

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, November 6, 1956.

The SPEAKER (Hon. B. H. Teusner) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.**STIRLING HAWKER RAILWAY LINE.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—My question relates to the suggestion made by local authorities, and supported by myself, that negotiations be commenced with the Commonwealth Government in order that the State might take back the narrow gauge railway from Stirling to Hawker. Can the Premier say whether any negotiations have been conducted on this matter and, if so, indicate the stage they have reached?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No negotiations have yet taken place with the Commonwealth Government. As a matter of fact, I am doubtful whether the Railways Commissioner would recommend the State's taking over this line. I will get the docket for the honourable member to peruse.

MURRAY RIVER FLOOD RELIEF.

Mr. JENKINS—Is the Premier able to indicate what proportion of the £800,000 promised by the Commonwealth Government for flood relief will be allocated to the lower Murray areas?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received a telegram from the Prime Minister to the effect that the Commonwealth is prepared to make £800,000 available for flood relief, to be used on the basis of £50,000 (which has already been provided for the Lord Mayor's Relief Fund), for hardship relief; £250,000 for repairing roads; £250,000 towards the cost of protective measures taken to restrict flood damage; and £250,000 for the reconstruction of embankments in the reclaimed areas. The Government has received a report from the Engineering and Water Supply Department estimating that approximately £500,000 will be required for re-establishing embankments, and Cabinet has approved of that work being proceeded with as soon as the river falls sufficiently to enable it to be done.

Mr. STOTT—I think the Premier will agree that £800,000 will be totally inadequate to meet the damage that has resulted from the flood. The Commonwealth collects £490,000 annually as excise on wine, spirits and brandy from South Australia. In view of that large annual revenue to the Commonwealth, will the Premier make further representations to ascertain

whether the £800,000 is only a first instalment and whether the Commonwealth will, after an assessment of how far the £800,000 will go, make an additional grant?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—At present it is not known how much damage has been suffered by many of the properties which have been inundated. Indeed, I do not know of anyone—not even the best agriculturist—who would attempt to assess the damage that will arise from the seepage problem in the Renmark area, for example. Under those circumstances we cannot foretell whether the amount provided will prove sufficient or not. It is sufficient to tide us over our immediate requirements. Neither the Commonwealth nor the State would take damage as the basis on which it should contribute funds. Replacement of damage is not requested, but assistance towards meeting hardship losses and getting the areas in production again. Damages associated with primary production, which these are, occur, incidentally, whenever there is a drought or when difficulties of that type arise. I propose to thank the Prime Minister for the £800,000 provided and to say that when a further assessment of the position can be made the Government will again take up the matter with him.

Mr. BYWATERS—In view of the intense disappointment and frustration felt at the totally inadequate Federal grant for flood relief and rehabilitation, and the fact that no additional amount has been granted for hardship, will the Premier consider the appointment of a committee, consisting of representatives of Murray Valley local government bodies, fruitgrowers, dairymen and members of Parliament whose districts are affected by the flood, to wait on the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer to seek a further grant, in order to alleviate the position of the flooded River Murray victims?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—At present we are not in a position to prove that the amounts provided are inadequate for the purposes they are designed to serve. It depends on what honourable members believe to be the responsibilities of the respective Government in that matter. I believe their responsibilities are to assist in hardship cases and to re-establish areas so that they can again be in production. I do not believe that the respective Governments can rightly call on the taxpayers to make up losses merely because there have been losses. Many people in a variety of ways, suffer losses which the taxpayer does not make up. If a person loses his employment he does not automatically have his losses made up by the

general taxpayer, so I do not agree with the assumption that all the losses arising out of the flood could be automatically passed on either to the State or to the Federal taxpayers. However, when the conditions on the river are better known and the amounts available are more accurately assessed as against the hardship occasioned the matter will be further taken up with the Commonwealth Government, if that proves to be necessary.

Mr. BYWATERS—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked on October 24 concerning the use of the huts on the Hart Street reserve, Semaphore, as temporary housing for flooded-out settlers of the River Murray, particularly at Mypolonga?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This matter has been investigated and the huts have been examined by the architect of the Housing Trust. He has prepared a report on the expense involved in shifting the huts and converting them into accommodation equal to that provided under the emergency housing scheme. From the report it appears that the proposal is practicable. Unfortunately, there are only eight huts and the number of applications for them from all the River Murray districts is overwhelming. I have asked the Housing Trust to prepare a plan for shifting the huts and re-erecting them at suitable places. In the meantime the Lands Department is ascertaining where they are most urgently needed.

Mr. BYWATERS—I am disappointed to hear that only eight houses would be available. Previously, in reply to a question by Mr. Tapping the Premier said that there are 19 emergency houses at Draper and that they will be removed as soon as practicable. Can the Premier say whether it would be possible to get some of them removed to River Murray flooded areas?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will have the matter examined and advise the honourable member.

Mr. BYWATERS (on notice)—

1. What is the total amount of money in the Lord Mayor's Murray River Flood Relief Fund?

2. How many applications have been made for immediate hardship relief?

3. How many have received assistance to date?

4. What amount has been spent in this regard?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This information will be supplied in due course.

LIQUOR LICENCES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Recently I introduced to the Premier a deputation of representatives of restaurant interests who were concerned about increases in liquor licence fees, and the Premier assured them that the increases would not take effect until early next year. Can the Premier indicate why increases commencing from last week have been imposed without any prior notice to the people concerned?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—When the honourable member introduced this deputation I told him that most licence fee increases would not take effect until early in the New Year because they were payable in advance every six months. I think they will become operative in February. I presume the question relates more to permit fees which, of course, become operative when the regulations are approved.

KOONIBBA WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. BOCKELBERG—Last week, in reply to a question, I was told it would cost about £23,000 to provide a water supply for the Koonibba Mission Station. Since then I have obtained figures relating to the cost of providing an adequate water supply. I understand one ton of iron costs £98 10s. 6d. and the timber structure to carry that iron, £100. Five squatters' tanks, each of 20,000-gallon capacity, would cost £1,725. The approximate freight charge for transporting that material would be £100; the cost of erection £200 and the cost of reticulation £500. The total cost of providing a water supply would thus be £2,723 10s. 6d. One ton of iron will catch approximately 21,000 gallons for each inch of rainfall and five squatters' tanks, holding a total of 100,000 gallons, with continual use would be sufficient to cope with a 10-inch rainfall. In view of these figures will the Minister representing the Minister of Works ascertain how the estimated cost of £23,000 was arrived at?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to obtain the information for the honourable member.

RIVER MURRAY FERRIES.

Mr. KING—Will the Minister representing the Minister of Roads ascertain the likely re-opening date for River Murray ferries, in view of the fact that the level of the river is falling and the local people are anxious to know when the ferries will reopen?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes.

HENLEY BEACH RAIL SERVICE.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Railways any further information following on the questions I have asked about Henley Beach rail service?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The Minister of Railways has forwarded the following reply:—

The Railways Commissioner has reported that in view of the fact that rail cars operate at higher average speeds than steam trains it would not be practicable to substitute steam trains for rail cars as suggested by the honourable member. It will probably be at least 12 months before sufficient rail cars are available to operate some six-car diesel trains on the Port Adelaide line and branches during peak hours. The honourable member stated that he had counted approximately 120 people standing in the 5.43 p.m. train. This represents an average of 40 people standing per car and the Railways Commissioner does not consider this to be an excessive number for a peak hour train. It would compare more than favourably with experience in suburban transport in other capital cities and, he has no doubt, with tram and bus services in Adelaide.

WALLAROO BULK HANDLING SYSTEM.

Mr. HEATH—For some time negotiations have been in progress on various problems associated with the bulk handling installation at Wallaroo particularly as regards the type of storage to be employed and the site on which it is to be located. Is the Minister of Agriculture in a position to make a statement on the matter?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—As the honourable member is aware, S.A. Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited is required by the Act to have its plans and specifications for installations at both terminal and country bins approved by the Minister. The general manager of S.A. Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited has kept the Government informed of its negotiations with the various interests concerned and I am now able to say that finality has been reached, and I understand the contract has been signed. The storage will be of vertical concrete construction and will be located on what is known as the southern site. I am sure that the company is very appreciative of the assistance afforded by His Worship the Mayor of Wallaroo (Mr. Clarke) and his corporation in making the land available; by the directorate and management of the Wallaroo Clothing Company, without whose co-operation the southern site could not have been considered; by the Railways Commissioner and his officers in respect of essential rail communications; and by the honourable member in the negotiations between all parties. I believe that the S.A. Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited intends

to make an announcement to this effect today.

Mr. HEASLIP—From the Minister's reply I understand that the southern site has now been chosen for the bulk handling installation. I also understand that the recommendation of the Harbours Board and the two Government nominees on the board of the company was that if that site were chosen a belt system should be installed instead of the truck-jetty system. Will the Government now consider the advisability of installing a belt system, which would lower costs to producers?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—That matter has not been further considered. The Government's decision was that the work on the jetty should conform to the recommendation made by the Public Works Committee and instructions were given to proceed on that basis.

PORT ADELAIDE FIRE BRIGADE SERVICE.

Mr. TAPPING—The following is an extract from the Port Adelaide *Messenger* under the heading "Alarming Fire Risk at Port Adelaide":—

Port Adelaide's lack of adequate fire protection is "alarming" in the opinion of some Port Adelaide councillors. At a council meeting councillors expressed concern both at the decreasing fire brigade strength and the increasing contributions by the council for fire brigade upkeep. On the motion of Councillor T. Sullivan the council decided to urge Mr. Tapping, M.P., to protest in Parliament about the alarming situation in Port Adelaide through depletion in strength of the Port Adelaide and Semaphore fire brigades.

The following is an extract from a letter I have received from the Corporation of Port Adelaide:—

Members view with concern the fact that on occasions one officer and one man only are available at the Port Adelaide station when called to a fire.

Will the Premier ascertain from the authorities whether the council's statement about the depletion of fire brigade service is correct, and advise me in due course?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes.

MURRAY RIVER FLOOD: ELECTRICITY CHARGES.

Mr. SHANNON—A friend of mine owns what is generally called a shack, but is really a nice little week-end cottage, built at Murray Bridge in the part now inundated by the river. I understand the shack has only the roof showing above the level of the water and that he has just received an account from the Electricity Trust for the last three months based on his average consumption of electricity

for preceding periods. Can the Premier say whether it is the policy of the trust to charge these people, who already are committed to considerable expense and inconvenience, the average rate of consumption of power during the period when they have not been able to occupy their premises? Would it not be more reasonable to charge only meter rent?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will discuss the matter with the chairman of the trust, get a report and advise the honourable member later.

ABATTOIRS CHARGES.

Mr. HARDING—The following statement appeared in the press:—

Metropolitan Abattoirs' cost of killing meat to butchers is 3d. a pound. Another organization (handling export meat) can kill for the butchers for one penny a pound, if permitted to do so by the Government.

Can the Premier say whether that statement is correct, and would he like to comment on it?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not know whether the statement is correct, but the Government has a freezing works at Port Lincoln and is killing meat for export there, and we have never yet had any confidence that the undertaking will pay. Unless there is a big intake of lambs it loses money. Since the Government has been operating that undertaking it has made a profit in only two or three years. Because of those factors I do not know whether the statement read by the honourable member is correct, but there is another factor that comes into it—the question of who retains the offals from the slaughtering. There are edible offals and other commodities that result from slaughtering and who retains possession of those offals depends largely on the killing charges. I will get the honourable member a report from the metropolitan abattoirs on their killing charges and show him what they comprise.

DEATH OF MENTAL PATIENT.

Mr. LAWN—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked recently about the death of an inmate of the Parkside Mental Hospital following on treatment at the Royal Adelaide Hospital?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received the following report:—

David Mutton, aged 72, ex Parkside Mental Hospital, arrived at the Casualty Department at 11.21 a.m. and was in bed in Loman Ward by 11.35 a.m. His diagnosis was that of a bilateral fracture of the lower jaw. The appropriate examinations, investigations and palliative treatment were undertaken. A diagnosis

of simple or closed bilateral fracture of the lower jaw was made. An operation from the routine operating list was completed at 3.50 p.m., and when the theatre was made available for the surgeon concerned, in this case at 4.30 p.m., an operation for open reduction was performed, and the fractures were plated. The operation was completed at 6.30 p.m. Following an uncomplicated post-operative phase, the patient was transferred back to Parkside Mental Hospital with the full concurrence of the Superintendent, and full clinical information was forwarded.

This chronology indicates that there has been no delay whatsoever. It is regretted that the public relations of this hospital have once again been adversely affected by a statement inevitably lending support to public anxiety concerning the proper care of patients. It is advised that open or compound fractures are required to be operated upon within 6 hours. No such limitation exists in simple or closed fractures and any proposed operation is concluded with due regard for the clinical needs of the patient. No inquiry was directed to me in order to check any alleged *prima facie* evidence that this patient was cared for in an improper manner.

PORT AUGUSTA-WOOMERA ROAD.

Mr. RICHES—The condition of the Port Augusta-Woomera Road has been referred to by me and the member for Whyalla several times this session. Has the Minister representing the Minister of Works any information from the Commonwealth Government on its intentions about the sealing of this road?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The Engineer-in-Chief has discussed this matter with the Commonwealth Director of Works for South Australia (Mr. W. T. Haslam), who said that this question had been raised in the Federal Parliament from time to time by Mr. Russell, M.H.R. The Director stated that consideration had been given to the question of providing an unsealed all-weather road, but in view of the high cost involved it was not proposed to proceed with the matter at present. The road from Port Augusta to Woomera is part of the Port Augusta-Tareoola road which is maintained by the Engineering and Water Supply Department with Federal aid funds allocated by the Commissioner of Highways. In view of the heavy traffic to Woomera in recent years, a special grant has been received each year from the Commonwealth to augment the amount which would normally have been allocated to this road.

DIFFERENTIAL RATING.

Mr. DAVIS—Last Tuesday the Minister of Education read a report from the Crown Solicitor on differential rating and I asked him

whether that report meant that a different rate could be struck for a pensioner and whether it would be possible to have a dozen different rates in the one street. **Has he a reply to those questions?**

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes, but it is not what the honourable member desires. I referred the questions to my colleague (the Minister of Local Government), who said that he considered the Crown Solicitor's opinion adequate and that if the honourable member was not satisfied he should again consult the corporation's solicitor, who has already expressed an opinion that coincides with the Crown Solicitor's.

MOUNT GAMBIER STONE.

Mr. CORCORAN—Last week I asked the Premier a question concerning the falling off in the demand for Mount Gambier building stone. I have now received the following letter from the secretary of the Mount Gambier Limestone Sales Association:—

Further to representations made to you by Mr. Lane a meeting of the association was held last evening to discuss the falling off in demand for Mount Gambier stone in Adelaide. It was decided to ask your assistance again in bringing this matter before Parliament or the Premier on behalf of the stone industry. Several years ago the State Government was very anxious to obtain Mount Gambier stone for the building of Housing Trust homes in Adelaide and sent several Government representatives to the South-East. As a result we agreed to supply as much stone as could be produced. At the same time quarries were being asked to supply Melbourne but in view of the demand in Adelaide it was agreed not to send any to Victoria. The Government has spent many thousands of pounds in making and sealing roads to the quarries and in the establishment of a new siding at Marte especially for the loading of stone. The industry was requested to step up production to 1,000 tons per week. This target was exceeded and brought in revenue to the railways of over £3,000 per week. Now it has declined to nothing. It is our considered opinion that Mount Gambier coralline stone is a better building material than cement bricks and that the Government should foster the sale of this stone in Adelaide and Elizabeth for the general welfare of the State railways, Housing Trust and our industry. As an indication of the Government's effort to assist it could first of all make some attempt to reduce the rail freight on our stone to Adelaide. By so doing more stone could be sold in Adelaide and increase in railway revenue would result.

Will the Premier consider the points raised in that letter?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes.

TOWN PLANNING.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—Has the Premier a further reply to the question I asked some time ago concerning the progress made on the developmental plan for the metropolitan area that was envisaged in the Town Planning Act passed last year?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The report has been in my possession for some days now, and as the honourable member will see from one sentence, is not entirely up-to-date. It states:—

The Town Planning Committee appointed last February has been vigorously engaged in the fact finding aspects essential for the preparation of the development plan of Adelaide and suburbs. This committee has worked very assiduously and the members have applied themselves to the extent of at least two meetings a week on this phase of their work. Some delay has been occasioned in the appointment of the new Town Planner but it is anticipated that this matter will be finalized within the next few weeks.

That matter has already been finalized. The report continues:—

The attached progress report gives further details of the town planning committee's work. As the attached report is a lengthy one I ask leave to have it incorporated in *Hansard* without reading it.

Leave granted.

The report was as follows:—

Since its appointment in February last the Town Planning Committee has held 26 day and 12 night meetings, which have lasted for 2½ to 3 hours. Although the work of the committee has been handicapped by the absence of a permanent Town Planner, planning staff and adequate accommodation, a considerable amount of investigational and fact finding work has been done. Contacts have been made with the heads of public undertakings and instrumentalities and plans have been explored for land usage surveys, statistical information, population densities and expectations. On the planning side, the following have attended meetings of the committee and given preliminary outlines of their requirements and future plans for the metropolitan area:—

The Commissioner of Highways—re roads, etc.

The Chief Engineer, S.A. Railways—re railway proposals.

The Government Statist—re future population.

The Deputy Director of Lands and the Surveyor-General—re land usage and mapping.

The Director of Education—re primary and secondary school requirements.

The Director, S.A. Government Tourist Bureau—re recreation reserves, beauty spots, etc.

Evidence was taken from the heads of these undertakings, who have assured the committee of their utmost co-operation. Communications

have also been made with the Engineer-in-Chief, the Municipal Tramways Trust, the Electricity Trust of South Australia and other bodies regarding their future planning proposals. Generally, the committee has concentrated on fact finding investigations with a view to accumulating data for the attention of the new Town Planner. In this regard co-operation and advice has been given to the Public Service Commissioner regarding the suitability of the applicants for the post and the selection of the best applicant for appointment. Under the Act the committee controls the subdivision of land and, in consequence, the committee has examined many proposed subdivisions. Most have been approved, some referred back to the council concerned for further review, whilst others have been returned to the subdividers for alteration and amendment. The committee has also heard about 12 appeals by owners of land against the refusal of Councils or the Acting Town Planner to give approval to resubdivisions. In all except two cases the appeals have been disallowed.

GAWLER EDUCATION CENTRE.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Can the Minister of Education say whether any action has been taken as the result of a deputation I introduced to him a few weeks ago from the Gawler Education Centre which advised him to purchase a certain block of land for a new education centre?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Negotiations are still proceeding and I trust the result will be favourable to all parties concerned.

BEER GLASSES.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier a further reply to my question of last week concerning the introduction of legislation on standard size beer glasses?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will have this matter investigated by the Inspector of Weights and Measures and let the honourable member have a report in due course. If necessary, I will have Cabinet consider it.

HILLS HIGHWAY.

Mr. SHANNON—On October 16 I asked the Minister of Education, representing the Minister of Roads, a question concerning the progress of work on the hills highways below the Eagle-on-the-Hill section. Because some of the departmental plant on this section constitutes a further impediment to the passage of heavy transport and because this is likely to be a fairly long contract, will the Minister of Education ask his colleague to consider the suggestions I have made from time to time for the amelioration of traffic conditions on this part of the road during the period of construction?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The Minister of Roads has provided me with the following reply to the questions previously asked by the honourable member:—

As it is necessary to allocate the funds available to the department in an equitable manner over all parts of the State it is not possible to devote any undue proportion to work on the Mount Barker Road. An increased amount could only be provided at the expense of other areas; therefore the work of widening is being carried out in stages as funds are available. The next section to be improved is on each side of the bend near Leawood Gardens, approximately between the Mountain Hut and Wylie's Corner, on which work will shortly commence. The section from the Big Tree to the Mountain Hut is under survey for future work. As heavy and costly earthworks are involved, together with the added difficulty that construction must be arranged to permit the passage of traffic at all times, it is not possible to state the time of completion. However, as previously reported on a number of occasions in Parliament and elsewhere, the work will continue over a number of years to provide a progressive increase in traffic facilities.

I saw the work in progress twice over the week end. It is certainly of a substantial and, I would think, a protracted nature. I will refer today's question to the Minister of Roads and obtain a reply.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Railways a reply to the question I asked last Tuesday about reinstating the railway employees who were involved in a railway accident recently?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The Railways Commissioner has advised that there were no faults in the signalling equipment and that the enginemmen in each case did not obey the indications displayed by the signals. All extenuating circumstances were taken into consideration when determining the penalties for infringement of the rules.

Mr. STOTT—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Railways a reply to the question I asked last week about laying on the table reports on recent railway accidents?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I have a report which has already been made available by the Minister of Railways to other honourable members. It states that it is not customary to table individual reports on railway accidents.

VEGETABLE PRODUCTION AT LOVEDAY.

Mr. KING—Can the Minister of Lands say whether any more of the unoccupied land at Loveday, capable of being irrigated, can be used for vegetable production? If suitable land already held is not being used, can it be

reallocated for that purpose? There is a big demand for vegetables, particularly tomatoes for which there is an unsatisfied market for factory purposes. If suitable land could be used, some of the people affected by the floods could be resettled. I understand that there are some people occupying suitable land—they may be described as “squatters” in the narrow sense of the word—but not using it. There is a limitation on the persons who would grow vegetables because of what may be described as a limitation of acreages. Will the Minister examine this matter?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I would be pleased to assist the settlers in the flooded areas. The history of the Loveday area is that after the 1914-18 war £1,000,000 worth of work was put into it, but it was not allocated. There were no applicants for it. A considerable amount of the pipeline has been removed and used in other localities, but there may be a small area that would be suitable for vegetable growing. I will get a report and let the honourable have it.

COUNTRY ELECTRICITY SURCHARGES.

Mr. STOTT—Is the Premier in a position to reply to the deputation I recently introduced to him concerning electricity surcharges, particularly in the River Murray areas?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This matter was the subject of a deputation to me and did not arise from a question in this House; consequently I have not the papers with me. However, I can inform the honourable member that a six-page report is at present being typed for him and should be in his hands tomorrow. The Electricity Trust has gone extensively into the matter and all the details in connection with it are fully set out in the report for the information of the honourable member and his deputation.

SCHOOL MUSIC FESTIVAL.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Last evening, together with other members, I attended the School Music Festival. I do not regard myself as a judge of music, but everyone will agree that the performance reflected great credit on the conductor, the school teachers and the students who took part. It is a pity that this festival is limited to the metropolitan area. In order that country school children may be encouraged in their musical activities will the Minister of Education consider recording at least one con-

cert annually and broadcasting it to country schools through the national radio station?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Firstly, I thank the honourable member for his compliments. I will convey them to the director and the officers concerned. I shall be pleased to personally consider his suggestion to ascertain whether it is practicable and if it is I will comply with it.

DEPARTMENT OF AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION.

Mr. LAWN—At Parafield a section of employees in the Commonwealth Department of Aircraft Production are engaged solely on maintenance work. I recently asked the Premier a question concerning the dismissal of employees engaged on production, but these men believe that, whether aeroplanes are made in Australia or imported, they will still require servicing. Some years ago it was suggested that all maintenance work should be undertaken in Melbourne, but the Vehicle Builders Employees Federation approached the Commonwealth with the result that servicing and maintenance has been undertaken in South Australia. The employees at Parafield are coming within the Commonwealth retrenchment order. In view of the dismissals taking place within the Commonwealth, the employees are concerned as to what will happen. Many of them have years of service with the Department of Aircraft Production. Will the Premier ascertain the Commonwealth Government's intentions regarding the production centre at Parafield?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. Quite apart from the employment angle, the suggestion contains much merit. It is desirable, for obvious reasons, for the servicing of aeroplanes to be undertaken at a number of places instead of at one central spot. Next week I shall attend a conference at Canberra and will take the necessary papers with me. If possible, I will interview the Minister concerned and get his concurrence in the retention of the service in this State.

NEW PORT AUGUSTA ROAD.

Mr. RICHES—I think it was in 1952 that the Highways Department surveyed a new road through the municipality of Port Augusta and entered into negotiations with landowners for the acquiring of portions of their blocks in order that the road might be constructed. The negotiations have been protracted and, despite repeated requests from the landowners, they have not been paid for the land acquired, and they desire the department to finalize the

matter at the earliest possible date. Will the Minister representing the Minister of Local Government take up this matter?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I am sure there is a good reason for the delay, but I will be pleased to take up the matter with the Minister of Local Government and inform the honourable member of the position as soon as possible.

NORTHERN PASTORAL LANDS.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Recently I have had several inquiries from persons interested in settlement on our pastoral lands, particularly in the northern parts. Can the Minister of Lands say whether there are pastoral lands now available for allotment there, or whether leases are likely to be terminated in the near future and become available for re-allotment? Will the Minister make the necessary inquiries and advise me?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yes.

RAIL CARRIAGE OF MOTOR PARTS.

Mr. STOTT—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Railways a reply to the question I asked on October 30 regarding the rail carriage of motor parts?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The Railways Commissioner has reported that on Wednesday, October 17 the General Traffic Manager received a trunk line call from Mr. V. K. Petras, garage proprietor, Karoonda, requesting that the railways handle two packages of spare parts from two consignors in Adelaide on the South-East rail car on his account for delivery at Murray Bridge. It was then nearly 11 a.m. The General Traffic Manager instructed the senior parcels clerk that he was to be on the alert to accept those parcels, although after the proper closing time, and to see that they were delivered to the train for dispatch. In addition, the stationmaster was instructed that the train was not to leave without the parcels, which were duly despatched and collected by Mr. Petras at Murray Bridge on the same day.

RIVER MURRAY TOURIST TRADE.

Mr. KING—Has the Premier obtained a reply to the question I asked recently regarding transport control of River Murray tourist trade?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have a full report from the Tourist Bureau, and it deals particularly with the possibility of getting Olympic tourists to come to South Australia. I will be pleased to make the report available to the honourable member or any other interested member.

RAILWAY PREFABRICATED HOMES.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Has the Premier obtained information regarding the possibility of transferring railway prefabricated homes to localities where they are needed to relieve the position of people living in sub-standard homes?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Railways Commissioner reports that apart from a few old houses which it would not be economical to attempt to shift, his department has no surplus timber frame houses which could be moved to replace substandard houses at other locations. Such modern houses as may have been noticed as vacant from time to time would almost invariably be waiting the transfer of an employee or the taking up of residence by a new employee.

PORT AUGUSTA HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. RICHES—A month or so ago the Minister of Education outlined to me the building programme for the Port Augusta high school and indicated that two new classrooms would be available for the commencement of the first term next year and that before the end of this year a start would be made on the erection of the craft section, but so far the work has not been commenced. Will he obtain a report this week on the progress of the work because the situation will be very serious if it is not put in hand soon?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes.

SUPPLEMENTING LOAN MONEY.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I understand that for some years past it has been the practice of the Federal Treasurer to supplement loans that are not filled when money is sought for State public works, and that a considerable sum of Federal revenue has been used in this way. Can the Premier give the approximate amount provided by the Federal Treasurer and the rates of interest charged on the money?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The amounts provided differ widely from year to year. I cannot remember what the amounts were, but they were probably not less than £35,000,000 a year, and in some years they may have been more. Recently the interest rate has been fixed at the short term interest rate because they have been short term loans to the States?

Mr. O'Halloran—At five per cent?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think the present rate is about £4 7s. per cent. That is on a short term loan of about 18 months, but I will get a schedule of the amounts that have

been provided and the interest rates charged so that the honourable member will have the full facts.

SUPERPHOSPHATE DELIVERIES.

Mr. HARDING—Has the Premier a reply to my recent question on alleged short-weight deliveries of superphosphate?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have a report that I will make available to the honourable member so that he can take up the matter with the persons concerned. The report states that it is conceivable that there has been short weight in one or two shipments last year through some machinery fault or human error.

EVICTIION ORDERS.

Mr. Tapping, for Mr. LAWN (on notice)—

1. How many applications for possession of premises in accordance with the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act were heard by courts in the metropolitan area for the year ended December 31, 1955, and for the nine months to September 30, 1956?

2. How many of these applications were granted?

3. How many eviction orders were issued for each of the periods mentioned above?

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

	For the year ended 31/12/55.	For the nine months to 30/9/56.
1. Number of applications for possession of premises in accordance with the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act heard by the court ..	344	246
2. Number of applications granted (orders made for possession)	306	228
3. Number of eviction orders issued (warrants to give possession)	76	45

SEMAPHORE TECHNICAL SCHOOL.

Mr. TAPPING (on notice)—

1. What progress has been made in relation to the proposed new technical school for Semaphore?

2. Has the site been chosen? If so, where?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—A new technical school for LeFevre at Semaphore has been under consideration for some time. It is not on the present Loan programme as there were more pressing secondary schools to be considered. I am aware of the need for a new school at Semaphore, however, and will

consider it with others when the Loan programme for 1957-1958 is being prepared. The site has been chosen but my officers are now examining the possibility of extending this by the acquisition of additional land facing Hart Street. If this is done an area of approximately ten acres will be available adjacent to another ten acres which could be used under the joint scheme for playing fields.

NUCLEAR REACTOR.

Mr. Tapping, for Mr. LOVEDAY (on notice)—

1. Has the Government given any further consideration to the site of the first atomic or nuclear reactor in South Australia?

2. Has favourable consideration been given to Backy Bay, sometimes known as Fitzgerald Bay, in Spencer Gulf, as a site?

3. If not, will the Government give favourable consideration to this area as a site?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—These matters are under consideration.

COUNCILS' BORROWING POWERS.

Mr. Tapping, for Mr. LOVEDAY (on notice)—Is it the intention of the Government to amend the Local Government Act so that the borrowing powers of local governing bodies are increased, to bring them into line with present money values, in the same way as rating powers have been raised recently?

The Hon. B. Pattinson, for the Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—Not this session.

OSBORNE AND TAPEROO SEWERAGE.

Mr. TAPPING (on notice)—

1. Is it the intention of the Government to provide sewerage in the Osborne and Taperoo areas in lieu of septic tanks?

2. Have any complaints been received of difficulties encountered from tidal waters and seepage?

The Hon. B. Pattinson, for the Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—The replies are:—

1. Designs and estimates are being prepared for the sewerage of the Taperoo and Osborne areas and full consideration will be given to this matter when information regarding cost and revenue is to hand. The cost of sewerage is very high in the sandy waterlogged ground in this locality.

2. Reports have been received from time to time concerning the difficulties encountered with the disposal of septic tank effluents with the high water table.

PENCIL SHARPENER SUPPLIES.

Mr. Tapping for Mr. LOVEDAY (on notice)—

1. Is the Minister of Education aware that there appears to be a shortage of pencil sharpeners in some South Australian schools, said to be due to import restrictions?

2. If this is the position, will the Minister make representations to the Federal Government to have the restrictions lifted sufficiently to provide adequate supplies of sharpeners?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The replies are:—

1. Yes.

2. No.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD, having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Road Traffic Act, 1934-1955. Read a first time.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It proposes amendments to provisions of the principal Act relating to a variety of topics. They are based on recommendations made by administrative authorities or the State Traffic Committee. I will explain the clauses in their order. Clause 3 provides that the various clauses of the Bill will come into operation on a day or days to be fixed by the Governor. It also states that those clauses which provide for increased penalties will only apply to offences committed after the clauses come into force.

Clause 4 deals with the temporary permits which are issued to persons in country areas in order to enable them to drive vehicles between the time when they apply for registration and the time when registration is granted by the Registrar. At present these permits operate only for ten days after issue. Information has been submitted to the Government showing that in some cases applications for registration are not dealt with in ten days. The Registrar suggests that 14 days should be allowed. Clause 4 therefore makes an amendment to extend the operation of the permits to 14 days.

Clause 5 contains a section enabling the Registrar of Motor Vehicles to issue permits for occasional short journeys by unregistered vehicles. The Motor Vehicles Department often receives requests for permission to

drive an unregistered vehicle on a road on an isolated occasion for a short distance. For example, a person who ordinarily uses a tractor for work on a particular block of land may desire, for some special reason, to move it temporarily to another block a short distance away. It is rather unreasonable to require normal registration in these cases, but at present the Registrar has no option but to insist on it. It is proposed in clause 5 of the Bill to enable the Registrar to issue special permits for journeys by unregistered vehicles. The fee for a permit will be 5s. The Registrar will be empowered to insert in a permit any provisions which he thinks necessary in the interests of the public, but will also have power to exempt the holder of a permit from any specified provisions of the Act.

Clause 6 deals with the limited traders' plates which can now be issued to manufacturers of agricultural machinery. Under the principal Act, limited traders' plates can only be used on vehicles driven by the person to whom the trader's plate was issued or by his partners or regular employees. The Government has been informed that manufacturers of agricultural machines, some of which are motor vehicles within the meaning of the Act, employ independent carriers to haul the machines between the factory and a railway station or port, and it is desired that while the machines are being so hauled the manufacturer's limited trader's plate may be used on them. The Government considers this request reasonable and clause 6 contains an amendment which will give effect to it.

Clause 7 deals with lights on wide motor vehicles. In section 42 of the principal Act there is, at present, a provision requiring a clearance lamp on motor vehicles more than 6 feet 6 inches wide. The lamp must show a green colour to the front and a red colour to the rear. Alternatively, two separate clearance lamps, one showing green to the front and one showing red to the rear may be used. This provision was inserted in the Act about 20 years ago and since then there has been a considerable development in the requirements as to clearance lamps in the other States of Australia. As a result of these developments the South Australian provision is now very different from those of the three eastern States and also falls short of the requirements which have been worked out by the Commonwealth Committee on Vehicle Standards.

In the other States clearance lamps are required to show a white or amber light to the front and red to the rear. As a general

rule they are only required on vehicles seven feet or more in width, or trailers extending beyond the width of the hauling vehicle for more than six inches on either side. Further, in the other States both front and rear clearance lamps are required and they must be on both the off side and the near side of the vehicle. The State Traffic Committee investigated this problem and made some recommendations which were based upon the standards for clearance lamps worked out by the Commonwealth Committee on Vehicle Standards. If these recommendations are adopted the law as to clearance lights in South Australia will be fairly closely in line with the laws of the eastern States, although complete uniformity is impossible because of differences between the laws of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland.

Put shortly, the requirements of clause 7 are that clearance lamps must be carried on all vehicles seven feet or more in width, on all articulated vehicles, and on trailers projecting six inches laterally beyond the width of the hauling vehicle. Two front and two rear clearance lamps will be required, and, in addition, an articulated vehicle must also carry two clearance lights on the front of its semi-trailer. Front lamps must be amber and the rear lamps red.

Clause 8 deals with the standards of reflecting mirrors. This question has recently been inquired into by the Traffic Committee. The law now requires a reflecting mirror to give a view along the carriage-way of the road beyond the vehicle for at least one hundred yards. However, it appears that on some big vehicles it is impossible to comply with this requirement except by having a mirror which projects to a dangerous extent. The standard set by our law at present is more stringent than that laid down in the laws of other States and in the proposed Vehicles Standards Code. It is proposed, therefore, to alter the principal Act and to provide that it will be sufficient if a reflecting mirror gives a view of the approach of any vehicle about to overtake the motor vehicle on which the mirror is fixed.

Clause 9 deals with the speed of motor cycles carrying pillion riders. At present the law prescribes a maximum speed of 25 miles an hour for such cycles on all roads throughout the State. It is proposed by clause 9 to raise the permissible speed to 35 miles an hour on roads outside municipalities, towns and townships. The police have found that it is often difficult for motor cyclists to observe a speed

of 25 miles an hour. On roads where there is a lot of traffic the stream of traffic tends to move at a greater speed than this, and if the driver of a motor cycle observes the present statutory speed it means that he cannot keep up with the general stream of traffic and thus incurs a greater risk of accident. The slow speed, so far from making for safety, has the opposite effect. The Government considers that the speed can be raised to 35 miles an hour on open roads with advantage to road users generally and without serious danger to anyone.

Clause 10 alters the general penalty for breach of Part II of the Road Traffic Act. Part II is the part which contains the provisions about registration of vehicles, licensing of drivers, equipment of vehicles and some speed limits. The general penalty of £20 for breach of these sections was fixed many years ago and is now too low. It is proposed to alter it to £50.

Clause 11 deals with the duties of motorists and pedestrians at level tramway crossings such as that at Morphettville. It is proposed in this clause to lay down a rule that motorists and pedestrians must not attempt to cross in such manner or at such a time as to give rise to the possibility of a collision with a tram car. In other words, the trams are given the right of way. At the same time the Government understands that the Tramways Trust has adopted a policy of stopping the trams just before they enter the crossing. This arrangement, coupled with the provision of the Bill, should greatly reduce the risk of such accidents as have recently occurred. In addition to placing a duty on road users to avoid risk of colliding with trams the clause also provides that motorists and pedestrians must not cross a tramway at a level crossing if there is an employee of the Tramways Trust warning traffic not to cross or if there is a mechanical or electrical signal operating.

Clause 12 empowers the Tramways Trust to erect stop signs on tramway level crossings in the same way as the Railways Commissioner. When a sign is so erected, a vehicle approaching the level crossing must stop not less than ten feet and not more than forty feet from the tram line. Clause 13 prescribes a speed of six miles an hour for vehicles approaching ferries. This clause has been asked for by the Highways Department because of some recent examples of reckless driving, in which persons approached ferries at an excessive speed and damaged the gates. It is proposed

to lay down a rule that a vehicle approaching a ferry must slow down to six miles an hour for the last twenty yards of the road leading to the ferry.

Clause 14 raises the general penalty for breaches of Part VI of the Road Traffic Act from £20 to £50. Part VI is that Part of the Act which lays down the general rules to be observed by traffic. The existing maximum penalty of £20 was fixed twenty years ago and, having regard to the reduced purchasing power of money, should now be increased.

Clause 15 deals with the speed limit of heavy vehicles. The effect of it is to increase the permissible speed of vehicles, having a gross weight of between seven and eleven tons, from twenty to twenty-five miles an hour. The twenty miles limit was fixed last year because of the Government's desire to prevent excessive damage to the roads from heavy semi-trailers. However, representations have been made by carriers pointing out the difficulty of keeping speeds down to twenty miles an hour and, after full consideration, the Government has agreed to raise the speed limit by five miles an hour for vehicles over seven and not more than eleven tons. A small drafting improvement is also made by clause 15, not affecting the interpretation of the Act.

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

MARKETS CLAUSES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD, having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Markets Clauses Act, 1870-1937. *Read a first time.*

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It makes three amendments to the Markets Clauses Act of 1870-1937. The Markets Clauses Act is a general Act containing provisions applicable to all markets which are now or may hereafter be established by Acts of Parliament. Since the Act was passed, eighty-six years ago, there have, of course, been tremendous alterations in commercial conditions, and great developments in the areas where markets were established. The policy of the Act of 1870 was to dole out powers to market authorities rather sparingly, and the markets which operate under the Act now find themselves labouring under restrictions which are irksome and without

justification in modern circumstances. This Bill proposes, therefore, to grant further powers to market authorities.

The first provision deals with the erection of dwelling houses, shops, offices, stores, workshops and other buildings. At present The Markets Clauses Act provides that market authorities may build and maintain market places and stalls, sheds, pens and other buildings and conveniences for the use of persons frequenting the market and for weighing and measuring goods sold in the market and for weighing carts. They have not, however, a general power to erect shops, offices, stores or other commercial or residential premises. Furthermore, there is no general power enabling a market authority to erect buildings on any land which it may acquire subsequent to its inception. In modern conditions it is essential that a market authority, which may own valuable commercial sites, should have a wide discretionary power to erect such buildings as may be appropriate in the circumstances and it is proposed in this Bill to give market authorities a general power of this kind.

The next clause deals with the market days. At present market authorities are entitled to hold markets only on the days specially prescribed by their special Acts or on days fixed by by-laws. There is no general power to hold markets on any day of the week. Owing to the growth of trade it is now desirable that all market authorities should have power to fix any days, other than Christmas Day or Sunday, as days for holding markets and it is proposed by clause 4 to confer power for this purpose.

Clause 5 deals with the powers of market authorities to grant leases, licences and other rights to use and occupy any of their property, whether shops, offices or other buildings, or stalls, stands, benches and space in the market. At present market authorities cannot freely make bargains with their tenants and persons using their markets but are restricted by rates fixed in various ways either by schedules to private Acts or by by-laws. The existing limitations on their powers to fix rents, fees and charges are completely out of line with modern requirements and it is proposed by clause 5 to give any market authority the right to charge such rents and other charges as are agreed between the market authorities and their tenants and persons having stalls or using space in the market.

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

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT
AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD, having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1932-1955. Read a first time.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It gives effect to recommendations recently received by the Government from the Workmen's Compensation Committee. Since the Committee's previous report rates of workmen's compensation throughout Australia have not altered and this year's report deals only with other aspects of workmen's compensation law. All members of the committee concurred in recommending the amendments made in this Bill.

The first question dealt with is whether a posthumous illegitimate child of a workman is to be regarded as a dependant of the workman for the purposes of compensation under the principal Act. One would think that this problem would only arise rarely, but there have been a number of cases in England, and one recently occurred in South Australia. The law in England is that all posthumous children of a deceased workman, whether such children be legitimate or illegitimate, are regarded as having been born before the death of the workman and if it is established that they would have been dependent on the workman if he had lived they are entitled to compensation for his death. However, owing to the language of section 8 of the principal Act (which dates from 1911), the legal interpretation is that posthumous illegitimate children are not entitled to compensation, whether dependency is proved or not. Illegitimate children who are born in the workman's lifetime have the same rights to compensation under the Act as legitimate children, and there seems to be no valid argument in favour of treating posthumous illegitimate children differently from other illegitimate children. It is therefore proposed by clause 3 of the Bill to give posthumous illegitimate children the same rights as legitimates. The law in England already provides for this.

Clause 4 contains provisions setting out that in certain circumstances partial incapacity is to be treated as total incapacity and the workman is to receive weekly compensation accordingly. The circumstances at which the clause is directed are these: it happens sometimes that an injured workman, after a period of

total incapacity, becomes fit for some work, and his weekly payments are stopped or reduced. Thereupon the workman tries to obtain work suitable to his condition, but is unable to do so. As he is not yet completely recovered final settlement of his claim is delayed, but in the meantime he has no work and either no weekly payments or only some small amount. The committee recommended that there should be some provision in the Act to ensure that a workman who is still partially incapacitated but is unable to obtain any work as the result of his injury will continue to receive the full weekly payment pending settlement of his claim. The same problem has arisen in England and in New South Wales and has been dealt with by legislation in those countries. Clause 4 is similar in substance to the English and New South Wales Acts. It provides that where the workman has so far recovered as to be fit for some employment and has endeavoured to obtain such employment but, as a consequence of his injury, has been unsuccessful, the arbitrator may order that the workman's incapacity shall be treated as total for such period as he thinks just. Such an order, however, can only operate pending a final settlement of the workman's claim.

Clause 5 deals with the rates of lump sum compensation for the specified injuries set out in section 26 of the principal Act. As a result of submissions made to the committee it reviewed the existing table of compensation for the scheduled injuries, paying regard to the corresponding tables in other States, and recommended some alterations. The first alteration recommended is that the difference in the amounts of compensation for right and left arms, hands, and fingers respectively, should be abolished. At present, in the case of a right-handed workman, the compensation for an injury affecting the right arm or hand or the fingers of a right hand is 5 per cent higher than in the case of an injury to a left hand or arm or fingers of a left hand. If the workman is left-handed, the higher rate is payable for the loss of or injury to a left hand, arm or fingers. It is proposed to abolish this distinction. Although a workman may be right-handed, the loss of a left hand in many cases results in as great a degree of incapacity as the loss of a right hand. The same thing applies to fingers. In New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania and New Zealand the distinction between right and left hands, arms and fingers has already been abolished and

the committee recommends that it should be abolished in this State.

It is also proposed in clause 5 to make slight increases in the rates of compensation for total deafness and for total loss of the sight of one eye, combined with a serious diminution of the sight of the other eye. At present total deafness is regarded as a 50 per cent disability. The committee considered that 60 per cent was a fairer estimate of the disability resulting from total deafness, and this is supported by the rates in force in other States. It recommended an increase to this figure, which is included in clause 5. The disability described as total loss of the sight of one eye, together with serious diminution of the sight of the other eye, is at present regarded as a 75 per cent disability. Upon a review of this matter the committee formed the opinion that this loss of sight is appreciably more than a three-quarter disability and that it should be assessed at not less than 80 per cent. It is recognized, of course, that opinions may differ as to what is a proper assessment; but the degree of loss of sight represented by the disability we are now considering is getting close to total blindness, which is regarded as a 100 per cent disability. It seems, therefore, that an assessment of at least 80 per cent is justified, and this is provided in the Bill.

Clause 6 extends the scope of Part IX of the Act, which deals with compensation for industrial diseases, that is, diseases due to the nature of a workman's employment. At present industrial diseases may be divided into three classes. In the first place, an industrial disease may be one of the specially named diseases which, under the Act, entitle a workman to compensation, irrespective of whether the disease is due to accident within the legal meaning of that term or not. Secondly, a disease, although not one of the specifically named diseases, may be one of the diseases treated by the courts as arising out of an accident within the meaning of the Act and thus entitling the workman to compensation on the ground that he has suffered personal injury by accident. There is a third class of disease which falls outside both the list of named diseases and the diseases amounting to personal injury by accident. For these diseases, even if they arise out of the workman's employment, no compensation is payable.

Until 1949 there was a fairly marked tendency in the English courts to increase the number of diseases which were regarded as due to accident within the meaning of the Act, but

this tendency has now come to a halt. Lord Justice Denning in the case of *Pyrah v. Doncaster Corporation*, decided in 1949, which dealt with a claim for incapacity caused by tuberculosis, held that the question for decision was whether the workman's infection with tuberculosis was an injury by accident or whether it was a disease due to a process of work. If it could be regarded as an injury by accident compensation was payable. If it was a disease due to a process of work compensation would not be payable unless it happened to be one of those specifically named in the Act or proclamations.

It is intended by clause 6 to provide that Part IX of the principal Act, which provides compensation for specified industrial diseases, will apply to any disease which is due to the nature of the employment in which the workman was employed at any time within 12 months before his disablement. This amendment will not take away the workman's rights in any case where a disease is treated by law as an accident but will bring within the scope of the Act any industrial diseases which at present are not regarded as due to accident and are not specially named in the Act or proclamations. The evidentiary provisions in section 89 by which certain named diseases are deemed to be due to the workman's employment, unless the employer proves the contrary, are being retained without alteration. Clause 7 provides that the provisions of the Bill will apply only where the injury or death is caused by an accident, or where occurring after the commencement of the Bill. Thus the Bill is not retrospective.

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

CRIMINAL LAW CONSOLIDATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

BARLEY MARKETING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

METROPOLITAN TAXICAB BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 1. Page 1363.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This legislation has occupied the attention of the House on two previous occasions and has been widely debated as to

various aspects of control, including the method by which control should be implemented. In the first place an inquiry committee reported to the Government in 1954, and as a result the Government introduced a Bill similar to the one now under consideration. It provided that the administering authority should be the Adelaide City Council. Strong views were held by various sections of the House at that time on that topic. Some suggested the Transport Control Board, others the Commissioner of Police, and a few supported the provision in the Bill that the Adelaide City Council should be the authority. Another suggestion was that it should be a small committee representing all councils in the metropolitan area. As a result of the difficulties encountered in Committee, although the broad general principles of the Bill had been accepted, it was eventually dropped.

Last session Mr. Jennings introduced a private Bill in which he provided that the administering authority should be the Commissioner of Police. I enthusiastically supported that measure and am still firmly of opinion that the uniform control of taxicabs in the metropolitan area could best be administered by the Commissioner. I speak with some experience, having had a little to do with taxicabs in London where they are under the control of the Metropolitan Police Commissioner. However, probably because a Labor member introduced the Bill, it did not commend itself to the majority of the House.

We now have this Bill before us and I am prepared to accept it. I think it is good, with the possible exception that the suggested controlling body is too large. It is to comprise four representatives from the Adelaide City Council, four from suburban councils, three from the industry and a representative of the Commissioner of Police—a total of 12 members. This more widely representative committee is an improvement on the one suggested previously. There may have been some difficulty in getting the city council to agree to this Bill: in fact, I have some doubts about its full agreement to the measure. It was suggested that the representative of the council who would be the chairman of the committee should have a deliberative as well as a casting vote, but I understand objection was raised to that and now he is to have only a deliberative vote. Some of the power which the council might have had over other councils has therefore been taken away. Apparently the Bill is the result of discussions by the Taxicab Com-

mittee and representatives of the city council, local government authorities, the industry and the police, a somewhat similar body to the one charged with the administration of the legislation. On broad general principles the measure, has been unanimously recommended by the committee, although on some points there are differences of opinion. On broad general principles I support the Bill, although one or two minor matters can be discussed in Committee.

All members are aware of the almost complete chaos in the metropolitan area because of the multiplicity of control of taxicabs. The city council controls most of them because there is more use for them in the city than in other areas, but municipal and district councils inside and outside the metropolitan area have the right to make by-laws and rules controlling taxicabs in their areas. I understand that if a person hires a taxicab licensed in one area it can only take him to the boundary of that area, and then he must transfer to a taxicab licensed in the next area if he desires to go further. That sort of thing is most undesirable. The Bill removes this anomaly and gives uniform control.

I am not happy about subclause (2) of clause 42, which tightens up the law to deal with "pirates" who are a menace not only to members of the taxicab industry but to people who ride in their cabs, because often the vehicles are not covered by the comprehensive insurance policies required for licensed taxicabs. If there were an accident and riders in such cabs were injured I doubt whether they would get compensation. The people who abide by the rules and give a proper service to the community should have the fullest protection of the law. Subclause (2) of 42 says:—

In any proceedings for an offence against this Act if evidence is given that any passengers were within the metropolitan area carried in any motor vehicle that evidence shall be *prima facie* evidence that the passengers were carried for hire or reward.

"Taxicab" is defined as a motor vehicle capable of seating up to eight persons. Therefore, any motor vehicle carrying passengers in the metropolitan area could come within the scope of that provision and the onus would be on the driver and the passengers to prove that the passengers were not being carried for hire or reward. In these days there is a habit amongst workmen of sharing the cost of running their motor cars and in connection with this there may be a difficulty, although it is a matter of administration. The provision is to prevent piracy and I cannot suggest any

improvement to it, although its administration will have to be done carefully or innocent people may be penalized.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—I support the Bill, which is an honest attempt to deal with a problem we have been considering for a long time without much satisfaction. The service the public get from the taxicab people is important, and we should as far as possible protect users and operators. The proposed board will be unwieldy. As soon as we attempt to get a board to represent all interested sections we get an unwieldy board. However, in this case we could reduce the size of the board without affecting the interests of the people concerned. The Bill proposes four members of the Adelaide City Council and four of the Municipal Association of South Australia. I cannot see the need to multiply the number of representatives from these bodies. We would probably get better administration from two of the best brains they have. It is easier to pick one winner than to pick two or three or four. As we go down the scale we must take in, and give equal authority to, men of lesser ability. The Governor usually selects members of a board, and if he had to select seven for this board it would be adequate and we would get the best brains available for the purpose. I would prefer to exclude all interested parties from the board, something we have done previously. Local government bodies are now responsible for the control of taxis, and they have got it into a tangle. The Government appointed the board in connection with our tramways, and a similar approach for taxis is desirable.

The interested parties have accepted the Bill but I suggest a board consisting of two members of the Adelaide City Council, two representatives of the Municipal Association of South Australia, one of taxicab operators, one of the taxi owner drivers, and one person appointed by the Governor. The Commissioner of Police or his appointee will be on the board, which indicates that the police will be taken into the board's confidence in assessing the character of an applicant for a licence. If he has a police record sufficient to debar him from being given a licence it should be known to the board.

I believe the interested parties who are seeking representation on this board will ultimately come to the opinion that they would be happy for some independent board to be appointed so that any stigma attaching to the granting of licences would be removed. Over

the years various charges have been made in this Chamber about preference being given to certain companies or individuals in the allotment of taxi licences. It has even been hinted that money may have changed hands as the result of licences being granted. I do not know whether any of those charges were justifiable but if an independent board were appointed by the Governor such charges could be denied at once. Such a board would give applicants for licences a fair hearing and make inquiries through the proper channels. It could then come to decisions which could not be challenged.

I shall give examples of what is happening at present in regard to taxis bringing people into the metropolitan area on legitimate business. If a country taxi licensee is engaged to bring a person to the metropolitan area he must invite his passenger to alight as soon as he reaches the boundary of the metropolitan area. The passenger must then secure another taxi licensed in the metropolitan area to take him to his destination. The Stirling District Council issues licences to taxi drivers, some of whom operate in the Mount Lofty area and others from Aldgate. Other councils license taxis; indeed, nearly all councils have exercised their powers to make by-laws for this purpose. I have been told that a number of taxi drivers regularly bring people to the city from Victor Harbour, Strathalbyn, Willunga and other places, and that as many as 100 trips a week are made from various country towns, but the present rule prohibits country taxi drivers from bringing people into the metropolitan area.

This morning a taxi was engaged to bring a person to the city for examination in a hospital, but it is often desirable that patients should not have to move from one vehicle to another. I believe that what the Leader of the Opposition said could be true, that, if a person is brought by taxi from Victor Harbour or Strathalbyn, as soon as he reaches Stirling he must be invited to engage a taxi licensed by the Stirling District Council to take him to Glen Osmond, where he will have to alight and engage a taxi licensed in the metropolitan area. Many people want to come to the city on business for an hour or so. Sometimes they hire a taxi to take them around the city and then ask the driver to take them to their home in the country, but that would be a breach of the rules laid down by metropolitan councils. Clause 34 (1) states that the Governor may make regulations prescribing the conditions under which licences of any kind or

grade may be issued or renewed. That is a fairly wide definition.

I believe that any taxi proprietor licensed to operate in a country area should be issued with a special licence to take clients from his area to the city. A fee should be charged for this licence, though it should not be as high as the fee for a metropolitan licence because the taxi proprietor would operate only spasmodically in the metropolitan area. I know that major taxi companies operating in the metropolitan area frequently bring passengers into the hills when there is an important event there. For instance, one of the most important race meetings held in Australia is held at Oakbank, when one may see as many metropolitan taxis there as he would find in the city. Those taxis could be charged with pirating just as country taxis could be charged with pirating if they brought passengers into the metropolitan area. Perhaps there should be special licences to enable country taxis to bring clients to the city and metropolitan taxis to take clients to the country. The authority to be appointed should consider this question, but only licensees who paid the appropriate fee for such a special permit should be allowed to do that business. This would be of great advantage to the people who use taxis, but we must be careful not to suggest something that will be difficult to police. Licensees with special permits would have to carry special plates.

It might be inferred from Clause 42 that the owner of a motor car is prohibited from taking even his neighbour into the city, but I do not think that is intended by the promoters of this legislation. The owner of the motor car would have to prove his innocence, but when we reverse the usual onus of proof we do so only when there is a grave suspicion that people are trying to get around the law and avoiding their obligations. I do not know whether subclause (2) is necessary, for I think that subclause (1) is sufficient. I imagine the licensing authority would issue plates to all taxi licensees. I hate to think that club riding will be entirely prohibited. A number of people in the hills area who work in the metropolitan area come down in each other's motor cars rather than travel to work by bus or train.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—What about the insurance cover?

Mr. SHANNON—A serious claim could be made against the owner of the vehicle in case of accident, but that risk is known to the parties and they are prepared to accept it.

Indeed, there have been cases in the court on that aspect. I do not think it is desirable to legislate to prohibit club riding, but it would be difficult, under clause 42 (2), to prove that you were not paying something for your ride in a motor car. For instance, if it were known that four people were helping the driver to pay for the petrol and maintenance of his vehicle, that would be evidence of payment and the practice would then come within the ambit of clause 42 (2). For those reasons I do not think that subclause should remain in the Bill. Under it a driver could be brought before the court and asked to prove that he had received nothing for taking his neighbour to town, and if the court did not believe him but considered he had received consideration he would be guilty of an offence and fined.

Mr. Dunstan—He might even lose his licence.

Mr. SHANNON—Possibly, and that would deter men of goodwill from offering such a facility. Indeed, a person with no other means of transport might be prevented from being in the city by a certain time for an important and urgent engagement. We should be careful about these matters. Mr. O'Halloran said we must stamp out the pirate, and that is true.

Mr. Hambour—What about good fellowship?

Mr. SHANNON—Yes; if we are not careful we may stamp out the helping hand that is sometimes of great assistance, especially to country people. Clause 42 (2) probably prohibits club riding, even though only two people share the cost of running the vehicle. With the reservations I have mentioned, I believe the legislation will achieve a marked improvement in the existing state of affairs, but if I see the opportunity in Committee to improve the Bill by taking out some of the safeguards which have been considered necessary by its framers but which I do not consider essential I will do so.

Mr. TAPPING (Semaphore)—I support the Bill. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. O'Halloran) and the member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) that a board consisting of 12 members is cumbersome, but I believe the Bill is good in principle and that any defects in its machinery may be remedied in the future. I welcome it because it is an improvement on the present position where many bodies control the taxicab business in the metropolitan area. Metropolitan councils welcome the Bill because for some time there has been chaos in the control of metropolitan taxis. Some time ago a metropolitan inspector told me that one council would need 10 inspec-

tors to eliminate piracy, but I believe that under this legislation the board will at least minimize piracy.

Previously I feared that this legislation might give the Adelaide City Council too much control, but as the board is to comprise representatives of all metropolitan councils the City Council will not be able to dominate the position. Mr. Shannon asked whether the right type of men would be elected to do this work, but I remind him that such boards as the Fire Brigades Board are elected by a ballot conducted by councils through the Municipal Association. That is a satisfactory procedure, and if a member of a board proves unsatisfactory he is replaced. Twenty councils control the metropolitan area and we can be sure that the men appointed to this board will be men of integrity and ability. The Police Commissioner's nominee will undoubtedly be a man with much experience in this field and the remaining three members, representing taxi interests, will also be experienced men able to do justice to their job. The 12 men on the board should therefore be able to do a good job. It may be possible at some future time to reduce the number to six and still have the job done satisfactorily.

Previous speakers have mentioned the difficulties under the present set-up. Indeed from statements made I have had the impression that to go by taxi from Port Adelaide to Gawler one had to take a taxi to Salisbury and then another to Gawler, but as far as I know a man may hire a taxi at the Outer Harbour and go to Gawler or even to Melbourne in the same vehicle without committing an offence. In that respect I could not follow the reasoning of previous speakers. Under the present set-up passenger-hire vehicles fall into two categories: taxicabs and hire cabs. The general experience has been that although the taxi proprietor charges a fee on a meter system for the miles he covers, the hire cab proprietor charges a fee from his garage to the point of pickup and then for the required journey. In that respect it may be said that the hire cab proprietor charges a double fee. Although this Bill deals only with taxi-cabs, I believe that the present procedure adopted by hire cab proprietors in charging fees should be modified because it results in the exploitation of the public.

Taxi companies and taxi drivers have done a sterling job over the years. A taxi-cab may cost as much as £2,000, and depreciation is very great. Then the proprietor must

pay telephone charges and running costs of his vehicle. In many cases a two-way radio set is installed at a cost of as much as £150. I am often puzzled how these men make a living, but I know they work long hours. In my district some men work 10 and 12 hours a shift in order to make a living. I have no complaint about the present-day taxi service. It merely needs sound administration, and this Bill will give that. The Bill contains so much wisdom that I subscribe to it fully.

Mr. CUMBE (Torrens)—I support the Bill with much pleasure because at one stroke it removes a number of anomalies that have existed for some time in the control of taxicabs. I am especially interested in this measure because I know some metropolitan councillors who have worked on the committee that drafted the report preceding this Bill. In the main the Bill establishes an authority to deal with the licensing and servicing of taxicabs in the metropolitan area. As I see it, two problems are involved: the safety of the travelling public, the vehicle and other road users, and the service given to the community as a whole.

Under the legislation the board will have certain powers, including the authority to check the mechanical efficiency and safety of a vehicle to see that it is roadworthy. It will have power to ensure that the brakes are efficient, and this power is necessary in order to protect both the passenger and other road users. Further, the taxi driver is to be tested to see that he is capable of driving before being granted a licence. I have ridden in some cabs the drivers of which I would not trust with my own car. They do not seem to possess even an elementary knowledge of road courtesy. There are some New Australians—and I am not casting aspersions on New Australians as such—who do not seem to understand our traffic laws and yet are licensed.

Some members have referred to the complement of the board—four representatives from the Adelaide City Council, four from suburban councils, three from the taxi industry and one representing the Commissioner of Police. I suggest that from 80 to 90 per cent of the taxis in the metropolitan area converge on Adelaide proper and, as the bulk of the taxi trade is centred in the city, the Adelaide City Council is entitled to adequate representation on the board. About 60 per cent of the State's population resides in the metropolitan area and they represent the majority of

taxi-users and as a result the municipal councils are entitled to adequate representation. I believe, too, that the industry should be properly represented.

The board will have power to control the dress and conduct of taxi drivers. In other words, it will ensure that to some extent taxi drivers are neat and tidy. I have received numerous complaints about the untidiness of some drivers. I do not intend this as a reflection on the industry, but there is always the odd person who detracts from the industry. The board's right to supervise the dress and conduct of drivers will redound to the benefit of the community. The board will also be enabled to regulate the fares to be charged. I think that is a most important provision.

Some members have referred to the fact that local councils can regulate the traffic of taxis under certain by-laws. This is dealt with in clauses 33 and 35 of the Bill: after a proclaimed day such by-laws will become void. As I see it, most of the metropolitan councils will only have power to actually license taxi stands in their areas. I think the Bill can only result in an improvement in the service, both from the industry's and taxpayers' point of view and I heartily commend it to members.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood)—I support the general principles of the Bill, although I believe that the authority which will be established will be somewhat unwieldy in size. I find clause 42 (2) completely objectionable. Under that provision it will be dangerous for any person to carry any passenger in the metropolitan area in his motor car. If I were to give a neighbour a lift to the city I could be charged with driving an unlicensed taxicab and the onus would be upon me to satisfy the court on the balance of probability that I was not gaining any reward from having picked up that person. That could be rather difficult to prove. The board would merely have to prove that I was driving a motor car with a passenger in it and then I would have to prove my innocence. All I could say to the court would be, "I did not get anything out of it. I carried my neighbour knowing the danger of this provision." If the court did not believe me—and it would not have to—I would be liable to a fine and, what is more, under section 38a (1) of the Road Traffic Act, to disqualification from holding a driver's licence. That section states:—

When any person is convicted, before the Supreme Court or any other court, for any offence against any provision of this Act relat-

ing to motor vehicles, or for any offence in the commission of which a motor vehicle was used, or the commission of which was facilitated by the use of a motor vehicle, the court may order that that person be disqualified either for a period fixed by the court or until further order from holding and obtaining a driver's licence.

There are certain Acts in which the onus of proof has been reversed. I have always been opposed to that. In certain cases, after certain formal matters have been proved, the onus is placed on the defendant. This provision, however, is much worse because it is wide open and makes possible the conviction of innocent persons. I cannot see that its inclusion is justified merely because many people operate on the club basis referred to by Mr. Shannon, and something must be done to stop them. It has been suggested that unless this provision is included it will not be possible to prove that the owner of a car received any reward. It may be that it will be much more difficult to prove, but I would rather that 99 guilty people were left untouched by this legislation than that one innocent person lost his driving licence. It has always been the principle of our law that the onus is on the Crown to prove the commission of an offence. This provision is completely unsafe and it will make it dangerous for any person to pick up any passenger and drive him anywhere in the metropolitan area. Under those circumstances, I submit that this House should not accept clause 42.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE (Burnside)—This Bill proposes setting up a board to control the taxi industry. It is closely aligned with the proposals I outlined when this subject was before the House last year. It may be that the board is larger than is necessary, but as a substantial degree of unanimity has been reached by all parties interested in the control of taxicabs it might be as well to permit the board to function in the form suggested by the Bill. It is necessary to have many machinery clauses to deal with the subject and I do not propose to canvass them. I am sure they will be dealt with by the members who have already spoken on them when we get into Committee.

However, I want to say a word or two about taxi services. I recognize that there are many well-conducted services in the city and that many operators do have some conception of service and courtesy when plying their taxis. I recognize, however, that there are some drivers who travel considerably faster than they should or need to, particularly in the city.

It may be a valid excuse that the quicker they deliver one passenger to his destination the quicker they can get another, but nevertheless, some drivers do behave on the roads in a manner not conducive to the smooth and even flow of traffic. Some taxi drivers cut in on heavy traffic, particularly from the right. One may witness this frequently in King William Street during busy periods. One notices taxi drivers, more often than other motorists, exceeding the speed limit and racing the lights at intersections. Frequently they swing out to the right in order to get ahead of other traffic so that they can be first away when the traffic lights change. In addition there are taxi drivers who offend in turning to the left through heavy pedestrian traffic without the care and consideration for that traffic which good motorists should have.

I object strongly to taxi drivers smoking while carrying fares and to their having wireless sets turned on without having sought the permission of their fares. I am not referring to the two-way radio they use to communicate with their main centre, but to broadcast receivers which are turned on for their own amusement, ostensibly for the enjoyment of their passengers. I object to the great lack of courtesy which is so frequently shown by taxi drivers in failing to open the door of a taxi. Some do so with punctilious courtesy, but others lean over the front seat and give a grudging shove to the door, which half opens to permit their passenger—be it man or woman—to enter as best he can. I object too, in principle, to multiple hiring and I regard it as most inappropriate that women passengers should be asked to sit in the front seat alongside the driver. I think regulations should preclude that in almost every conceivable circumstance.

Some simple uniform should be evolved for taxi drivers. The army type of safari jacket would be appropriate in summer, and in winter a kind of lumber jacket. It need not be expensive, but it would supply an air of neatness, which is lacking at present. If multiple hiring is to be permitted there should be a schedule in the cab prominently displayed showing each customer the proportion of the total fare he is expected to pay. In other States multiple hiring is rampant, and in Melbourne, where if a person is lucky to get a taxi at the Melbourne Railway Station, he is charged, although it is shared, what seems to be the full minimum fare for the journey. I do not suggest that it is the practice here, but it should not be. Many

drivers observe established courtesy in giving a service, but there is a great need for more courtesy. The owner of a fleet of vehicles should instruct his drivers in the elements of courtesy and service, and owner-drivers should observe the same courtesy as they would expect from taxi drivers if they were passengers.

Reference has been made to the use of a private motor vehicle and sharing expenses. I do not see this as a great offence, but a person using his motor vehicle in this way unbeknown to the insurance company is likely to impair his policy. One way to correct the position would be for the insurance company to point out on the policy that the carrying of passengers for hire or reward invalidates the ordinary private motorist's policy. In broad principles I support the Bill. It gives full representation, perhaps over-full representation, to the interests who are concerned in taxicab control. I approve the measure of control granted to local government authorities who know best the needs of their districts and people.

Mr. JENNINGS (Enfield)—I support the Bill, not because I think it is as it should be, but because it provides some sort of unified control. In striving for the ultimate Parliament has over the last couple of years denied the taxicab industry a unified control. I do not think this is a good Bill, but it provides a control infinitely better than the control we have now. I do not know why the Government did not have the initiative to bring down its own Bill, but it has waited until a Bill could be introduced after the differing views of the interested parties had been settled in some way. The Bill is an unhappy compromise. The Premier said it was agreed to by the conflicting interests, and that may be so, but it contains what the various interests have in desperation finally agreed to. The taxicab industry is now in a chaotic condition and taxicab owners and the public have suffered in consequence. In a fit of pique two years ago the Government withdrew its Bill after a clause had been defeated. Last year the Government refused to agree to a Bill I introduced without even having the courtesy to indicate its objections. This measure will give us an Act which can be amended in the light of experience. In Committee I will have more to say about several clauses.

Mr. KING (Chaffey)—I support the Bill. Over the years my attention has been drawn to certain aspects of the taxicab industry in the city. Often when I have used a taxi the

driver has explained his point of view about the industry, and from what I have heard the Bill is long overdue. The conditions associated with the granting of a licence to operate a taxicab should include a proper service to the public, and there should be no trafficking in licences. I do not think the object of this Bill is to provide a licence that can be bought, sold or exchanged, unless the holder of it is prepared to render a service. I was told, but I do not know whether it is true that one organization holds 30 licences, yet does not provide one cab, a garage or a radio-communication centre. I am not certain that it even has a telephone number. I believe it hires out the licences for about £8 a week each. I do not think the licensing of taxicabs should result in a business of this description. It would better if the licences were issued to people who intend to render a service to the community. In general I support the Bill, but in Committee will have something to say about several clauses.

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I support the Bill with pleasure because it gives some protection to people who are genuinely engaged in the taxicab business, and who have set out to meet the requirements of the law at great expense. The people who have tried to exploit the lack of control have endangered the lives of passengers as well as the business of genuine taxicab operators. Mr. Shannon spoke about the size of the proposed board and referred to the difficulty in selecting winners. Other members have supported the proposal to have representatives of municipal bodies on it and some have referred to the efficiency of those bodies, but a report tabled in Parliament shows that there is inefficiency in the administration of councils in this State. It will not be easy to get representatives of municipal bodies to be effective members of the board. I suggest that few of them have an overall knowledge of the problems of the taxicab industry. I think it would have been wiser to put the full responsibility for the control in the hands of the Commissioner of Police; for he has at his command all information about the police records of applicants for licences.

Subclause (2) of clause 42 places the onus on the defendant to prove his innocence, but that is contrary to the principles of British justice, and it should be avoided. Mr. Dunstan referred to the dangers that could arise from it. I wonder whether a member can frame an amendment that will protect owners of vehicles who, without reward, provide trans-

port for people who badly need it. I know the difficulties associated with prosecuting pirates and I will support any move to prevent their operating to the detriment of genuine taxicab operators.

Mr. HAMBOUR (Light)—I was quite apathetic about the Bill until the member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) raised the question of taxi proprietors licensed in the country bringing people into the metropolitan area. I have spoken to several members on this question, but they are not sure of the position. I want an assurance from the Government that the board controlling taxis in the metropolitan area will not have power to prohibit drivers licensed in the country from entering the metropolitan area, though, in fairness to drivers licensed in the metropolitan area, they should be able to take passengers into the country. I know that metropolitan taxi drivers take people into the country, but whether they can do so legally I do not know. No fee should be charged to permit country taxi drivers taking people into the city.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—I endorse the remarks of the member for Light. The board will not be able to override the provisions of this legislation, which lays down clearly that any country taxi driver not licensed by the board will be committing an offence if he brings a passenger into the metropolitan area. Taxis are often engaged in the country to bring people into the city in cases of emergency. Clause 27 states:—

Any person who does not hold a taxicab driver's licence and who after the proclaimed day, within the metropolitan area, drives a taxicab for the purpose of carrying passengers for hire or reward or in which any passenger is carried for hire or reward shall be guilty of an offence.

I cannot find any provision to enable country taxi drivers to come into the city with a passenger, or to pick up passengers in the city on the return trip. The area in which licencees may operate is defined. Clause 29 states:—

The board may, in respect of any taxicab, issue a taxicab licence to any fit and proper person. Every such licence shall authorize the taxicab to be used for the purpose of carrying passengers for hire or reward in the metropolitan area.

The "metropolitan area" is defined. The question of country taxis bringing passengers to the metropolitan area should be examined closely now and I urge the Minister to seriously consider it. I oppose clause 42 (2).

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham)—I support the second reading, and after perusing this Bill I am pleased that I opposed the measure brought down last year by the member for Enfield (Mr. Jennings). This Bill does what his Bill did not do; it gives control of the taxi industry to an appropriate body. I agree entirely with the remarks of the member for Burnside (Mr. Geoffrey Clarke) about the standard of service, driving and dress of those associated with the taxi industry. The standard in those three matters can be described as slovenly, though there are exceptions. Yesterday I was a passenger in a taxi that was a model of what taxis should be. It was operated by an independent owner-driver, but on the whole the standard is low, and I hope the board will raise the standard. Many taxi drivers are the bullies of the road. Many of them do not seem to care for the comfort or convenience of their fares. Several members have spoken on clause 42 (2), and unless good reasons in its favour are given by the Government I will not support it. The onus of proof should not be altered lightly. As the member for Norwood said, it is far better for 99 guilty men to escape punishment than for one innocent man to be convicted. Too often we alter the onus of proof. Many motorists make a practice of picking up people waiting for a tram or bus, but they will run a grave risk if this provision is passed. I agree with other members that there should be some reciprocity between country and metropolitan taxi drivers on taking passengers into the city or the country. If that is not possible under this Bill I will seriously consider supporting any amendment to that end.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—In the absence of anything better I will support this Bill, but I wish to make it clear that I still favour the appointment of the Commissioner of Police as the controlling authority instead of a board, and if in Committee any member moves to appoint him I will support the move. Most of the provisions in this Bill are acceptable. Clause 20 states:—

The board shall within three months after the close of each financial year of the board prepare and present to the Minister a balance sheet and a report on its operations during that financial year. The report shall as soon as practicable after the receipt thereof be laid before both Houses of Parliament.

That is a good provision, for members will be able to peruse the report and raise any questions if they deem necessary. Clause 31 states:—

(1) A licence shall not be issued or renewed unless the board is satisfied that the person to whom it relates is a fit and proper person to hold a licence.

(2) The board may request the Commissioner of Police to inform it whether, in his opinion, any person applying for the issue or renewal of a licence is a fit and proper person to hold the licence and the Commissioner of Police may inform the board accordingly.

(3) If the Commissioner of Police is of opinion that any person being an applicant as aforesaid or being the holder of a licence is not a fit and proper person to hold a licence under this Act, the Commissioner of Police may, whether or not a request has been made to him under subsection (2) in respect of that person, inform the board of his opinion.

This clause merely instances the disadvantage to all parties of the board's being the controlling authority. If the Commissioner of Police were the authority he would automatically inspect his records on receiving an application for a licence, whereas the Bill provides that the board may ask the Commissioner for a report. It should be mandatory on the board to ask him for such a report. True, the clause empowers the Commissioner, whether or not a request has been made to him, to inform the board of his opinion, but unless the Commissioner's representative on the board happens to remember the record of an applicant when his name is read out at a board meeting, he is not likely to furnish a police report. Too much is left to chance. If the board does not want a report it does not have to ask for one; the clause should be mandatory. Indeed, if the Commissioner were the licensing authority all applications would be checked. In Committee I will oppose clause 42 (2).

I congratulate the member for Burnside (Mr. Geoffrey Clarke) on his thoughtful address on this subject. He had obviously given much thought to the operation of the taxi industry in this State and to the way the board should work. Indeed, the Government should make his remarks available to the board so that it may consider them after its appointment. Although I did not agree with all that Mr. Clarke said, there was food for thought in his speech. I agree that the wireless set in a taxicab should not be turned on if the passenger does not want it. Further, the driver should ask the passenger whether he objects to smoking in the cab. Personally, I prefer to listen to a broadcast radio programme rather than the two-way radio that is found in many taxis today. Since becoming a member of Parliament I have travelled in many taxis, but only

once have I listened to a radio programme. On most occasions I have listened to the company's two-way radio, which the driver must leave on all the time. In some cases the language heard over these radios is not all that it should be. For instance, the person in the office may be complaining in no uncertain manner about a call that has come in, yet women passengers are forced to listen. The board should consider this matter. I would rather listen to a broadcast musical programme than to the two-way radio.

Mr. Jennings—It is almost unavoidable.

Mr. LAWN—There may be some difficulties, but the board should consider the matter.

Mr. Quirke—Drivers could report on reaching their destination.

Mr. LAWN—When the cab picks up a fare the driver gives his number and reports his destination. He should then be able to switch off until he arrives there.

Mr. Quirke—You feel like putting your foot through the set.

Mr. LAWN—I agree, and this matter should be considered by the board. The members for Stuart (Mr. Riches) and Light (Mr. Hambour) referred to country taxicabs. Two years ago when a Government measure on taxicabs was introduced I was told of a taxi driver who had brought a patient to a city hospital from a river town. An inspector told him he should not be in the metropolitan area and, on being told why he was there, the inspector said that would be all right if he took off his door, which had a certain sign on it. I see no reason for discrimination between metropolitan and country taxis.

Two years ago the Government wanted to put the taxi industry under the control of the Adelaide City Council, but now it wishes to broaden the board to represent all metropolitan councils and limit the operation of the legislation to the metropolitan area, although it can proclaim other areas. What will be the position of a taxi driver outside the metropolitan area? Under clause 29 a taxicab driver must be licensed by the board. If the Police Commissioner were the licensing authority, however, and the legislation applied to the whole of the State, I would be much happier. Then if a taxi driver had to transport a country patient to a city hospital or I wanted to travel by taxi to a country town, no restriction would be imposed either way.

Two years ago I mentioned instances about which I had cause to complain. From the remarks of speakers this after-

noon it can be fairly said that all members want to protect passengers. On one occasion I rang the City Council to find out to whom I should complain. An officer took particulars and promised to investigate the matter. Later he rang back and told me that I would have to complain to the Glenelg Council. That is yet another example of an anomaly that exists today, and the position will be no better under this legislation. When people wish to complain they normally go to a police officer. Unless the activities of the proposed board are widely publicized confusion will exist about where complaints should be lodged. I trust that the locality of the office of the board will be made known as widely as possible. Further, if a person hires a cab in Adelaide to take him to his home in Glenelg he should not have to come all the way to Adelaide to complain at the city council offices: he should be able to complain at the Glenelg town hall. Subject to the reservations I have mentioned, I support the Bill.

Mr. DAVIS (Port Pirie)—I oppose the Bill in its present form. I am not in favour of clause 27, which provides that the only taxis to enter the metropolitan area will be those licensed by the board. It will place country taxi drivers in an invidious position and will inconvenience country passengers. It is sometimes necessary for people in country areas to hire taxis to bring them to the metropolitan area, but under this provision those taxis will not be permitted to enter the metropolitan area. The passenger will have to be deposited outside the metropolitan area and arrange for another taxi to bring him into the city.

Mr. Quirke—The country taxi would not be permitted to pick up another passenger to take back to Port Pirie.

Mr. DAVIS—That is so, unless arrangements were made beforehand.

Mr. John Clark—That would not be permitted.

Mr. DAVIS—I do not object to metropolitan taxi drivers being protected, but country drivers should not be penalized. Metropolitan taxis can go to country towns at present and I have frequently seen fleets of them going to trotting meetings. If country drivers are going to be restricted from entering the metropolitan area, city drivers should be restricted from entering country areas. The member for Hindmarsh (Mr. Hutchens) said that municipal bodies were not sufficiently efficient to control taxicabs. I suggest that if

some metropolitan members went into the country and lost sight of the Town Hall clock for a few moments they would soon realize how efficiently country taxi services are controlled. I belong to a country municipality which is proud of the control it exercises over taxis, and it does not need a board to control them. I do not know whether Mr. Hutchens has a certificate of knowledge on these matters, but I contend that I would be just as capable of controlling taxicabs as he. I object to members casting reflections on municipalities. Country councils are just as capable of controlling taxicabs as are metropolitan councils. I hope this position will be reviewed in Committee and the clause amended not only to protect metropolitan taxis, but to afford freedom to country taxis.

MR. HEATH (Walleroo)—I agree with what most other members have said, but I think there is some misunderstanding about country taxis coming to the metropolitan area. The Bill is designed to control metropolitan taxis. That is most desirable. The position at present is that no country taxi can come to the metropolitan area unless it first receives a licence from the Transport Control Board. That board licences taxis to travel on certain controlled routes.

MR. LAWN—What would happen if a taxi were required for an urgent hospital case?

MR. HEATH—It does not matter for what purpose it is required, it cannot come to the metropolitan area over controlled routes unless a permit has been obtained.

MR. QUIRKE—Under this legislation country taxis will not be allowed to come to the metropolitan area.

MR. HEATH—The Transport Control Board has power, under legislation, to permit country taxis to travel over controlled routes to the metropolitan area. If this legislation is accepted, will it override the other legislation? There should be some reciprocal arrangement whereby metropolitan taxis can go to country areas and country taxis come to the metropolitan area.

MR. QUIRKE (Burra)—I am not at all pleased with the provision which could affect the operation of country taxis in the metropolitan area. Taxis coming to the city at present must be licensed by the Transport Control Board to travel over controlled routes, but if this provision were accepted I do not know whether or not it would be illegal for them to enter the metropolitan area. This provision requires explanation by the Minister. If it

will be illegal then the clause should be amended. We could have the ridiculous situation of a country passenger being deposited by a country taxi at the entrance to the metropolitan area—at Salisbury—and having to obtain another cab to come into the city. Will a public telephone be provided at the entrance to the metropolitan area to enable another cab to be procured, or will a rank of cabs wait there for country passengers? I should be permitted to book a cab in Clare to bring me to the city and wait while I transact my business before returning me to my home. That is surely legitimate taxi business?

I would not like to be chairman of the proposed board. There will be eight council representatives on the board—four from the Adelaide City Council and four from metropolitan councils—and knowing what happens between councils I cannot see a bright future for that board. I hope I am wrong because I would like the board to work. I do not favour creating a body that will not work. I think it would be far better to appoint the Police Commissioner the controlling authority. However, it may be a wise move to appoint him chairman of the board. I hope the Minister will clarify the position of country taxis coming to the city. Unless he does, I will oppose that clause.

MR. CORCORAN (Millicent)—I support the second reading but am concerned about the provision in clause 27 which deals with the duty to obtain a taxicab driver's licence. It says:—

Any person who does not hold a taxicab driver's licence and who after the proclaimed day within the metropolitan area drives a taxicab for the purpose of carrying passengers for hire or reward or in which any passenger is carried for hire or reward shall be guilty of an offence.

Then the penalty for the offence is set out.

[*Sitting suspended from 5.48 to 7.30 p.m.*]

MR. CORCORAN—What will be the position if a taxi driver brings a passenger from Millicent to Adelaide? I hope the Minister will explain it, because, like several other members, I am worried about this clause. Of course, the driver may hold a road permit from the Transport Control Board and have the appropriate disc, but that does not cover the requirements of this legislation. I do not say that the taxi driver should be able to compete against metropolitan taxi drivers when he is in the city. The member for Wallaroo (Mr. Heath) said there was noth-

ing to worry about, that the Transport Control Board's permit covered the position, but I think he is wrong.

I oppose clause 42 (2) because it places the onus of proof on a motorist who, out of courtesy, may pick up a friend on the roadside. He will have to prove he is not receiving some reward, but that does not encourage courtesy. Some people take exception to wireless apparatus being placed in taxis to enable drivers to communicate with their firm while on the road, but I have no complaints about that. Some taxi proprietors consider the comfort of their passengers, but others do not seem to care. I agree that taxi drivers should be correctly dressed. I hope the Minister will satisfy me on clause 27, otherwise I may move to amend it in Committee.

Mr. JOHN CLARK (Gawler)—I support the Bill. I have heard of a certain race of people who often do not know what they want, but fight furiously to get it. The member for Light (Mr. Hambour) this afternoon reminded me of those people because I gathered from his remarks that he did not know what was in this Bill but was prepared to fight to retain the present position. I support the Bill because anything is better than the chaos in the taxi industry today. A few days ago I read a book that won the prize for the finest work of non-fiction in the United States of America in 1955. I shall read an extract that has some relation to the matter we are discussing:—

At the very least, the comfortable conviction dominant over two centuries that everything would grow slowly better has disappeared completely, and we are again believers in catastrophe rather than evolution. Even the most extravagant of Communists insist that chaos must precede Utopia.

I hope that it is true because we certainly have chaos in the taxi industry today, and I hope the Bill will bring about Utopia in the industry. I have said in previous sessions that I do not like country interests set against city interests, and I am reluctant to enter into any debate that may make it appear as though I am supporting the country as against the city, but I am wondering what the effect of this Bill will be on the district I represent. Different legislation gives different definitions of "metropolitan area." In this Bill it is defined as that part of the State which is within 10 miles of the G.P.O. at Adelaide and other parts that are described or may be proclaimed. The Salisbury District Council, which includes Elizabeth, will be included.

The member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) said he would support the Bill, but would prefer the

Commissioner of Police as the controlling authority rather than a committee of 12, and I entirely agree with him. However, I will support the Bill because it should improve conditions in the industry. Gawler has the best trotting club in South Australia and also a fine racing club. When race or trotting meetings are held there hundreds of taxis bring people from Adelaide. I am happy about that because that swells the crowd, but what will be the effect of clause 27? I understand it is an attempt to check pirating, and I agree that pirating should be checked, but it seems that people wishing to go by taxi to Gawler from Adelaide will have to take a taxi as far as Salisbury or Elizabeth, which will be within the "metropolitan area," and then engage another taxi to take them to Gawler.

I believe city taxis should be able to take people right through, and that country taxis should be able to take people right into the city. When the House sits late at night I have to return to Gawler by taxi. It is surely stupid to suggest that I should take a taxi from Adelaide to the boundary of the Salisbury council area, get out, find a telephone booth and secure a taxi from Gawler to complete my journey. If I had occasion to go to another State and before doing so asked a taxi driver friend of mine in Gawler to meet the Melbourne express on my return and take me home, under this legislation he would not be able to accept such an engagement. Mr. Shannon questioned this provision, but was of opinion that it would be possible for licences to be issued to taxi drivers outside the 10-mile area. I cannot find anything specific in the Bill to assure me that that is the position. If this Bill is to be passed I hope the Government will amend the clauses that have been under fire, particularly clauses 27, 28, 29 and 42 (2). I hope this is not another example of ill-considered legislation rushed through in the declining hours of the session. I believe the Government would prefer slight amendments making the legislation clearer to proceeding with a measure that will be attacked and possibly collapse under the strain of it. I ask the Government to amend those clauses. The Bill cannot be perfect, but a Bill with faults is better than continuing the present position.

Mr. JENKINS (Stirling)—I have been informed that it is proposed to amend the Bill to enable taxis from country towns to enter the metropolitan area. I understand that at present a taxi can bring a fare to the metropolitan area if permission has been obtained

from the Transport Control Board. Clause 42 concerns proceedings for an offence under this legislation and relates to evidence of plying for hire. I think that if a taxi driver delivers a fare to the metropolitan area it is reasonable to allow it to wait and return that passenger to his country home. My only objection to this Bill is to the provision relating to country taxis and as it is proposed to rectify it I support the Bill.

Mr. STEPHENS (Port Adelaide)—I support the Bill, but suggest it be amended in some respects. In its present form it would bring disgrace upon this Parliament. The member for Gawler referred to the position when there is trotting at Gawler. City taxis can take passengers to the Gawler trotting meetings, wait and then return them to the city, but if this legislation is accepted a Gawler taxi will not be able to bring a passenger to the Wayville trotting meetings, because it will not be permitted within the metropolitan area. That would be a ridiculous situation. There should not be any distinction between city and country taxis. If a person met with an accident in the country and was ordered to the Royal Adelaide Hospital, would the taxi conveying him there be required to stop outside the metropolitan area and transfer him to another taxi? A person's life might be endangered and if, through this legislation, someone died we would be severely criticized for enacting such senseless legislation.

It is not my intention to discuss the differences between the city and metropolitan councils. I know there has been strife between the Adelaide City Council and Port Adelaide taxi drivers. I was informed of one case recently which resulted in an injustice to a person. At that time certain taxi drivers were members of the Port Adelaide Council and, I have been informed, used their position on the council to prevent a returned soldier from being licensed as a taxi driver. Apparently he had been treated in England for an accident after the war. He returned to Australia and became a taxi driver. He was advised to return to England for additional treatment to completely cure him. He did so, but on his return was not licensed as a taxi driver. He approached me, but I could do nothing because it was a council matter.

Mention has been made of clause 42 (2) under which the onus of proof is on a driver to show that he was not accepting a reward for carrying a passenger in his vehicle. If I were driving and came upon an accident and

was asked to take an injured person to the Adelaide Hospital, I could be prosecuted and would have to prove that I had not accepted money for taking him to hospital. If a working man were in the same position and he accepted a couple of shillings for doing such a good turn he would be liable. I think that provision is ridiculous. I believe in taxi control, but it should be by the Police Department. I support the Bill, but trust it will be amended in Committee to improve some of the unsatisfactory provisions.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—Two matters have been under discussion and I will deal briefly with them, because there seems to be some misconception about them. Members assume that the Bill will prevent a taxi from coming from the country into the metropolitan area. I point out that at present no taxi can come into any section of the metropolitan area from the country without breaking the law, unless it has a permit from the Transport Control Board. The practice has always been that if a permit has been issued the metropolitan councils always permit the taxi to come into their areas without let or hindrance. There is no reason why that state of affairs should not continue and an amendment on the files will bring about that result.

The second matter relates to the onus of proof. There are greater difficulties attached to this provision. Members are aware that under the Metropolitan Tramways Trust Act no person can carry anyone in the metropolitan area unless licensed as a taxi if the fee he receives exceeds 3s. for the return journey. One of the complaints I have received in connection with this matter is that a number of unlicensed persons carry temporary signs on their vehicles and hold themselves out as being licensed. They act to the detriment of those lawfully engaged as taxi drivers and who have been licensed, pay fees to the municipal authorities, have the right to carry passengers and conform to certain rules. Those lawfully engaged in the business have to be vetted by the Police Department as to suitability. One of the big problems is associated with pirates. In the Road and Railway Transport Act there is a provision almost identical with the one in clause 42 and members have not complained about that. I am in an amiable mood and if members want to delete clause 42, either subclause (2) or the whole of the clause, I will be happy to assist. Perhaps subclause (2) rather than the whole clause should be deleted. If we want the taxi business ade-

quately controlled it will be a mistake to delete all the clause. I do not think there would be any hardship under subclause (2) for it would be easy for a person to satisfy the court, because only *prima facie* evidence is needed.

Mr. Lawn—What would be the position if a taxi driver picked up an emergency hospital case?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Royal Adelaide Hospital is not the only hospital in the State. Each town of any size has a hospital and certainly any town where there are taxis, but the normal way to take a patient to the hospital is by ambulance. No member would suggest that there was anything wrong if, when driving my car back from, say, Gawler I picked up a man and took him to the Royal Adelaide Hospital. As a matter of fact, on some nights when returning to the city I have picked up persons wanting hospital attention and there has been no trouble. In Committee I will be happy to move to delete clause 27, and to delete subclause (2) of clause 42, if members want that done.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 25 passed.

Clauses 26, 27 and 28—consideration postponed.

Clauses 29 to 36 passed.

Clause 37—“Power of Search.”

Mr. KING—I do not know whether it is usual to have this power in Bills of this nature. This Bill deals with a civil matter and I am surprised that the board and its officers will have the same rights as the police have in a criminal matter. The power seems to be rather sweeping. Perhaps it could be used in conjunction with the police. Would the Premier explain the reason for the power?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—This provision will not be administered by the police but by the board. It deals with a case where it has been reliably reported to the board that a vehicle with a taxi sign on it is to be found at a certain place, and the only way to find out the true position is to make an inspection. The provision gives the board power to make that inspection. This does not infringe any great civil rights. An officer could not go in without some reasonable cause for suspicion.

Clause passed.

Clauses 38 to 41 passed.

Clause 42—“Evidence of plying for hire.”

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I move to strike out subclause (2), which deals with the onus of proof.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 43 and 44 passed.

Clauses 26, 27 and 28 (consideration previously postponed) passed.

New clause 27a—“Exemption of country taxicabs.”

Mr. MILLHOUSE—I move to insert the following new clause:—

27a. (1) Notwithstanding the other provisions of this Act it shall be lawful for a person to drive an unlicensed taxi-cab within the metropolitan area for the purpose of carrying passengers for hire or reward or in which any passenger is carried for hire or reward if—

- (a) the person so driving the vehicle is licensed as a taxi-cab driver by an authority other than the board; and
- (b) the taxi-cab is licensed as such by an authority other than the board; and
- (c) every passenger carried in the taxicab commenced his journey outside the metropolitan area; and
- (d) the provisions of the Road and Railway Transport Act 1930-1939 (if applicable) are complied with in relation to such journey.

(2) In proceedings for an offence against this Act it shall not be necessary for the prosecution to negative any of the matters mentioned in subsection (1) of this section, but the defendant may prove these matters if he relies on them.

A person shall not be convicted of any offence against this Act by reason only of the driving of a taxi-cab in the circumstances mentioned in subsection (1) of this section.

I think this provision will meet the objections raised by several members. It allows country taxi operators to bring passengers into the city and provides a defence for an apparent offence against the Act.

Mr. HAMBOUR—I think subclause (2) nullifies the effect of subclause (1). Why should a defendant have to prove anything?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—They are all matters that are easily proved.

Mr. HAMBOUR—I accept that explanation.

New clause 27a inserted.

Schedule and title passed. Bill read a third time and passed.

RENMARK IRRIGATION TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS brought up the report of the Select Committee, together with minutes of proceedings and evidence.

Report received and read. Ordered to be printed.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS (Minister of Irrigation) moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the consideration of the Bill.

Motion carried.

In Committee.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The following is the report of the Select Committee:—

1. Your committee met on two occasions and examined as a witness the Parliamentary draftsman, Sir Edgar Bean.

2. The chairman of the Renmark Irrigation Trust (Mr. C. S. Ruston) was contacted and he signified the trust's support for the Bill.

3. There was no response to advertisements inserted in *The Advertiser* and *Murray Pioneer*, inviting interested persons to give evidence before the committee.

4. Your committee is of opinion that there is no objection to the Bill, which it recommends should be passed with the following amendment to clause 4, to provide that on request the trust shall produce a copy of its balance-sheet and permit examination and the taking of extracts from it:—

Clause 4, page 2, line 11, add the following subsection:—

“(3) The trust shall keep copies of its last balance-sheet at its offices and on the request of any person made at such office at any time during the ordinary business hours of the trust, shall produce to him a copy of such balance-sheet and shall permit him to examine it and take extracts from it.”

Clauses 1 to 3 passed.

Clause 4—“Balance-sheet to be sent to owners and occupiers.”

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I move to add the following new subsection to proposed new section 26:—

(3) The trust shall keep copies of its last balance-sheet at its offices and on the request of any person made at such office at any time during the ordinary business hours of the trust, shall produce to him a copy of such balance-sheet and shall permit him to examine it and take extracts from it.

The amendment is self-explanatory and has the sanction of the trust.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I do not oppose the amendment, but in the second reading debate I said the Minister should consider inserting a provision to compel the trust to publish its balance-sheets in the local newspaper, which I think is *The Murray Pioneer*. While the amendment goes some way towards meeting my suggestion, it only enables people to examine the balance sheet in the trust's office and to take extracts therefrom. The trust is of public interest and persons other than occupiers of ratable land are interested in its activities. I have spoken with persons who are concerned, but unfortunately they were too busy with other activities to appear before the Select Committee. They have informed me that it would only cost £40 to publish the balance sheet in

the *Murray Pioneer*. I trust the Minister will consider my suggestion.

Mr. HAMBOUR—The activities of the trust are mainly of interest to ratepayers in the locality. There may be some other people interested in the trust's finances and under the amendment they will be able to go to the trust office and secure copies of the balance sheet. If copies are not available, they will be able to take extracts from it. I cannot see any justification for the suggestion that the trust should have to spend £40 on publishing its balance sheet in the press.

Mr. KING—The persons to whom Mr. Hutchens referred were apparently not at the annual meeting of ratepayers when this matter was discussed. I communicated with the trust's secretary and he assured me that there was no objection to this proposal. The balance sheet is principally of interest to the ratepayers in the irrigation area. This provision only relates to the operation of the trust as an irrigating authority. I admit that some persons may want to transact business with the trust and would appreciate examining the trust's financial position. As a result of this amendment they will be able to go to the trust's office and examine the balance-sheet and take extracts from it. I have no doubt that if any person is sufficiently curious about the trust's affairs he could secure all the information he required from any of at least 400 members of the trust, who would be happy to assist him.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I appreciate Mr. King's comments. As a member of the Opposition I was charged with the responsibility of securing the adjournment of this debate and consequently I made inquiries as to whether the legislation was satisfactory to the people concerned. Each person I spoke to expressed surprise that he would be denied the right of studying the balance-sheet as he had done in the past. There will be many people who will want to do business with the trust and will want to study its financial position. Mr. King said they could go to the trust's office and take extracts from the balance-sheet, but it is not easy to make a full and proper deduction from a casual inspection of a document and from merely taking extracts therefrom. I hope the Minister will seriously consider my request.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I was a member of the Select Committee appointed to investigate this matter and, as such, agreed to this amendment. I assure the member for Hindmarsh that this matter was thoroughly considered by

the Select Committee and it was finally agreed that if, as a result of this proposal, any person suffered hardship the matter could be rectified next session.

New subsection inserted; clause as amended passed. Title passed. Bill read a third time and passed.

METROPOLITAN MILK SUPPLY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 1. Page 1370.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Edwardstown)—I support the second reading. The Bill is necessary because certain areas along the River Murray have been flooded. It permits the issue of permits in additional areas in order to meet the milk requirements of the metropolitan area. I believe the board intends to get milk from the Narrung and Meningie districts. At present some of the milk from these districts is used in cheese production and for cream purposes, with the skim milk being used in pig raising. The factory in the locality may have to install a chilling plant and it will require up to 2,000 gallons of milk a day. Producers are licensed to supply milk to the metropolitan area but not all the milk they produce is used in that area. Milk picked up on the farm for the city is priced at 3s. 0½d. a gallon. There is an equalization scheme in existence and no doubt we will hear more about it in this debate. Under the Bill producers will get a better price for the milk they send to factories for cheese production and so on. The demand in the metropolitan area for milk is 1,000 gallons a day greater than it was 12 months ago and the Bill is a move to meet that increased demand. If there is a further increase during the next 12 months there must be a better appreciation of the position of dairy farmers.

I am concerned about their rehabilitation. This afternoon the Premier gave details of how the £800,000 Federal grant is to be spent, but the proposal is only an insult to the settlers. The sum of £50,000 is to be spent on hardship cases, and that will not be nearly enough. On roads £250,000 is to be spent, £250,000 on preventive measures, and a similar amount on the re-erection of embankments. To assist in relieving flooded settlers South Australians have subscribed handsomely to the Lord Mayor's appeal. There must be a rehabilitation of the settlers if we are to get milk for the metropolitan area. I believe the State Bank is mindful of its obligation to its

river customers, and that will have an important bearing on the supply of milk to the city. No doubt some settlers have mortgages on their properties, but because of the flooded conditions have insufficient equity in them. I wonder whether the assistance from the Federal Government will be hampered in any way if the private banks agree to increase overdrafts for settlers. What can we do to rehabilitate the settlers in the irrigated areas?

The SPEAKER—I think the honourable member is going beyond the scope of the Bill which deals with the issue of special permits to buy chilled milk from any proprietor of any dairy produce factory or milk depot in any part of the State. I do not want members to get beyond that; they must confine their remarks to the subject matter.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I agree with the move to secure milk from other areas in order to meet the requirements of the metropolitan area. The Bill had to be introduced because of the flooding of irrigated areas. Cattle have been transferred to other areas which will mean additional cost in the collection and transportation of milk. The 3s. 0½d. a gallon may not be obtained on the farm. The important question is, are we going to try to rehabilitate people in the flooded areas who were producing milk for consumption in the metropolitan area?

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member may not go into the question of the rehabilitation of dairy farmers who have been temporarily put out of production. He must confine his remarks to the Bill.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I will not pursue that line, but I am greatly concerned about the rehabilitation of these people. Production between January and May has been 15,000 gallons daily, and the board may use all that milk, if necessary, to meet the demand in the metropolitan area. How far will the Minister have to go to meet this demand? In his second reading speech he said:—

The board will accordingly be obliged to seek supplies from areas outside the normal metropolitan producing district and has already made inquiries about this matter. Although no definite assurances have been received, the board has good reason to believe that it will be possible to obtain the necessary milk. He did not say where the board will obtain the milk. He went on:—

At present milk produced by an unlicensed person cannot be sold as whole milk in the metropolitan area.

I am concerned that the Minister did not say how long this legislation will be necessary.

There is no guarantee that areas supplying milk will be able to continue to do so, though apparently it is good enough for them to supply milk to meet the emergency. I hope that those who supply milk under this legislation will be favourably considered when they apply for licences to supply the metropolitan area. I support the second reading, but I am very concerned about the rehabilitation of dairy farmers who have been put out of production by the floods.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—There are two aspects that I hope the Minister will consider. The loss of milk production from the river areas that have been flooded will affect the supply to the metropolitan area principally during the autumn months, when we have been largely dependent on them. There is an aspect which strikes me as being a humanitarian approach from the point of view of those unfortunate people who have been forced off their properties and who have had to shift their cattle to other pastures. They are working under difficult conditions in their milking and marketing operations. The board would be well advised, in seeking additional milk to fill this gap in the metropolitan milk supply, to take into account the position of such of these dairy farmers who can supply milk.

I suggest this not only because of their present unhappy position, but also because they have gone to great expense to comply with the Milk Board's standards regarding buildings, equipment, and the running of their dairy farms. To avoid severe milk rationing in the autumn months we have to break down these standards and draw supplies from dairies not licensed by the Milk Board and not necessarily equipped as the board would like them to be equipped. However, the milk must be of a certain standard and certain transport requirements must be met. Those unfortunate people who have had to shift their herds have complied with all the board's requirements in the past, and they should be the first to be considered to fill the gap in the supply if they are able to.

The Bill envisages a permanent alteration to the Act, but we should limit the period of operation of the amendment. I do not know whether a period of two years would be long enough, for there are many factors involved in the re-establishment of our normal dairying areas. The board, and dairy farmers themselves, have agreed that our milk supply should be safeguarded, for milk is easily contaminated.

We are breaking down that principle in this Bill, for we shall be taking milk from sources that have not necessarily been inspected and we will not know that the stocks are not infected. The Bill puts aside all those safeguards.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—You are not suggesting that the milk will be contaminated?

Mr. SHANNON—No, but I suggest that it will not be possible to meet the immediate needs of the metropolitan area if we retain all those safeguards. If we say that the conditions under which all milk for the metropolitan area is produced and handled are to be examined we will have milk rationing.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—This is emergency legislation.

Mr. SHANNON—Exactly, and because of that I believe we should have a time limit on it. If we limit it to, say, two years there will be no difficulty in extending it later if necessary. The Bill gives the board power to get milk from any part of the State, but I do not see much harm in that. I do not think we should define the areas from which supplies can be drawn because milk production in various parts varies from year to year. Milk is transported after it has been cooled to about 40 degrees. Modern milk tankers can travel up to 50 miles without the milk becoming more than a few degrees warmer. That does not harm the product, and at the receiving depot it is immediately placed in cool chambers and reduced to a temperature where no harmful bacteria can multiply.

This transportation factor will govern the distance from which supplies can be drawn. For instance, we shall not be able to bring milk to Adelaide by road from as far as Mount Gambier or Naracoorte and keep it in good condition, though refrigerated railway vehicles might do it. The company I am interested in used to transport milk from Murray Bridge to Adelaide in refrigerated vans on railway rolling stock. I assume it will be possible to bring it from Mount Gambier if necessary. I believe the board should have unfettered rights to go anywhere to get the type and quantity of milk required for the metropolitan area. This should not be permanent legislation, and that should be made clear to suppliers of milk from unlicensed dairies. This is only a temporary measure and to make that abundantly clear we should put a time limit on this legislation.

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray)—I support the Bill. Mr. Shannon suggested that dairymen on the river who have kept their herds together

should receive first consideration. I do not think there is any doubt about that. They are already supplying milk through the board. Those who have lost their dairies have improvised dairies that conform with the specifications laid down by the board. He contends that this should be a temporary measure and I agree. I believe that if we limit the life of this legislation we should provide for a one-year period. It is possible that these dairy-men will be back in full production by next spring. I was pleased to hear the Premier say that £500,000 is to be made available for rehabilitating the Murray swamps. I hope some of that money will be available for private swamp holders. The Minister said the Bill would not in any way affect settlers on reclaimed areas because no more licences would be issued. Those settlers rely on their milk licences for their livelihood.

This Bill enables wholesalers in the metropolitan area to purchase milk from wholesalers in country areas. The Minister said the milk would be obtained from areas south-east of the river. I understand that a considerable quantity of milk is available from around Meningie and Narrung, and that during the early days of the flood some of the dairymen in those areas transported their milk to Cooke's Plains, and the firm picking up the milk agreed to bear the cost of the extra cartage to enable this milk to be used in the metropolitan area. That has helped to alleviate the position of the settlers who have been flooded out.

This Bill has drawn members' attention to the value of the reclaimed swamps. The Minister pointed out that 15,000 gallons of milk a day normally come from reclaimed areas. That quantity represents one-third of the total metropolitan consumption. The reclaimed areas are a great asset not only to the State but to the Commonwealth. When the banks are reconstructed a greater degree of permanency should be provided to enable settlers to continue supplying milk to the metropolitan area. Some of the settlers may find it difficult to get back into production without assistance and the Government should enable them to borrow money for that purpose, because the sooner they are back into production the better. The Bill will assist those people and they will not be penalized.

Mr. HEASLIP (Rocky River)—When this measure was introduced I thought it was of a temporary nature because the Minister said:—

It has been rendered necessary by the flooding of the reclaimed areas along the river.

I assumed that it would only operate while those areas were flooded, but unfortunately a study of the Bill reveals that this will be permanent legislation. Under the principal Act all suppliers of milk to the metropolitan area have to be licensed, but the provision that enables the board to collect milk from unlicensed dairies is a retrograde step. Proposed new section 37a (1) states:—

The board may, if it considers it necessary to do so, issue a permit to any holder of a milk treatment licence authorizing him to buy chilled milk from any proprietor of a dairy produce factory or milk depot in any part of the State.

I do not agree with this provision. The northern areas are already experiencing difficulty in securing adequate supplies of milk, and if wholesalers go to the north for milk supplies the northern areas will face a shortage. At present all the milk for Woomera, Maralinga, Radium Hill, Port Augusta, Whyalla and Port Pirie is produced in the northern areas.

Mr. Davis—A lot comes from Clare.

Mr. HEASLIP—Yes, but that is in the north. The milk is being carted from as far south as the Barossa Valley and there is no surplus. In times of shortage milk has been carted from as far south as Jervois to Woomera. Wholesalers should go to the South-East for their supplies, but the Bill enables them to go anywhere in the State. The Minister said that the chairman of the Milk Board has already carried out investigations in the districts south-east of the River Murray as to whether milk supplies can be obtained and he is hopeful that from that source the necessary supplies will be forthcoming. He may be hopeful, but he is not definite. It would be wrong for milk to be obtained from the north. In Committee I will move to amend the new section to provide that milk can only be obtained from any part of the State in unusual circumstances.

Mr. Jennings—Who will define "unusual circumstances"?

Mr. HEASLIP—I admit that will be difficult. A drought can be an unusual circumstance and the present flood is an unusual circumstance.

Mr. Riches—Have you considered defining the areas from which milk may be obtained?

Mr. HEASLIP—No, I am trying to confine the time during which the legislation will operate. I wonder whether this legislation is really necessary, for last year we amended the Act giving the board power over the

reconstitution of milk—that is, milk in dried form which, with the addition of water, can be returned to a whole milk state. It is said to be as good as whole milk, and, in fact, it is whole milk. Today producers supply the metropolitan area with milk containing 4.2 per cent of butter fat. The legal standard is 3.5 per cent, but the board has fixed 3.8 per cent. The additional .4 per cent is turned mostly into butter. If that butter is exported the taxpayers have to pay 1s. a lb. subsidy on it. If to that .4 per cent were added water and powdered milk costing 1s. 6d. a lb., the reconstituted milk would increase supplies to the metropolitan area by about 12 per cent which would be sufficient to carry us over a difficult time. About 1s. 6d. on every gallon of milk to consumers goes into an equalization fund, from which bonuses are repaid to licensed suppliers. Under the proposal unlicensed suppliers will help to build up the fund from which they will get no bonus. This could continue for years and be undesirable. I support the second reading but hope that in Committee amendments will be carried to make the Bill more to my liking.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—The source of the supply of milk to the metropolitan area is to be extended to any part of the State. Mr. Heaslip pointed out that the northern parts of South Australia draw their milk requirements from areas as far south as Clare and the Barossa Valley, and on occasions the Jervois district. Golden North Dairies Ltd. at Laura and Clare supplies milk to Whyalla, Port Augusta, Woomera and Port Pirie, and draws its requirements from the middle north, but in dry seasons goes as far south as Jervois. The Minister said that the metropolitan area may be faced with a shortage of 5,000 gallons of milk a day and that it was hoped to make up the leeway from areas south and south-east of the River Murray. No objection can be raised to that but if the milk cannot be obtained from those areas there will be no compunction about going to districts around Clare and outbidding northern buyers. Golden North Dairies Ltd. has done a lot for the northern parts of the State. I wonder whether the Minister would consider an amendment limiting the scope of the Bill to areas south and south-east of the River Murray. I believe the required milk can be obtained from those areas and there should be no objection to such an amendment. If the Minister will not move in that way I shall have to do so.

Mr. BROOKMAN (Alexandra)—I support the Bill, which is a good solution of a difficult

problem. Owing to an increased home market in South Australia we have a shortage of milk, and the flooding of river areas has brought the matter to a head. The proposed alteration to the Act will ensure as far as possible that Adelaide will be supplied with the 5,000 gallons of milk by which we would otherwise expect to be short during the autumn, and also preserve the rights and privileges of dairy farmers who have observed health regulations and produced clean milk, often incurring considerable capital expense. In one sense the health standard will be affected. If milk is to come from outside the present districts supplying milk to the metropolitan area not all the dairies will comply with the requirements of the Milk Board. The proposal in the Bill is regarded by another speaker as a retrograde step, but we must accept it because of our flooded areas. During the last few years the Milk Board has done a level-headed job. Seven or eight years ago there was much criticism of its activities and people did not always comply with its regulations. There is no criticism of it today because it has gone about its work in a sensible way and got what it wanted without being in any way officious. It has tried to help the dairy farmers and it now has their confidence. It is possible for the board to cope with the present position if given the proper power. I do not know that we should limit its power.

Mr. Davis—How is it to be limited?

Mr. BROOKMAN—It is suggested that the legislation should operate for only a limited time. The board should have power to cope with an emergency when it arises. We have had one emergency and it is possible that we will have more.

Mr. DAVIS (Port Pirie)—I support the second reading but am not happy about the Bill. I am not in any way opposed to settlers whose properties have been flooded. We must do something to get more milk for the metropolitan area but country people are also entitled to a milk supply. If there is to be any rationing of milk it should apply to the whole State. The Government should not confiscate all the milk in the State to meet requirements in the metropolitan area. Country children are entitled to their milk as much as city children. Under this Bill country people may be robbed of their milk supply. The districts of Clare and Laura supply milk to Port Pirie, Port Augusta, Whyalla, and other northern towns. If we take milk from those districts for the

metropolitan area country towns will suffer.

The first people to be considered are housewives and children. There are many milk bars in the city and country towns, and they should be the first to be deprived of milk. The Government should consider pooling the whole of the milk produced in the State to see that country areas get their fair quota. In the past northern towns have received milk from the river flats, but that supply will not be available now. The member for Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip) said we could increase milk supplies by using powdered milk, but I do not agree with him.

Mr. Heaslip—I said reconstituted milk, not powdered milk.

Mr. DAVIS—Much of our powdered milk is made from skim milk, which is of little value to children, and not long ago powdered milk was in short supply. I hope the Minister will seriously consider zoning milk supplies so that all people may get a fair share.

Mr. HAMBOUR (Light)—The Bill merely provides for supplementing the city's supply while dairies in the Murray area are out of production as a result of the flood. I was astounded at the remarks of some members. The member for Murray thinks that the area south of the river is the only district in the State that produces milk. The member for Stuart thinks his district may go milk hungry, and the member for Port Pirie is afraid he will have to miss his porridge, but the best dairy in the State is in my district. The State's milk supply could easily be doubled by selling milk in bulk instead of turning it into cream, butter, or cheese. There are plenty of cows in the State, and they can produce all the milk required. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition told me this morning the wholesale price for milk was about 3s. 0½d. a gallon, but in my district it is 1s. 7d. a gallon. Golden North Dairies Ltd. pays 1s. 2d. to 1s. 5d. a gallon on the farm for 4.2 per cent milk; and Sandford's pay 1s. 5d. to 1s. 7d. on the farm for 4 per cent milk.

Mr. Heaslip—What about the equalization scheme?

Mr. HAMBOUR—If we sell all our milk as whole milk we temporarily eliminate the equalization. If producers in my district sell milk for cheese they get 50d. a lb., plus 1d. bonus. If milk is going to be so short as some members think there will be no need for equalization.

Mr. Davis—If there will be no shortage why bring down this Bill?

Mr. HAMBOUR—It simply allows milk to come to the city from additional sources.

Mr. Davis—Why take away supplies to country districts?

Mr. HAMBOUR—Milk producers can produce more milk at any time than the consumers can take. The effect of this measure will be that less milk will go into cheese and butter. We have large stocks of butter.

Mr. Shannon—Would you have the factories standing idle?

Mr. HAMBOUR—I would send those people to the flooded areas. I assure the members for Port Pirie and Stuart that the children in their districts need not go without milk.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Special permits to purchase milk."

Mr. HEASLIP—I understand that the member for Onkaparinga has an amendment that will meet the position better than the amendment I wished to move.

Mr. SHANNON—I move to insert at the end of proposed new section 37a the following new subsection:—

(5) This section shall continue in force until the thirty-first day of December, one thousand nine hundred and fifty-eight, and no longer.

This legislation breaks down the standards set up by the Metropolitan Milk Board for the supply of milk for human consumption. Wholesalers have a reputation to maintain, and it is in their interests to discard any milk that is doubtful, but we should not make this legislation a permanent feature. I do not think that people in the north will be deprived of an adequate supply of milk. What will happen is that the cheese and butter factories will use the milk they receive as whole milk, and this will affect their turnover of cheese and butter. There is not much harm in providing a limitation on the period of operation because this is legislation of a temporary nature. I remind members that we annually re-enact the Prices Act and the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act and if, at the end of two years, it is necessary to continue this legislation, we can reconsider it.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I am prepared to accept this amendment. It does nothing more than the Bill is really designed to do. The whole purpose is to overcome the problem of a temporary emergency and to enable the Milk Board to collect milk from areas it is not at present legally entitled to collect from. The Government hopes—as I am sure does

the Committee—that within two years the Murray swamps will be back into normal production and that the problem we are now facing will have disappeared.

Mr. RICHES—I desire to move an amendment which would precede this amendment.

The CHAIRMAN—Is the member for Onkaparinga prepared to withdraw his amendment?

Mr. SHANNON—I ask leave to temporarily withdraw my amendment.

Leave granted; amendment temporarily withdrawn.

Mr. RICHES—I move—

In new section 37a (1) after “State” to insert “except the area comprised in the Northern District of the Legislative Council.”

If the amendment is accepted the Bill will operate in all other parts of the State. I fear that if there is not this limitation, milk may be obtained from the northern towns and they will be adversely affected. If milk is obtained from the northern areas’ sources of supply it will be merely a case of taking milk from one part of the State where it is needed to give it to another part. We all share the Minister’s hope that sufficient milk will be obtained in the south and south-east, but the Minister cannot guarantee that, nor can he guarantee that there will be no demands on the northern milk supplies. Mr. Hambour’s contention that sufficient milk can be produced has not been substantiated by the Minister.

Mr. Hambour—The State could produce twice its requirements.

Mr. RICHES—If the honourable member can assure the Minister of that I am sure this amendment will be accepted. The amendment merely ensures that supplies will not be taken from the northern areas for the metropolitan area. If there is a shortage and there is a necessity to call on supplies from the northern areas I am quite sure the people in the north will be happy to share with persons in other parts of the State. I realize the Minister and the board will make every endeavour to obtain supplies from the south and south-east, but that does not mean that supplies will not be sought in the north. Whenever there has been a shortage of any article the northern areas have always had the thin end of the deal.

Mr. John Clark—The northern district of the Legislative Council includes some of the river districts.

Mr. RICHES—Yes, but none of the dairying areas.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—There are grave difficulties involved in accepting this amendment. I do not propose to accept it. This

Bill does not create any milk, but it enables the milk supplies to be marshalled to meet an emergency.

Mr. RICHES—In the metropolitan area.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Quite frankly, I cannot follow the honourable member’s reasoning. I am prepared to give an assurance that so far as possible the Milk Board will not go to those areas which supply the northern parts of the State. I said that the chairman of the Milk Board hopes to obtain milk supplies from areas south-east of the river. I could not accept an amendment which would prevent the board from doing certain things under certain dire circumstances. The emergency for which we are legislating is not of anybody’s making. It is not the fault of people in Adelaide, Gawler, Maralinga, Woomera or on the river. It is an emergency in which the whole State must share. This is not the honourable member’s normal reaction to any legislation. He does not normally say, “What I have is mine; you keep out.” He usually says, “Let us stand in on this and share it.” That is what I am asking him to do now. If we can preserve to the people for whom he is talking the areas which normally supply them we will do so, but I cannot accept an amendment that will prevent the board from going into that area if it becomes essential.

I point out that the honourable member is arbitrarily drawing across the State a line which, although an electoral boundary, is in no sense a commercial or geographical boundary, and stipulating that milk cannot be taken from that area for the metropolitan area. Some people in that area may be supplying milk to a factory in the north, but others may be selling to the metropolitan area. Does the honourable member wish to interfere with the normal practices of people by creating an electoral boundary into a commercial or geographical boundary? I doubt whether he could determine a boundary from which milk gravitates to one part of the State or another. The question of supplying milk is a supplier’s own decision and is subject to the dictates of the occasion. I put it to the honourable member that from that angle he would be well advised to withdraw his amendment.

Mr. HEASLIP—As a result of the Minister’s assurance that if it is possible to obtain milk without interfering with the sources now supplying the northern areas, I am happy to accept this new section. I feel sure the northern areas will not go short, or

if they do it will not be because the metropolitan area has robbed them. Although the member for Port Pirie does not understand what reconstituted milk is, I believe we are reaching a stage when we may have to consider what we have already done in the metropolitan area—that is, providing for the reconstitution of milk in the northern areas.

Mr. DAVIS—The Minister has assured us that only in an emergency will the board go into the area that supplies milk to the northern areas. I want an assurance from him that in a time of shortage metropolitan and country people will be treated alike, and that there will be sharing of the shortage.

Mr. RICHES—In view of the difficulties pointed out by the Minister I am prepared to withdraw my amendment, but I was concerned when he would not give an assurance that northern supplies would not be interfered with. We have never seen against sharing equally. If the Minister gives the assurance sought by Mr. Davis I will be happy. In the past the country has had to go without milk so that the metropolitan area could be supplied.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—It is not the intention of the board or the wish of the

Government that one part of the State should have plenty of milk whilst other parts go short. We cannot foresee the future position but I am prepared to give the assurance—

Mr. O'Halloran—That the northern parts of the State will not be short of milk in favour of the metropolitan area?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—If the honourable member puts it that way, I give the assurance.

Mr. RICHES—I seek leave to withdraw my amendment.

Leave granted, and amendment withdrawn.

Mr. SHANNON—I now formally move the amendment I temporarily withdrew, namely, to insert the following new subsection:—

(5) This section shall continue in force until the thirty-first day of December, 1958, and no longer.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Title passed. Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 10.23 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, November 7, at 2 p.m.