

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, September 3, 1958.

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

QUESTIONS.**NAILSWORTH GIRLS' TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL.**

Mr. COUMBE—On several occasions I have drawn the attention of the Minister of Education to the crowding at the Nailsworth Girls' Technical High School and have sought his assistance in obtaining alternative grounds for the school, but so far without success. Will the Minister once again take up the matter with the Minister of Agriculture who controls, through the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs Board, certain land on Grand Junction Road, and ask their co-operation in making available a small block for this school? I make this plea as this is the only suitable available block adjacent to housing and transport.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I took up the matter with the Abattoirs Board through the then Minister of Agriculture (Hon. G. G. Pearson), but the board reluctantly, but firmly declined to make the land available, no doubt for good reasons; but, as the honourable member has stated, it is true that we urgently need land for the essential requirements he has stated. There is no other suitable land that is known to the Deputy Director of Education, the property officers of the department, or the school council, and I shall be pleased to take up the matter and try out the new Minister of Agriculture to see whether I have any greater success with him.

STURT CREEK BRIDGE.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Minister of Works received a reply from the Minister of Roads to the question I asked recently about constructing a new bridge over the Sturt Creek at Marion?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have received the following report from the Minister of Roads:—

The Commissioner of Highways advises that the construction of a bridge over Sturt Creek on Marion Road has been included in the 1958-59 works programme. A plan has as yet not been prepared, but will be commenced in the near future, and it is expected that it will be possible to call tenders early in 1959.

PORT ELLIOT POLICE STATION.

Mr. JENKINS—A letter I have received states:—

The Architect-in-Chief's inspector and local policeman say the old police station and courthouse at Port Elliot are definitely going to be vacated by the Police Department. At the moment they are considering other properties that are on the market for police station purposes or they may station an extra policeman or two at Victor Harbour and patrol Elliot from there and do away with our local resident at Elliot.

Will the Premier ask his colleague, the Chief Secretary, whether he is aware that Port Elliot's population is growing rapidly and that, under new management on the foreshore, the camping ground has more and more visitors every year, therefore making it essential for a resident police officer to be stationed at Port Elliot? Will he also ascertain whether there is any foundation in those rumours and what is going to happen to the police station and courthouse at Port Elliot?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I shall be pleased to take up the question and get a reply for the honourable member. I realize the importance to a country town of having a police officer in residence rather than one merely patrolling the area.

CONCRETE SPECIFICATIONS.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Building Act regulation No. 31 lays down that the Australian Standard Specification for concrete (No. CA.2) shall be used in building, and the Standards Association lays down that if the proportions are by volume one bag of cement of 94 lb. shall be regarded as one cubic foot, and it states the other ingredients that shall be used. The Australian Association of Surveyors in its journal *The Builder* of April 24 stated that 90 lb. of cement was sufficient to make a cubic foot of concrete in a mixture such as that laid down by the Building Act. Following on this article in *The Builder* Ready-mixed Concrete Ltd., which operates in my area, wrote to the Australian Association of Surveyors and asked for the matter to be clarified and referred to the code that there shall be a further test of concrete and that one part of cement and not more than two parts of sand, and not more than four parts of aggregate, shall after seven days stand a compressive strength of 1,200 lb. to the square inch, and after 28 days 2,000 lb. In reply, the Australian Association of Surveyors stated:—

(1) A weight to volume ratio of cement of 90 lb. per cubic ft.

- (2) The use of aggregates having 45 per cent voids. With regard to (1) we are aware that the Code to which you refer in your letter states, "If the proportions are by volume, one bag of cement (94 lb.) shall be regarded as one cubic ft." This the writers feel is in the nature of a "rule of thumb" to which they have not, in the interests of a greater degree of accuracy, subscribed.

The association suggests that that is a rough and ready estimate only. Since that time many builders have been bringing pressure to bear on Ready-mixed Concrete Ltd., to make a mixture with less than 94 lb. of cement to the cubic foot. Can the Premier say whether this matter has been brought to the notice of the Government and what is the real test? Does the Act mean that manufacturers must use 94 lb. of cement to a cubic foot of concrete, or is it right to assume that they can use 90 lb. and thus reduce the strength of the concrete?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will get the honourable member an authoritative report and advise him in the near future.

WARREN WATER MAIN.

Mr. GOLDNEY—Can the Minister of Works inform me of the progress being made on the enlargement of the Warren water main, which has caused considerable trouble over the last few years? There have been a number of very bad breaks in the area through the Lower North and the northern end of Yorke Peninsula. Pressures have been poor and the people in these areas are anxiously awaiting the enlargement to the main, which work I understand has been started.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I regret that amongst the number of replies I have in my bag today the information desired by the honourable member does not appear. I will give it to him privately during the short recess or when the House resumes.

COUNTRY WATER SUPPLIES.

Mr. BOCKELBERG—Last year I presented a petition on behalf of settlers west of Ceduna, as far as Charra, for a water reticulation scheme in their district. If that is not possible because of the cost of reticulation, will the Premier see whether some other scheme can be adopted to provide the settlers with water?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The petition was forwarded to the Public Works Department for investigation and as soon as

a more complete reply can be obtained the Minister will forward it to the honourable member. The matter is being dealt with but finality has not yet been reached.

Mr. CORCORAN—The district clerk at Kingston says there is a rumour that work on the Kingston water supply will not be carried out this year. I do not take much notice of rumours, so I am checking up. I know that the estimated cost of the work is £79,000, but on the Loan Estimates this year only £20,000 is provided. Can the Minister of Works assure me that the work will be proceeded with during this current financial year, and what is proposed to be done about the difference between the £79,000 and the £20,000?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The position is as outlined by the honourable member. An amount of £20,000 is on the Loan Estimates for the work this year, and the total cost will be £79,500. According to a report I have the work will be done in two parts. One is the construction of a supply tank of considerable dimensions to assist in the overall scheme, but that will not be attempted this year. The £20,000 is for a start on the work this year and it will be completed next year. The following is an extract from a report I have:—

At the present time one bore has been sunk and tested and after Parliament has approved the expenditure of £20,000 for this financial year the Department of Mines will be requested to select the sites of two additional bores and to go ahead with the drilling and testing of these bores. Arrangements will also be made for the purchase of a pump for the No. 1 bore and the erection of a pump house at this bore and orders will be placed for at least some of the pipes. It is probable that the 100,000 gallon elevated tank will be the last item on this scheme to be completed and the Engineer for Design has been requested to make arrangements for the examination of the site tentatively suggested for this tank and to proceed with the preparation of plans and specifications so that tenders can be called for this work.

Mr. HEASLIP—My question relates to a water supply for Melrose. I understand a local landholder has been successful in obtaining what appears to have been a satisfactory quantity of water underground. Certain investigations and testings are going on. Can the Minister of Works say how far they have gone, have they proved satisfactory, and what are the possibilities of supplying Melrose with a water supply from this source?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I understand the honourable member is referring to what is known as Dickson's Bore. Approval has been given for an expenditure of £100 on the testing

of this bore and the Director of Mines has been advised of the sinking of the bore and asked whether he can arrange for an officer to make an investigation to see whether a suitable site can be selected for a departmental bore which could be used, if successful, for a supply to the township. In a letter dated August 21, 1958, the Director of Mines advises that arrangements will be made as requested and that his officer will confer with the district engineer at Crystal Brook. The testing of the bore will be carried out at the same time as the investigation is made, so that the most complete knowledge of the capacity of Mr. Dickson's bore will be available.

RIVER MURRAY LEVELS.

Mr. BYWATERS—Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked yesterday about the anticipated rise in the River Murray?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The Engineer-in-Chief reports as follows:—

The peaks of the floodwaters from the Goulburn and Ovens rivers and smaller tributaries have now reached the River Murray and it is possible to make a more accurate estimate of maximum heights in South Australia. The river did not rise quite as high as anticipated at Echuca and it now seems likely that the level reached at Renmark will not exceed 22ft. 6in.

I think the previous estimate was 23ft. The report continues:—

The level at Mannum will probably rise to 3ft. above normal pool level and at Murray Bridge about 1ft. 9in. above normal pool level.

UNLEY BUS STOPPING PLACES.

Mr. DUNNAGE—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my question about stopping places for Unley buses in King William Street?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The general manager of the Metropolitan Tramways Trust advises that stopping places on the bus service to Mitcham in King William Street between North Terrace and Victoria Square are situated between Rundle and Grenfell Streets, Pirie and Flinders Streets, and Flinders and Wakefield Streets. There is also a stopping place in King William Road, opposite Parliament House. I have conferred with the chairman and general manager of the trust who point out that the allocation of pick-up points in King William Street was the subject of discussion between the Adelaide City Council and the trust, and the decisions arrived at took into consideration the space for the overall needs of the general public.

MAAOOPE COMMUNITY CENTRE.

Mr. HARDING—I have received the following letter from the secretary of the Maaoupe Progress Association:—

We, the Maaoupe Progress Association, are interested in acquiring the Maaoupe school building and land as headquarters for our association. As no provision was made in this soldier settlement for a recreational centre we feel that your department could assist us materially by supporting our efforts to obtain the land and building. The property was recently inspected by the district inspector who intimated that it was to be disposed of and we would be extremely grateful if you could let us have valuations and conditions, etc., to enable us to carry on our plans of establishing a community centre.

Will the Minister favourably consider offering this land and school building for sale to the Maaoupe Progress Association?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The Maaoupe school has been closed for some time, and is not likely to be re-opened in the foreseeable future. The school building is a portable prefabricated structure and normally would be transferred to some other town or district where it could be put to effective use. I do not know of any precedent for the Education Department selling portable classrooms to any body, but on the other hand I see no reason why we cannot break new ground in that direction, more particularly for the worthy cause of establishing a community centre for a progress association. I think the majority of the members of this association comprise soldier settlers in the district and I shall be pleased to give the matter my personal and favourable consideration.

POLICE ACTION ON THEFT.

Mr. LOVEDAY—On August 19 I asked a question regarding the entry by plain clothes police without a search warrant into the premises of a member of the Amalgamated Engineering Union living in Adelaide. Has the Minister any further information?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I have not yet received any information from my colleague. I could write to the honourable member or ask the Attorney-General to do so, or I can reply when the House resumes.

NATIONAL PARK SWIMMING POOL.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—During the Address in Reply I suggested consideration of the establishment of a swimming pool in National Park. That suggestion was subsequently independently taken up by the member for West Torrens (Mr. Fred Walsh) in a question to the Premier. Has the Minister of Lands or the

National Park Commissioners been able to consider the suggestion and has any decision been reached?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—After reading the honourable member's speech on the Address in Reply I took the matter up with the commissioners, who indicated that they were not favourable to a swimming pool being incorporated in the lake but that they would consider a swimming pool as such.

SALES TAX ON SPORTING EQUIPMENT.

Mr. LAUCKE—On August 7 I referred to the incidence of sales tax on sporting equipment used by youth clubs and asked that the matter be referred to the Commonwealth, seeking exemption for such clubs. I was prompted to ask this question through my interest in the newly formed youth club at Highbury, which is doing excellent work in the interests of youths there but has experienced difficulty in financing equipment for the club. Has the Premier a reply?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Equipment of the nature mentioned is, in general, subject to a sales tax of 12½ per cent. To obtain relief from the tax it would be necessary for the Commonwealth to vary the schedules of exempted items.

Mr. Laucke—Would you apply for such exemption?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will submit the question to the appropriate Federal Minister.

WARNING LIGHTS ON STATIONARY VEHICLES.

Mr. KING—I understand the Premier has information relating to the question I asked recently about the provision of warning devices on stationary trucks.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Parliamentary Draftsman informs me that regulations will be ready for gazettal in about a fortnight.

MARREE RAIL CROSSING.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I understand the Minister of Works has a reply to the question I asked on August 19 concerning the road crossing over the railway line at Marree.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I received a report this morning from the Engineer for Water Supply. Yesterday I indicated privately to the Leader that a reply I had received from Commonwealth sources was not adequate

and that I would secure further information. The report I have now states:—

The crossing over the railway line at Marree which has been closed by the Commonwealth Railways is at the western end of the town. The district engineer, Crystal Brook, advises that with the laying of the standard gauge railway line to Marree and the construction of the stock yards on the other side of this crossing, there are now a number of railway lines at this point and he agrees that the road crossing should be closed because of these additional lines. He states that as some of these lines are on curves, some of the rails are at different elevations to others and there would be considerable difficulty in maintaining a suitable road over these rails.

There are two crossings at the eastern end of the station yard, the one under the bridge referred to by Mr. O'Halloran and the Commissioner of Highways and the second one approximately 200yds. further away from the town. Traffic entering the town from the south has to use one or the other of these two crossings but the one under the railway bridge cannot be used by vehicles with high loads. The creek referred to which passes under the bridge would probably be more correctly described as a depression and except after heavy rain no difficulty should be experienced by traffic using the roads across this depression on either side of the railway line, which are maintained by this department. There is no doubt that these two crossings are further away from the centre of the town than the one which has been closed, but in the circumstances, there seems no alternative to the use of either one or other of these two crossings.

PERMITS TO BOARD VESSELS.

Mr. COUMBE—I recently asked the Minister of Marine whether it would be possible for passes to be issued to consuls in South Australia to enable them to board vessels at Port Adelaide and Outer Harbour to interview their nationals. I asked this question on behalf of Mr. Lathlean of the Consular Corps. Has the Minister a reply?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The secretary of the Harbors Board reports that the board has no authority to grant permission to board vessels, this authority resting with the agents. He states:—

I have contacted Mr. A. J. Bartlett, secretary, Oversea Shipping Representatives' Association, 26 Currie Street, and if application is made to him by Mr. Lathlean he will circularize the individual agents concerned.

TRANSFERS OF TEACHERS.

Mr. BOCKELBERG—Considerable concern has been expressed by school committees in my electorate about the transfer of headmasters during and at the end of terms other than the Christmas vacation. This may be all

right in larger schools where the second in command is just as capable as the headmaster, but the committees think that it is not in the best interests of the children to have a headmaster transferred during the year, particularly at the end of the second term. Can the Minister of Education do something to overcome this disadvantage in isolated country areas?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to do so. Ordinarily, of course, the transfer of staff is a matter for the Director of Education and not the Minister, but I think a matter of policy is involved here. On one or two occasions recently I discussed this matter with the Acting Director of Education, Mr. Griggs, who agrees with me that in principle it is unwise to transfer heads of schools, particularly secondary schools, late in the year, as this has a disturbing effect on the staff, students and parents. I am anxious, if I have the authority and jurisdiction, to alter the practice. A large number of transfers have taken place this year owing to a variety of circumstances largely beyond the control of the Education Department. I hope steps will be taken in future either to alter the practice or to reduce it to the bare minimum of the requirements of the department.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I have been informed that a number of transfers have taken place recently because a headmaster in the metropolitan area died, and there have been transfers from Alice Springs, Mount Gambier and possibly Streaky Bay. In these cases the headmasters were supervising secondary education of Intermediate standard and higher, and they were transferred during the second term. Is it possible to have a complete investigation into the matter and to allow a headmaster due for promotion to remain at his present school until the end of the year without loss of status?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I am quite prepared to have the whole matter investigated, but it is not capable of easy solution. I am sure the member for Onkaparinga will not mind my mentioning a case he referred to me in which the headmaster of a very important high school in his electorate was being transferred. That is one in a chain of transfers that has occurred because the principal of the Unley High School—the largest in the State—reached the retiring age. Applications were called to fill the position, and the principal of the Norwood High School was transferred

there, which started another chain of transfers. The headmaster of the Mount Gambier High School was transferred to Norwood, and the headmaster of the Mount Barker High school to Mount Gambier. Neither the Director of Education nor I can do anything about *anno domini*, which started this chain of transfers. The honourable member mentioned death. We have no control over life and death, and unfortunately deaths of principals and headmasters occur during the year. If we decided not to fill these positions till the end of the year there would be considerable resentment on the part of the Teachers' Institute, which represents over 5,000 members of the teaching profession, on the ground that we were holding up promotions, and it would have considerable justification.

There are two types of circumstances. The more important one is that last year the Government amended the regulations under the Education Act, and as a result no less than 500 new promotion positions were established for members of the teaching profession. Naturally, that gave great satisfaction and gratification to teachers, and a large number of applications have been made for the positions. There have been appeals and cross-appeals, and the Teachers' Salaries Board has given a great deal of time and attention to applications and appeals, and in order to enable teachers to receive their promotions, it has gone on well into the year. This is an unusual set of circumstances that will not occur again for a long time, but I am anxious to have a complete investigation into the whole system of transfers, particularly of headmasters of secondary schools late in the year, and if possible, to remedy if from the beginning of the next school year.

STRATHALBYN WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. JENKINS—Two or three years ago I made representations to the then Minister of Works, Sir Malcolm McIntosh, asking him to connect people on the Sandergrrove Road, Strathalbyn, and others near the racecourse to the district mains. The Minister informed me that there was not sufficient pressure to take the water to the high ground, but that £44,000 would be spent to enlarge and relay the mains and to raise the banks of the reservoir. Last year there was not sufficient water to fill the reservoir, but it is now full, so can the Premier state whether it is now possible to connect these people to the mains?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will obtain a report for the honourable member as soon as possible.

PORT WAKEFIELD-BALAKLAVA ROAD.

Mr. GOLDNEY—My question relates to the sealing of the main road between Port Wakefield and Balaklava, which has been the subject of representations in recent years. Will the Minister of Works ascertain from the Minister of Roads when this work will commence?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will get a report from the Commissioner of Highways for the honourable member.

ERADICATION OF VERMIN.

Mr. HEASLIP—I understand that the district council of Orroroo is having difficulty in the eradication of vermin, mainly because there are stock routes a quarter of a mile wide running through the area. Can the Minister of Lands say whether the Government can assist the council in the eradication of vermin, particularly on stock routes?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Each year an amount is placed on the Estimates for that purpose, and only recently an application was received from that locality. I have approved of an amount for that district, but I am not sure of the exact sum.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ROLLS.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked recently about the reprinting of Legislative Council rolls?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Attorney-General has approved of the reprinting of the Legislative Council rolls. The three country districts, made up to July 31, 1958, are in the hands of the Government Printer. The two metropolitan district rolls will close on August 31, 1958. Supplementary rolls for all districts will be printed up to the date of the issue of the writ for the periodical elections.

INTRODUCING SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Mr. HARDING—I congratulate the Government on the publication of the book *Introducing South Australia*, and express my thanks for its presentation of a copy to me as well as to other honourable members, for it is a valuable book. Can the Premier say whether copies will be presented to senior schools for use in libraries and can further copies be purchased by members of Parliament for presentation to school libraries?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have some information concerning this matter and I will advise the honourable member later this afternoon.

PACKING OF APPLES.

Mr. LAUCKE—In any industry it is vital to keep costs of production as low as possible, and in the apple industry investigation is now being made into the export of apples in bulk packs as a means of decreasing handling costs. Has the Minister of Agriculture any information to give the House on whether the department is assisting the industry in its investigations and in the implementation of bulk handling methods for overseas distribution?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I will get a report for the honourable member. When the honourable member referred to bulk handling I thought he meant the handling of fruit in bulk in packing sheds, which is a practice that is being adopted widely overseas and is carried out in association with the use of three-point linkage tractors, but I do not know whether that method will be adopted in South Australia to any extent. I asked Mr. Dean, an engineer in the Department of Industry, now overseas, to investigate this matter, and he will visit Washington, in the north-west of the United States, and report to me. I cannot comment on the bulk packing of apples for export at the moment, but I will get a full report from the Chief Horticulturist.

KADINA-WALLAROO SCHOOL RAIL CAR.

Mr. HUGHES—Has the Minister of Lands a reply to the question I asked recently about running an extra rail car between Kadina and Wallaroo for school children?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The Minister of Railways has supplied the following report:—

The Railways Commissioner advised that the "250" Class railcar arrives at Kadina from Wallaroo at 4.11 p.m. and departs from Kadina for Moonta at 4.50 p.m. The car has seating accommodation for 56 adults, as well as standing space in the aisles and the baggage compartment. Of the 119 students referred to by the honourable member, 20 alight at Wallaroo Mines three minutes after departure from Kadina, and the remainder at Wallaroo 11 minutes after departure. The journey is a very short one, even by suburban transport standards, and the circumstances in his opinion, do not justify the extra service requested, which would involve substantial additional expense in fuel, running supplies and maintenance.

LEAVING HONOURS CLASS FOR UPPER MURRAY.

Mr. KING—Some time ago the Minister of Education was good enough to visit the river areas and met a large number of parents and teachers and discussed with them several subjects, amongst which was the provision of a leaving honours class for the Upper Murray districts to serve students from Waikerie, Barmera, Loxton, Berri and Renmark. The parents are anxious for their children to receive higher education in their own districts because of difficulties associated with finding suitable board elsewhere and lack of home influence. Will the Minister ascertain how many students would be required for the provision of a Leaving Honours class and whether it would be possible to obtain the necessary staff or make use of existing staff for this class? Will he also ascertain what transport facilities would be needed? I understand that the parents would do everything possible themselves by bringing the children to suitable pick-up centres. I believe there are at least 25 prospective students, and there might be more if it were known that a Leaving Honours class would be available in the river areas.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to have an investigation made. This is an important matter and I sympathize with the parents in their desire to retain their children in the country while they are at an advanced stage of education. Indeed, this is one of the best methods of decentralization, for it keeps students and their parents in the country, but it is not a problem that can be easily solved. The Education Department is short of teachers in general, and it is extremely short of teachers with high academic qualifications and practical experience in teaching students at an advanced stage. Pupils taking the Leaving Honours are in the same category as undergraduates of the university who have entered tertiary education after matriculation. Teachers need to be highly competent to be able to instruct such students. I think it would require at least 30 students for a Leaving Honours class to be set up in any school because it is somewhat extravagant with teachers in comparison with other grades of education. I think the Upper Murray district would be suitable for a Leaving Honours class to be set up because there are several towns near each other, and a relatively good system of school transport. I presume the honourable member has in mind the Glossop high school. I shall be pleased to have the whole matter investi-

igated by the Superintendent of High Schools in the first instance, and I am sure that the Acting Director of Education would be very interested in the matter, as I am personally. How soon it can be done I do not know, but I shall be pleased to have the initial inquiries made as soon as possible.

ALL-PURPOSE SEPTIC TANKS.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—The following is an extract from a letter I have received from the Mitcham Council:—

For some time my council has been of the opinion that an amendment to the Local Government Act empowering the councils to insist on all-purpose septic tanks being constructed to all new buildings would be advantageous in obtaining the best possible sanitary arrangements where deep sewers are not available.

With that letter was enclosed a copy of a letter from the Minister of Local Government to this effect:—

I have now received a report from the Local Government Advisory Committee, which has recommended that councils be enabled, subject to the existing powers of the Central Board of Health, to insist on the use of all-purpose septic tanks at new installations.

The letter is dated May 8, and the council has asked me to enquire of the Minister of Works whether any steps will be taken in that direction or not. Is that information available?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will get a report for the honourable member. At present the installation of septic tanks is under the control of the Central Board of Health, which must certify that a tank is suitable from a health point of view before it can be installed. I take it the question advocates the council having the power to enforce the installation of tanks?

Mr. Millhouse—All-purpose tanks.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I am not sure what the honourable member means by that, but I will have the matter investigated and advise him.

RAILWAYS EMPLOYEES' LEAVE.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Can the Minister of Lands, in the temporary absence of the Minister of Works, supply me with a reply to a question I asked recently about railway employees' leave?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have the following reply:—

The Railways Commissioner reports that at Mile End there are between fifty and sixty

guards, and of this number twenty have been rostered to commence their full period of annual leave on Wednesday, 24/12/58, and four on Thursday, 25/12/58 in order to give as many men as it is practicable so to do, the benefit of having their holidays over the Christmas period. The freight traffic immediately prior to Christmas requires the Mile End guards to work, and it is therefore not practicable to permit these twenty-four guards to commence their leave any earlier than rostered. Industries in Adelaide will close down on Tuesday, 23/12/58, and the Mile End yards also will be closed over the Christmas period for all but perishable and urgent consignments. The Union appears to expect that the department should roster the guards in question to commence their leave on Monday, 29/12/58, although no work would be available for them. The Commissioner regrets that he is unable to agree to this. The Commissioner adds that Mr. Quigley, in a letter dated, 17/1/57, to the General Traffic Manager, stated that he was instructed to request that as many Mile End guards as possible be rostered for their annual leave over the Christmas period. He goes on to say that the work offering for Mile End guards during this period is very light and the men concerned say that it is the most opportune time for their leave. It will be seen that the department has complied with this request from the Union.

FERRY APPROACHES.

Mr. JENKINS—Can the Minister of Lands, in the absence of the Minister of Works, supply me with an answer to a question I asked about the approaches to the Hindmarsh-Goolwa ferry?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have the following reply:—

Following the question of the honourable member, the Minister of Roads made an inspection of the ferry approaches at Hindmarsh Island this weekend. He is discussing with the Commissioner of Highway the possibility of temporary repairs to the fencing, although it is very doubtful whether they can be made satisfactory for driving stock to the ferry without tremendous expense. In view of the fact that it is expected to call tenders for a well constructed approach to the ferry from the Island side and that by the time this work is completed a new larger punt will be ready for installation, when stock transports may be used, it would appear to barely warrant expenditure on works of a temporary nature.

FRUIT FLY EXHIBITS.

Mr. BOCKELBERG—In view of the publicity given to the danger of the fruit fly and the expense incurred annually by the Government, would it be possible for the Minister of Agriculture to exhibit a fruit fly and infected fruit at the Royal Show so that the

public may gain some idea of its appearance? This may help in eradicating future trouble.

The Hon. N. D. BROOKMAN—There will be a comprehensive exhibit of the fruit fly in the Agricultural Hall at the Royal Show. I fancy the honourable member suggests having a genuine fruit fly there. It is an interesting suggestion and I will consider it, but frankly my first reaction is not to accept it. For one thing it might give the impression that the fruit fly can be cultivated with impunity, and, secondly, it might get away. I have seen only one fruit fly and that was after all the windows in the place had been closed tightly, and the fly had been taken from an attache case, unwrapped and exhibited in a sealed box. This shows how much importance is attached to one single fly. Magotty rotten fruit would be of interest also as an exhibit, but for the same reason I do not think the genuine article should be exhibited. At the departmental exhibit there will be proper diagrams and things of interest.

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES.

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

That in the opinion of this House a Royal Commission should be appointed—

- (a) to recommend to the House during the current session new boundaries for electoral boundaries for electoral districts for the House of Assembly to give substantial effect to the principle of one-vote-one-value; and
- (b) to consider in the preparation of such electoral boundaries the advisability of providing for multiple member districts.

The reason why the Opposition persists in its attempts to introduce electoral reform in this State is that it believes in democracy and that the people should be able to speak effectively in their Parliament. The only way to achieve effective speech is to ensure that the various sections of the community represented by electorates have an equal voice in electing members to Parliament. The present electoral system—the single member system—under which this Parliament is elected was introduced in 1938, so it is 20 years since this alleged electoral reform was first tried at an election. It was passed by the Liberal and Country League party two years before the 1938 election in an effort to secure the Treasury benches for that Party for all time. Twenty years have elapsed before the possibility has arisen of a change of government under that system and if I judge the portents rightly that change is just around the

corner—in the autumn of next year. I think it is wise to examine what has transpired under

this system during that period and the following table sets out the position:—

South Australia—Metropolitan and Country Enrolments Compared.

Year.	Metropolitan Area.			Country.			State.
	Enrolment.	Percentage of State Total.	Average Enr. per District.	Enrolment.	Percentage of State Total.	Average Enr. per District.	Total Enr. (State)
1938 . . .	212,000	58	16,300	152,900	42	5,900	365,000
1944 . . .	242,700	60	18,700	159,100	40	6,100	402,000
1950 . . .	271,000	62	20,800	167,000	38	6,400	438,000
1955 . . .	289,900	62.6	22,300	173,000	37.4	6,700	463,000
1958 . . .	301,700	62.95	23,200	177,600	37.05	6,800	479,000
Increase .	89,700		6,900	24,700		900	114,000
Incr. % .	42.3			16.1			31

The table abundantly proves my point that we have no democracy in South Australia. We have a system that denies people the right to elect the Government they want and to reject the Government they don't want. On analysing the above figures further we find that one country vote is worth 3.4 metropolitan votes. This is a scandalous state of affairs which should not be permitted in any part of the British Commonwealth. It sets a bad example to those parts of the Commonwealth that are being granted self-government or have been granted self-government in recent years. In this supposedly enlightened State we should be setting a good example, not a bad one.

Another point associated with this present system which has a detrimental effect on the body politic in South Australia is that at election after election there are large numbers of uncontested seats. I do not know whether the districts were determined by accident or design I should think by design—and I do not cast any aspersions on the Electoral Commission responsible for the most recent distribution, because it was impossible under its terms of reference to do justice and to give South Australia a democratic Parliament. However, having uncontested seats tends to destroy the people's interest in the body politic.

Let us look at the last election figures—and I remind members that that was the first election to be held after a redistribution. One would have thought that with the changes in boundaries, small as they were, interest would be re-awakened in the people and that there would be contests in all electorates. However, at the elections held on March 3, 1956, 16 out of 39 House of Assembly electorates

were not contested. In those electorates the people did not have the opportunity to determine who their representative would be, for the simple reason that the electorates were what may be classed as pocket boroughs for one or other political party. When we analyse those figures a little further we find that of the 16 uncontested seats only three—Hindmarsh, Mitcham and Semaphore—were in the metropolitan area, and 13 were in the country, spread out among the people who have more than three times the voting strength of those living in the metropolitan area. That is another very pertinent point that shows how undemocratic our Parliament has become.

The Opposition has sought repeatedly to change this system. In each Parliament since the end of the war we have moved in favour of electoral reform, and have tried in every possible way to get the majority of the Liberal and Country League to agree to a measure of reform. We have even been prepared to make some sacrifice on occasions in an effort to get this desirable objective achieved. In 1950 the Opposition introduced a comprehensive Electoral Reform Bill that was debated at some length, but it was defeated by the solid Liberal and Country League vote behind the Government. In 1954 we introduced another Bill in which we accepted to some extent—and I think a reasonable extent—the contention of the Government and the Liberal and Country League that there should be something in the nature of a zoning system. We were prepared to give sparsely populated areas a voting strength out of proportion to that provided in other areas, but that Bill, like its predecessors, was defeated, and the Government gave us its version of electoral reform when it brought in

a Bill, which subsequently became law, to appoint the Electoral Commission that investigated electoral boundaries. I suggest that members look at the report of speeches made by me on the 1950 and 1954 Bills before they make up their minds how they will vote on this motion, because they will find there abundant evidence in support of the principles of electoral reform I am now enunciating. The 1954 Act, which appointed a Royal Commission, continued the definition of metropolitan areas contained in the 1936 Act. This definition was an outrage on democracy; it was:—

“the metropolitan area” means the House of Assembly, districts of Adelaide, Torrens, Prospect, Thebarton, Hindmarsh, Semaphore, Port Adelaide, Norwood, Burnside, Unley, Mitcham, Goodwood, and Glenelg as existing at the time of the passing of this Act.

In this Act country areas were defined as being all parts of the State outside the metropolitan area. That is the Liberal Country League idea of zoning—to give to the thirteen metropolitan electorates one-third of the representation in this Parliament irrespective of population, either electoral or total, and to give to country districts, described as being the rest of the State, 26 members irrespective of how few electors may reside in that area. Section 5 of the 1954 Act provides:—

(1) Subject as hereinafter mentioned, the Commission shall—

- (a) re-divide the metropolitan area into 13 approximately equal Assembly districts; and
- (b) re-divide the country areas into 26 approximately equal Assembly districts; and
- (c) divide the proposed Assembly districts into subdivisions.

(2) For the purpose of this Act Assembly districts within the metropolitan area shall be regarded as being approximately equal to each other if no such district contains a number of electors more than 20 per cent above or below the average of the respective numbers of electors in all such districts: and the same principle, *mutatis mutandis*, shall apply to Assembly districts in the country areas.

That was the wide discretionary power vested in the Royal Commission. In making this alleged re-distribution it was allowed to fix a quota 20 per cent above or below the average. We will see what the Commission did. It apparently endeavoured to equalize enrolments as between districts in each zone regardless of geographical and other relevant factors. For example, the district of Stuart comprises, I think, the municipality of Port Augusta, and then there is a long Polish Corridor between the Flinders Ranges and the northern part of Port Pirie, where it takes in the Solomontown area.

Furthermore, it takes in what is known as “The Creek,” or the outer extremity of the Port Pirie harbour and all the wharves and appurtenances. If anyone were looking for the Port Pirie wharf area he would naturally seek it in the electoral district of Port Pirie, but in this queer re-distribution he would find it in the district of Stuart.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Where is “community interest” there?

Mr. O’HALLORAN—That was one of the points set out in the Act. Section 7 states:—

(1) In re-dividing the State into Assembly districts the Commission, so far as is compatible with the provisions of section 5 of the Act, shall endeavour to create districts in each of which respectively the electors have common interests.

(2) The commission shall also, so far as is compatible with the provision of section 5 of this Act and with subsection (1) of this section endeavour to create Assembly districts, each of which—

(a) is of convenient shape and has reasonable means of access between the main centres of population therein; and

(b) retains as far as possible, boundaries of existing districts and subdivisions.

In the case I have just mentioned that was completely ignored. It was also ignored in the cases of Port Adelaide and Enfield. In those cases means of communication and community interests were ignored so as to make a rough and ready average number of electors in them, but the choice example of the failure of the commission to realize that the tolerance of 20 per cent was prescribed for a specific purpose, namely, that it should not be necessary to have re-distributions at frequent intervals, was the district of Gawler. Before the commission was appointed the Government had already begun the establishment of Elizabeth. Everyone knew that that town would grow to a city in a few years, and one would have thought that some allowance would be made by the commissioners under the 20 per cent tolerance, but what do we find?

Salisbury and its environs were in the district of Gouger, but the commission, apparently realizing what the impact on Gouger would be with Salisbury North growing rapidly, decided it should become part of the Gawler electorate. The number of electors in the new district of Gawler created by the Royal Commission was 7,409 in 1955, but on April 16, 1958, it was 11,449, and it is growing by hundreds every week.

Mr. Hutchens—It is well represented, too.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes, but I do not think the commission was in order in determining the new district so that it could be so excellently represented. I believe the district of Gawler was determined as it was because of the fear of the impact of placing many more people in the district of Gouger or Barossa. Therefore, all these potentially dangerous electors were aggregated in the new district of Gawler. I admit that the exact implementation of the principle of one vote one value is not possible, but the electoral system should aim at approaching it as closely as possible. That is what I have always sought to do, and that is all I seek to do under this motion. The Constitution Act should provide for the more or less automatic adjustment of boundaries. The districts themselves should not be set out in the Act, as they are at present. Those districts can only be changed by an amendment of the Act, but let us examine the provisions of the Federal system. There we have a provision for an automatic re-division of the House of Representatives electorates whenever the quota, which has a tolerance of 20 per cent, is exceeded in more than a certain number of districts. Any re-division is done by an independent body free from any Government or Parliamentary control. That is what we have sought to introduce in South Australia and that is the only effective system of bringing about a proper distribution of voting strength.

The present gerrymander is the most vicious ever conceived, and it is the worst of any country in which democracy is supposed to prevail. Even if the metropolitan quota were twice the country quota, as in other Parliaments where that has been imposed by Liberal Governments, it would not be so bad, but in this State the representation ratio is nearly $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 1. Another point meriting consideration is that it has the effect of setting off the metropolitan area against country areas. On many issues vitally important to the people country members do not see eye to eye with metropolitan members. That is reasonable because their experiences are different. In the matter under review they are very different, and I believe they have been made deliberately so in order that country representation may be maintained, irrespective of how population may change. It does not matter whether the metropolitan area has 60, 62 or 75 per cent of the total State electoral population: according to the dictum of the L.C.L. the country must have 26 members in this House and the metropolitan area only

13. This shows that the L.C.L. does not believe in government of the people by the people for the people. That democratic ideal was expressed by one of the greatest Presidents of the greatest democracy of the world, the United States of America. It is as true today as when uttered at Gettysburg nearly 100 years ago, but it has not yet permeated into the minds of the L.C.L. in this State.

We hear much about South Australia's prosperity. I have a newspaper report of a speech recently made by the Premier at the official opening of an industry exhibition at Myer Emporium. He pointed out that he could remember the time when we used to boast that in South Australia we were a primary production State and had no desire to be anything else. He said that with that arrangement we got poorer and poorer every year and were losing 20,000 people every year as they left South Australia because we could not offer the same conditions as eastern States. Now we have the much vaunted prosperity. I will not delve deeply into the subject this afternoon, but there are two points I want to mention. I admit there is prosperity in this State, but there is a similar prosperity in other States. It is due first of all to the impact born of war and, secondly, to the high prices of all types of primary production, with the exception of dried fruits and butter. Wheat, wool and metal prices soared sky high. We are told that South Australia is the most prosperous State in the Commonwealth. Mr. Bolte, Premier of Victoria, says that his State is the most prosperous, Mr. Cahill says New South Wales is, Mr. Nicklin says the same of Queensland, and Mr. Hawke of Western Australia could tell a good story about the expansion in his State during the last few years. When statements are made about South Australia being the most prosperous State in the Commonwealth it is more or less pointing the bone at the fellow on the other side of the border fence. As Australians we should be looking for the development of our country from the national angle rather than using the parish pump ideology which permeated this country in the days before Federation.

Let us see whether our prosperity is as soundly based as we say it is. Let us see what country representation in this House has done for country districts. There has been expansion in some country towns. We have Whyalla and Port Pirie as examples, and in my district there are Leigh Creek and Radium Hill. This development has been due to either the discovery of minerals or to the places mentioned

being the most suitable for processing plants. We have a uranium treatment plant at Port Pirie, power houses at Port Augusta and postulated steelworks at Whyalla. The prosperity of a country depends primarily upon the production of its foodstuffs. The position now is far from good. There are fewer people on the land working as principals than was the position 30 years ago. Once the primary producing population begins to decline in numbers it is followed by an aggregation of land into larger estates, which closes up the avenues for young people to become settlers on the land, and they are forced, though they may not like it and may prefer the more frugal living from the soil, to become workers in industry for the term of their natural lives. When I travel throughout the State and see what is happening in country towns I am reminded of the following words by Oliver Goldsmith in *The Deserted Village*:—

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay;
Princes and lords may flourish or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;

But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroy'd, can never be supplied.

These lines aptly describe the position that is growing up in South Australia today, and the preponderance of country members in this House has done nothing to stop it. In fact, in some respects it has accentuated the position, because in many instances country members represent landholders who wish to retain their land and use it at their own sweet will and not in the interests of the community as a whole. The large landholders can afford to sit on their broad acres.

Mr. Stott—Is that Goldsmith?

The Hon. D. N. Brookman—Your description of the situation in the country is an exaggeration.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I do not think it is. I think I know as much about the country as the Minister of Agriculture. I was born in the north and have lived there all my life and have travelled extensively there in order to keep track of my own electorate. Incidentally, that electorate has an area of 132,000 square miles—five times the size of Tasmania—and has a wide diversity of interests. Means of communication are almost negligible.

Mr. John Clark—It takes a big man to represent it.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—A big and versatile man. This resolution is, after all, very simple. It proposes that a Royal Commission should recommend during the current session new

boundaries for electoral districts for the House of Assembly to give substantial effect to the principle of one vote one value and I challenge any member to say that that is not a just principle in a community that claims to be democratic. The Royal Commission is also to consider in the preparation of such electoral boundaries the advisability of providing for multiple member districts. In the past we had some criticism that single electorates would become too large in some respects. Mine has certainly become too large. Multiple electorates would solve that problem and would also permit the introduction of proportional representation which, after all, is the only means whereby each substantial body of political opinion in the community can get the representation in Parliament to which it is entitled.

I suggest that in order to bring about the better-balanced development of the State—which we believe in and which I think honourable members opposite, subject to certain reservations, believe in—and to encourage primary industries to go hand in hand with secondary industries and to build from our undoubted natural resources a great, prosperous, homogeneous and democratic State this motion should be carried.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—Obviously if this motion it to be effective it will have to be considered promptly, for it provides that the Royal Commission must report during this session. If the House desires to establish a Royal Commission it will not be possible to delay consideration of this matter and under those circumstances I will forgo my usual right to ask for an adjournment. If I do not complete my statement before 4 o'clock it may be necessary for me to get leave to continue my remarks. The proposal is for the establishment of a Royal Commission, and in that the Leader is quite open, but he insists that the terms of reference to that Commission shall provide for one-vote-one-value and for multiple electorates.

Mr. Dunstan—The Commission is only to consider those factors.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—They are the two essentials in the directions to go to the Royal Commission.

Mr. Dunstan—They are not directions to the Royal Commission.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—We hear the principle of one-vote-one-value advanced as an argument in different ways at different times. Apparently it is a popular

principle with the Opposition today, but it has not always been popular and frequently results in controversy in the Labor Party. Under the Party rules on occasions one person has as many as 2,000 votes, so apparently the belief that one-vote-one-value is the basis of democracy does not always apply. Multiple electorates are not universally adopted by the Labor Party. The proposed system operates in Tasmania and for a number of years has led to a deadlocked Parliament. The same system operates in the Senate and at present that is the subject of consideration by an all-Party committee.

Mr. Shannon—Incidentally, it seems to have given permanent life to the splinter group.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—That is so and I understand for that reason it is not universally popular with the Labor Party. The Leader has not suggested that there should be an alteration in the present number of members—39.

Mr. O'Halloran—I suggested that before, but you would not support it.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Leader has changed his policy on this matter from time to time. On one occasion he proposed that the electoral boundaries should conform with the Federal districts, but on this occasion we are to be more selective and have a Royal Commission. Assuming that the present numbers are maintained, on the figures the Leader has supplied—and if my arithmetic is not wrong—the House would comprise 24½ or 25 members from the metropolitan area and 14½ or 14 from the country. Assuming that the half member goes in favour of the country, 24 members would be elected from the metropolitan area and 15 from the country. Let me make my position clear: I would never be prepared to accept that. The Leader has argued from time to time that the city is developing more rapidly than the country, yet he is proposing to take away the very thing that is helping to develop country districts—the fact that they have representation in this House and can make their voices heard.

In the House of Representatives there is something of the principle that the Leader has set out as the proper procedure, and if members examine the position they will find that since the first day of Federation, when the principle of one-vote-one-value was adopted, the big capital cities of Melbourne and Sydney were built up. They have been given more representation in the House of Representatives than three States, perhaps four, and that has

been tremendously to the disadvantage of the development of this country. Why is it that the great North-West, the Northern Territory and Northern Queensland are at present unpopulated? These areas are full of wealth, yet nothing is happening. Why is it that the north of Queensland is seeking to break away and form a new State? Only because we cannot have development of the country unless we have a voice in the Parliament to determine policy. If the Leader wants a Royal Commission to provide for this, he must count me out, because quite definitely the representation that goes to make up this Parliament, two country members for each city member—which is not something that this Government brought in, but has been the position almost since the inception of Parliament in South Australia—has not shown itself to be disadvantageous to the city, and it has not amply compensated for the fact that city members have small electorates.

In most instances a shilling fare will enable every metropolitan member to see any of his constituents, whereas long distances are involved in the country, as the Leader realizes. He has suggested multiple electorates so that there would be three members for an area three times the size of present electorates, but this would not solve the problem. I oppose the motion, and ask leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

INDUSTRIAL CODE REGULATIONS.

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

That regulations under the Industrial Code, 1920-1955, relating to employees' records, etc., made on the 17th July, 1958, and laid on the table of this House on the 22nd July, 1958, be disallowed.

I have moved for the disallowance of these regulations because of difficulty that was experienced when new regulations under the Industrial Code were drafted recently, but as a result of conferences held between the Trades and Labor Council and the appropriate Minister and Government authorities, I believe there is a possibility that regulations that will meet the wishes of all concerned will be drafted, so I ask leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

HIRE-PURCHASE AGREEMENTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition), having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Hire-Purchase Agreements Act, 1931. Read a first time.

METROPOLITAN TAXICAB ACT REGULATIONS.

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr. O'Halloran—

That the regulations under the Metropolitan Taxicab Act, 1956-1957, made on the 27th March, 1958, and laid on the table of this House on the 17th June, 1958, be disallowed.

(Continued from August 27. Page 549.)

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—The Leader of the Opposition has moved to disallow the whole of the regulations under the taxicab legislation laid before Parliament this year. I felt that he realized he was in a very difficult position in doing this because undoubtedly, whatever the regulations have or have not done, they have vastly improved the position from what it was when the board took over. The Leader admitted there had been a vast improvement.

Mr. O'Halloran—I did not say that.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—He said that 80 per cent of the regulations were satisfactory, and on my summing up, that is a fairly substantial majority. I watched the Leader with his brief. Under ordinary circumstances he is extremely good with a brief, but he made very heavy weather indeed of this one. Probably he felt that he could have had a more convincing case. I am not saying he did not submit his case as well as he could, but I believe he felt he had a very bad case to argue, one that he felt could not be made very presentable to this House. The legislation to control taxicabs was designed to meet all sorts of difficulties arising out of multiple control.

Mr. Davis—And that legislation did not get over those difficulties.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Most of the difficulties have been overcome. It is true—and this applies to the honourable member's own conduct of municipal affairs at Port Pirie—that we cannot introduce the millenium overnight: we cannot solve all problems immediately. There has been a vast improvement in the industry since the board was established, and that is recognized by everyone associated with the industry. The pirating which was complained of by all sections has been stopped. The board has been able to introduce a code which has improved standards for the public. If we consider the many inherited difficulties that the board had to overcome we must admit that it has done a remarkably good job, notwithstanding that the legislation had a good deal of difficulty attached to it. In the first place, we gave

representation on the board to many conflicting interests. In the second place, the board had to be very large in order to get agreement between the various interests. However, the legislation has proved to be successful and beneficial to the industry generally. I have received a petition signed by 255 taxicab operators who own or drive green plate, unrestricted suburban cabs, which is the section the Leader of the Opposition presumed to speak for in this debate. To a certain extent the petition supports some of the Leader's remarks, but I believe it sets out the views of the taxi industry. It states:—

We, the undersigned operators of unrestricted or suburban green plate taxis, desire to bring under your notice the following:—

- (1) That we are in favour of one licence for all taxis operating in the present metropolitan area giving equal rights to all taxis.

Mr. O'Halloran—That was one of my main points.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I am not trying to cloud the issue, but putting it fairly. The petition continues:—

Briefly, our reasons are that under existing conditions the public are not getting adequate service in the city, particularly at peak periods, due to the fact that the suburban taxis cannot accept a hail in the Adelaide restricted area.

That one licence would be the simplest system to be administered by the board and more economical operation by all taxis by reducing dead miles.

That one licence would eliminate the present confusion in the public's mind as to which taxi it can or cannot hail, and that all taxis should be available for hire at all times when not engaged, regardless of where they are.

That the takings of all taxis have been reduced by the inability to provide the public with a service to which they have been accustomed.

We are in favour of control by the present board.

We are in favour of the present regulations being retained, subject to suitable amendments of the regulations deleting all reference to two licences, and to provide in such amendments for one licence with the same rights and privileges for all.

We have no specific objection to a controlled form of leasing by the board.

The Leader of the Opposition wants to disallow all the regulations. I have always thought that a system of one class of licences would be advantageous to all sections of the community. However, Parliament specifically provided for different classes of licences because it decided, for various reasons, that there should not be one class, however desirable that would be. Section 35 (1) prescribes the conditions under which licences of any kind or

grade may be issued or renewed. Section 35 (2) states:—

Different regulations may be made in respect of the several grades or kinds of licences.

This indicates that Parliament realized there were many problems associated with the industry and that it was desirable to give the board a chance to gradually overcome the difficulties. The board has gone a long way in that direction and the restricted area is comparatively small now. It is not the whole of the Corporation of Adelaide area. The background of the disallowance move is that the public is not getting the benefit it would get if there were one class of licence. I have a report from the Commissioner of Police who has representation on the Taxicab Control Board. He is not biased in any way, has no personal axe to grind, and has no type of licence to protect or sponsor. His report states:—

1. Sources of information.—Observations and inquiries made by police during the past three months generally and the period August 16-22 specifically.

2. Licences issued.—252 taxicabs are licensed to ply for hire within the restricted area. In addition 28 hire cars and 509 other taxicabs are permitted to operate within the area by appointment.

3. Taxicab movements.—There are 41 stands in the restricted area, having a total capacity of 82 cabs. At least 170 cabs, therefore, are disposed as follows:—

- (a) carrying a fare or returning to a stand;
- (b) cruising the streets in an endeavour to obtain a fare or a vacant stand;
- (c) "lying up" waiting an opportunity to occupy a stand.

If additional licences are issued in the restricted area, consideration must be given to additional stands. Several companies operating taxis which are licensed for the unrestricted area have made arrangements with business houses, hotels, travel organizations, doctors' rooms, etc., in the restricted area, to call only that company's cabs when customers require transport. There are several other instances of unrestricted cab operators having permanent bookings with customers who regularly require a cab in the restricted area. (The same type of arrangement may possibly operate between a restricted area cab and a person in the unrestricted area).

4. Demand.—The daily peak periods occur:—

- (a) in the morning when interstate and country train arrivals coincide;
- (b) in the afternoon when shopping and business crowds leave the city;
- (c) in the early evening when the pleasure bound crowds return to the city;
- (d) at night when the places of entertainment close.

These periods aggregate less than 5 hours, and a careful study during these times, over the last few days, has not revealed any shortage of taxis nor any complaints of persons

having to wait for taxis. Apart from the above, which may be termed "normal" peak periods, there are times when the demand is abnormal to such an extent that additional taxicabs could be used, but for a relatively short period only.

These "abnormal" peak periods are caused through:—

- (a) Freak weather conditions.—This of course can occur anywhere—restricted or unrestricted area—at any time. No doubt the greater demand would be in the restricted area, due to the number of people congregated there, but it is a temporary demand only.
- (b) Unusual movement to attend a large public function.—Generally speaking, on such occasions the demand is for unrestricted area cabs to bring people to the city, and any person who relies on taxis for transport usually makes definite arrangements for the journey homewards. The requirement for an increase in licences would apply more to the unrestricted area than to the restricted area, in this case.
- (c) The Saturday morning rush to the races (11.30 to 12.30).—During this period there are very few taxicabs available from stands other than those along or in close proximity to King William Street. At the same time, however, there are taxis cruising between Grenfell-Currie Streets and North Terrace. The situation at Gresham Place and Gilbert Place is already known to the members of the board, and the police have the matter in hand.

There is no shortage of taxis to convey people to race meetings, but other users may find difficulty in obtaining a cab in portion of the restricted area for a short period around midday on a Saturday. This is also a busy period for unrestricted area cabs. To permanently license sufficient taxicabs within the restricted area to meet such extraordinary demands, as mentioned above, would be quite impracticable and would cause hardship to existing operators during normal periods. It must be remembered that the "abnormal peak periods" would be considerably less than 2 per cent of the time.

5. Summary.—The number of taxicabs at present licensed in the Adelaide restricted area, and the circumstances under which other taxicabs and hire cars are permitted to operate within this area, have been sufficient to accommodate the requirements of the public except in abnormal conditions. Observations and inquiries have not disclosed any cases of undue waiting nor any complaints of taxis not being available in the restricted area. Therefore I recommend that no general increase be made in the number of licences for taxicabs to ply for hire in the Adelaide restricted area.

I suggest to Opposition members that the correct thing to do is not to disallow the regulations because if they are disallowed there will be a state of confusion that must be detrimental to all people operating taxis. The board should be given an opportunity to find solutions.

of the problems. No matter what action it took in the early stages it would be challenged by somebody, because there were so many conflicting interests. Its operations have been beneficial to the industry and the public. It has done a remarkably good job and its chairman has been most devoted to his work. He has shown ability and integrity unsurpassed by a member of any board for many years. He has no axe to grind. We should give this board an opportunity to work out the solutions to all the problems in order that this industry can be completely harmonious. That may take time. A few weeks ago when I was abroad I had an opportunity of examining conditions in other countries and when I travelled by taxi I sat with the drivers and yarned with them about conditions. Where this problem has been solved in other countries similar conditions do not apply and their methods would be disastrous in South Australia. In New York, for instance, any reputable person with a motor car can apply for a licence and, if his vehicle is road-worthy can use it or lease it for any purpose.

Mr. Jennings—That is something like the position in South Australia.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—No. In South Australia there is a restricted number which benefits those operating in the industry. I believe that if a person is to give service to the community he must have some security and rights. If we are to have open slather with no protection neither the public nor the industry will benefit and there will be confusion. Whatever strictures the honourable member may believe can be made, he admitted that the regulations we are seeking to disallow have been beneficial. The big majority of persons in the industry favour these regulations and it would be a calamity to disallow them. I hope the House will not follow that course.

Mr. JENNINGS (Enfield)—We have just heard a characteristic speech from the Premier in which he sought to put into the mouth of the Leader of the Opposition words he did not use. Secondly, the Premier encouraged the House to believe that the Opposition was seeking to abolish these regulations because only 80 per cent of them were satisfactory. The Premier failed to point out that we cannot disallow 25, 30 or 40 per cent of the regulations.

Mr. O'Halloran—Not even 5 per cent.

Mr. JENNINGS—Although we realize that most of the insignificant features of the regulations are quite all right the principal ones are completely wrong and therefore we have no alternative but to move for the disallowance

of the regulations. The Premier referred to some of the slight ways in which the taxi industry has been improved as a result of the operations of the board, but the principal issue to which the Leader referred—the leasing of licences—was not mentioned by him.

Mr. Hambour—He mentioned that in the petition he read from the taxi drivers.

Mr. JENNINGS—I have a copy of that petition and it does not mention the issue of the leasing of licences. It refers to restricted areas, which is a big issue. If the Premier did not hear what the Leader said he had an opportunity of reading the Leader's speech in *Hansard*, but he did not refer to the main reason for this motion for disallowance of the regulations which, incidentally, I believe was the principal reason for them in the first place. We all appreciate the chaos that occurred under the old system and we know that a Royal Commission was appointed with limited terms of reference. It brought back a recommendation which was subsequently incorporated in legislation introduced by the Government but that legislation was not proceeded with because the House would not have it. Obviously, Government members believe; as we did, that the Government proposal was not satisfactory. The member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) was one.

Mr. Shannon—The honourable member should read the debates before he continues speaking. He supported things then that he is now opposing.

Mr. JENNINGS—The honourable member should listen for a minute.

Mr. Shannon—I have both ears open and I am hearing things that rather surprise me. I don't think you have done your homework on this.

Mr. JENNINGS—The honourable member did not agree with the proposal put forward by the Government when it introduced this legislation in the first place. That legislation lapsed. The Premier let it go. Subsequently another Bill was introduced but it did not get Government support and the following session the legislation was introduced establishing the present board. The Opposition accepted it as something not perfect but much better than nothing. We supported the setting up of this board as a means of controlling taxis in the metropolitan area. We supported it for the unified control of taxis in the metropolitan area. It is rather peculiar that it is alleged in certain quarters that the Transport Workers Union opposes the board. That is not so. Certainly I think the union would claim that it could appoint a better board, but I

could appoint a better board, as could probably every member. Nevertheless the board is a sort of compromise board. It provides a new type of control; and although we may not be perfectly satisfied with it we accept it. I was surprised that the Premier read from one petition he had received, yet neglected to read from another that was also sent to him. A copy of the latter was sent to the Leader of the Opposition, who was good enough to let me use it. The letter accompanying the latter petition from the 'Taxicab Operators' Association of Australia states:—

Appended hereto are signatures of 255 taxicab operators who own and/or drive green plate unrestricted suburban taxicabs. You will no doubt observe from the tenor of the petition heading the signatures that one point, viz., the single licence, is in common with the policy of the Transport Workers' Union. Our main difference with the union's policy is that we wish to retain the present board and, apart from the regulations governing the types of plates or licences, we are content with the policy and action of the Metropolitan Taxicab Board as at present constituted.

I am afraid they have completely misunderstood the attitude of the Transport Workers' Union, which has no objection whatever to the preservation of the board; all it is concerned about is what the board is doing, and the first thing under that head is the leasing of licences. We know why the legislation was passed in the first place and why the trouble occurred in the taxi industry several years ago—because people were paying from £800 to £1,000 for licences handed out in bulk to people such as solicitors and doctors, who never used them, but hired them back to taxi operators for £8 or £10 a week. The Yellow Cab Company is one example, and I do not think it is the worst case, but we know more about it because it is a prominent company. Do not forget that the Act was passed to prevent such leasing. Never mind section 35 that the Premier quoted, completely ignoring section 33; the Act was passed to prevent the leasing of these licences or, in the unusual case to provide that leasing would be permitted only for a good purpose; but what has happened? The Yellow Cab Company still has the 43 licences it had before the legislation was passed, and it is still leasing them out at £6 10s. a week. It is leasing them out under the subterfuge—and the secretary of the company admitted before the Subordinate Legislation Committee that it was a subterfuge—of a partnership agreement. A service is provided: for instance, the telephone may ring sometimes,

and there are stands here, there and everywhere; but generally speaking the service is not accepted as being worth £6 10s. The secretary also stated before the committee that after investigation by the Prices Commissioner it was found that the company was entitled to charge £6 10s. This investigation was precipitated by the member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn), and following it the fee was arrived at, but what the secretary did not point out to the committee was that even though £6 10s. was considered by the Prices Commissioner as not representing great exploitation, prior to that the company was charging £8 a week.

Mr. Hambour—Do you say that, or did the Prices Commissioner?

Mr. JENNINGS—The honourable member does not see the point. I do not see why the company should have any licences.

Mr. O'Halloran—Unless it owns cabs.

Mr. JENNINGS—It does not. The men who drive the cabs own them.

Mr. Hambour—Don't they get a radio service?

Mr. JENNINGS—Not as far as I know, although I may be wrong. However, the honourable member has missed the point. What great part in the economy of South Australia does the Yellow Cab Company play? I cannot see that this State would go broke without it. We would still have the same people driving the same cabs, which they own themselves, and for which they have to pay leasing and licence fees.

Mr. Millhouse—Who would provide the service in that case?

Mr. JENNINGS—If service is necessary I should imagine it would not be beyond the ingenuity of 40 or 50 cab owners to form themselves into a society.

Mr. Shannon—You would then have another company, because a co-operative society is still a company.

Mr. JENNINGS—You would not. The people doing the work would have a say in what the organization is doing, unlike the Farmers' Union. There are worse examples than the Yellow Cab Company. About 14 licences have been issued to the Silver Top Company and the unfortunate people who have to lease them to obtain a livelihood have to pay £6 10s. a week, although no service whatever is provided. It is just £6 10s. blood money.

Mr. Hambour—Were those licences issued by the previous administration?

Mr. JENNINGS—Yes, and the board has taken over the previous administration.

Mr. Hambour—Were they existing licences?

Mr. JENNINGS—Yes, and that is why the Leader has moved this motion—because the present board is perpetuating the corrupt things the previous administration did. I have been told that, in addition to the 14 licences actually being used by that company, another two are being held in abeyance by the board until the company can get two more people who will agree to pay £6 10s. a week. I understand that Green Cabs have about 14 licences. Mr. Applebee, who was a member of the board, recently resigned from it because he did not like the way the board was managing its affairs. Orange Cabs Ltd. is in a different position from others because before the board was established it operated only in the suburbs. It had 43 taxis with suburban restricted plates. I understand that the man who conducts this company runs it fairly. He had a licence for every cab, but after the changeover in administration he found he could not manage his affairs very well, and he has been given permission by the board to lease all his licences over 29 at £3 a week for the licence and £3 10s. for service, making £6 10s. a week for a suburban licence. That is something he did not have before the board was created.

There are many other cases that I could mention. We all know of cases where a person not involved in the industry at all has two or three licences. I think most members are aware of what is going on in this regard, but I prefer not to mention names. The Premier eulogized the work of the chairman of the board, and I believe that he has spent much time on his work. The Premier said the chairman had shown remarkable integrity in his conduct of the board's affairs. I would not like to reflect on Mr. Bonnin, but I shall refer to a case where he was picked up by a green-plate taxi in a restricted area. The taxi was not entitled to operate in that area, but the driver is a personal friend of mine. He lives in my electorate and I have known him for several years, and I have no reason to doubt anything he tells me. He said he picked up Mr. Bonnin in a restricted area and drove him to his home and had a few words to say to him about the conduct of the Taxicab Board.

The driver was retained by Mr. Bonnin to drive his baby-sitter home, but later received a summons because he had picked up Mr. Bonnin in a restricted area. If that is the sort of

integrity the Taxicab Board is displaying it is something I cannot understand. This driver was fined £10 and he was happy to pay it because he now knows where he stands with the board, and I believe that we now know more about the board. The most important aspect is that the board is impudently and arrogantly trying to get around an Act of Parliament which precludes the leasing of licences unless there is good reason for it. Such reason must be presented to the Minister, who must lay it on the table of the House.

Mr. John Clark—Is that being done?

Mr. JENNINGS—Not yet. Leasing has been going on all the time, but we have not heard anything about it.

Mr. O'Halloran—The companies are getting around the Act by subterfuge.

Mr. JENNINGS—That is proved by the evidence given before the Joint Committee on Subordinate Legislation. The leasing of licences is the principal issue, and reasons for allowing leasing must be presented to Parliament, but not one reason has yet been presented to us. Further, the board has set itself up as a sort of industrial court. It says, "If you do not agree to forgoing the award we will do this, that and the other." It has used all sorts of intimidatory tactics, and has gone far beyond the powers it was given. The Premier implied that if we disallowed the regulations we should sack the board, but it was mainly through the efforts of members on this side of the House that the board was appointed in the first place. We do not want the board sacked, but we want it to realize it is a body subordinate to this Parliament and that it should not go beyond the powers delegated to it. If we disallowed the regulations the board could draft others in conformity with the spirit of the legislation.

Mr. Millhouse—What would happen until the new regulations were framed?

Mr. JENNINGS—The board was appointed about 20 months before it drafted any regulations at all. If it drafted regulations acceptable to Parliament we should have no more trouble in the industry, and we have had too much trouble during the last four or five years. In the last four or five years Parliament has devoted far too much time to taxicab matters, because after all it is not a tremendously important industry for the State. Because the Government once agreed to something that is reasonable we should not have to devote time discussing matters when people say they are being treated wrongly. I support the motion.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—We have just listened to the usual type of speech from Mr. Jennings. He referred to the honesty of the members of the Taxicab Control Board and particularly mentioned the chairman. He said he did not want to kick out the members: although he was not sure that they were honest he wanted to keep them. That is an amazing view. If I believed what the honourable member said about those people I would want to get rid of them. I do not think that Mr. Jennings really believes some of the things he said about the board. When we debated the Metropolitan Taxicab Bill in 1956 Mr. O'Halloran did not have a great deal to say, but he complained about two things. One was the unwieldiness of the proposed board, and I agreed with him on that, and the other was the onus of proof. We frequently include in legislation a clause dealing with the onus of proof and there is at times justification for it. When Mr. Justice Abbott was a member of this place he dilated on it frequently and on a number of occasions accepted it, although he opposed it several times because he thought the offences were not sufficient to require it. I thought that, having taken exception to these things, Mr. O'Halloran would have moved in some way in Committee, but he did not: his name does not appear in *Hansard* as taking part in the Committee debate. Mr. King dealt with the power of search, the Premier replied to his query, Mr. Millhouse moved for the insertion of a new clause, and Mr. Hambour asked a question to which the Premier replied. The Bill was then read a third time and passed. It does not appear that any member had any real criticism to offer of the legislation. Altogether there were 14 or 16 speeches and I do not think one opposed the Bill. Most members supported it in the hope that some of the difficulties would be overcome. The present discussion deals with the types of licences, green or white. In section 35, subsection (1) of the Act, Parliament gave a direction regarding the kind or grade of licence to be issued.

Mr. Jennings—That is not a direction.

Mr. SHANNON—It is. Words contained in Acts of Parliament have some force in law. Parliament deemed it necessary to provide for varying licences to meet prevailing conditions. Another point taken in this debate is that the board has apparently been permitting the transferring or leasing of licences. Charges have been made that the Minister has not reported to Parliament on any of these activities. The board has been in office for about

20 months, so Mr. Jennings said. The regulation under review is of comparatively recent vintage. It was promulgated in March of this year and is it not possible that the things the honourable member fears the board is doing in leasing and transferring licences occurred before the regulation became operative? That is probably why we have had no Ministerial information on the matter. In his suave way Mr. Jennings suggested that the Minister was in league with the board and did not let Parliament know what was going on, because it was not wise for us to know what was happening. I do not think Mr. Jennings means such things or he makes statements without knowing what they really mean. In section 33 we gave the board certain powers we realized would be necessary. All manner of circumstances arise in such an industry and I have no doubt that taxi drivers sometimes change their employment.

It would be a great hardship to a taxi owner who perhaps had to go to another State if it were said to him, "Bad luck. You can give the licence to whoever you like, but you cannot sell or lease it. Your goodwill is gone. You paid £500 when you started in the business. That is a total loss to you." We realized that problems such as this could arise because we inserted the following provisions in the Act. Section 33 states:—

(3) A licence shall not be transferred, leased, or otherwise dealt with except with consent of the board, and the board may, in giving any such consent, impose any conditions which it thinks fit.

(4) If—

(a) a taxicab licence is issued in respect of a taxicab which is not owned by the licensee; or

(b) a taxicab licence is transferred to a person who is not the owner of the taxicab; or

(c) consent is given by the board to the leasing of a taxicab licence.

Why did we put all those things into the Act if we knew that the ills which existed prior to the passage of the legislation would persist? We realized that certain circumstances would arise and we trusted the board by giving it wide discretionary powers. I think the board has done a fine job and I regret that Parliament, almost at the inception of the board, has criticized it and taken it to task. It has been suggested that the board does not know its business.

Mr. Davis—I do not think we knew our business when we passed this legislation.

Mr. SHANNON—There were no divisions in the course of the passage of the legislation and

the one amendment proposed by Mr. Millhouse was accepted without criticism. I have never seen such an important amendment so speedily accepted. The legislation was treated similarly and no criticism was offered. There was some slight comment on the size of the board and the onus of proof, but that is all. I received, as did every member, a printed communication from the taxi drivers. Members are sometimes inclined to be impressed by approaches made by various sections of the community and, unfortunately, by some who have an axe to grind. I take little notice of them and believe they should not receive much weight. Mr. Jennings read from a document he said was presented to him by 250 taxi-cab operators asking for the disallowance of these regulations. I understand there are between 1,300 and 1,400 licensed operators in the metropolitan area and I do not think such a small number as 250 represents a great demand.

There has been criticism of one of the first regulations this board has issued. If the members of the board were 100 per cent right they are better than human. It is obvious that mistakes will be made and I am convinced that if the board has made a mistake in this regulation it will be quick to amend it. I have spoken to Mr. Turnbull, who is acting as secretary for the board, and I have the highest regard for him. He was a superintendent in our police force and held a responsible position in charge of traffic. He is well suited for this particular work. He said to me, "There are certain things that can only be determined by trial and error. We are not too sure, for so many aspects are to be considered. We do not believe that we will not make mistakes." That is an honest approach. If there are inequities in this regulation I am prepared to trust the board to withdraw it. It could prepare a second regulation and introduce it at the same time as it withdraws the other and there would be no hiatus. I am convinced of the board's honesty and ability and I support the regulation.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra)—One would not think that I would have any particular interest in taxicabs apart from using them and getting complete satisfaction from the service the average taxicab driver renders to his clients, but every member has a responsibility and is called upon to vote on these measures. I have listened with interest to the debate but, quite frankly, the Premier did not impress me at all. The member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) was like the curate's egg: he was good in

parts but, generally speaking, he was unimpressive and certainly not his usual good self. In one particular which I will mention the Act itself needs amending. If it is necessary to disallow these regulations in order to remedy the things I will mention, then they should be disallowed. Another point made by the member for Onkaparinga was that the board be given an opportunity to revise the regulations to incorporate suggestions arising from this debate. That could be done.

Mr. Shannon—That is the usual procedure with most Government departments.

Mr. QUIRKE—Yes. I should like to see that done. I think the board has done a fine job where it has operated under the Act. I said, when the board was formed, that I thought the Commissioner of Police alone should control taxis in South Australia, just as the Commissioner of Police in London controls the thousands of taxicabs there and appears to do the job really well. The police here are called upon to take action for breaches by taxi operators; it would be just as well for them to control the whole thing, and there would not be an unwieldy board like this.

Every member knows that a big proportion of the work we do in a session of Parliament consists of amending Acts that need amendment. We claim no infallibility. We can make mistakes and we remedy them, as they become apparent, by amending the Acts. The provision concerning licences for people who do not operate taxicabs in their own names should, in my opinion, be amended. I have found some extraordinary figures during my inquiries into this matter. For instance, the Yellow Cab Company has no cabs of its own, but collects £6 5s. per week from each of 43 cab drivers, making £268 a week in all, and the Silver Top Taxi Company collects £6 10s. per week from each of 16 drivers, making £104 a week. Those 59 taxicab operators who carry the plates rented to them have to pay £19,583 a year to those two companies.

Mr. King—What do they get in return?

Mr. QUIRKE—I will tell you. Fifty-nine people pay nearly £20,000 a year in rental to people who do not have a taxicab, but merely charge for the rent of the plates. That is ridiculous. I have copies of the agreement that the parties sign, and they are available for any member to read. The standard agreement is as follows:—

The lessor agrees at all times during the continuance of this agreement—

(a) to provide a current licence issued by the board from time to time.

- (b) to provide satisfactory telephone and/or radio service to the lessee.
- (c) to arrange for collection of all charge accounts and payment thereof to the lessee.
- (d) where practicable to arrange for replacement of vehicles and for supply of petrol, oil, accessories and spare parts at discount rates.

There is nothing binding in the latter provision. It goes on:—

- (e) to provide all advertising.
- (f) to make available to the lessee any stand held by the lessor.

In my mind, it is a little surprising that he should have a stand at all. It continues:—

- (g) to lodge with the board within 72 hours
 - (i) a copy of this agreement when signed by both parties thereto; and
 - (ii) a notification of the termination of this agreement by either party thereto.
- (h) to retain a copy of the said agreement in his possession and at reasonable times produce the same for inspection by the lessee or his personal representative or an inspector of the board or any person authorized in writing by the board.

The following is what the lessee agrees to do:—

The lessee agrees at all times during the continuance of this agreement—

- (a) to provide and maintain a suitable vehicle approved by the board.

He provides the motor vehicle; that is the first condition. It goes on:—

- (b) to provide at his own expense all petrol, oil, lubricants and replacement parts required and to effect all necessary repairs.
- (c) to exercise proper care and control of the vehicle and not allow any person other than a driver licensed by the board to drive the said vehicle.
- (d) to wear while in charge of the vehicle and to maintain in good and clean condition any uniform or dress as prescribed by the board.
- (e) to observe and comply with the provisions of the Road Traffic Act and of any other Act relating to the vehicle or any regulation or by-law made thereunder.
- (f) to give to the lessor as soon as practicable after any accident in which the vehicle may be involved, particulars of such accident and of any personal injury to any person, of any damage to the vehicle or to the property of any person caused by such accident.

That, of course, is a very wise provision. It goes on:—

- (g) not without the specific authority of the lessor to pledge the credits of the lessor for any purpose whatsoever.

- (h) to pay to the lessor on the basis of the schedule "A" hereto attached the rental for the licence and service supplied at such times and in such manner as may reasonably be directed by the lessor.

- (i) to comply with roster requirements issued by the lessor from time to time and in particular to acknowledge and obey instructions given over the telephone and/or radio by the lessor.

- (j) to comply at all times with the regulations prescribed by the board.

Without having a brief for either party, I claim that the amount of money that goes to those two companies is exorbitant. I have only mentioned Yellow Cabs, which collects from 43 people £13,975 a year, and the Silver Top Taxi Company, which collects from 16 people £5,608 a year, a total of nearly £20,000 from 59 drivers. There is nobody here who would not like to make a deal like that on the side.

Mr. King—Do you know what their shares are worth today?

Mr. QUIRKE—I am not concerned with that, because it does not enter into the picture. Their shares may be worth nothing and by giving away the right to these plates they may become worth less than nothing. They should not have a right to draw from a public board something that enables them to make that amount from the operations of somebody else. That is what it amounts to and it is one of my objections.

The other is this: with these restricted areas, white plates operate in the city and green plates in the suburbs. The white plate man can pick up in town, take out to the suburbs, pick up there and bring back to town. He has a two-way traffic and is protected. He has something denied the green plate driver. If the suburban taxi driver brings a man into town, unless he has a prior engagement in town he has only one-way traffic and goes home empty. In fact, he is fined £10 if he dares to pick up anybody and take him to the suburbs. Taxi drivers operating the Yellow Cab and Silver Top plates thus have added protection, for they may operate anywhere, so the guarantees of their part of the business will not fall down. They have an absolutely open go, while the man in the suburbs has one-way traffic only. Nobody will get me to vote for anything as bad as that. It is completely and utterly unfair.

I want the board to examine the method of providing a remedy. It is not for me to suggest one. We introduced the legislation setting up that board and we are responsible

for its administration. If in any way it is guilty of maladministration, we have power to discharge it. I am not accusing it of being wilfully culpable in this regard but we should bring to its notice the inequalities operating under its administration, particularly regarding these plates. We should express the opinion that it is utterly wrong and should give the board an opportunity to revise its regulations. With an assurance given on those lines, I would not want to vote against these regulations.

Mr. Hambour—Last year it was said that we should give them a trial for 12 months and, if they were not satisfactory, they could be amended. Twelve months have not passed yet.

Mr. QUIRKE—Yes, but the regulations have either to be allowed or disallowed. I think they are inequitable and wrong and therefore should not be allowed to continue in any circumstances. It does not mean that they must be allowed to continue for 12 months. To me they are wrong and should be stopped at the outset. As a friend of mine carried away with his eloquence once said to me, "We must strike the iron while it is hot and nip it in the bud." That is what I propose to do on this occasion.

I should like somebody now to show me that my deductions are wrong. If they are not and there is no other way out, I shall have to vote for the disallowance of the regulations, but I do not want to do that. I want to give the board an opportunity. I suggest that we hold these regulations back to allow the board to bring out a fresh set, particularly something that will give the suburban taxi drivers a fair deal compared with the metropolitan drivers who operate where people congregate in masses, the latter drivers thus gaining an unfair advantage. The present arrangement is not even elementary justice, and we will not stand for it. For those reasons, for the time being at least, I support the motion.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham)—I oppose the motion. This matter has been exercising the minds of members in the last few weeks, but prior to that it had been concerning, in particular, the Joint Committee on Subordinate Legislation, which went fairly fully into the pros and cons of the whole position. In fact 56 pages of evidence were taken on this matter. It was my considered opinion, as a member of that committee, after all that evidence had been presented, that it was just not possible to disallow these regulations. Something has been said this afternoon—and this is a vital

point—about what would happen if they were disallowed by us. We all know that if this motion is carried there will be no regulations at all under the Metropolitan Taxicab Act.

Mr. John Clark—The board can have a fresh set ready tomorrow.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—I do not agree with that for one moment. By way of interjection I asked the honourable member for Enfield when he was speaking, "What would happen if they were disallowed?" He did not say what the honourable member for Gawler said; he tried to talk round the thing and asked, "What did they do before April 1 when these regulations were gazetted?" The old City Council regulations stood until April 1, so there was some system, good or bad, under which the industry was operating until these regulations came into force.

Mr. John Clark—These regulations are not yet law.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—The industry has been operating under them since April 1. On March 31 the old city by-laws and other councils' by-laws were operative for the industry. There was no break. I make this point, which apparently the honourable member for Gawler has not noticed, that, if we disallow these regulations today or next week, during the interim there will be nothing at all to replace them.

Mr. John Clark—How long will the interim be?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—I do not know but, if the honourable member reads all the evidence, he will realize that the job done by the board has been difficult. The difficulties would be multiplied tenfold if these regulations were disallowed for there would be a period, be it long or short, of absolute chaos in this industry because there would be no regulations at all.

Mr. Quirke—Are you suggesting that these regulations are right as they stand?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—No. The answer is this, and it is there in the evidence for the honourable member to see. Nobody for a moment suggests that these regulations are perfect. Mr. Bonnin, whom I compliment on the work he has done and the way he has performed it, said:—

This is not perfect. We took over on April 1 an industry which had fallen into much confusion and it was not possible overnight to put everything straight. We envisage that from time to time amendments will be necessary. We are prepared to tackle the problems and iron them out one by one.

His views were supported by Mr. Turnbull and others. The board did not suggest that the

present arrangements were perfect. It envisaged amendments, pretty soon, to iron out the various troubles. It is obvious that some members have not bothered to read the evidence. I shall tell the House what Mr. Bonnin said. The following is taken from his evidence before the committee:—

By Mr. King—Would it be a safe assumption to say that the Taxicab Board took over the *status quo* of the industry with all its imperfections and troubles as on April 1? In other words, you allowed things to continue because that was the position when you came into operation?—That is so.

Your present objective is to try and iron out the anomalies which have appeared from time to time with the object of rendering a service to the public with a fair return to the various sections of the industry?—I think that is a fair statement. We took over a certain state of affairs and this is the way we propose to iron out this particular aspect.

By the Chairman—I do not see how the board could have done otherwise than to allow things to continue until you could remedy the imperfections?—We got as far as we could with the regulations. We fixed the date of April 1 a little in advance and we thought by then we should be able to get our regulations into shape. This particular problem was one we had not finished. It had been before us at least twice, but it is not easy, with a board of twelve representing conflicting interests, to get finality. The result has been that progress has been slow and it has taken longer than we would have liked. Therefore, we had to leave some things up in the air and leave us room to decide our policy within the framework.

By Mr. Millhouse—Does that mean that in due course you propose to ask the Government to make amending regulations?—It is certain we will have to. The regulations are bulky, and were difficult to draft. They were done in a hurry and Mr. Marshall, who is on the board and who is Assistant Parliamentary Draftsman, took ill and was out of action for some weeks. Sir Edgar Bean had more than he could handle at the time and I had to spend much time with him because it was not a job he could do without being briefed on policy.

That is the position in a nutshell.

Mr. Stott—You said that the regulations were not perfect. What do you propose to make them perfect—get the board to withdraw them and draft a new set?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—If the motion is carried there will be chaos in the industry, in which case not only the taximen will suffer but the public in the whole metropolitan area. All we can do is to accept the assurances of the board that it is tackling these problems one by one and that it will in due course bring in amending regulations. It has given an undertaking in writing to do this. If the Opposition is serious in its suggestion that these regula-

tions should be disallowed, it will be on their heads if chaos results in the industry in Adelaide.

Mr. Stott—Where are these regulations imperfect?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—I do not agree that they are perfect. I am only concerned now to go into the three matters raised by the Leader of the Opposition, namely, the vexed question of leasing, the question of one or two plates, and whether the board has been meddling in industrial matters. I hope I made my preliminary point sufficiently clear that if these regulations are disallowed there must be an interim period when there will be no regulation of the industry in the city; anyone could come in or others could go out of it and anyone could do what he liked. Or, on the other hand, we must do what I suggest is the only commonsense thing to do and that is to accept the assurances of the board that as time goes on and it is given a fair trial its members will then be able to tackle the problems one by one and put them right.

Mr. Loveday—Does the question of leases need any trial?

• Mr. MILLHOUSE—Of course it does. Let us remember what the position was when the board took over. At that time, whether rightly or wrongly, we had in Adelaide 71 partnership arrangements—partnerships between taxi companies and individual owner-drivers. The board had to accept that position whether it liked it or not.

Mr. Davis—Do you think it was right?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—I do not have to say whether it was right. That is irrelevant. The position was that the board had to tackle that problem. In effect it said, what are we to do? Are we to take the licences from the owner-drivers and give them to the companies or are we going to try in some way to work out a compromise arrangement which gives service to the public and at the same time satisfies their ideas of justice for the companies and the drivers. The Opposition, of course, is entirely destructive in its criticism. It has not said what it would do and has not assisted the board to work out an alternative scheme, so it has not given any help.

Mr. Jennings—That is not correct.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—I listened with interest to the Leader's speech, and to the honourable member who interjected, who is apparently an expert, but he did not put forward anything concrete. The board, after racking its brains,

has for the time being adopted the most satisfactory arrangement in that it resolved that a form of leasing should be allowed, but strictly controlled. All members have access to the report on the leasing of licences and partnerships prepared by the board, as it is embodied in the evidence contained in the report laid before the House. Surely this is the crux of the complaints from the other side—the board is completely and firmly opposed to the idea of any licensee holding a licence as an investor, leasing it to another person, and collecting a rake-off from the other man's earnings. That is what members opposite were really complaining about, and that may have been the position before, but the board is determined it will not be the position in future. The allegations made by Mr. Fisher, secretary of the Transport Workers Union, who gave evidence before the committee, were put to the secretary of the board. The member for Gawler (Mr. John Clark) was there, so he would know that.

Mr. John Clark—Why single me out?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—Because you looked up inquiringly. In every case the chairman of the board had an answer to the allegations. I could deal with the question of trafficking in licences, which was raised early in the evidence. Mr. Clark asked, "Are there any vacant licences held" because a suggestion had been made that some licences were not being used, but were being kept for trafficking, which none of us like. Mr. Clark continued, "I mean licences issued by the board, held by someone and not used," and the reply was:—

There are a few. When we discover such a situation we act. There was one man to whom we gave notice when we discovered such a situation. He had four cabs but had only two on the road. The other two were kept virtually on the ice. We regard this as wrong. Of course the board regards it as wrong; we all do. The answer continued:—

The licensing officer gave notice to the man to show why the two inactive licences should not be cancelled, and within a week there were two cars using those licences on the road. We have taken similar action in other cases, and there has been one cancellation.

That shows the attitude of the board. The member for Burra (Mr. Quirke) mentioned the fee charged by the companies for services under these agreements. On the face of it what he said sounded quite attractive, but if he looks through the evidence he will see that in fact the position is not quite as he suggests. It is in evidence that the Prices Branch fixed the weekly rental at £6 10s. Heaven knows, I do not think much of the Prices Branch, but that

figure was fixed as an appropriate rental. Mr. Alfred Bertram Cox, the secretary of Yellow Cabs, gave some figures on the costs of that company. One of the conditions the board is laying down is that in all cases where a leasing arrangement is entered into part of the service that must be provided is a two-way radio. That has been accepted as the standard that we should accept in Adelaide, and Mr. Cox told us in evidence what it costs to provide. Perhaps this will be some answer to the member for Burra. Mr. Cox was asked:—

Does your company provide that radio service to your members?

He replied:—

Telephone and radio, 24 hours a day. It costs nearly £4,000 a year in wages, and about £1,000 goes to telephone costs, etc.

From this it can be seen that it costs that company £5,000 a year to provide a two-way radio service, which is a sizable part of the amount the member for Burra mentioned. In addition to this, the witness said that his company spends about £1,000 a year in advertising, so about £6,000 a year is spent before any overhead expenses, such as renting of premises, are paid. The fully paid shares of Yellow Cabs, which were worth 15s. when issued, are now worth only 8d. or 9d. It is only in the last few years that the taxi section of that company has made any sort of profit, and it is many years behind in its payment of dividends. I wonder how the company has kept going.

Mr. O'Halloran—By leasing plates.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—No, the board is against allowing any sort of rake-off—the very word I used to the chairman of the board—and the Yellow Cab Company is not getting anything from the leasing of plates.

Mr. Quirke—Can you give us one reason why they hang on to the licences if they are so penurious?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—It is only in the last few years that they have started to make some profit. Mr. Bonnin was asked before the Joint Committee on Subordinate Legislation, "Does price control affect this industry?" He replied:—

No. We have not specified the Prices Commissioner, nor could we, because we have no authority to do so. The board could not say it would appoint the Prices Commissioner, but it could approach the Government and ask that his services be made available. The important thing in the last sentence is "No allowance be made for the privileges conferred by the licence." In other words, the fee

would be related purely to the service provided and there would be nothing additional for the licence as such.

I then said, "No rake-off?" Mr. Bonnin said:—

No rake-off from the licence as such. That has been one of the grievances of the men in the industry. They claim that they are made to pay so much a week for the use of a licence and to that extent the company holding the licence is getting something out of them.

Of course, that has been the complaint, and that is what the board is determined to avoid in the future. The next point—and this is the whole crux of the complaints about the regulations—is the question of one plate or two plates. At present we have about 250 white-plate operators who are called restricted operators. They only can work in the restricted area of the city of Adelaide. We have about 500 or 600 green plates, and the holders of those plates work in the suburban areas. We should remember that that was a condition existing in the industry when the board took over. Under the old City Council control there were two plates and the board felt it should not disrupt the existing arrangements, even if it wanted to. Members opposite have not mentioned that 99 per cent of the present white-plate operators paid between £800 and £1,000 for their licences.

Mr. Davis—To whom?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—That is irrelevant. I am now referring to the state of affairs when the board took over. It knew that the white-plate operators had paid much money for their licences, whereas most of the suburban operators had not paid anything. Members opposite have advocated the abandonment of the two-plate system because the Transport Workers' Union is now completely dominated by the green-plate men. I do not blame them for wanting to abandon the two-plate system as it would be in their own interests, but we would be robbing those men who had previously paid for their licences hundred of pounds. Let us think carefully about the justice of doing that before we advocate it in this House. We have a two-plate system firstly because it is feared that if there were only a single-plate system Rundle and King William Streets would become congested with taxis at peak hours. On the other hand, the suburban areas would be denuded of taxi services because all drivers would go into the city to get a fare. It would not be in the interests of the community to have only one plate.

Members opposite have said that the board has delved into industrial conditions. It is true

that there is an award, but everyone, for one reason or another, has complained about it, mainly because it is unworkable. When the regulations were being framed discussions were taking place between the union and the taxicab operators for some other arrangement. The board said that if they did not come to some arrangement it would have to go ahead and frame regulations on the basis of existing arrangements. The Leader of the Opposition said the board was dabbling in industrial affairs, but that statement was nonsense. For the reasons I have given, I am totally opposed to the motion.

Mr. DAVIS secured the adjournment of the debate.

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

COUNTRY HOUSING BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

METROPOLITAN AND EXPORT ABATTOIRS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Agriculture)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It represents a major forward step in the provision of slaughtering facilities for meat for export. The Government is keen to assist in this as it will help primary producers and the State generally. In recent years there have been numerous demands for the encouragement of export killing by people other than the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs. The encouragement sought was permission to sell reject meat in the metropolitan area. A person licensed under Commonwealth regulations is legally entitled to slaughter for export but his licence is of little value unless he has a ready market for reject meat. Under the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs Act the sale of this reject meat in the metropolitan area is not permitted. In order to provide a solution to this difficulty the Government now brings forward this Bill. It accordingly gives the right to sell reject meat in the metropolitan abattoirs area but subject to a number of conditions.

The stock from which the meat is derived must be slaughtered at an abattoirs registered pursuant to a right, licence or authority granted by the Commonwealth. These export abattoirs are, in fact, registered under the Commerce (Meat Export) Regulations which have been made under the authority of the Customs Act. The abattoirs may be situated within or outside the metropolitan abattoirs area. The

stock so slaughtered must be the property of the licensee. The meat in question must have been rejected by a Commonwealth inspector as unsuitable for export but must have been inspected by an inspector of the board and branded as suitable for human consumption. The licensee must pay the prescribed inspection fee. If the abattoirs is situated within the metropolitan abattoirs area the inspection will be made there. In other cases, the inspection will be made at a place appointed by the board.

It is provided that the total weight of the reject meat, which may be sold by any licensee within any period of 12 months ending June 30, is not to exceed 10 per cent of the total weight of the meat which is slaughtered for export by the licensee, and is exported from the State during that 12 months as fresh meat in a chilled or frozen condition. That is, his local sales must not exceed 10 per cent of his exports. This means that the quota of rejects which he can sell in the metropolitan area must not exceed 10 per cent by weight of the meat he slaughters and exports. The Government has made careful inquiries before selecting the figure of 10 per cent. This is a generous figure. It should be pointed out that the term "reject" has been used very loosely in the past and reject percentages frequently give a false impression. In recent years the meat export trade has developed techniques and found markets which make possible the export of a great deal of meat as pieces. This means that a carcass that is loosely termed a "reject" may be so on account of a dog bite or bruise. The techniques referred to simply involve removing the affected area and exporting the healthy portion of the carcass in pieces. Statistically a "reject" may to a large degree become export meat.

The percentage is fixed with relation to a period of 12 months and will thus permit fluctuations above and below 10 per cent during the course of the 12 months. All categories of meat are included in the percentage and the percentage will apply to the total weight sold or exported, as the case may be. In order to deal with a case of irresponsibility, where it becomes obvious at some stage during the 12 months that a licensee is exceeding his permitted quota, it is provided that if the Minister is satisfied that such is the case, he may give notice to the licensee requiring him to sell, during such period as is fixed by the notice, in accordance with another and lesser percentage fixed by the Minister. Thus, the Minister could for a fixed period reduce the licensee's quota to say 7 per cent. Before

giving notice of this kind, the Minister is to consider any representations made by the licensee in the matter. Failure to comply with notice given by the licensee will create an offence. If a licensee honours the conditions set out in the Bill, this Ministerial power will, of course, not be used but it is considered that such a power is necessary to prevent breaches of the conditions.

The Bill provides that every licensee is to keep records of the meat sold within the metropolitan abattoirs area and the meat exported and that these records are to be available for inspection by the Board. It is obvious that provision of this kind is necessary to enable the provisions of the Bill to be enforced.

It is also provided that, in any proceedings under section 70 (b) of the Act, that is, for selling meat in the metropolitan abattoirs area which is not slaughtered at the metropolitan abattoirs, it will be a defence for the defendant to show that the meat was sold in accordance with the Bill. The facts to establish that the defendant is entitled to the exemption from section 70 (b) created by the Bill, will only be within the knowledge of the licensee or the person seeking to claim the exemption given by the Bill, and it is therefore proper to provide that the proof of these facts should be a matter for the defence.

Members will see that the main purpose of this Bill is to enable those who export to do their own slaughtering. In the past that has been virtually impossible because they have had only a small outlet for reject meat. This difficulty will be solved as a result of the Bill which, I am confident, will assist the slaughtering for our growing export trade. We are not solely a lamb exporting State for we have expanding markets for boned meat—mutton, particularly—to the United States and Japan. A quantity of boned beef is also exported. There is a limited market in Canada as well. These markets are expanding rather than contracting and our meat export trade is in a healthy state.

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

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS (Minister of Lands)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Under section 8 of the Weights and Measures Act, the Minister of Lands may, with the

approval of the Governor prescribe new denominations of standards, provided that such new denominations of standards "shall be either equivalent to or multiples or aliquot parts of the standards of weight and measure for the State or shall be equivalent to or multiples of each coin of the realm for the time being."

The existing standards, apart from coins, relate to the measurement of length, volume and weight, there being no standard for measuring surface area. From time to time the Government has been asked to prescribe a standard for testing leather measuring machines but no action could be taken owing to the fact that the required standard bears no relation to an existing standard.

Clause 3 amends section 8 of the Act by deleting the words which limit new standards to multiple or aliquot parts of existing standards. The amendment will bring the legislation in this State into line with that of Victoria and some of the other States and enable new standards to be prescribed when they are needed.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

ROAD CHARGES (REFUNDS) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 26. Page 520.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This is not the first Bill of this nature which has become necessary owing to the implications of section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution. I remember a previous attempt by this Government to compel interstate road hauliers to make a reasonable contribution to the cost of the roads used in the course of their activities but, although we were well advised at the time by eminent counsel that the Bill would stand the test of litigation in the courts, subsequently we learned by reason of the court's decision that it was *ultra vires* section 92 and so we had to enact legislation to refund to the hauliers the charges paid under that legislation.

This Bill is a result of a further attempt to impose a charge on interstate road hauliers. From memory, I believe the charge was 1d. a ton-mile with the alternative that if the hauliers desired to evade those charges they could register under South Australian law and pay the normal registration fee paid by residents of South Australia engaged in similar activities. I note that the Premier in introducing this Bill said the Government still believed

that, apart from the Constitutional position, the road charge was reasonable and justified on the merits. I supported that Bill, and I agree with the Premier that the road charge was reasonable and justified on its merits. However, the court decided otherwise, and now we have to take action to carry out the contract made with the hauliers on that occasion, because although some hauliers paid the charges levied under the Act others refused to pay. Naturally it would be unfair to penalize those who had conformed with the Act, and I therefore feel that the Bill is justified by the circumstances. One point not mentioned by the Treasurer in his second reading speech concerns the amount involved in this refund. I understand that it is not considerable.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—I think it is about £6,000.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I understand that is so, but it was not mentioned in the second reading explanation, and that is information which, I think, we were entitled to have when the Bill was submitted to us. It is not a considerable amount considering the astronomical figures our Budgets are now reaching.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—It has been held in trust, too.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I thank the Treasurer for that information. It will therefore be readily available to permit the refund to be made. What exercises my mind is what will be done in the future. For some time we have endeavoured to get these road hauliers to make a reasonable contribution towards the cost of South Australian roads which they are using in order to engage in what must be a profitable undertaking. As I pointed out a few moments ago, this is not the first abortive attempt to make these people pay a reasonable contribution. We were assured on the last occasion that the Government was anxious that these people should make a reasonable contribution, firstly, because it was unfair to saddle the taxpayers in this State with the cost of maintaining the roads the hauliers were using, and secondly, because it placed those hauliers at an advantage over the railways, which have to provide the tracks over which trains run.

We were told that one of these days somebody would devise a plan which would conform to section 92 of the Constitution. Apparently such a plan has been devised by the sister State of Victoria, whose road tax has been declared *intra vires* section 92 of the Constitution and is therefore valid. In New South

Wales similar action is being taken, and I understand that it is also contemplated in Queensland. I wonder where the enthusiasm of our Government has gone! It apparently has been dispelled overnight, because no reference was made to it in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech and no authoritative pronouncement has been made by this Government that it will follow the example set by the other States and impose a road tax. I am not, and never have been opposed to road transport, provided it is placed on a reasonable basis with other forms of transport.

It is distinctly unfair that our interstate railway service should be torpedoed to a great extent by competing road hauliers who do not have to pay for the roads over which they run. Furthermore, it is distinctly unfair that South Australian taxpayers and South Australian road hauliers, who have to pay registration fees—sometimes very onerous ones—and who also, under certain circumstances, are subject to control by the Transport Control Board as to the roads over which they can operate, should have to provide the roads that these hauliers can use freely without let or hindrance. Although I approve of this Bill, I hope we shall hear something further from the Government on this matter before the session concludes. I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

FRUIT FLY (COMPENSATION) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 26. Page 525.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Edwardstown)—I support the second reading of this Bill, which provides for compensation of certain fruit-growers. Costly road blocks have become necessary because some people are so unreasonable as to attempt to bring fruit into this State from infected areas in other States. I refer in particular to the road block at Port Augusta.

As regards Croydon, Clarence Park, Edwardstown and Walkerville, I know something about the Edwardstown area and can assure the House that I am not satisfied with the position. Generally, there is a need for the department to make better provision for those engaged in the stripping of fruit in the affected areas. Although I realize that what I am about to say may be contentious and that it would be difficult to provide the same concessions or conveniences as those normally provided in

industry, I should like the Minister to give some attention to improving the facilities and amenities for these people. I realize also that different conditions apply on different occasions as regards fruit retained by the householder. I think I am in a position to speak on this, having been in an area subjected to fruit fly control for four years, three of them consecutive. Generally, it occurs beyond a quarter-mile radius, but within a mile radius of the infected area.

I wrote to the Minister of Agriculture on January 31. I was not satisfied with the report I received from a certain resident close to the particular area where the fruit fly was found. Apparently when the householder was absent a request was made that certain fruit be left untouched in the hope that she could use it when she returned within the next couple of days. But, instead of that request being granted, all the fruit, including the citrus within her property, was stripped; yet next door nothing was done.

In the same street where the fruit fly had been found, fruit was hanging over the fence into the street a few doors away; yet the person who first complained had her fruit taken away, while almost alongside where the outbreak occurred fruit was hanging over the fence for weeks before it was taken.

I believe that, in all organizations employing labour, there is a foreman, or leading hand in charge. In this case, it is reasonable to assume that the appropriate leading hand would be available to supervise the personnel engaged. Later, I received a reply from the Minister, dated March 19, indicating that in Narkunda Street on January 18 apricot trees were inspected and the fruit stripped. Then on January 20 picked gangs were engaged to remove fruits susceptible to fruit fly. During the first pick, ripening fruit, including coloured citrus, was removed. I believe greater discretion could be used in stripping fruit. I give this illustration because people are at least entitled to have their cases heard by their representatives, though I do not want to go into too much detail. In some cases, it is a positive hardship on people to lose the fruit they are trying to grow. In many cases they go to the expense of engaging labour to keep their gardens in order. This sense of civic pride has to be recognized. It is not a matter of commercial value, but the compensation paid for the fruit in these cases will not compensate the people for the loss of fruit that has reached the ripening stage and could

be used for jam-making, preserves, or as table fruit. That point should form the basis for discussion.

If there should be an outbreak of fruit fly in a particular area, my views would be in keeping with the general feeling amongst people. Let us take the first 100 or 200 yard radius, but first give the people an opportunity to take what fruit they can for jam-making purposes from the mature fruit. I will deal with the non-mature fruit later on.

Mr. Quirke—Can they not do that now?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—They have the right and I think the department would desire them to, but it seems that some miscarriage of justice has occurred somewhere, so that that is not done. I do not like to blame people for their misdeeds, but it comes back to the officers in charge of the gangs who indicate what is to be done within 100yds. radius of where the fly is found. They warn the people that if they have fruit they should use it. It is announced in the press and is meant to be known, but it is not always carried out. It is a question of trying not to pull somebody to pieces, but to get the department's policy carried out. That has not been the case in the past. If we have to go to the extent of giving reasonable notice to surmount that hurdle and there may be a fear of certain animals kept by the householders, surely the department can decide on some other assistance with the right of entry without notices to "Beware of the dog." I wrote to the Minister regarding matters about which I was not satisfied and have received no actual reply, only an acknowledgment. That was in March. Inspectors sent to my place by the department told me that it would not be possible to make marmalade jam from my citrus fruit because it had not reached maturity. People may consider that they have been harshly treated if they are not allowed to keep their fruit for jam making.

Mr. Dunnage—What do you suggest should be done with it?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—When the fruit fly is discovered those living within from 100 to 200yds. should be immediately notified that they may use the ripe fruit for their own purposes, but when the fruit is not suitable for jam making I agree that the department should dump it at sea.

Mr. Dunnage—They take it out to sea and dump it and when it is washed ashore they collect it and take it back to sea again.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Instead of erecting an incinerator of its own, the Unley Corporation, with which the honourable member has

been associated for years, took its rubbish to an incinerator in Adelaide. Had it constructed its own incinerator it would then have been able to destroy the affected fruit found in its area. Most of Clarence Park is in the Unley Corporation area and for a number of years Clarence Park, Black Forest, Goodwood and Goodwood Park have been in the fruit fly affected areas. Fruit from these homes could have been destroyed locally if the Unley Corporation had erected its own incinerator.

Mr. Dunnage—What are we to do with the fruit now?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I support the action taken by the department. I do not favour the suggestion that the fruit collected from the various affected areas be made into jam at the Yatala Labor Prison and then distributed to our mental and other Government hospitals. I think an improvement could be made in the amenities for people engaged in this work. People within a quarter-mile radius of an outbreak should be permitted to make fruit into jam. A more realistic approach should be adopted in relation to citrus fruit, which should be left on the trees until all stone fruits are used, and the method of disposal should be changed. I am not satisfied that the department has solved the problem by lure spraying to attract the fly. The spray now used on citrus trees, like the original spray, prevents breathing through the leaves, with the result that they shrivel and subsequently fall, but I have not noticed any such effect on stone-fruit trees. If the department can solve the problem of spraying, it will help people who grow their own fruit. I support the second reading of the Bill, because it provides for compensation to people who lose their fruit through stripping.

Mr. CUMBE (Torrens)—With great pleasure I support the second reading of this Bill, which provides for payment of compensation to people in proclaimed areas affected by the scourge of fruit fly. I am sure members on both sides will support the Bill, if only for that reason, for without it people could not receive the compensation to which they are entitled. I rise to speak also because Walkerville, which is in my electorate, is within one of the proclaimed areas.

I pay a tribute to the general public for its attitude on this matter. Fruit fly comes on people without any warning; overnight they can lose the product of their gardens or orchards, and nothing can be done about it. Although some people buck against the

regulations the great majority appreciate the true position and co-operate with the authorities. In fact, without the co-operation of the general public, the scheme might collapse. Most of the people in the affected part of my electorate are home gardeners, but one commercial grower is affected. This man's livelihood would have gone overnight but for the able assistance given by the Hon. G. G. Pearson when Minister of Agriculture, and I sincerely thank him for his efforts. We must regard this matter from the State point of view, and try to appreciate what the position would have been if the department had not gone on with a vigorous campaign to eradicate fruit fly or confine it within set limits. We have all heard what happened in Victoria. New Zealand has absolutely refused to take supplies from Mildura and other affected areas, not only this year, but for some years hence. From this it can be seen what could happen if fruit fly touched our river areas. It is only due to the restrictive measures of the department in confining this scourge to certain areas that we are able to enjoy free marketing facilities, especially for the canneries. Canneries throughout the State employ thousands of people at peak periods, but if fruit fly became rampant not only would they suffer but thousands of people would lose seasonal employment. If only from that aspect the fruit fly campaign has been worth while. In the district of Hindmarsh a vigorous campaign is being carried out, and recently I saw a road block near Port Augusta put there to prevent diseased fruit coming from the western State. In his second reading speech the Minister stated that so far the scheme has cost South Australia £1,594,637, of which £400,455 has been paid in compensation to growers, the balance being eradication costs. That seems a large sum, but when we consider the disastrous results the State would have suffered if the scheme had not been carried out we realize that it has been money well spent. The Minister told us what the position would have been but for this scheme. For instance, we would have lost the New Zealand market, which is of prime importance. Because of the presence of fruit fly in Victoria that State has lost some trade with New Zealand, probably to the advantage of South Australia.

The fruit fly eradication scheme has meant that we can still export vegetables and citrus fruits to Victoria and other States. Many of our market garden products are exported to Victoria and Tasmania, and a valuable trade has been built up. It is difficult to eradicate

the fruit fly, but I hope that a remedy will be found. We are at least confining the fruit fly to certain areas, and until a remedy is found we should continue to confine it. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill, which will enable people to be compensated for loss of fruit, and I pay tribute to the Minister of Agriculture, and the former Minister, for their efforts and particularly to the general public for the way they have co-operated with the department, for without their co-operation the scheme must have failed.

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I support the Bill and endorse the remarks of the member for Torrens (Mr. Coumbe), who said many things that I was going to say. I express my appreciation for the way people in my district have co-operated in the scheme to eradicate the fruit fly, which has inflicted itself on the western suburbs for the first time. No one finds pleasure in losing his fruit, but people in Hindmarsh and Flinders Park particularly have willingly assisted departmental officers who have taken their fruit in an effort to save gardens in the metropolitan area and also commercial gardens. I agree with the member for Torrens that not only the commercial gardeners would suffer if the fruit fly became established. I have seen the damage caused by the fruit fly in Western Australia and Queensland, and I realize that if the fly became established in South Australia there would be no backyard gardens in the metropolitan area in a short time.

I congratulate the Minister of Agriculture and the department on the effective work done in my district. Departmental officers have shown residents the greatest consideration and given them the best possible advice. The work has been carried out smoothly, and I hope their efforts to eradicate the fruit fly will be successful. I do not hold myself out as an expert, but I wonder whether it would be possible to reduce the area being stripped. I understand that investigations along those lines are being carried out and I am confident that the department will reduce the area if it is possible. I believe that this year departmental officers have been far more considerate and have allowed people to retain fruit that is ripening, provided they do not dispose of it in other areas.

Mr. KING (Chaffey)—I, too, support the Bill, which is of tremendous importance to my district and neighbouring districts on the Murray. Between Waikerie and Renmark private and Government capital invested in the

fruitgrowing industry totals over £15,000,000. This includes money invested in orchards, vineyards, factories, irrigation works, and other activities associated with the industry. There are about 25,000 people dependent directly or indirectly on the income from that industry. According to the season and ruling prices that income is between £5,000,000 and £8,000,000 a year, which is a considerable contribution towards the State's income, and it makes itself felt as the money passes through the community. I think the member for Torrens has adequately covered the effect the fruit fly would have on our markets if it became permanently established. Much of our fresh fruit is marketed in other States. I remember that back in 1938 I had to certify that a certain citrus shipment—and I handled many of them—was of fruit that was free from fruit fly and that no fruit fly was known to exist within a mile of the orchard in which it was produced.

The fruit fly is feared in all countries. The action that has been taken by the Government, with the support of people whose fruit has been stripped, and the careful way the Department of Agriculture has carried out the scheme have resulted in the river areas remaining free of the fruit fly, although some infested fruit has been intercepted only a few miles from our borders. I hope the Minister will eventually establish permanent road blocks on the three main inlets into South Australia so that no fruit fly can be admitted to South Australia. This would be of great benefit to the fruit industry, and home gardeners would not be annoyed by seeing their fruit taken away for disposal at sea or in some other way.

I pay a tribute to the good-natured way in which metropolitan people have allowed their fruit to be stripped. In some cases it has taken place three or four years in succession and it must be most disheartening to see favourite fruit taken when it is just ready for the bottle. We hope the effort by the department will be successful and that the trials we have had to put up with will be worth while. People engaged in fruitgrowing in river districts are thankful for the prompt and effective action taken. They appreciate the way people in the metropolitan area have submitted to the regulations.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra)—I commend the Government for the persistent action taken in the attempt to keep down the fruitfly trouble. If it were allowed to spread to other fruitgrowing areas it could seriously affect our economic position. I do not know the basis on which compensation is paid. How does the scheme work? What is paid, for instance, for a patch

of three or four dozen tomato plants, or the fruit taken from the tree? If the incidence of this fruitfly menace were to spread to the hills would the commercial growers there be entitled to compensation? We have already established a precedent by paying compensation for fruit taken from backyards. If these commercial growers in the hills had to be compensated the sum involved would be terrific. Would they be paid on the same basis as the growers of fruit in the metropolitan area or would some other scheme be adopted? I would like the Minister to explain the position. When an area is proclaimed under the Act and compensation becomes payable for the fruit stripped, why don't the growers do their own stripping? When fruit is sold in a garden the customer does not pick it himself, but gets it after it has been picked and packed. Now it is only after the fruit is stripped that the compensation claim is submitted. Is there any check on the quantity of fruit stripped?

Mr. Dunnage's proposal about the use of fruit stripped from trees was laughed at, but enormous quantities of it could be made into jam. Members should study the life history of the fruit fly. We should not believe that there is a possibility of infestation again when the fruit is washed on the beach after it has been dumped into the sea. The maggot in the fruit has to incubate in the ground for a period and it does not emerge as a fly until the next year. There is no danger from the fruit that is washed on to the beach and it is hard to visualize a better way of getting rid of the infested fruit. In the United States of America they have eliminated the fruit fly by proclaiming the whole area. All fruit is taken from it and this is done for several years in succession in the attempt to get rid of the fly. Here in South Australia a fresh infestation can take place at any time because of the importation of fruit from Western Australia and New South Wales. A friend of mine picked up some people at Outer Harbour and took them to the river districts. When they got to Nuriootpa these people said, "We will have some Western Australian fruit that we succeeded in getting past the inspectors." My friend, knowing the danger, took that fruit into a nearby winery and threw it into a boiler. The fruit that these people were taking into the river district could have been infested, for the infestation at Port Augusta obviously came from Western Australia. I do not know how we can overcome this human frailty that causes people to attempt to sidetrack the regulations. What is being done is effective.

Before this legislation is accepted will the Minister outline the basis of compensation and indicate the Government's attitude in relation to any infestation that took place in areas where fruit is grown commercially? I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr. JENKINS (Stirling)—I support the Bill. It is primarily for the purpose of compensating those people whose fruit trees have been stripped and it is similar to previous legislation. The last paragraph of the Minister's introductory speech indicates that the department has an appreciation of what is happening and how to deal with infestations. The Minister said:—

2. Fruit Fly in 1957-58.—During the year outbreaks of fruit fly occurred at Port Augusta and in the suburbs of Adelaide. These were all caused by Meriterranean Fly, not seen in South Australia since widespread suburban occurrences were eradicated about eight years ago. Queensland Fly, the species involved in Adelaide in past seasons, was not encountered last year. This changed pattern indicates that last year's outbreaks were the result of introduction of infested fruit from Western Australia. It is also the first firm indication that recurring trouble with the pest is due to fresh introductions from outside the State, and not to carryover from local outbreaks. This pinpoints the importance of quarantine and publicity measures aimed at preventing the casual introduction of dangerous fruits by interstate travellers.

The member for Edwardstown (Mr. Frank Walsh) advocated that only ripe fruit be picked and the green left on the tree. I believe that would be a retrograde step, for some years ago when in Western Australia I visited the markets with the member for Gascoyne, who came from a fruitgrowing area, and he told me that the fruit fly infests the green fruit as much as the ripe fruit. Mr. Dunnage's suggestion that the fruit be made into jam is as reasonable a proposition as the suggestion of the member for Edwardstown that it be used by growers whose trees were being stripped.

The total cost of eradication and compensation is £1,554,000, of which £400,000 represents compensation. I was told three years ago that fruit fly in Western Australia cost the export trade over £1,250,000 annually, so we can appreciate that if we had not spent this money on eradication and infestations got out of hand it could easily cost us more than £1,500,000 annually. There are about 7,000 or 8,000 acres of home gardens in South Australia and if the fly got out of hand those gardens would be worthless. The general public appreciates the department's efforts in trying to

eradicate the fly not only for the good of the commercial grower but the home grower as well.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla)—I endorse what the previous speakers have said about the excellent work being performed by the department in combating the ravages of fruit fly and endeavouring to prevent its entry to the State. I believe that the notices erected on the roads regarding fruit fly could be improved in advertising value. Some have not impressed me by their appearance and I do not think they have had much impact on motorists travelling from one State to another. I feel that many people in other States where fruit fly is prevalent do not appreciate our concern about its possible entry here. I suggest that a much more effective advertising campaign could be carried out in other States with a view to informing the people generally of the importance of the matter to South Australia.

I do not suggest this is a new idea: it may have been thought of before; but the Agriculture Department might consider taking up this matter on a larger scale. It could have advertising slides in picture theatres in other States; a documentary film distributed for public screening and also for screening in interstate schools, and special tourist literature available to prospective visitors to this State, emphasizing what the fruit fly would do if firmly established here. In other words we should try to impress upon adults and children in all other States the importance of this matter to South Australia.

I believe there is widespread ignorance on the subject and possibly the persons concerned in the incident mentioned by Mr. Quirke smuggled fruit in partly because they didn't realize the importance of the question here: they were acting in an irresponsible way mainly through ignorance. If advertising were carried out logically and thoroughly in all other States, although the campaign would cost money, it might result in considerable savings in the end. The prevention of fruit fly is expensive and I do not begrudge the expenditure because it is money well spent, but any method we could adopt to effect savings in that respect should be considered.

Although we have road blocks I am sure irresponsible people can get fruit through. That would not be at all difficult for a person determined to evade supervision at a road block. It seems to me impossible to guard against the entry of fruit at all roads leading into the State. We can guard the main roads but

there are many minor roads and I am certain fruit comes through those channels. I have no doubt that deliberate smuggling goes on. I suggest that this question of widespread advertising along the lines I have indicated be investigated with a view to being followed up if thought practicable. I can see nothing against it. I believe that if we really had a heavy campaign along these lines whereby both adults and children in other States were thoroughly educated, we could save ourselves much trouble and expense. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa)—I agree with all that has been said in favour of the fruit fly campaign and with the measures adopted by the Government to combat this menace. I found the speech of the honourable member for Whyalla very interesting. He advocated that publicity be given to the very great dangers inherent in a careless approach to eradication measures, and he urged that people should be educated on the dire need to keep out fruit fly. Publicity is of vital importance, and I fully endorse what the member for Whyalla said in that regard.

Many people do not realize just how important it is to this State to keep the fly out. The road blocks are most necessary, but they in themselves are not a complete guarantee that infected fruit or fruit which is susceptible to infestation does not get through into our State. The human factor comes into the matter, and that human factor can be assisted through publicity and advertising to make people realize the importance of abiding by our law against introducing certain fruits. Once we have had a publicity campaign on the importance of this subject, I would advocate that very little consideration be given to anyone who flouts the law and introduces fruit. Ignorance of the law is no excuse at any time, and this menace of fruit fly is so very great that I would like to see not only severe but vicious penalties imposed on any person so careless of his public responsibility as to introduce fruit which could lead to infestation in this State.

I agree entirely with the Government's eradication measures. The amount of money expended to date is very minute compared with the ultimate good which would arise if we had complete freedom from this fly. The generous co-operation of garden owners who have lost their fruit in this campaign has been referred to. I look forward to hearing the reply of the Minister to Mr. Quirke as to what would happen if the fly became estab-

lished in commercial fruit growing areas. It would be beyond the means of the State to fully compensate growers if that occurred. Although I admire the co-operation of those who have had the incidence of fruit fly in their areas, I think they are only doing their natural duty in co-operating to the full in keeping our State free of this horrible menace. I have much pleasure in supporting this legislation which compensates those whose fruit is being taken.

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray)—I support the Bill. I feel that all members are very conscious that fruit fly can be a great menace to our fruit growing industry. We realize that the Government, through the Department of Agriculture, has taken certain steps in an attempt to eradicate the fly that has come here from other States. Certain people have questioned whether the compensation is being overdone, but I imagine every person who loses fruit feels entitled to some form of compensation.

Every member who has spoken has been in favour of the precautions that have been taken. It has been suggested that the steps taken to police these precautions are not sufficient. I was particularly pleased to hear my colleague, the member for Whyalla, say that it was necessary to give added publicity to this menace. While returning here from Western Australia recently I was particularly pleased to hear continual announcements over the broadcasting system of Western Australia advising people of the urgent need to dispose of any fruit they had before entering South Australia. The person in charge on that occasion stressed the fact that South Australia was a clean State and that a very heavy penalty would be imposed on anyone guilty of bringing fruit into this State. I felt that that was something that could be emulated in other States.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—They have an officer on the train to advise passengers.

Mr. BYWATERS—Yes, and the same thing applies on the Melbourne express. Each morning an officer of the department boards the train at Mount Lofty and conscientiously approaches every passenger to explain the danger of fruit fly. I have known that man for many years and know him to be a conscientious officer and trusted servant of the Department of Agriculture. However, I point out that Mount Lofty is a long way from the Victorian border. Passengers disembark at Murray Bridge for refreshment, and if they have not otherwise been informed of the position they may be totally unaware that fruit

fly exists. They leave the train to have break-fast and could dispose of fruit that was infested with maggots. Murray Bridge is very close to the fruit growing area of Mypolonga and the adjacent river areas where a good deal of fruit is grown, and I, like the member for Burra, wonder what would happen if an area comprising approximately 1,500 acres had to be declared a restricted area. The glasshouse business in Murray Bridge is rapidly developing and a number of growers in that area would be affected. I suggest to the Minister of Agriculture that if possible an officer of the department board the train at a point much nearer the border than Mount Lofty.

The officers in charge of road blocks are conscientious, but, as the member for Whyalla said, there is nothing to stop people from bringing in, in suitcases, fruit such as custard apples, a fruit particularly susceptible to fruit fly, or other types of fruit. These could quite easily be smuggled in without the officers of the road block having any idea of what was happening. More publicity needs to be given to this matter.

The honourable member for Ridley (Mr. Stott) asked the then Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Pearson, whether the Government would impose severe penalties, as suggested by the honourable member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke) a moment ago. I agree that severe penalties should be imposed on people who wittingly flout the regulations. On that occasion, the Minister said that he relied on co-operation rather than on trying to apply severe penalties. If publicity were given to this and, notwithstanding that, people flagrantly ignored the law, then they should be penalized heavily, because our fruit industry is worth a good deal to us. As was mentioned in the second reading speech of the Minister, we have spent £1,500,000 since the fruit fly first came to this State, but it has saved us in that time about £30,000,000 to £40,000,000. That money, I take it, represents the value of the actual fruit that would have been lost had these precautions not been taken, but that would be only a part of the whole picture because so many men and women rely on this industry for a living. The over-all picture cannot be painted in terms of pounds, shillings and pence because it would not be possible to estimate the total amounts involved. For these reasons I support the second reading.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Agriculture)—In closing the debate on this Bill, I want to make a few remarks on some

points raised by honourable members. I should say, first of all, that I appreciate their comments generally and am glad to note their co-operation in supporting the measure without questioning its purpose. Some points I am unable to answer tonight, but I have made a note of them. I shall have to look up some old letters with which I am not conversant, in order to reply to members, so I shall not deal with them now.

The first point is the flight distance of the fly—in other words, the radius around a fruit fly area selected as the best possible distance, which it would not be safe to reduce. Nobody can be quite certain what the absolutely safe radius is. Early opinion was that it should be double the present mile radius, which, as far as we can judge, has proved effective because outbreaks have not occurred in any given area infested in the previous season. However, it cannot be established with any certainty. All we can do is use the best scientific opinion available in selecting a figure. So far, we believe the distance chosen has been effective.

As regards turning the fruit into jam, unlike many members I did not laugh when the suggestion was made. In fact, I do not think it is by any means stupid. While I do not agree that the suggestion is ridiculous, I do say that it is not a practicable proposition. The difficulty involved in making use of this fruit is that it can be classed in two ways. Firstly, there is the fruit stripped early in the campaign. As soon as an outbreak is discovered the gangs go into the area and strip the fruit. At that early stage in the campaign the fruit is highly dangerous as regards further infestation and must be disposed of as safely and quickly as possible. The experts all agree that the burial of the fruit is unsatisfactory. It is not safe because the fly can get out of the fruit and escape through the ground. By far the best method of fruit disposal so far devised is dumping it at sea. Early in the campaign infected fruit is dumped at sea as quickly as possible. There is no fruit stripped that is not dumped within 24 hours; in fact, it may be only a few hours before it reaches the bottom of the sea. I emphasize that a large percentage of that fruit stays there. Only occasionally a bag bursts and a few bits of fruit are washed up on the beaches after certain westerly gales. It is only a small amount and is attended to immediately. We have been unable to discover a better solution than that. A further point is that the fruit stripped is often immature and quite useless for jam-making or anything else. Again, it is so assorted and mixed that it

would be impossible, even if all the other conditions were satisfied, to make practical use of it.

The honourable member for Burra asked two questions on compensation: first, concerning the basis of compensation; secondly, concerning the policy of the Government as regards compensation if there were a big outbreak of fruit fly in a fruitgrowing district. Each Bill dealing with fruit fly is self-contained and does not amend any previous measure. We have a compensation committee composed of Sir Kingsley Paine, Mr. A. G. Strickland who is head of the Plant Division in the Department of Agriculture and has been the direct controlling authority since the first outbreak in 1947, and Mr. Ragless, a private citizen. They are very experienced in these matters. Honourable members are aware that Sir Kingsley Paine has had extensive experience with Royal Commissions and has often been called upon to deal with relief funds.

Mr. O'Halloran—He is a man of wide experience and great understanding.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—Quite so. I do not think any honourable member would suggest that we could appoint a better man. During a stripping campaign each householder who has his fruit or certain plants removed receives a receipt showing the quantity, and this receipt is attached to any claim made for compensation. The committee gives these applications deep consideration and its members inform themselves of the prices of fruit and vegetables throughout the season from the various organizations and take into account the stage at which the fruit was stripped. If it happens to be tomatoes, they take into account the date of planting and the time at which the plants were removed. A person who loses his tomato plants in December would suffer a greater loss than one who lost them in February or March. The committee is prepared to hear appeals, but it receives remarkably few. A claimant is entitled to bring witnesses or submit other evidence. I cannot recall a single instance of a man complaining to me about compensation received, therefore, the committee must be satisfying the claimants. The principle adopted is for the committee to assess the losses sustained and then pay 100 per cent compensation.

I cannot answer the question regarding what would be the Government's policy if there were an outbreak in a fruitgrowing area. It would depend on how serious the outbreak was and the cost of dealing with it. I cannot commit the Government as to its policy on a

hypothetical case. The matter would be considered after an outbreak had occurred. The very careful control methods adopted have so far protected our fruitgrowing areas.

Mr. Dunnage—What compensation is paid to people who lose other than fruit? One man had 19 peach trees poisoned. Would compensation be paid for that?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I heard the honourable member say on a previous occasion that he had received a letter from someone full of complaints, and on investigation I found that they could not be sustained. This matter has been given the most careful consideration by the best trained technical officers. It would be useless for me to examine the trees mentioned and try to arrive at the cause of their death when we have technical officers to do this. I am referring to the previous letter received by the honourable member.

Mr. Dunnage—Is compensation paid for other than fruit?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I have little confidence in the merits of the claim mentioned, knowing the history of the previous claim. Some honourable members have referred to road blocks. These are not and cannot be 100 per cent effective, but undoubtedly they have prevented infested fruit from coming in from Western Australia. We have another road block at Yamba, near Renmark, operating 24 hours a day. The number of roads leading to South Australia from Victoria present a most difficult problem. Several important roads leading across the border could be blocked, as they converge to a large extent on Tailem Bend, but the volume of traffic there is so great that the difficulties of establishing them would be immense. In winter, when the danger of infestation is at its lowest, the department is making careful inquiries into what could be done with road blocks somewhere in Victoria. I do not know if they would be practicable, but we are partly protected from Victoria by the vigilance of the Victorian authorities, who have road blocks in several parts of that State and are wide awake to the danger of infestation from New South Wales. In a sense, Victoria acts as a filter for New South Wales. We are giving attention to certain districts around Griffiths in New South Wales with the idea of doing more to protect ourselves from that direction.

This matter is on the agenda for discussion at the Agricultural Council in Western Australia next month. It is hoped that road blocks can be established in New South Wales, which will assist us. I thank members for

their co-operation in this work, and assure them that I will take up any complaint voiced. At times I admit there must be cause for complaint, and every time one is received most careful consideration is given to it.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Compensation."

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I have received a complaint that the sprays used have affected passion fruit vines. Will the Minister state whether compensation is payable for that type of fruit?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—Tartar emetic, the old type spray, was considered safe, and the mixing was supervised carefully to avoid any possible damage so that no damage could occur to trees or vines. The spray now used is malathion compound, which is absolutely

safe. The change was not made because of any possibility of damage, however. I imagine passion fruit would be included as not being damaged by sprays, but to be sure that is the position, I will take up this matter and obtain a considered report. I assure the honourable member that anyone who feels he has suffered damage has a right to claim.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I do not think the same type of spray should be used on stone fruits as on citrus, because it causes shrinking of leaves on citrus trees, although I admit that the new growth has not started to shrivel.

Clause passed.

Remaining clause (4) and title passed. Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.40 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, September 16, at 2 p.m.