice is caused because that is not done. It causes a discrepancy between the amounts which two people get, despite the fact that they are on the same wage. Because of the changing value of money it is wrong to have set figures.

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

Mr. FRED WALSH—If a workman is not employed full-time his average earnings are the basis of compensation. I submit that there should be no set figure for compensation, but that the workman's weekly earnings should be multiplied by 208. In some States there is no limit in this respect, and until we have the same provisions we should award 208 times the amount that the workman was earning at the time of accident. Averages and set amounts can cause hardship in certain cases. It is pleasing that the advisory committee decided to investigate the suggestion of the employees' representative about loss of speech and facial disfigurement. Possibly the committee may consider this matter should be covered by the schedule rather than by proclamation, and I prefer it in the schedule.

I am very sorry that the advisory committee did not recommend compensation for injury incurred in going to or returning from employment. The employees' representative and the Opposition have attempted to have this embodied in the Act before, and I hope that due consideration will be given to our submissions in Committee. On numerous occasions the Premier has told deputations from the Trades and Labor Council that their submissions regarding concessions for Government employees will be considered. Where it can be proved that Government employees are not getting the same concessions as those in other States he will attempt to grant them. In the main, whenever proof has been forthcoming he has acceded to the request, but the Opposition now wants him to provide

compensation for injury received when travelling to or returning from employment. Numerous instances of hardship have been put before the House. One workman who was employed by Wallaroo-Mount Lyell Fertilizers Ltd., at Port Adelaide was killed on December 2, 1952. He was riding his motor cycle along Rann Street, Birkenhead, when he collided with a truck at about 7.25 a.m. He was due to commence work at 7.30, and his employer's premises were about 200yds. from the place where the collision occurred. Under our law the rule is that a man's employment does not begin until he has reached the scene of his employment. Again, his employment does not continue after he has left the premises, so the period of going to and returning from work is excluded from the compensation provisions. If a workman is injured while on his way to work at a place three quarters of a mile from the site of his labours on a footpath over the land of his employers which the workman was not permitted but was not obliged to use as a short cut to his place of work, the injury does not arise out of or in the course of his employment. That employee of Wallaroo-Mount Lyell Fertilizers was not entitled to compensation.

Mr. Davis—He was entitled to it, but did not get it.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Yes, but not legally entitled. An opinion on this case states:—

There are certain exceptions to the general rule, but unfortunately this man's case does not come within any of those exceptions. The first exception is if the period of employment will include the time taken by the workman in getting to and from his work by means of transport provided by his employer if he is using that transport in discharge of some contract or duty owed to his employer.

Last year the Act was amended so that if a workman is injured when being transported to or from his work in a vehicle provided by the employer he is entitled to compensation. The opinion continues:—

The second exception is that there must in all cases be an interval of time and space in going to and returning from the scene of his labours during and in which the employment of the workman lasts, but once he has left the scene of his labours (or has not reached that scene) and is on public highway or a roadway on private property used by the public, then he ceases to be acting in the course of his employment. The third exception is that the course of his employment may be taken to have commenced although the hour for actual work has not struck. That is to say, if the workman's arrival at the premises is not unreasonably early then he would be entitled to compensation for an accident that happened even before his actual work commenced, but he must be at the premises in these circumstances.

A workman may get to his place of employment early and commence work, particularly if there are only a small number employed. He may be injured before his starting time, but he would be entitled to compensation. Even if the Committee does not accept the amendment to be submitted by the Leader of the Opposition I hope that the advisory committee will later recommend a provision to cover injury sustained in travelling to or returning from work. This is now generally accepted in other States, and South Australia cannot afford to remain out of step. Every member on this side of the House endorses the statements made by Mr. O'Connor, the employees' representative on the advisory committee, about its chairman. We are quite satisfied, even if we do not always see eye to eye with him, that he acts impartially. I support the second reading and hope that in Committee we shall be able to get members opposite to accept our amendments.

Mr. QUIRKE (Stanley)—When a man leaves home to go to work he does so for the purpose of earning money to sustain his family. If he is killed at his place of employment his family receives compensation, but if he is killed when travelling to work his family gets no compensation, though his dependants are just as much in need of money then. Provision for compensation for injury or death as a result of an accident in going to or returning from work may result in increased premiums, but at least the workman's dependants would have some security. We must reconsider our attitude to the employee and his work. The fact that an accident prevents him from doing that and cuts short his life does not alter his intention in relation to his family unit, which is the basis of national life. Surely, that should govern the question of whether compensation is to be paid to his dependants. The number of accidents involved in workmen travelling to and from work is so small as to be negligible, and the amount of compensation that would be involved because of such accidents is scarcely worth considering in view of the benefits accruing from compensation payments. I trust that before long a future Parliament will consider this matter, because the widow who is left alone to bring up her children needs greater security after the bread winner has gone, and it is the responsibility of the people of this State, through their legislative halls, to see that her security is sacrosanct.

Mr. STEPHENS (Port Adelaide)—I support the Bill, but I believe that its provision should receive detailed scrutiny in Committee. Much has been said about compensation payable to workmen going to and coming from their place of employment.

The SPEAKER—The honourable member may not discuss that matter, because no contingent notice of motion has yet been passed. He must speak on the provisions of the Bill.

Mr. STEPHENS—I merely refer to that matter, Mr. Speaker, because although it is not in the Bill, I believe it should be there. In the last compensation case with which I was associated a waterside worker returning to work after tea was struck by a Tramways Trust bus. He lost an arm and was badly smashed, but he was not entitled to even a penny compensation, because he was not working at the time of the accident. We took up his case, and a member of this House appeared as his barrister. The man was awarded certain damages at common law, but had we not been able to prove negligence on the part of the trust he would have received nothing although he was crippled for life. I trust that this Bill will be improved in Committee. For years our workmen's compensation legislation was considered the worst in Australia, but it has been improved of late years. We should not follow the lead of other States; we should take the lead in our humane care of injured workmen and the dependants of those who are killed on the job.

Mr. McALEES (Wallaroo)—I could not give a silent vote on this Bill, because I have had a tremendous amount of experience with workmen's compensation. In the past it has been hard to get the injured workman's legal entitlements from the ship owners and stevedoring companies, and if there has been a loophole those companies have always fought the worker to the very steps of the court house and then offered to compromise. Regarding the payment of compensation benefits to workers injured while travelling to and from work—

The SPEAKER—The honourable member may not deal with that subject at this stage.

Mr. McALEES—I can quote cases as previous speakers have done. Workmen's compensation is a serious matter and should be considered as such. The money has not been minted that will compensate a widow for the loss of her husband, although the little mite given her helps tide her over for a time. From figures previously quoted in this debate it is obvious that insurance companies are making much money out of business written on workmen's compensation, and the Government should take over that business. I remember when this legislation was last before the House the member for Torrens (Mr. Travers) said that companies could not afford the increased benefits advocated by members on this side, but I have never heard of a company going bankrupt merely because of compensation benefits paid to workers. Therefore, who pays the penalty? The worker, the man who always suffers, and his dependants. True, this Bill is an improvement, but it is not a great enough improvement to satisfy the workers of this State. I shall have more to say in committee.

Bill read a second time.

Mr. Frank Walsh for Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition) moved—

That it be an instruction to the Committee of the whole House that it has power to consider new clauses relating to the following:—(*a*) the right to compensation; and (*b*) alternative remedies.

Motion carried.

In committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

## AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 8. Page 1452.)

Mr. QUIRKE (Stanley)—For many years I have sought something along the lines of the provisions of the Bill. Never have I outlined how the legislation should be implemented, but I have suggested that action was necessary to protect against misrepresentation purchasers of what are now called agricultural chemicals. At various times tins and packets of chemical fertilizers and sprays that would not give results indicated on the label have appeared on the market. After conducting trials and experiments, I have come to the conclusion that many of them are of doubtful value. This Bill attempts to regulate the sale of various liquid and other types of fertilizers to people who know nothing whatever about chemical formulae and who buy material on the registered label which clearly indicates the various values of the chemical constituents of the products. I know of household gardeners and small vegetable growers who have purchased these products having no particular knowledge of how to assess their values.

Under this Bill the assessment of the values of the various items offered on the market will be the responsibility of people who should know, and the Minister will have power to refuse to grant a title to something that is practically worthless or will not do what is claimed for it. However, I do not think this will necessarily obviate some forms of exploitation. As an illustration let us assume that a product consisting of nothing but sulphate of ammonia and water is offered on the market and is branded as having a nitrogen content, which will be strictly truthful. It can be sold at 5s. a bottle whereas its actual value based on its sulphate of ammonia content may be only a few pence. Sulphate of ammonia will produce certain results, but it is doubtful whether the results will be commensurate with the charge for the product. It might contain 30 per cent nitrogen, but many people would not know that they could purchase the same amount of nitrogen for a few pence. There is nothing to prevent that type of exploitation and I would like to hear the Minister on that point.

An analysis is to be taken of any fertilizer submitted for registration and the analysis will be a guide to its registration. It must be appreciated that an analysis of chemical constituents—that is whether a product contains so much calcium, nitrogen, manganese or molybdenum—is not necessarily a guide to a product's real worth. Some fertilizers will give results under some conditions but no results under other conditions. I do not know how that problem is to be overcome. When this legislation is enacted it will prevent much of the exploitation I have complained of at various times. All agricultural scientists and chemists would agree that because an article contains certain constituents it will not necessarily be effective under all conditions. A number of questions have been asked concerning a taint in potatoes and we were informed that Gammexane was responsible for that taint and that Lindane, which is a purified form of Gammexane, will not taint. Gammexane is the cruder form of that particular pesticide and if used on vegetables is objectionable. Is there any power, in this Bill, to prohibit the use of Gammexane because of its effect on vegetables? The Minister said that if Gammexane were used on cauliflowers one year and the following year a crop of potatoes were planted on the same land the flavour of the potatoes would be affected although no additional Gammexane spray were used. Gammexane gives an objectionable flavour to vegetables—I do not know whether it affects a person's health—and the housewife who is forced to discard vegetables because they cannot be eaten, loses her money. If Lindane were used the housewife would not lose because the vegetables would not be tainted.

Despite advances in agricultural science, I believe we are still in the infancy stage of possible developments. It is advocated that poultry and pig keeping should be upon the deep litter system. That system is simply a method of using litter in association with air and moisture and composting it down. Less disease accrues to birds and animals produced under that system than under any other system. There is a biological association with it. The deep litter system is in no way different from what takes place on a forest floor where the leaves are continually falling to the surface of the ground and being composted by natural processes under aerobic conditions and constantly buried under anaerobic conditions thus providing nutrients for the trees which feed on it. The same principle applies to the feeding of animals and birds and just as trees are healthy under these conditions so, apparently, are animals under similar conditions. That is where this legislation might fall down if we take only the chemical value of a product offered for registration as indicating its value. There are well-known biological substances which would be weak as regards phosphorous, nitrogen, iron, calcium, manganese and molybdenum which go to make up plant life, but their value is immense. Let us assume that one took a hundredweight of succulent green fodder and analysed it. Its nitrogenous and phosphatic content would be weak but could one say that its value as a fertilizer was neglible? We know perfectly well that would not be true. From the point of view of the fertility of the soil, there is nothing more precious that could be added to it than that green matter which, although weak in nitrogen, can become an immense source of nitrogen because of the nitrogen cycle. I mention that to indicate that to take everything on the basis of its chemical constituents can lead us grievously astray. The nitrogen cycle is one in which organic matter runs through a process of fermentation into ammonia, then into nitrites, which are highly poisonous, and another transition to nitrates, which are available to the plant and form the basis of its nitrogenous supply. We know,

too, that green matter, when digested by animals, can become proteins. We know we cannot manufacture proteins ourselves; the only means we have of obtaining them is from plant life, either directly or by medium of the animals we eat that have been fed on that protein. Therefore, the source of all protein in the animal world is vegetable matter.

We have to be very careful when legislating in this way, because very shortly we may be called upon to amend the law simply because it recognizes only a chemical basis of values in agriculture, horticulture, viticulture or the various cultures of our food supply. The fertility of land growing our food is very important. There is not the slightest doubt that we are what we eat, and we are either healthy or unhealthy according to the quality of the foodstuffs given to us. In relation to phosphatic fertilizers, we know that the supply available to us is diminishing, and this should lead us to seriously consider our future. However, it has been proved conclusively that the time will come when, owing to the building up of our agricultural soils, we will be able to use much less phosphates than we are using today and so spread out the available supplies. There again, we know there must be an organic process which, in its fermentation, releases the weak acids that make phosphates available, so we must be careful when dealing with the chemical construction of anything.

Whilst I appreciate the efforts of the Minister of Agriculture in regard to this Bill, I know that he realizes the enormous changes that have taken place in agricultural practices, and that we no longer live by the theory of Liebig. Although he was a great man—you might say the father of chemical production—he was under the impression, which he handed on to posterity, that provided we have the mineral constituents we can produce anything. He based that on his knowledge of hydroponics, but although you can produce these things in water, we now seriously doubt whether his theories have much value in relation to animal and human life. We know that the only real process in agricultural life is a natural one, and because of that we have extended the rotation of our crops. We have much to learn in that regard, but we are learning. We have extended the rotation of our crops in order to get into our wheat that essential flesh building substance known as protein. We know that on infertile soil we cannot obtain wheat with the protein necessary to make good flour.

In giving my approval to this legislation, I also recognize that there are tremendous advances that one day will cause us to say that to assess the value of any fertilizer or foliar spray upon its chemical constituent will be to assess it on false values. I applaud the Minister for the advances he has made in this regard. This Bill is a great step forward, not only to prevent exploitation, but in the very analyses of these products. The results accruing from these analyses, because of the knowledge of the constituent parts of these things, will enable us to go on learning.

I could speak for hours on this matter. Complete libraries have been written about this subject, which is a very entrancing one upon which the health of the country depends. However, this is not the place for that, so at this stage I indicate my whole-hearted support of the Bill, knowing that ultimately we shall have to reconsider it in some particulars. I accept this Bill for what it is, because it is such a tremendous advance on what we have had in the past.

Mr. WHITE (Murray)—Very briefly, I indicate my support of this Bill. The Minister referred to it as a machinery measure, but I believe it is one of the most imporant Bills we have had before us this session, because it aims to place in one Act two other Acts dealing with fertilizers and other substances used for rectifying soil deficiences, and concoctions that have been evolved to deal with insect pests and weeds that cause worry to agriculturists. If fertilizers and weedicides are not placed before the public in the way they should be, or if the ingredients are not properly mixed or up to the proper strength, they will not accomplish what the manufacturer claims, and the agriculturists can obviously lose a great deal of money because their crops will not develop in the way they expect after using these commodities. Another object of the Bill is to bring these Acts up to date because of the great advances made in evolving the new commodities with which this Bill deals, particularly trace elements. These elements make up small deficiences in the vast areas of country we have in this and other States. In fact since they were discovered 25 years ago, areas in South Australia, on Kangaroo Island and in some parts of Yorke Peninsula have been developed and made profitable. If these elements are not given to the primary producer satisfactorily mixed with superphosphates, the resultant crops are not satisfactory. Also he would be prevented from using them correctly, because he has to judge the amounts

necessary to correct the soil deficiencies in his land. It is very important that the manufacturer shall be compelled to manufacture these things to a certain standard, and that has been the object of the Fertilizers Act.

The same could be said about pest destroyers. There are hundreds of these destroyers and weedicides on the market, and they play a very important part in agricultural practices and development. They have been evolved from time to time to meet the problems encountered by the producers. About 15 years ago wild turnip flourished in the Murray Valley and threatened to bring cereal cropping completely to a standstill, because it grew in such profusion that these crops were choked out. It was difficult to reap the crops infested with it because the machinery was not available to cope with it. Hormone sprays were developed to retard the growth of this weed, and as a result cereal growing can now be carried on successfully in that area. However, if these sprays were not presented to the agriculturist in the proper way, or if below strength, the benefit of their use would be nullified. I am very pleased to note that part of the Bill has been framed to protect the public from the injurious effects of some of these chemicals. If the Bill is passed manufacturers will have to register their labels and stipulate the active constituents, indicating that they will not be injurious to public health. That is a very wise precaution. I am pleased that provision has been made to protect firms that have secret formulae on some of which much money and time have been expended during experimentation. It is only right that some protection should be provided so that their particular formulae will not be made available to the public. The Bill also provides for the appointment of analysts and inspectors. This is necessary to give effect to the measure. Protection is also being afforded to the distributor. He should not be held responsible if he sells a commodity not knowing that it is not up to standard. This is one of the important Bills that has come before the House this session, in that the future of agriculture in South Australia and our economic well-being are involved. I can see nothing but good in the Bill and therefore have pleasure in supporting it.

Mr. MICHAEL (Light)—In recent years we have seen a great advance in spray fertilizers, insecticides, weedicides and hormones, and it is necessary that such legislation as this should be in such a form that it can be understood by the public to prevent their being fleeced by the improper selling of these materials. The Bill provides that these items sold by distributors shall be properly marketed. Whereas a few years ago it was considered unnecessary to use many stock medicines because the country was healthy, it is becoming increasingly necessary to use medicines to counter stock diseases. This applies to sheep right through the north where producers are now drenching and inoculating them, although not to the same extent as in other districts. In cereal and fruitgrowing sprays and hormones are used for all kinds of things. I commend this legislation because it brings these items under control in the interests of the public. Great damage could be done if medicines and sprays were not what they were represented to be. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 passed.

Clause 4—"Interpretation."

Mr. HAWKER—I move:—

To insert after "fertility" in subclause (1) (*b*) (ii) "or structure."

There are some materials on the market called soil conditioners, and in one instance it is announced on the label that although it is a soil conditioner the usual fertilizer must still be used. Some people have advertised a soil conditioner claiming that it did not improve the fertility of the soil, but only the structure. Therefore, there is some doubt whether it would come under the Act.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN (Minister of Agriculture)—In agriculture "fertility" includes "structure." I have had the honourable member's suggestion examined and although there cannot be any real fertility without a proper soil structure, to put the question beyond doubt I am prepared to accept the amendment.

Amendment agreed to; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 5 and 6 passed.

Clause 7—"When a substance deemed not to comply with particulars of composition."

Mr. QUIRKE—Assuming that a simple mixture of sulphate of ammonia and water were offered for registration under some name, we know that this mixture would give some result, but because it was registered that would tend to give the manufacturer a title to sell

it, and yet its value could be out of proportion to the price asked. That is a form of exploitation which should not be permitted. Is there anything in the Bill which would overcome that difficulty?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—The fact that the substance must have its label registered and its contents disclosed would be a protection as to what is submitted to the public. More than that, my officers are always available for advice on the best use of these commodities. This should be adequate protection for the public if they are prepared to accept the advice tendered.

Mr. GOLDNEY—Paragraph (*b*) relates to substances not properly mixed. About three seasons ago quantities of superphosphate after being stored for a few weeks, went hard, causing great inconvenience and loss to producers. The only concession the companies allowed was that if the superphosphate were returned it would be reconditioned, but the buyer had to pay the freight. Under this clause, if anything of that sort happened would the manufacturer of the superphosphate be liable to prosecution for not having it properly mixed?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I think the condition of the superphosphate referred to by the honourable member was not due to a poor mixture but to the quality of the rock phosphate procurable that year, and that the acid had something to do with it, too. The companies could not be blamed: they must take the rock as it comes to them. If poor quality rock came to them again probably they would know how to deal with it. The provision in the clause has to do more with the correct mixing of superphosphate and with ensuring that proper quantities of trace elements are included.

Mr. FLETCHER—Some years ago I took up with the department the matter of mixing trace elements. I put the case of a farmer who purchased Victorian and South Australian superphosphate, both with trace elements, yet there was considerable difference in the quality. Is it not true that when it makes tests the department does its own mixing because purchased superphosphate containing trace elements is not reliable?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I cannot speak of the practice in the past. The Bill provides for taking grab samples from superphosphate and the admixtures put in. The tests cannot be but proper tests of the manufactured articles as sold.

Mr. QUIRKE—Earlier I referred to the possible sale of sulphate of ammonia and water in eight ounce bottles and its having a certain nitrogen content. Would it be possible to provide for putting on the label, say, "The contents of this bottle are the equivalent of two ounces of sulphate of ammonia?" That would prevent any exploitation. If it were done, then anyone dopey enough to buy two ounces of sulphate of ammonia and pay 4s. 6d. for it would deserve to lose his money. In connection with regulations, will the Minister consider using terms like "nitrate of soda" "and sulphate of ammonia," which can be easily understood, rather than technical terms that few people understand?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I shall be glad to do that.

Clause passed.

Clause 8—"Agricultural chemical to be sold in labelled packages."

Mr. TAPPING—An ordinary storekeeper may purchase a substance in packages from a manufacturer who is not aware of the requirements of the Act. If the packages are not labelled in accordance with the legislation will the storekeeper be liable to the fine of £100? Is there any liability on the part of the manufacturer?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—Under clause 9, if the storekeeper believes the substance he purchased in packages from the manufacturer was in accordance with the legislation he would not be liable; the liability would be on the manufacturer.

Clause passed.

Clauses 9 to 31 passed.

Clause 32—"Regulations."

Mr. QUIRKE—Earlier I brought up the question of the prohibition of obnoxious chemicals in relation to growing foodstuffs, such as potatoes. Would it be possible to prohibit the use of Gammexane that causes an obnoxious flavour and have Lindane used instead? I have a great objection to chewing something that tastes like a mouldy bag. If Lindane is effective, Gammexane should be prohibited.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I do not know whether this Bill goes so far as to prohibit the use of Gammexane, but paragraph (c) of subclause (1) gives power to regulate and fix standards for agricultural chemicals and the composition thereof. Therefore, it may be possible to prescribe the composition of

Gammexane or the other chemical mentioned by the honourable member. Perhaps a suitable regulation could be framed on the advice of departmental experts.

Mr. Quirke—Gammexane is useful for certain purposes.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—Yes, but I will see whether it is possible to use the power given under this clause for the purpose the honourable member has stated.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (33 to 37) and title passed. Bill read a third time and passed.

## NATIONAL PARK ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 9. Page 1495.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Goodwood)—I support the second reading, and I agree with the Minister's remarks concerning the many different views expressed by representatives of citizens who are interested in the formation of a National Trust. I pay a tribute to these people, even if their views were varied. It is to be hoped that the Town Planning Act will not hamper the commissioners of the National Park. The Minister indicated that they should take over the control and management of other areas and maintain them in their natural condition. The Bill provides for an additional commissioner, who shall be an officer of the Department of Lands, and also for a change in the title of the Minister. The Act provides that the Mayor of the City of Adelaide shall be one of the commissioners, but I understood his title to be "Lord Mayor of Adelaide."

Mr. Jennings—Why the Lord Mayor of Adelaide? Why shouldn't the Mayor of Mitcham be a commissioner?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I must abide by the Act, and I would not like Mitcham to be selected rather than any other suburban council. By the Ministers' Titles Act of 1944 the title of "Commissioner of Crown Lands" was altered to "Minister of Lands," and it states, amongst other things:—

> Every enactment, regulation, rule, by-law, instrument, agreement or other document of any kind which contains a reference to any title changed by this section shall be read as if the changed title corresponding to the existing title were substituted for it.

I assume that the National Pleasure Resorts Act would be administered by the Tourist Bureau, and that section 13 is similar to clause 9 of the Bill. Likewise, clause 13 seems to be similar to section 7 of the National Pleasure Resorts Act. I understand that certain other legislation is to be introduced in another place shortly, but it seems that the provisions of several Acts could be included in one measure. Could not this legislation have been combined with that legislation? Generally speaking, this Bill commends itself, but some members, particularly country members, may have suggestions to offer on the preservation of certain wild life sanctuaries in their districts. I support the Bill.

Mr. BROOKMAN (Alexandra)—This Bill seems to be part of the general policy of the Government to establish a national trust, but as the National Trust Bill has not yet been explained in this house members are finding it a little hard to understand fully how this Bill will fit in with that legislation. The Bill covers a restricted field and deals only with the preservation of fauna and flora, whereas I take it that the National Trust Bill deals with the preservation of other things. This Bill extends the powers of the Commissioners of the National Park to cover not only the Belair National Park, but also every other wild life reserve. The present Commission administering the National Park Act comprises, Professor Cleland (chairman), Messrs. Hale, Womersley, J. N. McGilp, M. T. Phillips, and C. G. Stephens, the Lord Mayor of Adelaide, the Minister of Lands, the Conservator of Forests, the Director of the Botanical Gardens, the Director of the Zoological Gardens, and the secretary of the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Scociety. They are all excellent commissioners and dedicated to their work, but having in mind the way in which this Bill widens the commissioner's scope, should we adhere to a commission of which the Lord Mayor of Adelaide is a member? After all, a wild life reserve under this legislation may be near Port Lincoln, and there seems to be no reason why the Lord Mayor should be on a body exercising authority over a reserve in that district. I do not complain particularly about that, but it seems to me that this Bill may not have been fully considered in its relation to the National Trust Bill.

We need to preserve our diminishing flora and fauna, not only from the aspect of their beauty, but for commercial reasons. I remember hearing a story about flora that contained a certain drug. That source of the drug was not used until early in World War I when

supplies of it were short and British medical authorities wrote to South Australia, asking for particulars of the location of the plant and the quantities available. That native plant was of considerable importance to the medical services then.

I have recently examined a work by Professor Wood Jones entitled *Mammals of South Australia.* This is the latest authoritative work I can find relating to our mammals, and was published in 1925. It reads like a battle casualty list. He has detailed the various species of South Australian fauna which either have disappeared entirely or are presumed to be extinct or close to extinction. The book was written 30 years ago and I presume that the picture would be worse today. It is perhaps interesting to refer to some of these mammals. The platypus was then considered close to extinction and it still is in South Australia. Native cats are almost extinct. The pouched mouse, of which there are at least six species, cannot be found in the settled areas and apparently exists only in sparsely settled regions in the north-east and north-west of the State. At one time they were well distributed throughout the State. The numbat or banded anteater is no longer to be found in South Australia. It is not extinct because small numbers appear in Western Australia and it is possible that we may procure some for Flinders Chase. This animal is easily destroyed by bush fires because it has not the ability to escape. Most of the bandicoot varieties have disappeared. In the district I represent they were quite common 30 or 40 years ago, but I have never seen one. I was told the other day that some still exist in the wilder parts of the scrub, but, to all intents and purposes, they have disappeared.

The opossums have fared somewhat better. The ring-tailed opossum has suffered a considerable decrease in numbers. An open season was declared on them in the 1920's but it had to be stopped before the official closing date because of excessive slaughter. Since then they have been comparatively rare. Many other varieties of opossums have been wiped out. After all, if there is an open season on one type of opossum, it is not likely that a shooter will identify the species before he fires. The bushy-tailed opossum is the only marsupial adapted to modern conditions and is found throughout the metropolitan area. He has earned the detestation of man and there has been agitation for an open season on him. Koalas, which were a South Australian mammal, are only found in South Australia today because of their introduction into sanctuaries. Most of our rat kangaroos, hare wallabies and other wallabies have almost disappeared. The yellow-footed rock wallaby, which was plentiful throughout the lower and mid north, is almost extinct in this State. The euro and red kangaroo have declined in numbers. Wombats are scarce and our water rats and native rats are less abundant.

In South Australian waters the hair seal or sea lion is to be found. It is almost confined to the Great Australian Bight. The member for Stirling (Mr. William Jenkins) sometimes describes this mammal as vermin, but it is peculiar to South Australia. We should retain controls to ensure the continuance of this species. The Australian fur seal and the New Zealand fur seal, both South Australian mammals, have almost disappeared. I have not recounted the full list of South Australian mammals, but what I have mentioned reveals the depredations that have occurred. They have not been entirely due to man. Foxes and domestic cats that have run wild, plus man, have been the cause of the destruction. Certainly the foxes and cats are serious menaces, but we can control human inroads, so I welcome this Bill because it will eventually deal with this difficult question of preserving our native fauna. At Flinders Chase on Kangaroo Island there are no foxes, so it is extremely important that we should build up that sanctuary. In South Australia it is probably of less renown than in scientific circles in other parts of the world. In this reserve, the flora and fauna live together and are relatively well-balanced. There are difficulties there; for instance, wild cats are present and cannot be completely eliminated, and introduced animals such as goats and pigs are also there. However, in spite of that, Flinders Chase has a very important part to play in the preservation of our flora and fauna. Consequently, I strongly support this Bill. At the beginning I said that the Government had made the National Park Act into something bigger than was ever intended, and perhaps has omitted to redraft it as it should have done. However, it has given recognition to the need for the preservation, not only of our monuments, but also of our flora and fauna. We are in rather a complicated position in regard to these reserves. Perhaps if the National Trust takes a leading part in these things, this measure will go a long way. At present the National Park Commissioners run the National

Park, and they will be given additional powers under this Bill. The Flora and Fauna Board runs Flinders Chase, and a Flora and Fauna committee, although it has no official position, I assume advises the Minister of Agriculture. That committee has had a good deal more publicity than other bodies in the last couple of years because of the public controversy over the Younghusband Peninsula sanctuary. I hope that this Bill will solve the problem. I feel it might have been better than it is, but I hope it will finally draw in all the other bodies working towards the preservation of fauna and flora, and bring about a public realization of the need for their preservation so that eventually no more species will be threatened with extinction.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS secured the adjournment of the debate.

## AJOURNMENT.

At 9.37 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, November 16, at 2.30 p.m.