

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, September 18, 1957.

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

QUESTIONS.

FEED BARLEY SUPPLIES.

Mr. BYWATERS—Yesterday I received a telephone call from one of my constituents who is alarmed because he cannot buy feed barley in Murray Bridge. He told me that a local agent had 4,000 bags in stock but that a few days ago this had been sold to an Adelaide buyer. I understand also that there is feed barley in a number of other places in the State, but because Murray Bridge is possibly the nearest place and the freight is cheaper this barley has been bought at Murray Bridge by a city buyer to the detriment of the people there who require it. I ask the Minister of Agriculture whether it would be possible for the Barley Board to see that people wishing to buy barley from the Barley Board for resale purposes do so without exhausting stocks from one particular area?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I would have to get an up-to-date report from the General Manager of the Barley Board before I could give a conclusive answer, but I understand the board's policy is to sell feed barley, or any other grade of barley, to a buyer and give delivery from the stock in which such quality is held which is nearest to the buyer's location. I understand also that the board does not indicate priorities and that if it receives an order from a *bona fide* purchaser and is able to supply it and give a destination, it does so to any buyer whatever type of person he may be, whether he is buying for resale or buying directly. The board's function is to market the barley. I will refer the honourable member's question to the general manager to see whether some assistance can be given to this person at Murray Bridge, but that will be a decision entirely in the board's hands and will be governed by what the board can physically do in the circumstances.

THEVENARD BERTH DEPTHS.

Mr. BOCKELBERG—I understand that there should be a depth of 25ft. of water at the Thevenard jetty, but at present it is barely over 23ft. Can the Minister of Marine have soundings taken, and if what I have said is correct, can dredging be done so that there will be 25ft. of water available at the jetty?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I will take up the question with the Harbors Board and bring down a report.

YOUNG STREET, QUEENSTOWN.

Mr. STEPHENS—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Roads a reply to the question I asked some time ago about the Government purchasing a property at Young Street, Queenstown, for the purpose of widening that road?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—Through my colleague, the Minister of Roads, I have received the following reply:—

The Commissioner of Highways advises that although the acquisition of land required for widening of Young Street has not been completed, it is anticipated that this will be done in time to permit work to commence during this financial year.

NANGWARRY POWER STATION.

Mr. HARDING—Can the Premier state when the construction of the proposed new electric and steam power station at Nangwarry will be commenced? Will electricity from this station be supplied to the adjacent townships of Tarpeena, Penola, Kalangadoo, Mount Burr, and surrounding districts? Is there at present sufficient water available for steam purposes for local use to operate the new plant?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—As the honourable member knows, the Electricity Trust has been extending its operations in the South-East and has already constructed a power station adjoining the timber mill at Mount Gambier. More recently it has been investigating the carting of timber from Kalangadoo to Mount Gambier to increase the size of the power station which is already located there, but it has found that the cost of transportation is fairly high, and secondly, that this would not serve the mill at Kalangadoo, which requires a fair amount of steam for the kiln attached to the sawmill. Under those circumstances the trust has approached me and asked for permission to negotiate with the Forestry Board for the establishment of a power plant at Nangwarry adjacent to the timber mills there. The idea is that the Electricity Trust will purchase the electricity from the board, which will operate the power station because it already has technical services at Nangwarry and a fairly considerable saving would be made as a result of the Forestry Board operating it. The electricity would be supplied to the grid that it is proposed to establish throughout the South-East. I have no knowledge about available water supplies, but it would be purely a local problem because

the South-East generally is very favoured for water. If there is not at present sufficient water it would not be a very costly job to provide it.

TOILET FACILITIES ON DIESEL RAILCARS.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—On August 29 I addressed a question to the Minister representing the Minister of Railways about the possibility of providing lavatory accommodation on the smaller type of diesel driven trains. Has he a reply?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—Through the Minister of Railways, the Railways Commissioner has reported as follows:—

The "300" class cars referred to by Mr. Clark as "red hens" were designed solely for use on the suburban system, which includes the run to Gawler. It is not the practice on any railway system, as far as I am aware, to provide toilet accommodation on suburban cars, and I can see no real justification for providing such accommodation in cars on the run to Gawler. I might add that it should not be overlooked that toilet facilities are provided at various stations in between Adelaide and Gawler.

NAILSWORTH POLICE STATION.

Mr. COUMBE—It was reported recently that the Nailsworth police station would be closed shortly. Will the Premier ascertain the reason for the move and can he guarantee that the district will be provided with adequate police protection, indicating the form it will take? Where will the citizens report accidents and present their business in the future, and will adequate publicity be given locally to the move to avoid undue inconvenience to local residents?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Members know that there has been a big change in the composition of the police force, which is now very mobile. In view of that, I had a report from the Police Commissioner requesting permission to close down a number of police stations, and probably Nailsworth was one of them. I have discussed the matter with the Commissioner, but as the Chief Secretary is at present examining the composition and organization of police forces overseas I have requested him not to take any action until the Chief Secretary returns, when the matter will be further discussed. I will see that the honourable member's question is placed before him before any decision is made. I think Mr. Quirke referred to the police station at Hallett, where the same decision was made. No action

will be taken to close the station until the Chief Secretary has returned and investigated all possibilities.

GUMMOSIS.

Mr. QUIRKE—My question relates to the gummosis disease which is rapidly destroying the apricot industry in South Australia. I give full marks to departmental and research officers for the work they are doing in this matter. It has been proved that the fungus causing the destruction is found not only on apricot wood but on dead prunings from vineyards, and it looks as though it has a general application. There is power for the inspection of orchards and the spraying of vines, but apparently the same power does not apply in relation to the control of the gummosis disease. Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether an authority exists in this matter, or is it proposed to make compulsory the destruction of dead fruit prunings by burning in order to assist in the general attack on the disease?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—So far the problem has been tackled on a voluntary basis, and no attempt has been made to invoke compulsion. The discovery that gummosis can exist on other dead prunings is a comparatively recent one, and that raises a new problem. The honourable member will appreciate that we do not know yet how wide the problem may be in respect of other dead wood. A difficulty arises in connection with the compulsory destruction of prunings when they are nobody's property. There is quite a quantity of wood which could harbour the disease, and which it is nobody's responsibility to destroy. It is appreciated that the voluntary approach is often more successful than compulsion, provided there is co-operation from the people concerned. I will discuss the matter with the horticultural officers of the department, based on the suggestion made by the honourable member, and intimate the attitude of the department.

WALLAROO GRAIN DISTILLERY BUILDING.

Mr. HUGHES—Has the Premier the report he promised yesterday to get regarding sub-leasing a portion of the Wallaroo grain distillery building?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have obtained the following report from Mr. Ramsay, general manager of the Housing Trust, who was handling this matter, and I

will give the honourable member later copies of it so that he can have them distributed in his district if he so desires:—

On approximately Thursday, 22nd August, I heard that it was possible that Pfizer Ltd., an American Company with plants in most countries in the world had a representative in Australia looking for a site to establish a plant. Pfizer manufacture approximately 80% of the penicillin used in the United States of America as well as many other antibiotics. Through the local representative, a Mr. Godwin, I obtained the telephone number of the Australian representative of the company who is also an American and lives in Sydney. During that weekend (August 24-25) I telephoned Sydney and spoke to the Australian representative, Mr. McGee. He said that he and his American colleague, Mr. Ensminger, would come to South Australia on the afternoon of Tuesday, 27th August, and leave at lunch time on 28th. After this arrangement was made I was informed that antibiotics were normally made by a fermentation process and therefore the idea that the Wallaroo grain distillery could be a suitable building occurred. I again phoned Mr. McGee and told him that there was a plant which had originally been built for distillation and fermentation 100 miles from Adelaide and it might interest Mr. Ensminger. However, I pointed out that he could not visit this plant in the time allowed. He then spoke to Mr. Ensminger and phoned me back and said that they would still come on the Tuesday but would not leave again until early Thursday morning and that they were interested in Wallaroo. This fact I reported to you and passed on the message that they were interested in Wallaroo and I was allowing Wednesday, 28th, to take them to that town.

As arranged they landed on the afternoon of Tuesday, at 2.30 and they came to the House at approximately 3 p.m. and were introduced to yourself and the Minister of Lands. Mr. Hincks in particular talked at some length about Wallaroo and they seemed definitely interested. In addition, of course, you told them yourself briefly of the history of the grain distillery and I mentioned that I hoped to take them to that town the next day. Later that afternoon I obtained a set of plans of the Wallaroo Grain Distillery and that evening met the Americans for about three hours. At that meeting a number of facts emerged; the most important was that they wanted to look at alternative sites within 25 miles of Adelaide because as well as manufacturing they thought it possible they would have their Australian administration at their new plant. Further, they wished to meet technical officers of the Engineering and Water Supply Department and obtain a great deal of technical information particularly on sewerage. I still pressed them to visit Wallaroo, but they said that the plans of the factory were sufficient for their purposes and they preferred to see around Adelaide and meet Messrs. Murrell and Hodgson. On the Wednesday (28th) I actually drove them some 150 miles around Adelaide and the near countryside, took them to Port Adelaide and

Outer Harbour because they were very keen to see the port handling facilities, and then took them to meet the officers concerned in the Engineering and Water Supply Department. They left Adelaide on Thursday, 29th, and took with them among a great deal of information, plans of the Wallaroo Grain Distillery. Subsequently, Mr. Ensminger phoned me from Sydney and asked for more climate data particularly relating to humidity. He has now returned to America and I believe there is quite a good chance of the industry coming to South Australia although exactly where I am not in a position to forecast.

They are the full details relating to the Americans' visit and the events that transpired in connection therewith. They came here as a result of Mr. Ramsay's initiative and I personally discussed this matter with them in the presence of Mr. Hincks. Whether they will come to South Australia is a matter for decision by the parent company.

Mr. RICHES—I feel that members generally appreciate the interest that Mr. Ramsay has taken in taking the initiative to try to get an industry to come to South Australia. I have always held that it should be someone's responsibility to take the initiative, someone with authority and access to Government departments. Can the Premier say whether this is the normal duty of Mr. Ramsay, or is there an officer advising the Government on industries which may be invited to come to South Australia? Is it anyone's responsibility to place the claims of South Australia before industries that may be interested in coming here?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—We have a Department of Industry, but it is mainly concerned with industrial matters and not with the development of new enterprises. Actually, the development of new enterprises is under the control of the Treasury, and I take full responsibility for the encouragement of industries coming to South Australia and I seek new industries in every way possible. Consequently, there are a number of channels which are extensively used by the Government. In the first place, the Agent-General, if he gets any advice from anyone interested in coming to Australia, from Great Britain, immediately communicates with me. Secondly, Mr. Branson, who was at one time an officer of the State Government and who used to do considerable work in this activity, is now secretary of the Chamber of Manufactures, and he has agreed to act as a liaison officer in these matters. A number of other officers have given valuable assistance, particularly Mr. Meyer of the Harbors Board, who has on a number of

occasions, through his association with shipping interests, been able to give me the tip when someone is interested in establishing an industry. We also supply considerable material to overseas journals on the advantages of South Australia for the establishment of industries.

Mr. Ramsay has done particularly valuable work. The Housing Trust holds substantial areas of land and on a number of occasions it has acted on behalf of the Government in securing land for industries that have been persuaded to come here. It is not normally Mr. Ramsay's duty to take this responsibility, but he has on occasions rendered valuable advice and assistance to the Government, and he is a most valuable officer of this State. We also get considerable assistance from overseas organizations, and I assure the honourable member that every avenue is fully explored, but normally the fostering of new industries is undertaken by the Treasurer.

RENMARK COURTHOUSE.

Mr. KING—Can the Minister of Works indicate when work on the alterations to the Renmark courthouse will be undertaken?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—Plans for improved and additional accommodation are almost complete and provision has been made to enable work to commence this financial year.

IRON ORE DEPOSITS.

Mr. LOVEDAY—In view of Rio Tinto Company's interest in recently-discovered iron ore deposits in Tasmania can the Premier say whether it has shown any interest in our deposits in the Middleback Ranges and, if not, has any approach been considered in that regard?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have discussed with Mr. Dickinson, who is now the chief exploration officer of the company, its programme of development in Australia and also its interest in iron ore. In addition to negotiating in Tasmania I believe it has negotiated in other places. Mr. Dickinson informs me that the company is not interested now in developing steel production, but rather is interested in mining operations. He also volunteered that it may be possible, if an industry were established in South Australia, to provide additional iron ore from Western Australian sources to increase the tonnages available here to the quantity required for such an industry. The company would be interested in selling the production from its mines to South Australia.

DIESEL VEHICLE REGISTRATION FEES.

Mr. LAUCKE—The recent increase in the tax on diesel fuel has brought the costs incidental to diesel and petrol powered transport and also the revenue derived by way of tax from either source of power, more into line with each other. With this in mind, and to enable diesel truck owners and prospective purchasers of diesels to determine costs and plan for the future, will the Premier consider reducing registration fees on diesels to the level of petrol-driven vehicles?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—This matter has already been considered by Cabinet which believes that such a reduction would be fair and reasonable. The higher registration on diesels was imposed by Parliament in order to secure more adequate revenue for roads because diesel vehicles were not taxed at that time. This matter has been delayed temporarily pending a decision of the High Court in respect of the requirement to pay the tare tax by various carriers not registered in this State. If its decision is unfavourable Cabinet will recommend the introduction of legislation similar to the Victorian legislation.

ASSISTANCE TO LIBRARIES.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Can the Premier say whether the Government intends, if councils purchase premises for the provision of library facilities, to subsidize such purchases and, if not, is it prepared to subsidize a council for the cost of a library if it rents premises for use as such?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will get a report.

ROYAL ADELAIDE HOSPITAL.

Mr. LAWN—In this afternoon's *News* the following appears:—

A master plan for rebuilding the dangerously antiquated Royal Adelaide Hospital should be sought urgently from the finest architectural opinion, Professor H. N. Robson said today. Most of the hospital's wards are carrying many more patients than was intended when they were built—and that was a long time ago, Professor Robson said. There is a danger of infection. The strain on the medical and nursing staff must lower efficiency Professor Robson said.

Has the Government any plans as suggested? If not, will it consider giving effect to what Professor Robson advocates?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—This topic was the subject of a conference between all the honoraries at the Royal Adelaide Hospital and me about 10 weeks ago and, if I remember rightly, Professor Robson was a

member of that conference. I disclosed to the honoraries all the plans the Government had concerning hospital services in the metropolitan area, and I also arranged for the honoraries to have full access to the Hospitals Department in drawing up future proposals for extensions, alterations, demolitions, and other work at Royal Adelaide. The honoraries expressed appreciation of the approach I had suggested and already, as a result of that, some modifications have been made at Queen Elizabeth Hospital. As far as I know, everything is being harmonized between the medical profession and the Royal Adelaide Hospital Board concerning this matter. I can bring to mind no communication I have received from Professor Robson, except on the one approach where I understand my decision was considered completely satisfactory, therefore I am not conversant with any other views he may have on this subject. As far as I know, however, he has made no approach either to the officers of the Hospitals Department or to me, as Acting Minister of Health, but whether that is an oversight I do not know.

NARACOORTE RAILWAY STATION.

Mr. HARDING—Will the Minister of Works ascertain from his colleague, the Minister of Railways, when it is expected that a start will be made on the new passenger railway station at Naracoorte?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM MCINTOSH—Yes.

HAY SHORTAGE.

Mr. LAUCKE—I refer to the current extreme shortage of wheaten and oaten hay for chaffing purposes. Hay supplies of three of the largest chaff mills in the Barossa district, which have an extensive distribution of chaff throughout the State, are practically exhausted and chaff is being imported from Victoria at about £30 a ton. With these disturbing conditions now applying and having in mind the record number of stock this State is carrying, the prospect of little bulk of spring paddock feed and the possibility of a late opening next season, I ask the Minister of Agriculture whether he has had any surveys made of hay requirements from the next harvest and whether plans are being made to encourage the necessary cut, particularly in the recognized haygrowing districts?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I hope that the position as outlined by the honourable member will in itself provide a powerful incentive to those people with crops fit for hay to cut

them. I have received independent reports only recently on the chaff position in the metropolitan area and those reports confirm what the honourable member has said concerning the importation of chaff from other States. Apart from being extremely costly, this practice is dangerous because of the possible introduction of bad weeds with the chaff, a danger we have experienced previously. In the past the Government has gone to some lengths to encourage people to cut hay, but the results have not been altogether satisfactory and, from the financial point of view, they have been somewhat calamitous. Up to the present Cabinet has discussed no proposal on this matter, nor do I think it will be necessary to discuss it. Indeed, the publicity the honourable member's question will probably give to it will probably encourage people to cut all the hay available from hay crops this year.

FOOTROT CURE.

Mr. QUIRKE—I have been approached by a Mr. Arthur Collins who claims to have a cure for footrot. The proof he offers in support of his claim is such as to warrant a close investigation of his cure. He claims that minor cases of footrot can be completely cured in four days and major cases can be put on the road in eight days. That is a wide claim indeed, but he is willing to demonstrate it as he has already done in two places in the South-East. He says the cure will stand up to any test. Mr. Collins has approached the Minister of Agriculture and received the Minister's usual courteous reply, but because part of the remedy involves the use of a highly corrosive acid, the department apparently considers there is an element of danger in it. Mr. Collins, however, claims it is not dangerous and that this has been amply demonstrated. As this cure may be instrumental in saving hundreds of thousands of stock, will the Minister undertake to have Mr. Collins demonstrate the efficacy of his treatment? Further, if such treatment is even only half as effective as he says, will the Minister allow him to market it as a cure for what is today a very serious menace to the sheep flocks of this State?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have interviewed Mr. Collins two or three times concerning his proposals. The remedy he claims to have used comprises two very highly corrosive acids, the names of which Mr. Collins has asked me not to disclose. Mr. Collins has appeared before the Stock Medicines Board on an application to have his remedy accepted by it and sold under the purview of the regulations made

under the Act, which requires, *inter alia*, that a label be attached to the bottle stating, in effect, that it has been approved by the Department of Agriculture and the board. I do not doubt Mr. Collins' statement that his remedy is effective, but the board takes the view—with which I concur—that other equally effective remedies are available which are certainly not as dangerous in corrosive elements, and the board considers it would not be justified in registering a cure that could be highly detrimental to live stock and possibly stockmen if placed in the hands of people who understood less about them than Mr. Collins does or who did not have the same regard to the health of animals that he has. I do not doubt that under Mr. Collins' careful attention and with his knowledge of livestock as a stockmaster, he could successfully administer the cure, but the board takes the view—with which I concur—that it should not be freely made available as a registered stock medicine, and I have advised Mr. Collins to that effect.

HOLIDAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 21. Page 412.)

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham)—It is some weeks since this Bill was debated and honourable members may have forgotten what has taken place. The member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) introduced the Bill and moved the second reading. The Premier and the member for Enfield (Mr. Jennings) have also spoken on this measure. The Premier opposed the second reading, but having heard his remarks I was almost inclined to support it because he drew attention to one section in the Act which enables the Governor to proclaim a special day to be a public holiday or a bank holiday in any year. In other words, by executive act the very thing which the member for Norwood desires to do by his Bill can be done in any case, and I am not sure that that is a good thing. If an unscrupulous Government came to power in South Australia almost anything could be done under that provision with regard to our public holidays.

Mr. Lawn—Haven't we an unscrupulous Government now?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—No, quite the reverse. Despite that weakness in the Act, which it would probably be wise to eliminate, I am not prepared to support the second reading or to move amendments in Committee. I have given

this proposal to give, in effect, a five-day working week to bank officers the gravest consideration over a long period, and certainly long before the Bill was introduced. Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to be able to defer to the wishes of bank officers in this matter because I have a great regard for them, but I think that in the interests of the community it is my duty to oppose the measure. That does not mean that I have not a great sympathy with the claims of bank officers. I suppose they feel they are justified in asking for a five-day working week, which is enjoyed by most people, and if I could support them in this matter I would do so. They have acted quite properly, for they have gone through all the processes they could to bring this measure before the House.

First, they approached the Government to introduce an amendment to the Holidays Act or to bring about a five-day working week through some appropriate means. When that was rejected they approached the member for Torrens and myself to do it, and that is what I meant when I said that I had given the matter very serious consideration before the Bill was introduced. I am speaking for myself, and the member for Torrens can put his own views on this matter, but we were not prepared to bring down a Bill because we did not believe it would be in the best interests of the community. After having gone to the Government and to Government members the bank officers did the only other thing possible: they went to a celebrated member of the Opposition to introduce this Bill. I do not hold that against them for they acted perfectly properly in this matter and it is a pity that other sections of the community do not do likewise when they feel they have a legitimate claim. It is ironical that Mr. Dunstan should have introduced the Bill, for he strongly favours bank nationalization, which is bitterly opposed by the majority of bank officers. The Labor Party is very much opposed to the Commonwealth Government's proposals on the Australian banking system, which are supported by the majority of banks and bank officers. Members can see just how ironical it is that the Bill should have been introduced by Mr. Dunstan. Despite the diversity of views between himself and the bank officers, perhaps he can be forgiven for trying to secure some political advantage. When one realizes that this measure will rob workers in industry of a great convenience, one wonders how the Labor Party could be persuaded to support it, for the Party claims to represent these workers. When Mr.

Dunstan was giving the second reading of the Bill I interjected "Why didn't you include shop assistants and others in this proposal?" He gave me a typical superior, self-confident reply and made me feel very small. He turned a withering gaze upon me and said:—

Because shop assistants are not at a disadvantage in this matter. They can go to the court and get this provision and that is why I did not include them.

When one considers that reply in relation to the real facts one suspects that in preparing his speech Mr. Dunstan did not undertake sufficient research. Shop assistants belong to a union and members opposite believe that they represent unionists, yet Mr. Dunstan said that shop assistants could go to the court to get a five-day working week if they wanted it. I felt small when I heard Mr. Dunstan's reply, and he often makes members feel that way when he replies to interjections, so I made some inquiries and found that in 1945 an application was made to the Commonwealth Arbitration Court by shop assistants of Newcastle for a five-day working week. The court rejected the claim and said:—

Elimination of Saturday trading would effect a fundamental alteration of a well established usage and practice of the people. Thus the issue before us concerns not only the industrial relations of shop assistants and their employers but also very directly of persons in the community. The change, if made, would largely be a social change. In those circumstances we think the question raised is rather one for Parliament, which as recently as 1946 gave attention to the subject of Saturday trading, than for this tribunal.

This is the only reported case I can find where shop assistants have gone to the court for a five-day working week, and in it the court said it was a matter for Parliament, yet Mr. Dunstan has the effrontery—perhaps that is a little strong as I do not want to hurt his feelings—to say that shop assistants organized in a union, and members opposite say they have a special interest in such people, are not covered by the Bill, because they can go to the court. However, the court says that it is a matter for Parliament. I am surprised that a member opposite should introduce this Bill on behalf of bank officers and at the same time leave out shop assistants.

Mr. O'Halloran—How did shop assistants in Tasmania get a five-day week?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—Plenty can be said about Tasmania later. When I discussed this matter with members of the Banks Officers Association one of the points that impressed me more than anything else dealt with staff recruiting. The

banks have had a difficult time in getting recruits. Youngsters leaving school and wanting employment are put off when they find they have to work on Saturday mornings. From experience in my office, I know that is the position, yet Mr. Dunstan did not mention it, and it was a point which I believe would have been a strong one in his argument. The gist of his argument was that other people, the shop assistants whom he left out in the cold, could do the work at Savings Bank agencies. In other words, bank officers won't work on Saturday mornings, but we will get somebody else who is already busy to do a little bit extra. That is a fallacious argument. Mr. Dunstan said we had to look at this matter as a court does, and for the benefit of those who may have forgotten his oratory, I remind them that he said:—

Therefore, in effect, we are the people who must become upon this occasion, owing to the disabilities of the bank officials in the face of Commonwealth legislation, a court of conciliation and arbitration, to determine the rights and wrongs of this matter.

Nothing could be clearer than that and I am in entire agreement with that portion of his speech. What principles would be adopted by a court of conciliation and arbitration? Let us refer to what is known as the Five-day Working Week Case in 1945. In the judgment of that case the principles on which the court acted were laid down.

Mr. Lawn—The court has somersaulted since.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—I will refer to that later. On page 35 of Vol. 54 of the Commonwealth Arbitration Reports the following appears:—

... the court has acted on a principle which was discussed and applied by Kelly J. in the *Wool and Basil Workers case* in which he said:—

"In the *Storemen and Packers (Wool Stores) case* I was called upon to deal with a claim for the prescription of a five-day working week. Upon this question I said, '... the time has, I think come to re-state the general principle that this court will not interfere with an employer's right to regulate his own business, unless in his regulation of it he imposes unjust or unreasonable demands upon his employees.'"

The court can see no reason at the present time for departing from this principle.

On page 36 this appears:—

Moreover, in cases where the employees are engaged in rendering services or supplying goods to the public on Saturdays, the court must weigh against the claims of the employees to be free from work on Saturday morning the reasonableness of and necessity for the public custom of availing themselves of such services or supply and also the effect

of the change on ancillary industries or occupations which make possible the rendering of such services or supply. In particular, the court must be satisfied that improving the arrangement of leisure of one particular group, it will not in the circumstances existing at the relevant times impose unreasonable burdens upon the rest of the community. In the same way as the court will protect the employee from unreasonable or unjust demands on the part of employers that they should work on Saturday mornings, so, in cases where the court has to consider the public interest, it is the duty of the court to be sure that the granting of the five-day week will not impose unreasonable or unjust restrictions on the members of the public.

So we must be sure that the granting of a five-day week will not impose unreasonable or unjust restrictions on members of the public. Mr. Lawn interjected that the court has somersaulted in this matter. I admit that those principles were established in 1945, but as late as 1956 the court, in the Bank Officials Case, affirmed those principles. It said:—

Having in mind the course of the proceedings before the commissioner, and the manner in which the parties' cases were put to him, it is fairly clear that Mr. Portus applied to this case the principles or doctrines enunciated by the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration in 1945 in the Five-day Week Case. We have concluded firstly that in the circumstances of this case fully justified the learned commissioner in applying the cases referred to; and secondly that no modification of the principles enunciated in them is justified upon the material before the commission in this appeal.

In other words, the principles I have enumerated still stand and are still applied by the Arbitration Court. What would happen if a five-day week were granted to the banking industry? I believe it would cause unreasonable and unjust restrictions on the public. In the propaganda for a five-day week one of the strongest arguments on the surface has been, how did industry get on when it worked a 5½ day week? It is said that workers were able to transact their business at that time when the banks were open for the same period, and we have been asked why they cannot do so if the banks enjoyed a five-day week. That argument is fallacious when we realize that one of the reasons advanced by the workers for the introduction of a five-day week as opposed to a 5½ day week was so that they could transact their business and do their shopping on Saturday mornings. It may interest members opposite to know that in the Five-day Week Case the workers of Whyalla and Iron Knob advanced five reasons why they should have a five-day week. Their second reason was

the inability of members working 44 hours in 5½ days, plus necessary overtime, to transact their business and shopping. If banks had a five-day week I believe it would cause an unreasonable and unjust restriction. I do not know how many members come to town on Saturday mornings, but those who do realize how busy the city is. The place is thronged with people. In my profession I am frequently told by clients that they can see me only on Saturday mornings and I attend my office to meet their convenience. Saturday morning is far busier than any other morning. One only needs to pass the State Savings Bank or the Commonwealth Savings Bank at 9.25 a.m. on a Saturday to see how many people are waiting for the doors to open. Mr. Dunstan has pointed out that the Motor Vehicles Department, Public Trustee, Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages and other Government offices are closed on Saturdays. However, we cannot compare Government offices with banks.

Mr. Davis—Why?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—Because the transactions which the normal citizen has with Government departments are unusual and out of the ordinary. He may register his motor vehicle every 12 months, or visit another Government department every 10 years, but he goes to his bank regularly. Another difficulty I see in Mr. Dunstan's contentions is that he regards savings banks and trading banks in exactly the same way in this legislation. Their businesses are entirely different. Savings banks are particularly required to be open on Saturdays so that workers can deposit savings and withdraw moneys. We cannot treat all banks the same, but if we compel savings banks to remain open it will be grossly unfair to their employees. My own experience is that my trading bank is busier on a Saturday morning than at other times. I visited it recently of a Saturday to verify my beliefs and found that to be the position. A distinction should be made between savings and trading banks, but Mr. Dunstan has not attempted to do so. In any event, if he did, it would be grossly unfair to savings bank officers.

Much has been said about Tasmania, which has been regarded by members opposite as possessing the ideal set-up. They have referred to Tasmania frequently in endeavouring to persuade us to agree to this Bill. I point out, however, that in southern Tasmania, for instance in Hobart and in the nearby municipality of Glenorchy, shops have been closed on Saturday mornings since 1937. In other words,

the closing of shops, which has been spurned by the member for Norwood, preceded the closing of banks by eight years.

Mr. Riches—Did the member for Norwood spurn the closing of shops?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—He said they could go to the court.

Mr. John Clark—So they can.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—Why don't they then? I suggest that Tasmania is in a different category from South Australia because in southern Tasmania the shops closed on Saturday mornings well before the war and it was only eight years ago that banks were first closed on Saturday morning. The honourable member, however, has more support when we consider northern Tasmania because, although the banks throughout Tasmania closed early in 1950, as far as I know the shops are still open in Launceston on Saturday mornings. However, because in southern Tasmania the closing of shops preceded the closing of banks on Saturday mornings we must be careful when considering experience in that State.

Apart from that distinction, members should not forget that the community of Tasmania is different from that of South Australia both as regards the dispersion of population and the size of the population, and I suggest Tasmania is not a good guide for us to follow. What conclusions do I draw from what I have said? The truth is that in some occupations workers must work in the public interest at times when the bulk of the community is not working. As stated in the Bank Officers Case, working on Saturday morning is incidental to the ordinary exigencies of the occupation, and I believe that into that category fall professional men such as lawyers.

Mr. Dunstan—Doesn't the Law Society recommend the closing of lawyer's offices on Saturday mornings?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—No, and our office remains open, although I do not wish to advertise here as it is against the ethics of my profession. I believe that such occupations as lawyers, bank officials, and certainly employees of public utilities fall within the category I have mentioned. Whether for better or for worse, because of their occupation, those people are obliged to work on Saturday mornings in the interests of the community as a whole, even though the bulk of the community is not working. That is the answer I gave to the bank officials previously and that is my answer to them today.

Have the bank officials no redress in this matter? Of course they have, and the present

application the association has before the Arbitration Commission for penalty rates on Saturday morning is the redress to which they are perhaps entitled. The hearing of that application is proceeding at present. The association applied for a variation of the award so that the following penalty rates would be paid for Saturday morning work: junior male and female officers, £2 for each Saturday morning worked; male officers (21 years and over), £3 15s.; female officers (21 years and over), £2 10s. Those are the penalty rates being asked for by the bank officials for Saturday morning work and that is the appropriate redress for the fact that bank officials, in common with many others in the community, have to work on Saturday morning.

To sum up, this is not a Party political issue and we must consider it on its merits because the proposal for a five-day working week for bank officials has been turned down not only by the Liberal Government in this State, but by the Labor Government in New South Wales and perhaps elsewhere.

Mr. Riches—You don't suggest this Bill was introduced for Party advantage?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—Of course I do, but it should not be treated as a Party political measure. If Parliament passes this Bill, there would be the risk of an agitation for a 4½ days working week in industry. In other words, it is a vicious circle.

Mr. Davis—That's a very old story.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—It is a very true story though. I believe it would be disastrous for South Australia, and indeed for Australia generally, if such agitation were to begin. We should not risk allowing it because in this country we must work hard if we are to survive, and nothing should be done to detract from that aim.

Mr. O'Halloran—What will you do when automation comes?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—If it comes fully in the banking industry I will be willing to re-examine this matter, but at this time, in the circumstances in which we find ourselves, and for the reasons I have given, I oppose the second reading.

Mr. JOHN CLARK (Gawler)—I support the Bill. I listened with much interest to the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) and I believe that when he has thought a little more about his speech he will agree that it was not one of his best efforts. I was particularly interested because at lunch today a colleague asked me who would be the next speaker on

this Bill. When I told him that it was Mr. Millhouse he asked me if Mr. Millhouse would support it, and although I am not normally a betting man, I would have been prepared to wager that the honourable member would oppose it. As things have transpired, I would have won my wager.

Mr. Millhouse said towards the end of his speech that this is not a political measure, and that was one of the truest things he said; but when the vote is taken on the Bill we will find out whether it is a political measure. It was certainly not introduced as such, but from the tone of the remarks of at least two speakers on the Government side one may be sure how members on that side regard it. I am not certain that I should spend the time of the House discussing Mr. Millhouse's remarks, but he made one or two on which something should be said.

Early in his speech he momentarily raised my anticipation that he would support the Bill. He then gave the most astonishing reason why he was almost inclined to support it when he said there was a so-called weakness in the Holidays Act that would make it difficult for this legislation to be proclaimed. He said he was afraid of what might happen to the legislation in the hands of an unscrupulous Government, but I assure Mr. Millhouse that the loophole, if there is one, is in the Act for some purpose and has probably been tried and found wanting by the bank officers. With this Government in office the bank officers cannot use that loophole, so the honourable member may put his mind at rest on that issue.

Mr. Millhouse said he did not believe that the Bill was in the best interests of the community but quite frankly, although I listened as attentively as I was able, I did not discover where it was not in the best interests of the community. I suggest—and I hope I will not be regarded as unreasonable in this matter—that it must have been obvious to most members, particularly as the honourable member continued his remarks, that the real reason for his opposition to the Bill was because of its place of origin. We heard some reflections cast on the member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) who altruistically introduced this Bill. We were told he was the last person we would expect to introduce a Bill of this kind, but I believe he would be one of the first, and that could be said for most of my colleagues on this side, for we stand for justice. That is why we support this Bill.

The honourable member for Mitcham said he found it surprising that the Labor Party would support something to assist bank officers, but I do not find it surprising. If Mr. Millhouse went to the trouble of investigating the politics of bank officers and if they were willing to say what they thought on politics, I think he might get a rude shock, although I could be wrong on that. The honourable member's attitude is no doubt affected by the fact that he is more interested in the people who own the money than in those who handle it in the banks. We were told about the terrible thing we would be doing to workers in industry if we closed the banks on Saturday morning, but do members opposite realize that in these days practically all factories and shops of any size have banking facilities? There is not a factory that I can think of where it is not possible for deposits to be made, and I think withdrawals also, in business hours.

Mr. Dunstan—Banking business can be done by employees when they receive their wages.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Yes. Then we were told something about shopping hours. We were taken to Newcastle and eventually to Tasmania, but we took a different direction there because what we were told about Tasmania was more in regard to a five-day week for everybody, not so much about a five-day week for bank officers. At any rate, shop assistants' conditions were not raised by the member for Norwood, but by an interjection from the member for Mitcham himself. Then we were told by the honourable member that he did not like the Bill because it would effect a fundamental change. That cry has been made for the last 200 or 300 years, and more, by the conservative element that is afraid of change. I prefer to call "change" by another name—reform. We know what was said in England when Parliamentary reform was first mooted. I think the first Reform Bill was introduced in 1832. It did not extend the franchise very much, but representatives of the same class as the member for Mitcham held up their hands in holy horror for fear of what would be done. There was great opposition to factory reform also.

Mr. O'Halloran—Women and children were working in coal mines in those days.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Yes. We know of the dreadful things that were said and of the warnings of the awful things that would happen to England if these reforms were made.

Mr. Jennings—Some people even said that those changes were against the natural economic law.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Yes, and they said the same thing against the move to abolish slavery. Coming much closer to modern times, did we not hear the same things said about what would happen to the economy of the nation if a shorter working week were introduced? The fundamental changes of today are the ordinary social usages of tomorrow. Something has been said about automation, but I do not think the problems of automation are nearly as difficult as we are led to believe. Many industries have adopted automation in part at least already. The member for Mitcham told us about crowds outside the Savings Bank on Saturday mornings, but if he had taken the trouble to consult the banks he would have found how busy they are, or are not, on Saturday mornings, apart from Savings Bank activities. Perhaps I should not have referred so much to the remarks of the member for Mitcham, because he indicated how we will be treated in this debate. He indicated that we shall have the customary spectacle of the big dog, the leader of the pack, barking and the other smaller, but not necessarily inferior dogs—

The SPEAKER—Order! I think the honourable member is referring to members of this House, and I ask him to withdraw that statement about the big dog barking because the language is un-Parliamentary.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—I certainly withdraw Mr. Speaker, but I took it for granted that a member was allowed to refer in metaphorical terms to other members.

The SPEAKER—The honourable member has withdrawn, and I ask him to continue his remarks now.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—It seems that the Premier has strongly opposed the Bill and his colleagues are joining in unison in opposing it whether they know what they are talking about or not. Therefore, I should not have wasted so much time on the remarks of the member for Mitcham. I regret that this measure is being treated as a Party matter, but it is not that. It should be discussed impartially and not on a Party level. When he moved the second reading the member for Norwood tried hard, despite provocation, to keep it away from a Party level, but I should think he did not find that easy. I join issue with some of the arguments—if they can be classed as arguments—put forward by the Premier. He gave only the points that he hoped would fit his case, though it is doubtful whether they did. He did not mention other points that did not suit his case. For instance, he made great play on the point that agencies of Savings

Banks were, in effect, agents of their particular banks and that under the Bill they would have to close for banking on Saturday mornings, or morally should close. Surely the mere cashing of cheques or the depositing or withdrawal of money is not the principal part of banking business. Indeed, I do not think it can be called the essential part of banking. I shall now quote an extract from the Bank Officers' Industrial Agreement that was published in the *Government Gazette* of September 27, 1956, for it tells us fairly plainly what banking is supposed to be. This definition clause states:—

For the purpose of this agreement an agency or receiving office shall mean and include only such offices as shall not be kept open for business during usual banking hours on every business day and/or at which cheques or bills are not domiciled and from which drafts are not issued.

That makes it clear that agencies and receiving offices are regarded as different from the branch offices of a bank. Firstly, they do not keep normal business hours; secondly, they do not deal generally in negotiable instruments; and thirdly, they do not make loans or take securities and the like. It should be noted that a co-operative registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act is prohibited by that Act from carrying on banking business, yet it may accept deposits just as bank agencies do. Obviously, the Act does not consider that this activity is essential banking business, and surely no one would suggest that a co-operative is a bank. However, the Premier, either wittingly or unwittingly, implied this line of argument when he opposed the Bill. He suggested that such agencies were banks.

The Premier's speech was full of omissions. He did not tell us that the question of agencies being closed on Saturday mornings applied only to Savings Banks. The Savings Banks transact only a relatively small proportion of all banking business, though of course it is an important part. If the member for Mitcham had investigated that point he would have realized that the Premier was not anxious to mention the amount of work done by all the banks, but only by those that suited him. The Premier told us that reports from the Savings Bank had shown that it conducted 30 per cent more business on Saturday mornings than on any other morning. I do not deny that, but he omitted to tell the House about reports of the business done by trading banks on Saturday mornings. Even the State Bank does much less business on Saturday mornings than on any other days.

Mr. Jenkins—That is not so in country districts.

Mr. Dunstan—The Premier had a report about the business of the trading banks.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—I am reliably informed that he did, but he did not tell the House about it. I hesitate to suggest that he did not give those facts to the House because they did not suit his argument, but that is the inference. The Premier based most of his arguments, such as they were, on conditions obtaining in the Savings Banks, of which there are two in South Australia, and to a lesser degree in the State Bank. He ignored the work of the trading banks, but that is completely unjustifiable because we have seven such banks in South Australia apart from the Commonwealth trading bank. These banks employ two-thirds of the bank officers in this State, so it was unjustifiable for the Premier to ignore those people when opposing the Bill. We would be justified if we made the reasonable assumption that the trading banks care for a very large share of the banking business, and also that it would have been logical before condemning the Bill out of hand and in its entirety to inquire how much Saturday trading was done by the trading banks. I suggest that such an investigation was made, but the facts elicited were not given to the House.

Mr. Jennings—They were suppressed.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Possibly, but in deference I did not say that. The Premier said it would be capriciousness on the part of the Government to keep banks open just for the sake of being open. How can that be justified? He said also that Saturday morning trading would cause more work for bank agencies, which are to be found in chemist shops, stores and other shops. He said that the normal functions of these agents were not related to banking. I emphasise that these are not agencies of trading banks but of the savings banks. I apologise for devoting most of my remarks to a criticism of those made by the Premier, but they were so misleading and unjust to the case put by Mr. Dunstan that I can be pardoned for doing what I have done. The Premier said that bank officers would gain leisure at the expense of the agencies and he attempted to make the point that if the principal were precluded by law from opening on Saturdays the agent should also be precluded. That seems reasonable, but members know that the Electricity Trust and the Housing Trust, which can be regarded as State instrumentalities, close on Saturdays, yet provision has been made

for their accounts to be paid on Saturdays, not at their own offices, but through the goodwill of a trading bank. The Government must countenance that sort of thing, yet it conflicts with the expressed opinion of the Premier. It is a clear case of principal and agent, and the facilities cannot be classed as banking. Mr. Millhouse said that Mr. Jennings was rather confused about banking. I did not hear Mr. Jennings speak, but I heard the Premier and it is certain that he confused the functions of banking. Mr. Millhouse cast grave doubts about the power being in the legislation, but the Premier said that the legislative power existed to preclude Saturday bank holidays. That is 100 per cent correct, but the Premier did not say that over two years ago, at a deputation of bank officers to him, he at first denied that the power existed, but then he said that the legislation did not intend the Government to make Saturday a regular bank holiday, and therefore the Government would not exercise its powers in the matter. Then, why is the provision in the legislation? Despite what the Premier said in this debate the Government has specifically refused to exercise the power when asked to do so. The following is a copy of a letter from the secretary to the Minister of Industry and Employment, dated November 2, 1954, to the Australian Bank Officials Association (S.A. Branch) and to the Commonwealth Bank Officers' Association (S.A. Division):—

I am directed by the Minister of Industry and Employment to inform you that your letter of October 14 asking for Saturday to be included in the days proclaimed as bank holidays under the State Holidays Act, has been considered by Cabinet. In reply I am directed to inform you that section 4 (a) (i) of the Holidays Act provides for the Government by proclamation to appoint any part of any specified day to be a bank half holiday throughout the State, or in a particular locality, but the section when inserted in the Act in 1947 was not intended to be used as a means for proclaiming a permanent bank half holiday on Saturday mornings. Although your request has previously been before Cabinet and was not approved, the matter has again been considered by the Government, which however has decided not to take any action in the direction sought by your association.

Mr. Millhouse has no need to worry about that section, and he can sleep well tonight. There is the power under the Act, but the Government refused to use it, which is why the Bill was introduced. I have given my views on the argument put forward by the Premier and some members may think that I am biased for political reasons, but I hope I am not for this is not a Party matter. For all I know some

members on this side might vehemently oppose the Bill. I do not know how they will vote. In case it should be said that I am biased, I will quote another opinion. It is not a private letter; otherwise I would not quote it. It is an open letter to the Premier and a copy of it was handed to the press, but I do not think it was printed. It was written by the Divisional President of the Commonwealth Bank Officers' Association, after the Premier spoke in this debate. I am justified in assuming that this opinion can be taken as the view of the association. The letter was dated August 26, and was as follows:—

I listened with interest on Wednesday to your address in reply to the Bill to amend the Holidays Act introduced by Mr. D. A. Dunstan, M.P. Really, Mr. Premier, your arguments were very weak, and I feel sure that a man in your position could hardly have believed them himself. Surely, Sir, you must realize that the payment of a savings bank withdrawal, like the encashment of a cheque, is only one of the very minor functions of a bank. If it should be illegal for savings bank agencies to function on a bank holiday, then it is equally illegal for a storekeeper to oblige his customer by cashing a cheque. You, as Treasurer of the State, must be aware of the many ramifications of banking. Let us adopt a much broader horizon on this subject, Sir, and consider banking in its broadest sense. I noticed that you quoted an investigation undertaken some three years ago when you said that savings banks were used about 30 per cent more on Saturdays than on any other morning in the week. I also noticed that you glossed over the result of your more recent inquiries and failed to even mention figures pertaining to trading banks, or are you aware that they transact very little business on Saturdays?

When you said that Executive Council would proclaim each Saturday a bank holiday at the appropriate time under powers conferred by the existing Act, did you have your tongue in your cheek, or had you forgotten what you told a deputation which waited upon you some three years ago? Let me remind you. After first denying that the power existed, you begrudgingly admitted that, although it did exist within the letter of the law, it would not be within the spirit of the Act to make such a proclamation even for a trial period. I would have expected your memory to be much better, Mr. Premier. Bank clerks have been long suffering over this issue, and now look forward to your acknowledging their right to a five-day working week along with other wage earners. May we look forward to a withdrawal of your opposition and a new deal for bank clerks?

Let me answer the questions posed in the last sentence. We need not look for a withdrawal of the Premier's opposition nor for a new deal for bank clerks, because they will not be forthcoming. Hope springs eternal in

the human breast, and down through the years it has been a good thing that it has. The letter I quoted obviously gives the bank officers' opinion on the Premier's smoke screen on this legislation. In fact, I received a copy of the letter some time after preparing my remarks on the Bill and I read it this afternoon because it provides some evidence that I am not biased on this; the opinions I have expressed in disagreeing with the Premier's remarks are also expressed in this letter.

Quite frankly, I have been both amazed and disappointed at the reactions of Government members who have spoken on this Bill. On the evidence so far provided in this debate it appears they are willing to reject it without a fair investigation. I have tried most sincerely to enlighten the House and I ask members to consider reasonably the case presented on its merits and forget it was moved by a Labor member.

A few months ago I was speaking to a bank manager at Gawler, and, as he was naturally interested in his profession, he sought my advice and assistance in the matter of a five-day week for bankers. I asked him who would be introducing the measure in the House and when he told me that it would be Mr. Dunstan I told him he was making a mistake. In saying that I did not wish to reflect on Mr. Dunstan, but I pointed out that if the bank officers could have got a Government member to sponsor the Bill it would not be regarded with the same suspicion as I am afraid measures introduced by Labor members are. I ask that that feeling be forgotten with regard to this Bill for it has not been introduced by the Labor Party. I am not sure how many members will vote on it, but I ask all of them to examine the case thoroughly and deal with it on its merits. I support the Bill.

Mr. BROOKMAN (Alexandra)—The member for Gawler (Mr. Clark) said that Government members were suspicious of the Bill; but I am not suspicious of it: I merely do not like it. There is not much to be said on either side on this matter and, whether one likes it or not, the issue is clear. I believe the following is a fair summary of the case presented by the member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) in his second reading explanation of the Bill: Saturday should become a bank holiday; one reason why Parliament should deal with this matter is that it is thereby doing the work of the court, which is not able to adjudicate in this matter; most employees now

have a five-day week; very little business is done on Saturday mornings; workers who work the five-day week are not denied the opportunity of using banking facilities for they may use savings bank agencies in the shops; there is no point in keeping banks open on Saturday mornings in the country because the farmers generally come to town on other days. I do not know of any other point he raised except to explain those arguments. Why is it a right that bank officers should have a five-day week? Although they may like it, I do not see why it should be a right for anyone to have a five-day week.

Mr. Davis—You don't think it is right for them to have a five-day week?

Mr. BROOKMAN—It is not necessarily a right that they should have a five-day week. Undoubtedly many Australians have a five-day week, but that does not entitle everyone else to enjoy one automatically. Members should resist this Bill. Admittedly, the country is not likely to become insolvent because of this move, but I believe it is a step in the wrong direction as it shortens the present working week further and I do not think we can afford to do that in this country. Our working hours have been shortened quite enough now. Our costs of production and administration are high; indeed, they are so high that we cannot compete favourably with many other countries in many lines of production and at present we hold our position in the world's economy largely by the production of wool for which there is a ready demand. In other respects, however, we are not in a strong position and I do not think that anything that will add to the cost of production should be agreed to lightly.

Mr. Bywaters—Would you like us to go back to a 48-hour week?

Mr. BROOKMAN—No; I merely say that I do not agree to any further shortening of the working week. I understand that after the five-day banking week was introduced in New Zealand 10 per cent extra staff was required, and I believe it is reasonable to expect that to happen here if a five-day working week is introduced. Although I have no expert knowledge on this subject, I believe that the New Zealand experience would be repeated here and that it would be a bad thing.

Precedents are always produced in any argument on shorter working hours or any other privilege, but practically any case can be helped by producing a precedent, so the fact that a precedent could be found so easily does not strengthen Mr. Dunstan's case; it rather weakens it. Mr. Dunstan referred to the

Motor Vehicles Department and said that because a person could not go into that department on Saturday morning he should not be able to go into a bank, but those two services are different. Firstly, the *status quo* is that banks open on Saturday mornings, whereas the Motor Vehicles Department does not. Mr. Dunstan suggests that the *status quo* be changed, but a person does not usually have to go to the department once a week; indeed, if he goes at all it is usually about once a year, which is altogether different from the frequent use he must make of his bank. There is therefore little similarity between the two, and such an argument is worthless.

We live in a country with a high standard of living; indeed, only a minute proportion of the world's population enjoys a better standard of living than we do. The bank officers affected by this Bill are not overworked, although I do not say that they are underworked or are loafing. They are getting a fair deal at present and to release them from their present obligation to work on Saturday morning would further weaken the working spirit of this country and have a devastating effect on other industries and businesses that remain open. One of the quaintest arguments used by Mr. Dunstan was that workers would not be deprived of banking facilities if banks closed on Saturday morning, because they would be able to use the myriad agencies of the Savings Bank in such places as grocers' shops, but, although I agree with that, I point out that he said later that the shop assistants also want a five-day week and that he did not doubt that they would ultimately get it. It seems to me, therefore, that the honourable member wants to eliminate Saturday morning banking and that all this talk about the myriad agencies of the savings bank is merely a smoke screen, for he is not genuine about the workers being able to use them as he wants all shops to close. Certainly the passing of this Bill to close banks on Saturday morning would have a serious effect on all forms of Saturday morning trading.

We have been told something of the work done in banks on Saturday mornings, and I admit that some types of work, such as the negotiation of overdrafts, will be carried out on a considerably reduced scale on Saturday mornings, but I believe that savings banks do more work than than on any other morning of the week, and that is not surprising. The fact is that the banks are performing a useful service on Saturdays. I am sure they would have to

increase staff considerably, perhaps as much as 10 per cent to make up for what they would lose by not opening on Saturdays. We have often heard from some members that the greatest good must be done for the greatest number, but this Bill does not by any means follow that principle. Actually, it does the greatest good for a few thousand people (by allowing them a five-day week), but it denies the rest of the population of this State, nearly 1,000,000, from having bank facilities on Saturdays. I oppose the Bill and hope it will be defeated.

Mr. DAVIS (Port Pirie)—I support the Bill. I was upset after hearing the heart-rending speech of the member for Mitcham. I was astounded to find that he was so keenly interested in the wealthy workers of this country. He said that the Bill would result in great inconvenience for people working in industry, but how many would be inconvenienced if banks were closed on Saturdays? Surely bank officials are just as much entitled to a five-day week as workers in industry. Too often we have heard the story that progressive legislation brought down by this side of the House would interfere with business generally. I have seen the time when workers had a 60-hour week, and we heard the same story then from those who opposed a shorter working week. We always hear that if workers' hours are reduced it will mean the ruination of someone, but shorter hours have not had that effect.

Most workers now enjoy a 40-hour week, yet members opposite say that if a man is working in a bank he should not have the same privileges as those in other industries. I have been fighting for shorter hours all my life, and I believe that all workers, whether employed in a bank or on the end of a pick, should enjoy the same hours. Obviously, the member for Mitcham knows little about the financial position of the workers and the amount of money they are able to bank. I am not compelled to do my banking business on a Saturday morning: I can do it on a Friday. Industrial workers have no money to bank because their wives take the pay envelope as soon as they get home on pay day, and they can do any banking necessary. I admit that I have not much money, and when I call at a bank on a Saturday morning it is usually to see how my overdraft is, but I have never been held up long at the counter. It is ridiculous for members opposite to put up the argument that the banks would have to increase their staff if

the Bill were passed. People only have a certain amount of money to bank and it does not matter whether they bank it in four or five days. There would be no inconvenience for the public generally if bank officers were given a five-day week. We have often been told that if banks or shops were to shorten their hours of business the people on the land would be inconvenienced, but most of these people spend Thursday or Friday in their nearest town.

The member for Alexandra (Mr. Brookman) would like to go back to the dark ages when farm workers had to work from daylight to dark, and perhaps even with a hurricane lamp at night, but I am pleased that legislation has been passed to give workers generally more leisure. Why should an employee, whether he be in a bank or in any industry, be deprived of his Saturday morning off? The member for Mitcham dealt at length with shop assistants, and he said that members on this side of the House desired to give them a five-day week. That is true, but they are just as entitled to a five-day week as the employees covered by this Bill. I live in a city where employees forced a five-day week on shopkeepers some years ago. The member for Mitcham said that the member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) had told the House that the shop assistants should go to the court for better conditions, but those employees at Port Pirie who were enjoying a five-day week as a result of refusing to work on Saturdays lost that privilege because the employers took them to court, for the court forced the employees to work a 5½-day week.

Members opposite have no desire to be progressive: they want to get back to the stone age. They have no desire for the workers of this country to enjoy the benefits of prosperity: Why should any worker have to work in industry to produce profits for someone else? The only way the workers can share in the prosperity of industry is by a monetary gain or shorter hours, and I think that in the interests of health shorter hours are preferable. Opposition members have been accused of making this Bill a political issue, but it is not because most bank officers do not hold the same political views as we do.

Mr. John Clark—You cannot be sure of that.

Mr. DAVIS—On polling days I have often seen bank officials assisting candidates opposing my Party. However, everyone is entitled to his political opinion and I think none the less of those bank officials because they have different political opinions from mine. The member for Light (Mr. Hambour) is holding

up his hands, and he knows that I have some friends on the other side of the House. Therefore, no-one can charge us of making this a political issue. Members of this side support the Bill because they believe in fair play. Every worker should enjoy a five-day working week. It is difficult sometimes to be off on Saturday morning, but where it can be done the rostering is such that only five days a week are worked. Departments of the Port Pirie Smelters must operate seven days a week, but because of rostering the workers work only five days, which is a great benefit to them and lengthens their lives. It is wrong for one section of the community to work 5½ days each week and others five. We seek uniformity in this matter. With the tramways and railways it is impossible for all workers to have Saturday and Sunday off, but again rostering enables a five-day week to be worked. I hope the Bill will be passed to allow bank officers to work only five days each week.

Mr. JENKINS (Stirling)—I oppose the Bill, although I am reluctant to do so. I must oppose it on principle; I have not been dictated to like members opposite. I approach this subject from the point of view as to how it affects my district. Members opposite say that very little business is done by banks on Saturday morning. If that is the position, why don't the banks reduce their staffs on Saturday morning? Under the legislation they cannot close, but they could reduce their staffs if it were necessary, but it is not done. My district is not covered by the Early Closing Act. Victor Harbour is a tourist town and the shops there open to provide a service to holiday-makers. Many people from Adelaide and other nearby towns leave home on Friday night to go to Victor Harbour for a holiday. On the Friday night and Saturday morning the shops do a tremendous business, with which banking is associated. The normal population of Victor Harbour is 2,400, but for many months of the year it is increased to about 10,000, because of the presence of holiday-makers. The shops and the banks provide them with a service. Mr. Dunstan based his support for the Bill on the statement that little banking business is done on Saturday morning, but that morning is one of the busiest for the banks at Victor Harbour, where there are five. On Friday the managers go to their agencies nearby to transact business and if the banks in Victor Harbour were closed on Saturday morning there would be no opportunity for the bank managers to negotiate business between Thursday night and Monday morning. Mr. Dunstan

said that Saturday tends to be a dead day for banking. I suggest that country members consult country bank managers to get information about the amount of business done that morning.

I have discussed the matter with a cross section of country people and with traders at Victor Harbour. The bank managers told me that they do a considerable volume of business on Saturday morning. They would like to have that morning off, but it is necessary to keep the banks open. The convenience to people who visit our towns must be considered. Most of the towns live on the tourist trade, and banking is an integral part of that trade. One member opposite said that little business is done by the trading banks on Saturday morning. That may apply in the city, but not in my district where it is almost impossible to make an appointment to see a trading bank manager on a Saturday morning, because he is so busy. There is as much business done that morning as is done on any full day in the week. After weighing all the factors involved in this matter so far as my district is concerned, I must oppose the Bill. As I said earlier, the Early Closing Act does not apply there. Only a week or two ago Goolwa broke away from early closing because the influx of tourists is increasing and because better facilities for trading are needed. The trend is away from early closing. Shops on the South Coast rely on holiday-makers for their business and Saturday is one of the busiest mornings of the week. Even the stock and station agents are open that morning. Banking is an essential part of trading in towns on the South Coast, and it should be available on Saturday mornings.

Mr. RICHES (Port Augusta)—I support the Bill. The argument advanced by Mr. Dunstan was reasonable and valid, and it has not been answered by the Premier or any other members who oppose the measure. I have tried to view this matter with an open mind, but human nature being what it is I have not always found it easy to do that. Every political pronouncement I have read from bank officers has not given me any comfort, nor have they indicated to me that they have much concern for the people for whom I have tried to be a spokesman over the years. Indeed, the most vigorous opponents I have encountered at election time have been bank officers and I have no doubt that at the next election, probably under instructions, they will be handing out blue cards in the same way as in the past. They are entitled to do that,

and I would fight for them to be able to do it. When an approach was made for my support for a measure sought by members of an organization which has allied itself so definitely in the past with one brand of politics it caused me to examine the matter very carefully. I believe that fair play is bonny play all the world over and the fact that bank officers may have opposed us at election time should not prejudice our view if they have a case to present, for in the name of justice that case must be considered. They have as much right as any other section to expect society to give them freedom on a Saturday morning if that can be done without adversely affecting public interests, and I believe that can be done. No argument has been advanced to show that public interests could not be served by bringing bank officers into line with the Public Service and other sections who enjoy a five-day working week. Because I am convinced of the justice of this case I support the Bill.

I wish to comment on the opposition to the Bill. My first reaction to it was the question, "Why can't this matter be settled in the court?" because all workers, other than agricultural workers, may apply to the court to have their conditions adjusted; but the member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) answered that in his second reading explanation by saying that the court is not available to bank officers in this matter. However it may feel about the rights of bank officers to a five-day week, the court cannot determine this issue: it can be determined only by Parliament. I have checked that statement and am satisfied Mr. Dunstan is right.

Mr. Millhouse—How have you checked it?

Mr. RICHES—Firstly, the Premier claimed he had consulted authorities in the matter and said he was satisfied that that statement was correct. Secondly, Mr. Dunstan has shown me the law in this matter. Thirdly, in this debate Mr. Dunstan said that shop assistants had access to the court, but that bank officers had not. Some members oppose the Bill because it does not apply to shop assistants and Mr. Millhouse asked why it did not, but how can a Bill to amend the Holidays Act in respect of bank officers apply to shop assistants? Secondly, Mr. Millhouse charged Mr. Dunstan with spurning shop assistants, but that statement is sheer nonsense. Mr. Millhouse read from the report of a case in Newcastle where shop assistants had applied to the court and where it was said that the decision was a matter for Parliament, and he would have

members believe from that that shop assistants were in the same category as bank officers regarding their access to the Industrial Court, but in fact shop assistants have access to our court. The decision referred to by Mr. Millhouse was not that the Newcastle Court was unable to grant a five-day week to shop assistants, but that it was not prepared in its discretion to do so. Further, it stated that if that were to be done now, Parliament would have to do it. Despite what Mr. Millhouse said, shop assistants have access to the State Industrial Court and have applied to it for a five-day week.

In a decision given by the South Australian Industrial Court it was held that section 167 (b) of the Industrial Code prohibited a board, when fixing the times to be worked to entitle employees to the wages fixed, from fixing a time beyond the hour fixed by the Early Closing Act for the closing of the shops in which the employees were employed, but did not prevent the board from fixing the ordinary hours of work on Saturday mornings—provided they did not extend beyond such closing time—and from fixing the wages for work on Saturday in either ordinary time or overtime. From the hearing of the appeals, it seemed to the court that the real question in issue was what part of the ordinary working week of 40 hours should be worked on Saturday, what rate should be fixed for work in ordinary hours on Saturday, and what rate should be fixed for work on Saturday outside the ordinary hours (if any).

That indicates to me that shop assistants have access to the court and as the court has decided that bank officers have no access to it, Parliament is the only authority to which bank officers may appeal for a decision. In the shop assistants case to which I referred, the court's principle as to Saturday morning work for day workers is that it will order that the ordinary week of 40 hours be worked on Mondays to Fridays except where, in the interests of the public or the efficient working of the employer's business or of industry generally, it is found that work on Saturday mornings should both ordinarily and necessarily be performed. That principle, which has been laid down by our own State Industrial Court, is a sound one for us to have regard to in considering this Bill. I am convinced that the work of bank officers can be done adequately on week days and that Saturday morning closing would not interfere with the interests of the public or impair the efficient working of the banks or industry generally.

Having said that, it is incumbent on me to reply to some contrary opinions expressed in this debate. The Premier's opposition was based on the assumption that, without amending the Act, the Executive Council could legalize Saturday morning closing if it considered it desirable, but as constituted at present the Executive Council is unsympathetic, so the appeal must be to this House. The Premier then raised another objection, that it was doubtful whether a State law could bind the Commonwealth Bank, which is interested in this matter. The Premier said, in effect, "The banks may be closed on Saturday morning by arrangement, but I have seen an opinion by eminent counsel which said that the Commonwealth Bank was not subject to any State law because under its constitution the Commonwealth had the power to make banking laws. It is undesirable by Act of Parliament to legislate against the public interest."

I point out, however, that the Commonwealth Bank operates in Tasmania where Saturday morning closing has been the order of the day for some time, yet we have heard no outcry from the people there that such closing is against the public interest or that industry is being jeopardized. Further, the Commonwealth Bank is observing the State law, and I believe that if this Bill were to become law the Commonwealth Bank would fall into line in this State the same as it has done in Tasmania.

The member for Stirling (Mr. Jenkins) made a plea on behalf of his constituents, saying that special facilities should be available at a tourist centre so that persons might bank at weekends, but, although I could understand members opposite saying that a man who worked on week days should be able to visit his bank on Saturday morning, I believe that the suggestion that a tourist is unable to transact business on any day other than Saturday is too silly an argument to be advanced in this Chamber.

Mr. Jenkins—You've got it all twisted.

Mr. RICHES—I do not know who has it twisted, but the honourable member said that the population of Victor Harbour rose to 10,000 during the tourist season and that many people were unable to do their banking business on weekdays.

Mr. Jenkins—I didn't say that.

Mr. RICHES—*Hansard* will prove the honourable member did, although he may not have intended to. He gave the population figures, but to suggest that this Bill should be defeated merely because the banking require-

ments of tourists cannot be satisfied on week days is one of the weakest arguments that has been advanced against this Bill. The honourable member also mentioned the tendency to get away from the provision of the Early Closing Act. I realize that the Early Closing Act does not apply in some parts of the State and that some businesses in certain towns remain open on Saturday afternoon and Sunday, but I believe there are people who will transact business of any kind on any day of the week if there is no law to prevent them. Will honourable members argue that if a country town closes on Wednesday afternoon and opens on Saturday afternoon the banks should be forced to open on Saturday afternoon to meet the convenience of the traders? No-one would apply the argument there, and it cannot be applied as some honourable members have sought to apply it in the course of this debate. Mr. Brookman held up his hands in horror and said that if bank clerks were given a shorter working week it would have a devastating effect upon working people. No-one has suggested that bank clerks are overworked, and that they will do any less work if banks are closed on Saturday morning. They will still have to transact all banking business.

The basis of this Bill is not that they should do less work, but that there should be a greater measure of freedom and a greater opportunity for them to take their place in the community. In my opening remarks I had something to say about the political outlook of bank clerks. In my experience they have been amongst our best citizens. You will find them working for social and sporting clubs, and active in cultural and civic organizations. The fact that they are required to work when certain other sections of the community are not interferes considerably with their contributions to the community. I gladly pay a tribute to all bankers in my district for the community work they do, and they would have my vote if it would free them on Saturday morning. I am convinced that their voluntary services would be greater and that the community would benefit. I believe that this would be in the public interest, except on election days. I favour that they should have the right of their own free will to be at polling booths on Saturday morning as well as Saturday afternoon.

I hope I have been able to convince the House that there is no substance in the opposition to the Bill, which has shifted its ground with every speech made. I confidently

expected that the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) would have been able to give us some concrete arguments why the Bill should not be supported, because he informed us that the bank officers approached him first in order to introduce the Bill, thinking they would receive some measure of justice from the Government, but it was quite evident to me that he had been unable to find any concrete reason for opposing the Bill. He suggested that because shop assistants were not included in the Bill, it was not acceptable to him.

Mr. Millhouse—I did not say that.

Mr. RICHES—The honourable member and Mr. Jenkins had better get together and read *Hansard*, because he will find that in answer to an interjection he did say that.

Mr. Millhouse—I just asked why shop assistants were not included.

Mr. RICHES—The honourable member said more than that and charged the member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) with spurning shop assistants. The honourable member gave no argument in opposition to the Bill, but endeavoured to engage in a debate with Mr. Dunstan. I got sick and tired of hearing about the member for Norwood. I would like to think that this was a measure which could be considered on its merits, without prejudice because it had come from Mr. Dunstan and because it had been supported by members on this side. Surely it is not too much to ask that if there is any cogent reason why the Bill should not be voted for we should hear of it. To date I have heard no valid reason for opposition to it.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra)—The debate has developed into a very interesting one, and as far as my judgment goes the honours are with those who support the measure. In spite of the great evil we are told will transpire, I think that after a week or two there would be no impact upon the general economy of the State if the Bill were passed. I discussed the matter with the sponsor, Mr. Dunstan, and came to the conclusion that no harm would be done. One of the things which influenced me to come to that conclusion was that it was only this place which could do as the Bank Officers' Association desires. Another reason was that I take great exception to the action of the administration of the Associated Banks in this State. Where are they in this picture and what have we heard from them? We were circularized by the Bank Officers' Association, but their employers are sitting on the fence believing that if there is any comeback it

will be on the Government. I take exception to the attitude of those who employ bank officers—their attitude to this place and to honourable members. The fact that employers were sitting on the fence influenced me to a great extent to come to my decision, a decision which I gave to Mr. Dunstan and to the Bank Officers' Association and to other people who contacted me, but since Mr. Dunstan's speech, I have had to withdraw my support, for which I am sorry.

I have before me a copy of the application by the Bank Officers' Association to the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Court for a variation of their award, which was to be heard before Mr. Commissioner J. H. Portus on August 26, 1957. I understand the case has since been adjourned. I will never agree to the use of a double headed penny. Here we have an application to the court for overtime rates for officers working on Saturdays. They include £2 extra for junior male and female officers and £3 15s. for male officers 21 years and over and for female officers of 21 years and over £2 10s. Whilst this matter is before the court, they are also asking Parliament to abolish Saturday morning work. If the bank officers lost their application to the court and this measure then came before the House, I would vote for it, but I am not going to cast a vote for it while the court is still considering the application.

Mr. Dunstan—What difference does that make to this measure?

Mr. QUIRKE—No difference but if it were passed in its entirety there would be a great deal of lack of enthusiasm by bank officers for Saturday closing. They would not spurn £3 10s. for a Saturday morning's work. If the award is in their favour and they get Saturday morning closing that will wipe that out. They have a double application—an application for overtime for Saturday morning work, and an application before the House for the abolition of Saturday morning work. They cannot have it both ways, not as far as I'm concerned. Their application to the court includes the following:—

The ordinary hours of work shall not exceed 40 per week exclusive of meal times, and in any place otherwise than in Tasmania, the hours shall be worked from Monday to Friday (both inclusive) between the hours of 8.30 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. and on Saturday between the hours of 8.30 a.m. and 12 noon.

Their working hours will embrace Saturday mornings, for which they want overtime. If the measure is passed in its present form and the banks were closed on Friday and officers

were called back to work on Saturday mornings, necessarily they would be paid overtime. That is clear.

Mr. Dunstan—The application before the court has nothing to do with the hours the bank opens.

Mr. QUIRKE—Is it necessary for me to repeat that the application is for overtime rates on Saturday mornings? This measure proposes to abolish Saturday morning trading activities.

Mr. Dunstan—Yes, to close the doors of the bank.

Mr. QUIRKE—I do not see eye to eye with the honourable member, but whilst the application before the court is not decided I will not vote for this measure.

Mr. Hambour—If the court granted that application and we closed banks on Saturdays, would the employees lose those overtime rates?

Mr. QUIRKE—The application relates to working hours including Saturday mornings, but the proposal we are considering proposes to abolish Saturday morning trade.

The SPEAKER—Order! I do not think the honourable member should refer to a matter which is still *sub judice*.

Mr. QUIRKE—I have made sufficient reference to it.

Mr. Riches—You have confused the issue sufficiently.

Mr. QUIRKE—If the honourable member had employees with two applications, one to close on a Saturday morning and the other for overtime rates how would he view it?

Mr. Riches—Do you think that is inconsistent?

Mr. QUIRKE—Of course it is. Had this court application not been brought to my notice I would have supported the Bill. I, too, pay a tribute to bank officers and to banks generally for the service they render to the public. Apparently some banks anticipate the passing of this legislation because one bank in particular is installing night safes in some country towns. If this legislation becomes law I hope all banks will make similar provisions because at present traders collect considerable sums of money on Saturdays and if the banks were closed they would be obliged to retain the money and safeguard it over the week-end. The money would be safer in a night safe. If this Bill were passed I do not think there would be a ripple on the State's economy, but while the action is before the court I will not support the measure. If that application is defeated I will support the Bill.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa)—In general principle, and in spontaneous personal reaction, I would be inclined to support the Bill in so far as consideration of the interests of bank personnel alone is concerned, but I feel there is an overriding obligation to public interest in this matter. There are many professions and avocations, the operations of which in the public interest cannot be restricted to a five-day week. I believe the banking profession falls into this category. In respect of clients' interests I doubt not that the closing of banks on Saturday mornings would be considered by traders generally and their customers as an unreasonable restraint of trade. Saturday mornings have become a family shopping time and a most important trading period.

I fully appreciate that bank officials, by the exacting nature and tempo of their work, are perhaps more entitled to consideration for freedom from duty on the sixth day of the week than are employees in many other industries who do enjoy a five-day working week. Should the reluctance of bank officials to work on Saturday mornings be reflected in any serious difficulty by the banks to retain their highly-trained personnel, and if there be any difficulty experienced in recruiting staff to banking institutions, then public interest could, perhaps, be better served and preserved by closure on Saturdays. The loss of senior personnel and a rapid turnover of younger, inexperienced staff could be reflected in a general lowering of standards of service to the public.

The local bank manager is more often than not the experienced counsellor and friend of his client, and through his advice and often guidance renders more than a tangible service to the customer. If there were evidence of a disability arising to the banks through the circumstances I have outlined I have no doubt the directors and staffs of the banks could and would indicate such disabilities as being to the public's detriment and would make appropriate recommendations concerning banking hours. The public interest from every angle is the crux of this matter and as long as public interest is best served by the retention of present trading hours as assessed by directors, staff and clients, I feel legislation should not be enacted to upset the *status quo*. I oppose the Bill.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—I make no apologies for my stand which is in accordance with the principles I have advocated all my life as a member of the Australian Labor Party. I do not have to talk with my tongue in cheek

and say that although bank officers have acted properly and I would like to support them and would if it were proved that they might be adversely affected by a 5½ day week, I must oppose the Bill. I do not have to manufacture excuses. Either we favour this Bill as a principle or oppose it, and if we oppose it we should have grounds for our opposition. I have had many years' experience in dealing with the principle involved in this Bill and I have heard similar arguments to those advanced today used against unions in the Arbitration Court, but I do not think I have heard any as stupid as that advanced by the member for Stirling (Mr. Jenkins) in his opposition to the Bill. He said that the banks should remain open on Saturday mornings because of the number of tourists going to Victor Harbour. To be consistent he should have advocated the banks remaining open on Saturday afternoons and Sundays. If a bank must remain open to meet the convenience of tourists on Saturday morning, it should remain open on Saturday afternoons, Saturday evenings, and Sundays. He might just as well say that the banks should be open all day Saturday for the convenience of the betting public and bookmakers. Bookmakers want to draw large sums on Saturday mornings for their business operations and large punters want to draw out money for their investments on Saturday afternoons, therefore to be consistent he should advocate that banks should remain open on Saturday nights to receive the money that is to be returned.

Mr. Jennings—But only one party would return it.

Mr. LAWN—That may be so. If Mr. Jenkins is consistent, let him advocate keeping the banks open seven days of the week. Mr. Millhouse suggested we might at some time have an unscrupulous Government which might do all manner of things. I suggest we have an unscrupulous Government today. Our legislation is all in the interests of one section of the community. The worker doesn't get a go from this Government in regard to industrial legislation. The Premier, in his closing remarks on this Bill, said, when referring to the member for Norwood:—

I suggest that he withdraw his Bill and then when it becomes necessary Executive Council could take the proper action, but until such time as that is necessary no action will be taken.

The member for Gawler (Mr. John Clark) this afternoon read the contents of a letter from the Bank Officers' Association to the Premier

recalling to his mind a statement he made on a previous occasion that Executive Council did not have power to grant a bank holiday on a Saturday morning. With regard to the question of unscrupulous Governments, we all know that the Premier makes all sorts of promises about deep sea ports, decentralization of industry and everything else before an election but immediately it is over those promises are forgotten. The Premier went on to say:—

I could not find much objection from the managers of trading banks. Some of them said that if the law wanted them to keep their banks open they would stay open, but would close them if the law said they had to be closed.

From my experience in the Arbitration Court I know what a judge would accept from that statement; he would say that the employers have no objection to what the bank officers desire but do not wish to be officially quoted as having agreed with them. Government members, and particularly the member for Stirling (Mr. Jenkins), claim that bank managers have told them just the opposite. They cannot have it both ways. They say they would like to support the bank officers who have acted perfectly properly, and then they say they are afraid they cannot support the Bill. The Premier went on to say:—

It is undesirable by Act of Parliament to legislate against the public interest.

I have heard this question of "public interest" argued for many years in the Arbitration Court. Whenever the trade union movement attempts to establish a definite principle which will have general application, whether it is the question of hours, annual leave or long service leave, the question of public interest is always argued. We heard this afternoon the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) quote an Arbitration Court judgment, but I will attempt to show the House what the Arbitration Court has done over the years. In a judgment in 1943 Mr. Justice Kelly (as he then was), in dealing with a claim by the Storemen and Packers Union for a five-day week, said:—

I cannot find that to require the employees to work the five and a half day week is unjust or unreasonable and I am, therefore, not prepared to make an award prohibiting the five and a half day week.

That is an early judgment that it is not unjust or unreasonable to expect men to work a five and a half day week, and it is the way the application was treated originally by the Arbitration Court. We later find a decision by the same judge in the Wool and

Basil Workers' application in 1945 in which he said:—

The position is that employees who claim a five-day week must show that the grant of it will not be detrimental to the public interest.

He referred to a decision of the Full Court and said:—

The Full Bench expressly approved that principle. But what it also did was to indicate that the refusal of an employer to concede his employees' reasonable claims was tantamount to the imposition by him of an unreasonable demand upon them.

The Full Court judgment to which Mr. Justice Kelly referred contains the following words:—

If, therefore, the ordinary week's work of 44 hours can be performed in five working days without detriment to the public interest, without loss in the value of the goods handled or to be handled by the industry and without reducing the efficiency of production or the efficacy of the necessary service rendered by the industry, then it is unreasonable to continue to demand, contrary to the expressed wishes of the employees, that their ordinary 44 hours of work should be spread over five and a half working days.

That is an instance where the court said that it is not unjust or unreasonable to expect men to work five and a half days a week, and then we have the court saying that the onus was on the employees to prove that the five-day week would not affect the efficiency of production or the efficacy of the necessary services. The employees who claimed a five-day week had to show that it was not detrimental to the public interest. That is the result of the quotations I have made up to now. Mr. Justice O'Mara later inserted this provision in the Metal Trades Award:—

In any case in which the ordinary week's work of 40 hours can be performed in five days as aforesaid without—

- (1) detriment to the public interest;
- (2) loss in the value of goods handled or to be handled;
- (3) reducing the efficiency of production; or
- (4) reducing the efficacy of the necessary service;

and a majority of the employees in such workshop or establishment desire to work their ordinary hours in five days as aforesaid, the employer shall adopt a five-day week in such workshop or establishment. Any dispute as to whether the ordinary hours of work can in any case or cases be worked in five days without detriment, loss or reduction as aforesaid shall be determined by a Board of Reference upon application made by or on behalf of the employees. Upon such an application proof that the working of a five-day week will result in such detriment, loss or reduction as aforesaid shall be upon the employer.

There is another instance where the court, having originally said that it was not unjust or unreasonable to order a five and a half day working week, then decided that the onus was on the employees to prove that the five-day working week would not result in loss of production or the efficacy of the service. Later we have the same court saying that the five-day week should be worked unless the employer could prove some particular reason why it should not be worked. It can be seen how the court has reversed its opinion.

The court was confronted with similar arguments to those advanced here, and although it accepted them originally it eventually saw the light. We have had the argument that banks should remain open for bookmakers and tourists, and all other sorts of arguments. These arguments hoodwinked the courts at first. When the metal trades and motor body building industries first went to the court the employers argued that if the small workshops were not open on Saturday mornings the man who was working a five-day week would not be able to take his car in to have it serviced or repaired and would have to lose time by taking it in between Monday and Friday. Is that not consistent with what has been argued here, namely, that if we close the banks on Saturday morning people will have to bank between Monday and Friday?

The employers, when addressing the Full Court, argued that a doctor may wish to take his car in for servicing or repair on a Saturday morning in order to have it on the Monday. The court fell for these arguments but eventually it realized that if the car could be repaired in such a short time on a Saturday morning it could be done in just as short a time on any day. It also realized that people did not get sick on only five days of the week, and that if a doctor could make arrangements to take his car to a garage on Saturday morning he could make arrangements to take it in any other day. The court also realized that doctors did not have only one car, and that they have a habit of going away any time and making arrangements for some other doctor to take over their practice. I know that from my own experience, and I am not complaining about it.

All these arguments were advanced why men in industry should not get a five-day week, and it has all been proved subsequently to be a lot of ballyhoo. It was simply an argument put up by the employers in the same way as arguments have been advanced today to stop progress. The member for Mitcham

(Mr. Millhouse) said that we on this side of the House, by supporting the Bill, were robbing the workers of a very great convenience. That has been the general theme of Government supporters. I still have to see the day when I will see the member for Mitcham and other Government members as champions of the worker, because they have never been the champions of the working class and they cannot convince me that they are on this occasion.

When the trade union movement in the 1920's advanced arguments in support of a 44-hour week, one of the reasons it put forward was that the workers needed time to make withdrawals from banks and attend to certain other business, but neither the employers nor the court thought that was worthy of consideration. The worker did not count for anything. Now it is suggested that we should consider the convenience of the worker and, according to one member, the tourists. I know that the people I represent work in factories or in similar types of establishments.

Mr. Hambour—Don't you represent all the people?

Mr. LAWN—I do my best to represent the 21,500 people in the electorate of Adelaide particularly, and I also do my best to represent all the people of the State and not only a section of profiteers or other small sections. Whether the electors in my electorate are bank managers, shop assistants, small business owners, council workers or people in industry, I am sure they will support my attitude. I know that these poor workers, in whom the member for Mitcham attempted to indicate he was interested, receive their pay envelopes and without leaving their place of employment can put savings into a special purpose savings box provided by the Savings Bank. Workers in nearly all factories and business places in the metropolitan area, and probably throughout the State, can avail themselves of the privilege of getting an envelope and putting their money in it and placing it in that box. That saves them a considerable amount of money on Saturday mornings, for if they had to come to the city to bank on a Saturday morning they would have to use public transport, which is very costly now that fares have gone up again. It would probably cost them more to go to the city and return home than the money they could put in the bank. Further, there would not be the chance of losing the money on the way to the bank or spending it. That is the answer to the argu-

ment that banks must remain open on Saturdays for the convenience of workers.

When I was working in industry I had to find some way of going to the bank, if I had any money to bank, and I had to find some way of getting to shops to make purchases, but I, and all other workers, could get along without much inconvenience in those days. If I had money in the bank I did not suffer in any way because I could get it out and use it, and no one else suffered either. The trouble was to put the money in the bank in the first place. Most of the banking done on Saturday mornings consists of deposits or withdrawals, and it is ridiculous to put forward the argument that workers will not be able to put money in the bank or take it out on Saturdays if this Bill is passed, or that tourists at Victor Harbour must have banking facilities on Saturdays. That argument would apply equally as well to the closing of banks on Saturday afternoons and Sundays.

The member for Burra (Mr. Quirke) referred to the application by the bank officers union to the courts. That application excepted Tasmania, and if he made inquiries he would find that the application means what the member for Norwood said it meant. Apparently the member for Burra was not quick enough to understand what the member for Norwood said. The bank officers had to make application to the court for a five and a half day week, as the Western Australian and the Commonwealth courts made it clear that this was a matter for Parliament. If bank officers apply to the Commonwealth Arbitration Court they must apply for a 5½-day week, which includes Saturday morning, but they excluded Tasmania from the application, and if this Bill is passed obviously bank officers will make an application, or the banks will, to include "South Australia" after "Tasmania."

Mr. Dunstan—And so will Western Australia after their Bill is passed.

Mr. LAWN—Yes, if they adopt a five-day week there. The argument put forward by the member for Burra is not a sound reason for opposing the Bill. Either we agree with the principle or we do not. The Bill has no political angle as far as I am concerned, for I do not think I would lose an election if I opposed the Bill or supported it. In any case, I would not let that question worry me. I have always been consistent on these matters in this House and have said what I thought in accordance with my policy and political beliefs, and I do not care whether I have offended or pleased people.

I think that bank officers have always known my policy: it has always been in accordance with the principle of this Bill, a five-day working week. I would like a five-day week myself.

Mr. Hambour—What do you have?

Mr. LAWN—The honourable member knows that people frequently call at members' homes on a Saturday or Sunday, and I have to attend to them. My support for this Bill is consistent with the attitude I have adopted all my life. I will support a five-day working week whenever I have the opportunity. I visited Tasmania in 1953 when a Federal conference of my union was held there and I did not know until then that banks were closed in that State on Saturday mornings.

Mr. Millhouse—How did you get on?

Mr. LAWN—Quite well. I think I spoke to 20 or more people there about the closing of banks on Saturdays, and they all told me that they got on quite well with that arrangement. I support the Bill.

Mr. LOVEDAY secured the adjournment of the debate.

COUNCIL BY-LAWS: POULTRY KEEPING.

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr. Millhouse—

That by-law No. 67 of the corporation of the city of Adelaide made on August 20, 1956, and laid on the table of this House on February 5, 1957, and by-law No. 57 of the corporation of the city of Woodville made on July 23, 1956, and laid on the table of this House on June 25, 1957, both in respect of the keeping of poultry, be disallowed.

(Continued from September 4. Page 577.)

Mr. KING (Chaffey)—I support the motion. As it is nearly 6 o'clock I ask leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

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

THE BUDGET.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from September 17. Page 663.)

Legislative Council, £10,630.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla)—In examining the Premier's statement this year, I found that it was very largely a repetition in many ways of previous financial statements he has made. He said that this State is becoming much more prosperous, and as usual painted a glowing picture of things to come, but nowhere can we find set out in this financial statement any approximate figures regarding the

real purchasing power of the wage earner during the last year, and that is a feature that I find is consistent throughout previous financial statements. I think it would be a good thing if in these statements we had something far more accurate in relation to the purchasing power of wage earners instead of these broad general statements regarding their prosperity or the alleged prosperity.

Mr. O'Halloran—In other words, recognizing the wage earner's place in the scheme of things.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Exactly. Only during the war and since has the State experienced anything like full employment. At present unemployment is once again rearing its ugly head, and the prosperity the Premier is talking about can only be described as arising from near full employment in that period, and the good prices enjoyed by primary industry. The period since the war has witnessed the enormous growth of hire purchase—the mortgaging of future wages to an unprecedented extent—indicating that the wage earners have not the ready cash to purchase the commodities they have already produced. That shows that the community, in our form of capitalist economy, does not receive the real purchasing power to secure the results of its own production. This situation can only be described as a dangerous one, and it is very susceptible to any period of unemployment, any period of drought, or a fall in the price of primary products.

The Premier's remarks this year have not quite that ring of confidence that we find in previous financial statements, despite the comparatively favourable circumstances that have arisen from full employment, good seasons, or high prices, because the Premier is not getting the money to do these things that he realizes are becoming more and more urgent as the years go on, and which can no longer be disguised with stories of prosperity on every hand. Last night the member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) dealt extensively with the extension of social services, and showed that this State does not compare favourably with other States in this regard. Despite the fact that the Premier is always claiming that there are fewer industrial disturbances here and that the wage earner in this State produces more per head, we find that the social services are lagging by comparison with those of other States. I do not propose to go over that ground again, but I wish to deal with another aspect of the social question, namely, housing. This is a basic question in any community, and

my attention was drawn in the first instance in these Estimates to an item regarding the Point Pearce station. I looked at this item because last year, with Mr. Dunstan, I drew attention to the fact that the houses at Point Pearce were in a particularly disgraceful condition. I am pleased to see that this year an amount of £3,000 has been allocated for the erection of cottages for aborigines there, but that is only touching the fringes of the problem. That statement is borne out by a recent report in the *News*, I think of last week, headed "Missions slated." The article stated:—

Government's handling of Point Pearce Aboriginal Mission was strongly attacked by Mr. P. Mayfield, chairman of Congregational Church Youth Department's division of social action. He said Government not giving mission aborigines fair deal. Best of about 50 houses for them were pretty shocking, and they could all be classed as hovels, he said.

I suggest that that is no exaggeration of the position, and although I am pleased that £3,000 has been allocated, it is obvious that that will not go very far towards providing better homes for aborigines at Point Pearce on the present cost of housing.

Mr. O'Halloran—It sounds like one house.

The Hon. Sir Malcolm McIntosh—The supervisor has improved existing cottages. Quite a lot has been done there.

Mr. LOVEDAY—That may be so, but this sum cannot supply much in the way of new houses to replace the 50 hovels there. I think it is perfectly accurate to describe them as hovels. However, I want to pass from this to the housing position in general. Houses are required for people in distressed circumstances. These may be classed as emergency homes, but we want homes for aborigines, we want far more houses for rental and far more for purchase. Early this year we were informed in the Governor's Speech that an improvement in the housing position is now evident, but I think it is quite clear that the only improvement evident is in the case of those people who have received homes and have been able to move into them recently. In 1952-53 there were 7,904 applicants for trust homes, and 4,126 units were built. In 1955-56 there were 11,751 applicants, yet only 3,238 units were built. This year the trust will build 3,100 homes, and there is a possibility that this rate will be maintained for the next year. This small number has been built despite the natural increase in population and the stepping up of migrant influx.

In my opinion the Housing Trust is doing a very good job. I want to make that quite clear because it has been said that, as we mentioned the fact that the trust is not able to produce as many homes as we would like, we are criticizing it. I am not criticizing the trust as such; in fact, without the trust the position would be disastrous. For this financial year the trust proposes to construct 1,730 houses for sale and 1,330 for rental. In answer to questions, the Premier has said that it is impossible to build a higher proportion of houses for rental because the trust needs to get as much money as possible back from houses for sale in order to build still more houses. That is a very good reason, because the Premier also said in answer to another question that his Government would provide as much money as it possibly could for houses, and would continue to do so to the utmost of its ability. In other words, he said he had no more money to put into housing. Despite the efforts he says he is making the position is becoming more chaotic every year. It is fast becoming a chronic situation with no possible hope of improvement. Something different will have to be done if we are to improve the housing position. In order to emphasize the point I shall refer to housing in other parts of the world, and show that what we are experiencing is nothing new, but something that is happening in every country that has become highly industrialized. The fact is that the money economy we have will never satisfy the essential needs, and social needs in particular, of the people. It is true that in all countries that have become industrialized the standard of housing has gradually become worse and it has become increasingly difficult for the people to purchase their own homes. The reverse should be the case in view of all the technical improvements that have come about through the increase in the use of machinery and the alleged improved methods of production.

Mr. O'Halloran—And we have a prosperous Australia.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Yes, but the purchase of a house is becoming increasingly difficult for the wage earner, and there seems to be no sign of relief. As the standard of housing has risen the opportunities for profit through sale or rent have dropped. In a capitalist economy that means that the money has gone into other channels because it could earn higher rates of interest. In England it has been noticeable that the chronic shortage of dwelling space

has increased ever since England became highly industrialized. That has dated from the beginning of the 19th century and the shortage is becoming more apparent as the years go by. The qualitative standard of housing in the industrialized countries has not kept up to the standards possible with modern technical knowledge, and the wage level of incomes has borne no relationship to the requirements of a decent dwelling. Previously I gave figures which showed that in 1938 it took 23 per cent of the wage earner's weekly income to purchase a home on a 20-year basis and 33 per cent in 1956-57. What is being put forward as a remedy for the present position? Housing contracts are being extended to 35 and 40 years and there are various schemes for houses to be bought on very small deposits. In other words, it is being recognized by the authorities who have the selling of houses that it is becoming increasingly difficult as the years go by for the wage earner to purchase a home. By their own actions they are proving the point. Last night in this debate Mr. Hambour submitted arguments along similar lines. He said:—

I understand that the Housing Trust will continue to provide second mortgages. In the past the deposit on a trust home has been about £700 or £800, but will the trust continue to grant second mortgages when the maximum advance under the Advances for Homes Act is increased? If it does, the deposit on a trust home will be reduced to about £300, and this will be a big inducement to many people to buy homes.

That is only begging the question and not solving it. The real basic question is the increased cost of the home in relation to the wages earned. Unless something can be done to reduce the cost of homes we will not improve the position. As a matter of fact, in Whyalla the Broken Hill Proprietary Company has re-entered the field of home building and is now building houses that can be bought on a 35 to 40-year term. A few years ago they had to be bought on a 20-year term, but even on the longer term the worker has to pay £4 5s. to £4 9s. a week. By the time he has purchased a £3,500 home he has paid about £6,000 for it. There is no doubt that when the wage-earner considers the purchasing of a home that will take 35 to 40 years to buy he has serious thoughts about the advisability of tying himself up in one place for such a long period. When he wants to go out of a house of that type he frequently finds that in the agreement which is drawn up by companies of that

description he can only sell to a person approved by his employer, which restricts the field of sale. If there is any depreciation it is judged by the people who sold him the home; he cannot get an outside arbitrator. The improvements he has made outside the house, say in the garden, are not regarded as improvements for purposes of sale and he can get no reimbursement for that work when he sells.

Mr. O'Halloran—How does the widow of such a man fare?

Mr. LOVEDAY—If a man is killed or dies the widow is requested, after a short period, to vacate the house so that another employee of the company can move in. These are things that the wage earner now has to consider when purchasing a house. There is an attempt to make the scheme attractive by having a low deposit, but despite the alleged advantage of the long period of 35 to 40 years the company is finding it difficult to get its employees to purchase houses. That is a serious position and all the glossing over in the world will not hide the problem. I now quote the views of a world-wide authority on housing, particularly in cities. The following quotation comes from *The Culture of Cities*, by Lewis Mumford:—

The failure of decent housing to obtain capital through competition in the market has led to widespread attempts to foster homeownership among the workers: under the guise of offering security, those who have fostered this movement, including government agencies, have sought to burden the worker with the risks: risks whose returns are not sufficient to attract the necessary capital from the more wary. This diversion of the worker's meagre budget to housing not merely undermines his standard of life: it lessens his freedom of movement and, during a financial crisis or a local shutdown often results in the complete loss of his entire investment—and the roof over his head as well. Needless to say this is no solution of the housing problem: even apart from the fact that the building of individual houses is technically an extremely wasteful process. Except for the income groups well on the comfort level, the building of houses for profit has been carried on throughout the western world only by debasements of design: systematic overcrowding of the land, and over-population of the interior quarters on the part of those who must eventually rent them.

If members think of the design of houses built during the past 10 years they will agree that there has been a considerable debasement of design in order to get the house down within the alleged capability of the worker to buy it. Mr. Mumford continues:—

And so long as the pecuniary canons remain uppermost, there is no prospect for a change.

What do all these facts signify? They signify that some of the most essential items in the construction and equipment of cities cannot be produced, on any terms, under a pecuniary economy; and that houses in particular can be built only by ignoring the positive standards, based on scientific data that are appropriate in an advanced civilization. This discovery has been slowly sinking into the minds of thoughtful people for the last century; and in the realm of both city development and housing it has resulted in a series of measures that cannot be sanctioned in terms of private gain and pecuniary aggrandizement.

That view is reinforced by a report in this morning's *Advertiser* under the heading "Bigger House Loans by Life Groups," which states:—

In the life assurance companies lies the greatest hope of the man with the better-than-average income for a better-than-average house.

It is interesting to see what they consider to be the better-than-average income and the better-than-average home. The report continues:—

The borrower must be able to find about 40 per cent of the total amount required. Usually, this is between £2,000 and £3,000, for an average loan of from £3,000 to £4,000.

A man of 40 with a £4,000 advance and a £4,000 policy as security, both for 25 years, would have to repay at the rate of nearly £9 a week. A £4,000 advance with a £2,000 policy as collateral security would require a weekly repayment of about £7.

What a proposition! Members should bear in mind that this report deals with houses costing little more than £4,000, yet the wage earner's home of the Housing Trust type costs about £3,500 today and that is only a little below the figure mentioned in the article. That emphasizes the truth of the statements in Mr. Mumford's book.

In an effort to solve this problem I shall make a suggestion that I hope will be taken seriously, but before doing so I draw attention to the fact that we have been told almost *ad nauseum* over the years that the housing position is getting better, whereas it is really getting worse every year. In his 1949 Financial Statement the Treasurer said:—

The housing shortage in this State, in common with most other advanced industrial countries, remains a serious problem, but rapid progress is being made to overcome the shortage.

I suggest, however, that rapid progress is not being made: we are slipping back all the time. In answer to a recent question the Treasurer said that 50 per cent of the Loan money we get from the Commonwealth Government is derived from taxation from

the States. Further, he said that the State is being charged interest at a rate common to short-term loans. As the housing shortage is a Commonwealth-wide problem and not peculiar to South Australia, I suggest that the States get together and insist that a large part, if not all, of this taxation revenue from the States should come to the States free of interest for the specific purpose of being applied in the main to housing and that houses should be made available through the Housing Trust and the other house-building authorities in the various States at no more than 1 per cent interest to cover administrative charges in order to deal with the housing problem. In no other way will the housing problem be tackled adequately than by making houses available at a low rate of interest.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—How do we insist?

Mr. LOVEDAY—If the States cannot insist, then all their vaunted boast of being sovereign States is not worth the paper it is written on.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—We cannot insist on money being handed over for nothing.

Mr. LOVEDAY—I find it hard to believe that we cannot borrow free of interest money that has been raised in this State, and the whole question should be examined to see whether we can get our own taxation revenue free of interest.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—The question has been examined by the States for years now, but their repeated requests have been ignored by the Commonwealth. What does the honourable member mean by "insist"?

Mr. LOVEDAY—Seeing that the Playford Government at election time supports the Government at present in power in Canberra and that that Government apparently refuses to listen to that argument, this State Government could take a different line prior to Federal elections.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—Mr. Chifley started the system.

Mr. LOVEDAY—I am not concerned with who started it: I merely say that unless money is provided at this low rate of interest the housing problem cannot be solved.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—Mr. Chifley was always regarded as a financial genius.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Possibly, but even financial geniuses make mistakes and I do not hold up this question as one of which Mr. Chifley said the last word. All the evidence points to the one fact: the housing problem cannot be solved

unless money can be provided on easy terms.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—How do you view the taxation scheme advocated by the member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan)?

Mr. LOVEDAY—I am not discussing that scheme and whether I agree with it is beside the point, for I am dealing with housing. It is suggested from time to time when the control of rents is mentioned that the Government need only lift controls and houses will be built again and the housing shortage overcome, but any student of the housing situation throughout the world knows that is not true because this problem is common to all highly industrialized countries and South Australia is becoming more highly industrialized every year. The very things that are happening here prove the truth of Mr. Mumford's statements.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—Assuming the honourable member's contention is right and loans at a low rate of interest are necessary, who is to provide the money? The honourable member insists on the Commonwealth providing it, but to date the Commonwealth has not responded to that insistence.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Whether it is responded to or not, during the short time I have been in this House I have heard many things suggested regarding housing, and I have read the Premier's statements that the position is improving, but that is incorrect.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—Statisticians' figures show that it is improving. Where is this cheap money coming from which the honourable member insists we should receive? That is the crux of the question.

Mr. LOVEDAY—I have also heard from honourable members opposite that to solve the housing problem we should reduce the amount of deposit required, extend the period over which a house could be paid for and so on. I am demonstrating, and I think conclusively, that they are not solutions, but only palliatives. They have the effect of tying up the wage earner for long periods and he is becoming increasingly wary of the position, because he has not the confidence in the economy which some people express. He realizes that what happened in the past can happen again. If members opposite doubt that, I invite them to inquire into the points I have mentioned. Before one goes somewhere, one should have an objective, and I am saying that in this instance it should be to get cheap money.

I am not in a position to know the complete answer to the Premier's interjection, but first we want to be decided and united on an object-

ive, and it is obvious from what I have heard in this House that we are not so united. If we want to solve the housing problem, we must be united on the objective and stick to it. I think it was yesterday that the Leader of the Opposition said that this State was getting to the position where it would have to consider using national credit to make possible most things which are not possible under the present form of economy, and that is quite to the point.

I mentioned earlier that the period of high prices, good seasons and practically full employment had also been accompanied by an unprecedented increase in hire purchase, which is an indication that people have not the purchasing power to buy the things they have already produced. It is obvious that they would not enter into these agreements if they had the cash to pay for the goods. If that situation does not mean anything to members opposite, they need some clarification of their ideas.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—You do not support the latest suggestion of a hire purchase company for trades unions?

Mr. LOVEDAY—The only reason trades unions are interested in hire purchase is that present rates of interest are so high that they have been driven to try to make hire purchase cheaper, because no one has provided any alternative under the existing scheme of things. If people are to get the goods they want, they must go in for hire purchase. If hire purchase were abolished tomorrow, there would be a tremendous slump all over Australia, because the people have not the purchasing power. If I have made only this one point, and it is taken up seriously, it will lead to a far greater improvement than anything else in the Budget. In the Budget are all kinds of items, and with all the juggling one cannot make much difference to them. No doubt the Government feels it has allocated the money to the best advantage, and I will not try to criticize it, although I may have a difference of opinion on some items.

The question of housing is basic to the community. We have to deal with instances of families with several children who have no home, and there is no current solution to this problem. We find families living in one or two rooms, and about 100 new applications to the Housing Trust every week; we see the number of unsatisfied applicants growing every year, whereas the number of new houses being built is growing less. It is all nonsense to say that those in the past who have provided

homes will do so again, because private enterprise will not provide them. It has come to the stage where some Government instrumentality must provide homes, if we are to have them at all. If the Government instrumentality in South Australia, which in the main is regarded as most efficient, cannot provide houses at a cost at which the wage earner can purchase them, there is something radically wrong, and a remedy must be searched for elsewhere.

Mr. Quirke—Don't you think it is possible to build an economy whereby the worker can buy his own home?

Mr. LOVEDAY—Definitely. The present position is a blot on the economic position. We have radar, television and other scientific achievement and yet we cannot produce a decent house which the wage earner can purchase within a reasonable time, which I consider is 20 years. Probably Mr. Heaslip will say that it is due to high wages or some such nonsense. If the position is examined it will be found that the figures do not agree with his ideas. For instance, in 1938 the basic wage was £3 15s. a week and the tradesman fitter's rate of £5 5s. a week. The cost of a house was £650 to £800, and the interest rate $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent to 4 per cent. An £800 home with no deposit on a 20-year term at the rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent took 23 per cent of the fitter's wage in those days, or 24s. a week. In 1957 with a basic wage of £12 11s., the tradesman fitter receives £16 6s. The cost of a house is £3,500, and allowing for a £200 deposit, which makes the position a bit better in that respect than in the previous example, on a 20-year term at 5 per cent the payment would be £5 9s. 3d. a week, which is 33 per cent of the fitter's weekly wage. Wages have not increased to the same percentage as the price of a house, in the cost of which approximately 50 per cent is for labour.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—The honourable member is not referring to the same class of house.

Mr. LOVEDAY—I am referring to a comparable house, and I take those figures from my own observations and not from what someone else has told me. I went to Whyalla in 1938 and have watched building there ever since, and I tell members that the houses I am quoting here are comparable houses.

Mr. Frank Walsh—The standard would be equal to that of any comparable Housing Trust home?

Mr. LOVEDAY—The standard has been good right through. In other words, it is a

fair and accurate comparison and I challenge any member to find fault with it. I have quoted the tradesman's position, but how much worse off is the man not on the tradesman's rate? The position so far as the unskilled man is concerned is infinitely worse. I suggest that people are not examining this question in sufficient detail to realize its implications and to realize what is needed to remedy the position.

If members are in doubt I invite them to read world authorities on the question of house purchase. The authorities are unanimous in their opinion and all state it is not just a question of improving the technique of building or improving methods, but that the only logical change can be brought about by making money available to purchase houses at the lowest possible rate of interest. In other words, reducing the interest rate for house purchase is the only way of tackling the problem. Instead of members talking about palliatives—most of which if put into operation would merely frighten many people off purchasing houses—there should be a united approach on the question by dealing with the root of the problem and keeping at it until we get satisfaction. If Australia becomes increasingly highly industrialized the position will steadily worsen and if we do not tackle it now we will be forced to do so in the future and in the interim the social problems that will arise through the paucity of houses—increased divorce, increased child delinquency and increased domestic strife, which is reflected in inefficiency in work and which is hard if not impossible to measure—will present a national problem. Many of these things that arise from the shortage of houses are intangible, but nevertheless they have a most serious reaction on the whole community. I suggest this problem is one of the most important and should receive the attention it deserves. I support the first line.

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—There are ample opportunities during consideration of the lines to discuss most matters and I contend that this part of the debate should be confined to consideration of financial and economic matters. The member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday) drew attention to the Treasurer's remarks on previous occasions. I do not propose to delve into history and quote earlier speeches of his, but on this occasion he said one or two things that caused concern. I would not be a party to building up a state of gloom because I believe that Australia is a land of wealth and great potentiality and

if a proper economic policy were pursued we would progress. This State could supply a standard of living unequalled elsewhere in the world and a standard that could continually improve. Notwithstanding years of prosperity the Treasurer said:—

The number registered for employment at the end of July last in South Australia was barely 3,600, whilst the number in receipt of unemployment relief was 1,345. This latter number is only about 15 in every 10,000 of the total population, or about 36 in every 10,000 of working population in the State. It is interesting to note that in the March *Monthly Summary of Australian Conditions* issued by the National Bank of Australasia the following appeared:—

Since the restoration of a peace-time economy, which conservatively might be taken around 1948 or 1949, there has not been any strong or persistent change, either upward or downward, in either of these indicators. During the "wool boom" year of 1950-51 both were somewhat higher than in 1955-56. During the subsequent recession year of 1952-53 . . . Even that journal acknowledges a recession. The concluding remarks of the Treasurer were:—

In the light of these achievements I have every confidence that progressive effort of the people of this State will ensure that the next 12 years will record accomplishments even more extensive than those of the immediate past.

I believe we should have confidence in this country, but sentiments such as those expressed by the Treasurer are no consolation to the unemployed. They must feel that there is something wrong with the financial and economic position of this country when they are unemployed at the end of a run of prosperity.

I have watched with interest the building of Queen Elizabeth Hospital, which is nearing completion, and I congratulate the Architect-in-Chief's Department on the magnificent work it has performed. I was interested yesterday in listening to the remarks of the Chairman of the Public Works Standing Committee, Mr. Shannon, and I, too, hope that the board of that hospital will be given a chance to function efficiently. Much needs to be done to provide for the hospitalization of our growing population and it was gratifying to hear a Government member refer to this important matter.

During the Address in Reply debate I referred to the Police Department, and I wish to say again that that department is composed of a body of men of whom we should be very proud. When I was in another State recently I heard someone refer to "sleepy Adelaide," and my reply to that was "Send

some of your crooks over here and you will find that we are not as sleepy as you think." I notice that there is an increase of £119,000 in the Budget for expenditure on that department. I agree that the department is very efficient, and I have noted from press reports that the new Commissioner has made certain decisions which I am hopeful he will put into effect. It is with pleasure that I notice he has indicated that he is taking steps to cut out red tape wherever possible, and I believe this will save a good deal of money.

I referred during the Address in Reply debate to the necessity for policemen being in telephone communication with headquarters at prescribed intervals. Whilst this is a good thing it is costly. The State has seen fit to provide the police, at great cost, with a wireless system which makes communication possible between officers on duty and headquarters. I know that a special squad is sent out for the prescribed purpose of attending accidents, and these men have to be highly trained in many respects, including first-aid. It is necessary for this squad to report at regular intervals, and it is provided with means of radio communication with police headquarters. However, I know of a case where the police officers did not stop to communicate with headquarters, and they were in trouble as a result. These are things which should be avoided wherever possible, because it is a waste of money and time and can also endanger life if not used properly.

The Auditor-General's report contains some interesting figures with regard to education. The Auditor-General at page 35, said:—

During recent years there has been a considerable expansion in the numbers of students receiving education and in the educational facilities provided by the State, both directly through State instrumentalities and indirectly through grants to other institutions. The expansion of facilities has resulted in a continually increasing cost to the State. The net cost met from Consolidated Revenue in 1956-57 was £9,004,000 and from Loan Funds on account of additional accommodation was £1,680,000, so that the cost to the State amounted to £10,700,000. This represents £12 8s. 1d. a head of the population of the State. In 1952-53 the cost was £6,900,000, or £9 0s. 3d. a head.

I am directly interested in education and have been associated with school councils and committees since long before coming into this House. The expenditure per head on education has been increased, and there is some indication that it may be further increased. I believe that increase is warranted, because education is something which will cause the

State a great deal of concern and trouble in years to come. A great deal more attention has been given to this all-important matter in recent years. Wherever possible parents should encourage their children to give their services to the State by becoming school-teachers. I know that teaching does not have all the pleasing features of some other forms of employment, but it should give one a good deal of satisfaction when one realizes the great service being rendered to the State. We in this House will have to seriously consider giving assistance to provide the necessary extra teachers that will be required, particularly in secondary education.

I am confident that schools would not have been able to carry on had it not been for the assistance rendered by the parents' and friends' associations and school committees, and I commend the Minister of Education for the concluding paragraph in his report in which he gives credit to those organizations. In his report he shows that the money raised by these organizations for the purchase of school amenities amounted to £129,000. I shudder to think what conditions in the schools would be like if it were not for the wonderful work being done by these people, and it is pleasing to note that their services have been appreciated. I am confident that with encouragement they will go on doing good work, and I am hopeful that the financial position will enable their efforts to be adequately subsidized in the years to come.

An increased amount of £602,000 has been provided for the railways, and about £66,000 for roads, the total proposed expenditure on the two being approximately £16,000,000. At page 188 of the Auditor-General's report we see that advances to the Tramways Trust at June 30, 1957 stood at £6,516,000, of which £3,152,000 had been lost. A vast amount of money is being advanced for railways, tramways and roads. I am not suggesting that one penny less should be granted for roads, and it is pleasing to see the improvement that has occurred. Many of the roads I saw during a recent visit to the South-East were a real credit to the Highways Department, but more are needed. Because of the great decline in the number of people using public transport and for the sake of economy we must give more thought to the co-ordination of our transport systems. In some places the tramways could provide transport instead of the railways though there might be some slight inconvenience for some people, but we must co-ordinate our transport services

to save money that could be devoted to other necessary services.

The member for Semaphore (Mr. Tapping) spoke at some length and with considerable feeling on a matter that he and I have raised frequently for some years. I think that in my first speech in this House I referred to the problem of councils' contributions to the upkeep of the fire brigade. I plead again for some consideration to be given to a more equitable system. The member for Semaphore stressed the necessity for retaining adequate fire brigade services in Port Adelaide. It is a highly industrialized area with many wharves and factories, and some people are compelled to live there so as to be close to their work and thereby save transport costs. They have to subscribe in rates to the colossal amount of £12,270 per annum that the council contributes to the upkeep of the fire brigade. As the Burnside Council contributes only £1,250 I believe there is something wrong with the system, so the member for Port Adelaide had sound grounds for complaining.

I shall now refer to contributions made by other councils, and I am more familiar with their areas than I am with Port Adelaide and Burnside. The areas of Hindmarsh, Thebarton and West Torrens are similar in nature. The Hindmarsh Council pays £2,413 annually in fire brigade contributions, but Thebarton, which is just across the river from Semaphore, pays only £473.

The Hon. Sir Malcolm McIntosh—What are the rates in those areas?

Mr. HUTCHENS—They are about the same. The conditions in the West Torrens council area are similar to those in Hindmarsh and Thebarton, but that council pays £1,553. The Walkerville area is a good residential area, but that council pays only £232, whereas the Woodville Council pays £3,233, and I cannot understand this discrimination. Councils should contribute to the fire brigade in proportion to their rate revenue, which is based on property values, and such contributions would reflect the protection that the fire brigade affords.

Of course, the Treasurer told us that he sent out a circular asking councils whether they would agree to some variation in the method of rating in order to provide a more equitable system, but had replies from only four councils. If I were a councillor in Walkerville or Burnside I would say, "We must keep our mouths shut because we are doing all right. Let Hindmarsh and Port

Adelaide Councils pay." However, this State depends largely on industrial areas for its progress, and I ask councils not to kill the goose that lays the golden egg. I make a plea to protect these industrial areas and their residents and not allow this position to continue.

Mr. Loveday made a strong plea for greater housing accommodation, and I agree with every word he said. Members representing industrial areas find that although the housing position is alleged to be improving one important section of the community is suffering hardship as a result of the landlord and tenant legislation and the continued shortage of houses. Today there are more people coming to members representing industrial areas seeking assistance in regard to housing than ever before. Many aged people are in a hopeless position. Only today three unfortunate women came to me because they were unable to secure accommodation. In war-time we tell them, "Give us your sons and you will be right for the rest of your days," but in a peacetime economy they are forgotten. Today a woman who has been living in the same home for more than 20 years, because of the relaxation of landlord and tenant legislation and the inability of the authorities to supply accommodation, finds herself in a serious situation. She seems to have no chance of getting a house, and early in November she will probably be out in the street. The member for Semaphore has known her for years, and the Hon. F. J. Condon knows her and knew her late husband, and they can verify what I am about to say. Nobody within the limits of their ability have given more in time and money to charitable organizations than this lady, yet in her old age it is impossible for her to obtain proper accommodation, so I feel that our economy has let her down.

I agree with the member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday) who suggested that strong action should be taken. It is not much encouragement when the unemployment pool is growing for a man to invest in a home on his own account, because he knows that after having made excessive payments the same thing might happen to him as happened in the years gone by, when people who were making final payments on their homes lost everything. That was a tragedy, and shows that there is something wrong with our economic position or its management that these things can happen after a number of record years in primary production. I know we are facing a possible bad year now, and there is cause for some concern, but we have had a run of good years, with record

prices for wool that injected millions of pounds into our economy. Added to our primary production, we have had a good and profitable time in our secondary industries.

It is difficult to make comparisons using money values, but that is the only comparison we can make. I say it is difficult because we have had such a terrible decline in money values. Recently I was reading the *Financial Review*, which is not a journal of the Labor Party, but a publication put out by financial interests. This condemned the Government of recent years, and was very strong in its condemnation of the Australian Government. It stated that it was tragic that since 1949 the pound had been reduced in value by about 50 per cent. A study of the C series index figures will show that that is a fact. Despite the prosperity that we have been told is evident and the increase in production, we find ourselves in this position.

I will refer to the *Statesmen's Pocket Year Book* to show just how secondary industries have grown. I know that these industries demand services, but with all the prosperity we have had there have been some means of collecting the money to build up our economy and keep it stable. This publication shows that in 1938-39 there were 2,067 factories in this State employing 43,371 persons; in 1949-50 the number had increased to 3,046, employing 78,436 people; and in 1955-56 we had 3,908 factories employing 92,589 people. These figures show that our factories and the number of employees have increased and the value added to material by treatment would lead us to believe that there has been a development in our secondary industries and in the prosperity of our country. In 1938-39 the value added to material by treatment was £13,678,930, or £22 19s. 9d. per inhabitant. In 1954-55 the value was £111,027,712, or £137 9s. 11d. per capita. The gross output is worth examining, because in 1938-39 it amounted to £35,005,264, or £58 16s. 5d. per capita, which increased in 1955-56 to £316,961,412, or £379 15s. 11d. a head.

One would think that with the development our financial position would have improved, because any person who studies the industrial development would think that we are improving our bank balances and our economic position. Before going on with the position generally, I wish to say that we in South Australia compare very favourably with any other State in regard to our income. The Commonwealth

generally has been enjoying a period of prosperity in both primary and secondary production, yet we find that in 1949 the public debt was £2,945,590,000, or £357 3s. 11d. a head. One would have thought with all the facilities available we would have reduced the public debt.

The Hon. Sir Malcolm McIntosh—When you are asking for more schools and hospitals?

Mr. HUTCHENS—I have acknowledged all these things, and I think the Minister was listening to me. If the Minister wants to learn something I suggest that he listen to me. The debt has risen to £3,888,594. That is a debt of £412 9s. 6d., that is incurred by each new babe as soon as it draws breath. In South Australia we have had a Liberal Government for some years and it has always adopted orthodox finance methods. In 1949 our public debt was £127,501,000, or £187 14s. a head of population. By 1956 it had risen to £276,440,000 or £321 16s. a head of population. Australia has a great future and we should have more confidence in our people, and reduce the debt.

Mr. Hambour—The Chifley Government had to borrow money.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I will tell the honourable member something about the Curtin Government which assumed office in 1941 and had the responsibility of conducting a war which cost Australia £2,949,000,000. Whilst doing so it reduced the overseas debt by £100,000,000 and the interest Bill by £7,000,000, yet did not borrow one penny overseas. Then it had to spend money on rehabilitation and it handed over to the Menzies Government not an £80,000,000 reserve overseas but a reserve of at least £560,000,000. Now the Commonwealth pays £127,000,000 a year in interest. It is time we got away from orthodox finance and issued credit. We should have more confidence in the people. Due to the muddling of some politicians and the inability to adopt a decent financial policy we have many thousands of unemployed in this State. When the Labor Party was in office in the Commonwealth it made provision for a recession, but what has the present Government done? It had a reserve of £410,000,000 for State public works. There must be a sounder and more humane approach to the economic problem. We should do more to encourage our people who have proved to be the equal of any in the world when it comes to doing their best.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa)—I congratulate the Treasurer on the presentation of his nine-

teenth Budget. To be in charge of the finances of the State and to keep them on an even keel for so long is no mean feat. The confidence reposed in this State by capital investors, both local and overseas, during that time, and the colossal development of both primary and secondary industries, are monuments to the Treasurer's basically sound financial approach. The highest compliment that can be paid to the Treasurer, who administers the financial affairs of this State, is that whilst South Australia is still dependent on the special grant recommended by the Commonwealth Grants Commission it is relatively dependent to a lesser degree each financial year. That is irrefutable evidence that South Australia is progressing more rapidly than Australia as a whole.

Mr. Lawn—How does it indicate that?

Mr. LAUCKE—If we are less a mendicant State than before, then our economy is improving.

Mr. Lawn—How is our improvement greater than that in other States?

Mr. LAUCKE—We need less from the Grants Commission. Our deficit last financial year of £49,000 compared with the originally estimated deficit of £853,000 gives cause for great satisfaction and the Treasurer deserves the thanks of all South Australians for his efforts on behalf of the State. The sum of £400,000 received from the Commonwealth Government by way of a pound for pound subsidy to help people who suffered because of last year's disastrous River Murray flood is another result of the Premier's efforts. From time to time we hear strange comments on this State's economic position, but I refer members to the observations of a noted independent observer (Sir Douglas Copland) who said:—

Nobody need have any doubt about South Australia's future. There is no need to tell South Australians much about development. Adelaide is one of the greatest industrial centres of Australia relative to its population. The evidence in South Australia is so obvious that nobody here need have any doubt about the State's future.

He said these were the ingredients of a prosperous future here:—Improved agricultural techniques and methods, increasing carrying capacity of land to withstand drought. Ensure that natural resources are developed to the highest degree. South Australia was showing the way in this direction.

Those words of such an eminent economist appeal to me and I believe the ingredients he suggests for a prosperous future are evident in this State. Firstly, with regard to the improvement of agricultural techniques, South

Australia can boast the first agricultural college in the Commonwealth. Further, it is still the outstanding college of its kind in Australia and has done, and will continue to do, much good for our primary industries. Production figures in this State have improved because of the application of scientific principles to agriculture, and much research is carried out in our institutions to find how our primary production can be economically improved. In this direction I feel we are acting along the lines advocated by the learned professor. By developing drought-resistant plants at the research stations we are enabling land holders to carry more stock every year. Secondly, the financial resources of our State are being firmly developed. Earnest efforts are being made to increase the production of coal, uranium, pyrites and other minerals, and I support that policy.

Mr. Lawn—I thought you opposed Socialism.

Mr. LAUCKE—When we talk about the State we refer to the people who are members of it. Turning to the various items in the Estimates, I am happy to note that £134,203 is to be granted to the Aborigines Department. This represents an increase of £38,272 on the amount granted last year, which reflects to the Government's credit. I am particularly pleased to see that church authorities interested in the welfare of aborigines are to be given a greater sum, for the men and women who serve the native population and thereby answer a high calling are surely the most competent people to administer such Government grants in the interests of the natives. These authorities do a remarkable job on the mission stations. I am pleased to see that grants are to be made to two mission stations that have not previously received grants and that the grant for the maintenance of aboriginal children at institutions and homes is to be increased. I am particularly happy to note the overall increase of £38,000 in the sum set aside to alleviate the conditions of natives on reserves.

The surplus of £358,000 earned by the Forestry Department was very pleasing. Of this sum, £240,000 has been appropriated and paid to Revenue. I am concerned, however, with one matter in connection with the Forestry Department: its policy of using land in high rainfall areas near the city for afforestation purposes when that land could be put to greater national use in food production. This year it is proposed to plant 576 acres of our hills area with pines, and last year 330 acres were planted. I earnestly beseech

the Government to consider that that land would be better used for the production of milk, cheese, potatoes and other foodstuffs, particularly as our population is increasing each year.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—That matter is being considered now.

Mr. LAUCKE—Thank you, Mr. Minister.

Mr. Corcoran—That must be part of the Government's decentralization policy!

Mr. LAUCKE—Government members believe in decentralization on sound, economic lines, and that industries should be set up where proprietors desire. I support the suggestion offered yesterday by the member for Light (Mr. Hambour), who advocated grants to country district councils for sealing lateral roads. It is an excellent idea, and I have no doubt that councils with proper equipment are well placed to attend to more of our road construction. Country people appreciate the provision of single phase electrical installations. The single phase system has provided country areas with power which hitherto has not been available because of the excessive surcharge. Many farmers whose requirements are not higher than five horsepower for dairy appliances and shearing machines can be powered by single phase, leaving grain crushing and wood cutting to tractors. The innovation is a real boon to country areas, and the surcharge is much less than would apply to the three phase system. I am concerned to notice that the surplus of the Electricity Trust during the last year is lower than that for the previous year, and I hope that this has no effect on extensions to rural areas.

An amount of £10,000 is provided for country ambulance services. This is most gratifying to country people who feel that assistance in this humanitarian work is worthy of Government consideration. I am interested to know what method of allocation of these moneys will be adopted. I hope there will be some system of subsidy, having in mind that those who are prepared to help themselves should be assisted. In this respect I notice that in Tasmania the purchase of ambulance vehicles is subsidized by the Government pound for pound and operational expenses to the extent of 5s. in the pound. The Brisbane services are subsidized at the rate of 10s. for every pound raised by the brigades from subscriptions and donations, and in Victoria the subsidy is at the rate of 10s. in the pound for replacements of vehicles and maintenance costs. I hope that some system of subsidy will apply in the allocation of these moneys in

South Australia, because that would be an incentive to district ambulance committees to raise funds to qualify for a Government subsidy, but I suggest that there should be a limit to any particular service, because there will not be sufficient money to allow individual brigades to get huge amounts. I congratulate the Treasurer on his Budget, which is an excellent one, and I have much pleasure in supporting the first line.

Mr. DAVIS (Port Pirie)—I have no desire to congratulate the Government. It stands condemned in the eyes of the Port Pirie people. I shall refer to one matter which if not rectified may result in the loss of lives of many citizens. Last year the Port Pirie Corporation realized the danger caused by stock being driven through the main part of the town, and it was feared that the loss of lives would result. In that portion of the railway yard known as the South Yard is a trucking yard adjacent to the Wandearah Road. To get the stock to the abattoirs the stock must be driven along this road, passing through a thickly populated portion of the town and also past the Risdon Park school, creating a great danger to the children there. There have been a number of near accidents, because sometimes the stock enter the backyards of homes. If some of these wild bullocks break away from the drover and enter the school yard a number of children may be killed. The council decided that a deputation should wait on the Minister of Railways to advocate that the yards be removed. The General Traffic Manager, Mr. Harvey, paid a visit to Port Pirie. However, a fortnight ago the council, because the Government had done nothing, wrote to the Divisional Superintendent at Peterborough as follows:—

At the meeting of my Council, held on 26th inst., reference was again made to the potential danger to pedestrian and vehicular traffic as a result of the operation of stock movements from the trucking yards adjacent to Wandearah Road.

The members of my Council are strongly of the opinion that the operation of a trucking yard practically in the centre of a city of 15,000 inhabitants is a source of danger, as stock from same must traverse roads which pass through residential areas to reach their destination. Damage to property and near accidents have been reported on several occasions.

My Council urges that this trucking yard be transferred to the eastern end of the railway yards here as such location would obviate the necessity of stock passing through any residential area to reach the various holding paddocks.

The reply I received as leader of the deputation was:—

With reference to the deputation introduced by you on the 25th June last, in regard to the Port Pirie Trucking Yards, I have to inform you that I have now received a report from the Railways Commissioner on the matters raised. Two fundamental propositions were put forward by the deputation, viz.:—

- (1) To remove the 3ft. 6in. gauge trucking yards from the South Pirie yard to a position near the existing broad gauge trucking yards at the east end of Port Pirie Junction yard.
- (2) To construct a siding with unloading ramps at a level crossing on the main Adelaide-Pirie line at a point on that line nearest to the new abattoirs.

In regard to item (1) above, it is feasible to extend an existing mixed gauge track as far as the present trucking yards at the east end of the Port Pirie Junction yard. This work would cost £1,500 and would involve a shunt from the Pirie South yard (in which the present narrow gauge trucking yards are situated) of some $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles. It would be necessary to raise a charge of 20s. per four-wheeled van, or 40s. per bogie van, for this service, to cover the reasonable costs of the Railways Department. This appears to the Railways Commissioner to be an unjustified addition of cost to the meat industry, and he suggests as an alternative that the Master Butchers could provide road loading ramps at the existing 3ft. 6in. gauge trucking yards, for both sheep and cattle, at an estimated cost of £350, from which they could load their stock into road vehicles and transport it to the abattoirs.

The Railways Commissioner is advised that the abattoirs will be killing both cattle and sheep, coming in the main from the 3ft. 6in. gauge Peterborough Division, and that each week the abattoirs will deal with about 90 head of cattle and something like 400 sheep. The Commissioner is of the opinion that it would be a grossly uneconomical proposition to provide for the siding suggested in (2) above (estimated, with signalling and unloading facilities, to cost £12,500). The reason for this is that the stock coming from the Peterborough Division or from the Commonwealth Railways would have to be transferred into 5ft. 3in. gauge vans in the Port Pirie yards and then be shunted out two or three miles to this siding. He feels sure, having regard to the relatively small number of stock anticipated to be handled at the abattoirs, that the charges which his department would have to raise to meet its costs would be unacceptable to the Master Butchers.

It should not be the responsibility of the butchers of Port Pirie to bear the cost of shifting the yards. The residents of that city are desirous of the change of location. The butchers agree wholeheartedly with the townspeople that everything possible should be done to remove this danger and the Government should undertake that work. The provision in the eastern end of the yard would be more

inconvenient for the butchers than the present yard which is nearer to the abattoirs because butchers would have to drive their stock out of the town and take a country road if the eastern end were used. Probably when lives have been lost through this dangerous situation the Government will pay heed to what I say and accede to the requests of the people of Port Pirie. The stock at present travel past the Risdon Park school, and many children have only narrowly escaped being injured by the cattle. I know the reply that I will receive from the Railways Commissioner, but I say quite definitely that it is not the responsibility of the Port Pirie people to remove the danger that has been placed there by the railway authority. If a mistake was made in the early days of Port Pirie, it is now the responsibility of the Government to remove the source of danger. I sincerely hope the Government will not wait until some people have lost their lives, because I feel sure it will very much regret it if the deaths of any of the people of Port Pirie are laid at its door.

I appeal to the Government to accept the responsibility of doing something outside the metropolitan area. I have heard it said on many occasions that Sir Thomas Playford is the greatest Premier that South Australia has even seen, but that is a mis-statement. If people stated that he was the best Adelaide Premier they would be correct, because this Government has no consideration whatever for the needs of the people outside the metropolitan area. I am appealing to the Premier to alter his attitude to the country areas and particularly the city of Port Pirie, because it is time the Premier and the members of his Government realized its importance. I am asking the Railways Commissioner to do something for Port Pirie, because it is time the Government realized that Port Pirie line is the only money spinner in the whole of the railway system in South Australia. It would be interesting to know what profits are made on the operation of the Broken Hill-Port Pirie line. I am not asking the railways to do a great deal of work, and surely the Government can spend a little of the profits it makes on that particular section of railway and not wait until accidents occur that this Government will very much regret.

I do not know whether the Government or the members of this House realize that the volume of exports from Port Pirie is the fourth highest in the Commonwealth of Australia, but instead of giving it some consideration and

attention it is neglecting it and letting it die. One sees ships being turned away from Port Pirie when they should go there to take away valuable cargo, and one wonders what the Government is going to do about it. Furthermore, Port Pirie plays a very important part in the loading of vessels for the reason that it has the cargo to give to the shipping companies to ensure that ships that leave South Australia or Australia are able to load to full capacity with the lighter cargo. Members of this House have probably heard of what is called "stiffening" in a ship which is either lead or concentrates. It ensures that so many thousands of tons of this heavy cargo can be put in ships which then go to other ports of Australia and fill up with general cargo, particularly wool. If Port Pirie could not provide ships with bottom loading it would mean that they would have to go out of this State to get it because Port Pirie is the only place in South Australia which can provide that type of loading.

I have some figures which show the movement of cargo inwards and outwards at Port Pirie. Port Pirie receives oil for the Commonwealth railways, fuel oil for the South Australian railways, fuel and diesel oil for the B.H.A.S., motor spirits, kerosene, aviation gasoline, coke, sand, and other general cargo. It is a distributing centre for oils, and distribution goes as far afield as Alice Springs, Wilcannia and Watson. The exports include lead for the United Kingdom, the Continent and the U.S.A.; lead concentrates for the United Kingdom, the U.S.A. and Japan; zinc concentrates for the United Kingdom, the Continent, U.S.A., Japan and Tasmania; wheat for the United Kingdom and East Africa; barley for Japan; and sulphuric acid for Port Lincoln for the production of superphosphate. Honourable members can therefore see the important part that Port Pirie plays in the economy of Australia, yet this Government will not keep the wharves in decent condition so that vessels can come in and take a full load. Any vessel desiring to take away a full load of ore has to be lightered at the anchorage, which is 10 miles from the port, and this results in greater costs to the shipping companies. Vessels of any size can only be partly loaded with wheat, and then they have to be taken to some other port to be topped up.

Mr. Millhouse—Where do they usually go?

Mr. DAVIS—I think most of them go to Port Lincoln or Wallaroo. Our outports should be improved so that vessels can take a

full load without being shifted. If the Government did the right thing by Port Pirie more vessels would come there. Companies will not send ships there if there is no berth for them. Sometimes they have to wait several days before one is available. I have previously accused the Government of doing very little for places outside the metropolitan area, and I repeat it. I do not think any member has appealed to the Government more often to do something for the outports than I have, and I think I will have an able supporter in the new member for Wallaroo. I am sure he will protest against the Government for not doing much for our outports, though I think that my remarks are falling on deaf ears.

Mr. Millhouse—You are not suggesting that our ears are deaf?

Mr. DAVIS—I do not know about that. What I am saying might be going through their ears because some things have nothing inside them.

Mr. Hambour—Tell us about your local government policy and whether the people of Port Pirie followed your lead.

Mr. DAVIS—They are following the lead given by the member for Port Pirie and they are proud of the fact that they have had good advice. However, I was too progressive for some people who, like the members of the Government, have no desire to make progress. They are like still water—they like to stay still and never make progress. Unlike this Government, I was prepared to spend money in the interests of the City of Port Pirie, and I have no regrets for what I have done for that city. Every person there would back me up in what I am saying about the necessity to improve that city and its port.

Mr. Hambour—You were unjustly dismissed in Port Pirie?

Mr. DAVIS—I have no desire to discuss anything except what is before the Committee.

I am now discussing the apathy of this Government in regard to country ports and towns, but I give the Minister of Railways credit for being 100 per cent behind me when he came to Port Pirie with the Railways Commissioner and admitted that I was only right in asking for the removal of the railway line from the main street. I was told previously that there were too many engineering problems in shifting the line and placing it where I suggested, but fortunately for the council we had an engineer there who had considerable knowledge of railway construction. He had been working on the Brachina line and later I was told that there would be no engineering difficulty in removing the line from Port Pirie's main street, but that the whole problem was wrapped up with our harbour, and I agreed with that.

I have often referred here to the dangerous condition of Port Pirie's wharves, and the only thing that is holding up the shifting of that line at Port Pirie is the deplorable state of the wharves. This Government is prepared to let the wharves of the fourth port in the Commonwealth fall to pieces. The ore is stacked at the back of wharves, and ships are unable to get in to load it, yet the Government sits idly by without raising a finger to try to prevent this. After having promised that all this work will be done, it has given priority to other matters. Is it right that any other places should have priority over a port as important as Port Pirie? The Bulk Handling Co-operative Ltd. has priority over Port Pirie, yet this port is the fourth port in the Commonwealth. I ask the Government to carry out its responsibilities and give further consideration to this port. I have pleasure in supporting the second line.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.53 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, September 19, at 2 p.m.