

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, November 4, 1958.

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

QUESTIONS.**WOOL FREIGHT RATES.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier any information respecting my recent question whether freight concessions granted to South-Eastern woolgrowers who send their wool to Adelaide can be extended to woolgrowers in other districts who use road transport to market their wool?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—A report from the Railways Commissioner shows that it was purely a concession given to meet Victorian competition. A number of transactions were going on purporting to be interstate transactions, whereas they probably were not. The Railways Commissioner does not recommend to the Government that the concession be extended to other districts, because present revenues do not permit it.

WOOL STERILIZATION.

Mr. HAMBOUR—I believe the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science has been investigating the sterilization of wool. Will the Minister of Agriculture ascertain the progress made?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I will ask for a report.

HARCOURT GARDENS BUS SERVICE.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—The important Harcourt Gardens bus service which carries 42,000-odd passengers monthly has to cross the Anzac Highway in rather a difficult way. It does so about midway between Marion Road and South Road and then has to travel in a westerly direction by making a U-turn to proceed along its normal route along Gray Street to another district. Will the Minister of Works consult the Minister of Roads with a view to permitting a crossing to intersect Beckman and Gray Streets, thus providing a direct crossing and relieving the unnecessary traffic congestion that occurs through the U-turn at present?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I shall be pleased to do that.

NORTHFIELD MENTAL HOSPITAL.

Mr. JENNINGS—Lately a group of people skilled in arts and crafts have been giving voluntary service to patients at the Northfield Mental Hospital. The group includes many

leading South Australian artists. The therapeutic value of the work must be tremendous, and I believe it has the commendation of the Medical Superintendent. I give one example. A young girl is receiving tuition in piano playing from one of our leading pianists and I understand is progressing extremely well. Can the Government make available to the artists some form of transport to enable them to get to and from the hospital? The hospital is rather inconveniently situated regarding public transport, and it would help if it could be made available, under the control of the Medical Superintendent, bearing in mind that often musical instruments have to be transported as well?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will refer the question through the Minister of Health to Dr. Birch to see what practical steps can be taken in the way suggested. The Government deeply appreciates the action of people who are prepared to spend their time in the interests of their fellow citizens. In the circumstances outlined, I agree with the honourable member that this type of occupation can be extremely valuable.

NANGWARRY SHOPPING CENTRE.

Mr. HARDING—Can the Minister of Forests say whether tenders have been called and accepted for the shopping centre at Nangwarry, and when is it expected that the work will begin?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—Tenders will be called and advertised tomorrow. They will close on November 26.

CALLINGTON WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. BYWATERS—Prior to the appointment of the present Minister of Works I took a deputation to the then Acting Minister (Hon. C. D. Rowe), requesting a water supply for residents at Callington. Some time has elapsed, but I have heard nothing further. It was suggested that it be brought from the Nairne Pyrites area to Callington. I had previously taken other deputations to the Minister, but on each occasion found that the estimated ratable return did not warrant the works. Will the Minister inquire whether anything has been done in this matter, and if the position is the same as before, will he be good enough to inform me so that these people can perhaps make an offer to the department?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I should be pleased to look into the matter and let the honourable member have what information I can obtain from the dockets.

POLLUTION OF RIVER TORRENS.

Mr. CUMBE—Over the last few weeks I have received many complaints from residents of Walkerville and surrounding districts about the pollution and silting up of the River Torrens where it passes through these districts. Recently I took up this matter with the Minister of Works to see whether something could be done. The residents are becoming concerned. Can the Minister report on the latest progress. A few years ago the North Adelaide Swimming Pool was silted up and made unfit for use and now the Gilberton Swimming Club, which is the largest of its type in Australia, fears this will happen again.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Following on representations made by the honourable member, and the receipt of letters from the Walkerville and St. Peters Councils, the two local governing bodies concerned, investigations were made immediately for the purpose of making a report and if necessary, taking legal action against the offenders, but I have not yet received the report from the departmental officers.

JANITORS FOR SCHOOLS.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Has the Minister of Education seen a report in the press about a child's being burnt to death when tending an incinerator at school? Previously I made representations to the Minister on behalf of school committees in my district asking that janitors be appointed so that children would not have to tend incinerators. This was done because an accident occurred in a school in my area. At that stage Cabinet was unwilling to appoint janitors. Will Cabinet again consider the matter of appointing janitors so as to avoid accidents of this kind in future?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The whole question of janitors and caretakers is under consideration by Cabinet. In due course a decision will be made.

MURRAY RIVER LEVELS.

Mr. KING—Will the Minister of Works obtain a report on the expected duration of the high river in the Upper Murray, the expected levels at main centres, and how long the road between Kingston and Cobdogla will be out of use owing to flooding?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I will endeavour to have the information for the honourable member tomorrow.

ROAD TRANSPORT OF LAMBS.

Mr. QUIRKE—Last Friday an application was made by a stock firm at Burra to the Transport Control Board for a permit to transport 1,100 young lambs by road to Minlaton, but the application was refused. The agents got in touch with me, and I got in touch with the board this morning, but still it would not grant a permit. It cannot be argued that the rail movement is not quick. It is reasonable for the distance.

The SPEAKER—Order! I think the honourable member knows he cannot debate the question.

Mr. QUIRKE—Those lambs must be loaded 15 or 16 miles out from Hallett on to road transport, brought into Hallett, sent to Dry Creek, then to Melton or Paskeville to be loaded on to road transports and taken to Minlaton. This may be satisfactory for aged sheep, but I question the reason for a refusal in relation to young lambs. Does the Transport Control Board consider the type of stock mentioned in an application—whether they are lambs or grown sheep—and if not, will some attempt be made to differentiate between the types of stock for which permits are sought?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The honourable member knows that the decisions of the board are not the decisions of the Minister; the board has statutory power to make such decisions itself. I think the matter raised requires clarification, so I will bring the honourable member's remarks under the notice of the Minister of Railways.

STANDARDIZATION OF NORTHERN RAILWAY LINE.

Mr. HEASLIP—Last week I asked about the possibility of standardizing the Wilmington-Gladstone-Adelaide line, and the Premier promised a report. Has he that report now?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Railways Commissioner has informed me that it is his view that the standardization of the line between Broken Hill and Port Pirie by itself would be an unattractive proposition, and that the only acceptable scheme would be the conversion of the whole of the 3ft. 6in. gauge lines of the Peterborough division, which includes the Gladstone-Wilmington line. This is in accordance with the 1949 agreement and was, in fact, proposed by me in my recent submission to the Prime Minister. With regard to the standardization connections to Adelaide, an examination is

being made of the practicability of constructing an independent 4ft. 8½in. gauge line connecting the Peterborough division with Adelaide. Both economic and physical investigations are in hand, but are not yet complete. These investigations cover the various alternatives available, and the Railways Commissioner hopes to submit a comprehensive report in the near future.

CONCESSION WATER RATES.

Mr. RICHES—Will the Minister of Works inform me whether any provision has been made for supplying water at concession rates for reserves or sporting utilities such as golf links? The Port Pirie Golf Club has received a water rates account for about £400, which is an expense it cannot afford to continue. It does not ask for preferential treatment, but if the department makes any concessions, will the Minister extend them to this club, in particular, if it can substantiate its claim?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Desirable though it may seem to extend concessions to various sporting clubs and associations, it is a matter that requires much consideration. At present I doubt whether there is power in the Act to make such concessions.

Mr. Riches—They used to be made until a few years ago.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—A number of sporting bodies have requested similar concessions. I point out that if concessions were granted in a number of cases we would rapidly reach a point where the department's revenue would be seriously affected. It is not logical to treat one sporting body differently from others. The moment a concession was granted to one, sporting bodies throughout the State would naturally consider they merited equal consideration and would press for it. During my short time in charge of this department I have found it necessary to reject such requests and I think that policy must continue. If the club in question makes representations they will be considered, but I cannot hold out any great hope for success.

RICHMOND BUS TURN-ROUND.

Mr. FRED WALSH—I have received the following letter from residents living near the Richmond bus terminus:—

We wish to lodge a complaint about the dangerous practice of M.T.T. buses using Leicester Street, Dover Street, and West Beach Road as a loop. The former two streets are very narrow, compelling the buses, when travel-

ling along Leicester Street prior to turning into Dover Street, to drive on the wrong side, sometimes even getting on the footpath. The same happens following the turn into Dover Street, making it impossible for any vehicle going in the opposite direction to pass near the corner. Because, under existing conditions, the safe and proper manoeuvrability of the buses in terms of the traffic laws is impossible, we, as ratepayers, cannot park our cars near this corner for a short time for fear of damage. There are 21 young children on the loop and we parents are afraid for their safety as even on the footpaths they are not safe.

I have also communicated with the West Torrens council whose views are somewhat similar and understand that it has approached the trust but cannot secure an alteration of the turn-round. Will the Minister again take this matter up with the trust with a view to the trust discontinuing the practice of using the streets referred to as a loop and, instead, making the turn-round by backing buses into Dover Street from West Beach Road and then proceeding to Marion Road? If it is considered that this is risky with one-man buses it is suggested that conductors be used at all times.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have dealt with this matter on the honourable member's behalf previously and the trust has advanced what appear to be sound and logical reasons for declining the request. Other suggestions have been made, including one that the buses should proceed further down the road and turn on a vacant block. I point out that in other suburbs similar conditions apply. Similar conditions apply near where I stay during the week and the trust tells me that they apply at many termini where it is necessary to turn round one block of buildings so that the bus can make its return journey. As the honourable member has requested it, I will bring the matter to the notice of the trust. I cannot recall whether the letter read contains any new suggestions.

FEED GROWTH ON HIGHWAYS LAND.

Mr. LAUCKE—There are many parts where the Highways Department is buying land from farmers for road-widening purposes, but that land will not be used for road construction for the time being. I have in mind portion of the highway between Gawler Belt and Daveyston. This land is carrying fence-high growth of natural feed. The land is reasonably flat because it was formerly part of a farm and the feed could easily be mown and baled on site. In the interests of preventing fire hazards and avoiding unnecessary waste of good feed will the Minister of Works ascertain

from the Minister of Roads whether such feed could be offered to farmers whose land adjoins the highway?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I will bring the matter to my colleague's notice and ask whether such arrangements could be made. It would seem logical to reduce the fire hazard and also to utilize the land for some purposes.

FLAX INDUSTRY.

Mr. RALSTON—On September 30 I asked the Premier whether he would obtain a report from the Minister for Primary Industry relating to the future of flax production at Mount Gambier. Has he a reply?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—No. I have not seen any correspondence in connection with this matter, but I will make inquiries.

TANTANOOLA AND GLENCOE ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.

Mr. CORCORAN—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked last week concerning the extension of power to Tantanoola, Glencoe and other parts of the South-East?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I regret the delay in securing a reply in connection with this matter, but it had to be referred to the trust. I now have a reply from the Assistant General Manager which states:—

The trust proposes to investigate the possibility of supplying power to Tantanoola and Glencoe. This investigation will start within the next few weeks and will be completed early in the new year. If the result of this investigation is favourable it is hoped that the work will start on these projects before June, 1959.

MARREE STREETS AND FOOTPATHS.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—As the Minister of Works knows, Marree has assumed much greater importance since it became the break of gauge centre between the standard gauge line from the south and the narrow gauge line to the north running to Alice Springs. When I was in the district recently I was told that the Minister's Department contemplated improving various streets and footpaths in the town, and I have since been informed that when the beneficial rains fell some weeks ago it was extremely difficult for people desiring to catch a train to get from the inhabited side of the street to the railway station; in fact, they had to take off their shoes and socks and walk bare-footed. Have the works contemplated been carried out and, if not, when will they be carried out?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I am not aware of the exact nature of the works proposed or whether they have been carried out, but I will make inquiries and inform the honourable member later.

NARACOORTE POLICE STATION AND COURTHOUSE.

Mr. HARDING—When I asked the Premier on September 17 whether he had a reply to my previous question regarding the proposed new single men's quarters and courthouse at Naracoorte he told me that plans had been completed and tenders were to be called on September 15. Will he ascertain from the Chief Secretary whether tenders have been called and when the work will be commenced?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes.

MAGILL REFORMATORY STAFF.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked recently about the appointment of another attendant at the Magill Reformatory?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I took up the question personally with the Chief Secretary, who has informed me that the appointment of one additional officer has been approved and that the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board has been asked to investigate whether further staff is required.

POULTRY INSPECTORS.

Mr. BYWATERS—Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to the question I asked on October 21 about the qualifications of poultry inspectors at Adelaide poultry sales?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—The honourable member's question arose out of a complaint from one of his constituents who had a fowl condemned at auction. It had had its tail pulled out and he had put Stockholm tar on it, according to the man's own statement. I have received the following report from the Chief Inspector of Stock:—

This department has undertaken the inspection of poultry at South Australian Farmers' Union market for at least 20 years without previous complaints. Mr. Weston was appointed as an inspector of poultry in 1944 and has carried out regular inspections at the market since then. The procedure at the market is for the inspectors to inspect all poultry offered and where he considers birds to be diseased and unfit for human consumption he issues a certificate and the birds are then destroyed. The carcasses are thrown into a container and later incinerated.

Where a line of birds infected with a contagious disease such as infectious laryngotracheitis is seen the matter is referred to the

Chief Inspector of Stock for such action as is necessary to prevent the spread of the disease.

The above procedure has worked to the satisfaction of the sellers and buyers, the department and the auctioneers for at least 20 years. The bird referred to by Mr. Fitzgerald was badly mutilated around the anus by picking by other birds. The original trouble could have been leucosis (visceral gout). From Mr. Fitzgerald's own description the bird was unfit for human consumption.

RIVERTON-SPALDING RAILWAY.

Mr. QUIRKE—Has the Premier a reply to my recent question relating to the relaying of the rails on the line between Riverton and Spalding?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—My colleague, the Minister of Railways, reports:—

Under the 1949 Standardization Agreement, narrow gauge rolling stock not suitable for conversion can be utilized by the State on other narrow gauge lines. These terms do not apply to abandoned rails, which become the property of the Commonwealth, and any that might be used by the State must be bought at an approved valuation. This, in fact, has been done with rails released from the South-East gauge widening. The Riverton-Spalding line is maintained in a safe condition for the freight traffic operating. It is intended, however, to proceed with the relaying of this line with welded secondhand 80-lb. rails when other more urgent relaying projects using this type of rail are complete. The secondhand 80-lb. rails used for this purpose will be obtained from the relaying of other 5ft. 3in. gauge lines. As the 80-lb. rails in the Port Pirie-Cockburn line were themselves secondhand before being laid there, the Railways Commissioner cannot see any advantage at this stage, of contemplating their being placed in the Riverton-Spalding line after removal from the Port Pirie-Cockburn track.

NORWOOD PARADE VERANDAHS.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Last year a deputation from the Kensington and Norwood City Council waited on the Premier concerning the removal of supporting verandahs from the Norwood Parade. Earlier this year I asked him when he would be in a position to reply, as I understood the matter had been referred to the Crown Law authorities. He told me he could not reply at that stage. As it is now more than a year since the deputation waited on him will he expedite a reply?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—This matter, which has been the subject of legal opinions, refers to a position that arose before the present Local Government Act was passed. I travel along the Parade on occasions and have noticed that shopkeepers alongside it are improving their premises. Personally, I

feel that as the value of property there is rising steeply that is the best solution of the problem. In general terms it is not possible to alter the Act to impose new requirements on the persons concerned. When the amendments to the Local Government Act were under consideration this year the Government decided against including the provision suggested by the deputation introduced by the honourable member. The Government decided against the imposition of new obligations, particularly as it appeared from the evidence that the rise in the value of land and the action of some shopkeepers was helping the position favourably. In regard to new premises councils have power to see that the provisions of the Act are carried out.

MOUNT GAMBIER HOSPITAL CHARGES.

Mr. RALSTON—Has the Premier any further information regarding treatment and hospital costs of child patients at the Mount Gambier hospital who are suffering from notifiable diseases?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have the following report from the Director of Tuberculosis:—

The only comment I would add is that I have been visiting the Mount Gambier Hospital every three months for the past year with the Chest Clinic Almoner. I see and prescribe outpatient treatment for patients who have been previously treated in hospital for tuberculosis, and any other patients referred by practitioners in the South-East. I have seen the children referred to in the question on one of these visits. The visits will continue and I am now considering whether there is need to increase the service provided in the South-East for the care of tuberculosis sufferers. This matter will be discussed with medical practitioners in Mount Gambier during my next visit from November 10-12.

The matter is being taken up by Dr. Woodruff and in the near future will be discussed with the medical practitioners in the area.

TRANSPORT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—My question deals with the bus transport of children from the Salisbury-Elizabeth area to the Enfield High School and the Nailsworth Boys and Girls Technical Schools. In August I addressed a question to the Minister of Education on the matter and referred to what I regarded as an unsatisfactory service. The Minister said, in effect, that the service was completely unsatisfactory and that he believed a complete alteration would have to be made. That was over two

months ago and the parents are concerned about the matter. Has any arrangement been made to alter or improve the service?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Speaking from memory, I did not say that it was an unsatisfactory service, but rather that the matter was unsatisfactory to me. I obtained reports from the Transport Officer and from the Transport Committee within the department, but as I was not satisfied with them I referred them back. I have nothing final to communicate to the honourable member now. I do not think we can do anything at present; we shall probably have to wait until the beginning of the next school year. A transport problem cannot be easily remedied. I hope to be able to give the honourable member information next week.

SOUTH-EASTERN PINE FORESTS.

Mr. HARDING—Has the Minister of Forests a reply to the question I asked on October 30 regarding the use of fertilizer in South-Eastern forest areas?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I investigated whether the forests had been treated with fertilizer after the trees had been planted, and obtained the following report:—

The spraying of pine forests with zinc sulphate solution at a strength of 2½ per cent at ages from two to four years has been standard practice in the South-East for nearly 20 years. Application of various major elements affecting plant nutrition in the South-East has been used on an experimental basis and their use is at present confined to applications of superphosphate in certain locations. Superphosphate has given good responses on heath lands and on deep white sand. It is best applied at or within a year of planting at a rate of 4cwt. per acre. It has been necessary to date to treat relatively small areas in this way and hand applications have been used. For larger areas aerial applications would probably be used, as is the case in the Adelaide Hills. Experiments are in progress with nitrogenous and other fertilizers at the present time.

SURVEY OF POULTRY FARMS.

Mr. BYWATERS—Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to the question I asked recently regarding the institution here of poultry farm surveys, similar to those in Victoria?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I have a long report on this matter, of which the following are extracts:—

This department was associated with a comprehensive economic survey of the poultry industry conducted by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics in all States in 1953-54. In

addition, the department takes the opportunity each year in reporting on the egg-laying tests at Parafield, to publish a brief economic analysis of egg production in this State during each current year. These reports are published annually in the *South Australian Journal of Agriculture*. Apart from these reports, the department is continually providing advice to poultry producers on economic matters and in this regard it is hoped that the further development of an economic advisory service within the department will materially increase the advice available to farmers in future years.

I shall be glad to make the report available to the honourable member.

PORT AUGUSTA WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Minister of Works received a further report on the discolouration of water in the Port Augusta area?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—No. I have no further information to add to what was previously given.

RAILWAY RETRENCHMENTS.

Mr. RALSTON—Has the Premier a reply to my question of October 21 relating to recent retrenchments of railway employees at Mount Gambier?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have a report on this matter from the Minister of Railways, who has been advised by the Railways Commissioner that, because of the falling away of rail traffic at Mount Gambier as a result of competition from interstate road hauliers, it has been necessary to reduce the number of staff handling freight at that station. However, arrangements have been made to transfer surplus employees to other work within the department. Only last week the Commissioner made quite a considerable cut in wool freight rates to Port Adelaide in an endeavour to retain the business.

HOUSE SURGEON APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. RALSTON (on notice)—

1. How many students passed the final examination for the degrees of Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery at Adelaide University in 1957?

2. How many of these sought appointments as house surgeons in South Australian hospitals?

3. How many were appointed?

4. What were the names of the approved institutions to which they were appointed and the number appointed to each such institution?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Director-General of Medical Services reports:—

	South Australia.	West Australia.	Asians.	Total.
1. The number of students who passed the final examination for the degrees of Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery at Adelaide University at the end of 1957 were	37	13	9	59
2. The number who originally sought appointments as House Surgeons in South Australian Hospitals was . . .	35	—	7	42
The amended number of applications for House Surgeons (2 original applications withdrawn)	35	—	5	40
3. The number appointed	35	—	5	40*
* In addition to these appointments for the period 1st February, 1958, to the 31st January, 1959, there were 9 other Resident Medical Officers already employed for the period 1st June, 1957, to 30th May, 1958. These officers had completed the final examinations of the University of Adelaide in May of 1957.				
4. The only approved institution in South Australia to which appointments were made was the Royal Adelaide Hospital.				

POWER STATION CHIMNEY STACK.

Mr. RICHES (on notice)—

1. Has the work of erection been commenced of a chimney stack to take smoke from the Port Augusta A power station higher into the atmosphere?

2. If not, when is it proposed that a start will be made?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Chairman, Electricity Trust of South Australia, reports:—

1. No.

2. A tender has been accepted and it is expected that work will commence in January, 1959.

PORT GERMEIN ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

Mr. RICHES (on notice)—When is it anticipated that a supply of electricity will be available to the township of Port Germein?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Chairman, Electricity Trust of South Australia, reports that construction will start this week and supply will be available about the end of January, 1959.

SOLOMONTOWN BEACH WALL.

Mr. RICHES (on notice)—

1. Has any decision been reached regarding the application from the Corporation of Port Pirie for improvements to the Solomontown beach wall?

2. If so, what assistance is the Government prepared to offer?

3. If not, when is it anticipated that a decision will be reached?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Reports obtained from the Harbors Board engineers do not support a proposal for

repairing the breached section of the beach wall. They state that the whole length of the wall must be sheet piled to ensure a satisfactory result. This work would cost £35,700, and cannot be approved on the grounds of finance available at present.

PORT PIRIE RAIL CAR SERVICE.

Mr. RICHES (on notice)—When is it anticipated that the Blue Bird rail car service will operate between Adelaide and Port Pirie?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The Railways Commissioner reports that it is anticipated the new rail car service on the Adelaide-Port Pirie line will be introduced on 15/12/58.

ABORIGINES DEPARTMENT WELFARE OFFICER.

Mr. RICHES (on notice)—

1. Has a welfare officer of the Aborigines Department been appointed to the Port Augusta district?

2. If so (a) when was the appointment made, and (b) who was the officer appointed?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Applications for the position of welfare officer in the Aborigines Department with headquarters at Port Augusta closed a short time ago. They are being considered, and the Public Service Commissioner hopes to make a recommendation this week.

RENMARK IRRIGATION TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS (Minister of Irrigation), having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Renmark Irrigation Trust Act, 1936-1957. Read a first time.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to give to the Renmark Irrigation Trust power to erect embankments to protect the district of the trust from inundation by floods. Whilst the trust has certain powers in this regard under section 65 of the Act, the Act does not give the trust power to erect embankments on land not owned by the trust or in which it does not possess the necessary legal interest. It is obvious that, as was the case on the occasion of the last flooding of the River Murray, banks must be constructed with speed and without the delays consequent upon the acquisition of title to the land upon which the banks must be constructed. The principle of giving the trust power to enter land and to construct works is already established in the Act and section 115 empowers the trust to enter any land within the district and to construct drains on the land. The section gives to the owners of land affected a right to compensation for any resultant damage.

Clause 2 proposes to give to the trust similar power as regards flood embankments. The clause provides that the trust may construct these embankments on any land within the district, and gives the trust the necessary power of entry. It is provided that the owner of any land affected is to be entitled to compensation for any damage suffered. It is provided that for the purpose of the clause the trust may declare a special rate. Section 94 provides that such a rate may be declared for various purposes, whilst section 92 provides that the special rate so declared is not to exceed 5s. per acre per half year.

During the recent floods, the trust went ahead and constructed necessary banks without statutory authority to enter the land in question and it can be said that the emergency at the time justified the action taken by the trust. In order to meet this position, clause 3 provides that the amendments made by clause 2 are to be retrospective as from July 1, 1956. Accordingly, the legal position of the trust as regards the construction of these flood banks will be established as will the rights to compensation of the owners of the land affected. Section 164 and following sections of the Act deal with the procedure to be followed as to claims for compensation. Section 164 provides that any such claim is to be made within one year after the right to compensation arose. Obviously, this provision is not applicable to rights which arose before the passing of the Bill and clause 3 provides that, for the purpose of such rights to compensation, the claim for compensation is to be made within six months

after the passing of the Bill. The Bill is a hybrid Bill and, in accordance with the Joint Standing Orders, it will be necessary for it to be referred to a Select Committee after being read a second time.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I understand that it is necessary for this Bill to be passed immediately and on the information disclosed I see no reason to object to its passage. It deals with an unfortunate circumstance of the past, and legalizes things that had to be done and anything of a similar nature which may be found imperative in the future. I hope it will not be necessary to use the prospective clauses of the Bill, but the retrospective clauses are necessary and I do not object to them.

Bill read a second time and referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Hon. C. S. Hincks, and Messrs. King, Harding, Jennings and Lawn; the Committee to have power to send for persons, papers and records, and to report on Wednesday, November 12.

INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

IRRIGATION ON PRIVATE PROPERTY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

PULP AND PAPER MILLS AGREEMENT BILL.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) brought up the report of the Select Committee, together with minutes of proceedings and evidence.

Ordered that report and minutes be printed.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (LONG SERVICE LEAVE) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 28. Page 1413.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I hardly need say that the Opposition wholeheartedly supports this Bill, which has been sought for a number of years by various industrial organizations with members employed in the Public Service and also by the Teachers Federation on behalf of South Australian school teachers. I could never understand why the long service leave provisions were limited and I am pleased that the Government is taking steps to remove an anomaly by granting to those who serve for a period longer than 40 years leave at the appropriate rate for the

additional years of service. During the Premier's absence I asked the Acting Leader of the House whether the Government would amend the existing law and he promised to refer the matter to Cabinet. I am happy that that consideration has been favourable. I am interested to know whether an officer who has served more than 40 years and is on long service leave, as provided in the present Act, will become entitled to additional leave if he is still on leave when this Bill is ratified. I rather fancy that it would be so, but perhaps the Premier can clear up that point.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—Without having looked it up, I think that would be the position.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—In that case I support the second reading.

Mr. JOHN CLARK (Gawler)—I support the Bill. With other members I am happy that public servants and teachers are to be treated as they should have been treated long ago. I have made requests for such legislation on behalf of teachers on many occasions. During the Address in Reply debate in 1953, speaking on means of recruiting teachers, I went to some trouble to point out that student allowances were not as high as they should be. Increases have since been made in those allowances. I entered the Education Department in depression times, as did many others, when people were only too glad to obtain a permanent type of employment. In 1954 I suggested that the ungenerous long service leave provisions were a definite hindrance to the recruitment of young people as teachers. I stressed then, and have since, that while other avenues were available with better entitlements it would be difficult to secure teachers. On several occasions I have compared our departmental long service leave conditions with those applying in other States. I suggested that parents would be reluctant to permit their children to enter on a teaching career when better entitlements could be obtained in other spheres. In introducing the Bill the Premier said:—

A study of the relevant provisions in other States has revealed that the maximum amounts of long service leave should be increased to allow public servants and teachers who render long service to obtain similar advantages to those enjoyed by their counterparts in the other States.

I was interested to hear that because in the past the Premier has been reluctant to admit that our conditions are below those of other States. I understand from friends in the Public Service and teachers that they are

happy with the Bill and I support the second reading.

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

INDUSTRIAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 28. Page 1413.)

Mr. FRED WALSH (West Torrens)—I have studied this Bill and see nothing in it controversial. Its object is to increase the salary of the president of the Industrial Court to £3,750 and that of the deputy president to £3,150. When the Industrial Code was enacted in 1920 the president's salary was fixed at £1,700, and the deputy president's at £1,200. I think the basic wage then was about £3 18s. a week, but today it is £12 16s., which is about 3½ times higher. During the depression the president's salary was reduced to £1,500, and most members will recall that at that time there was a general reduction in salaries and wages of 12½ per cent, but the president's salary was reduced by more than that, so it seems he was harshly treated. His salary remained at £1,500 until 1947, though wages and salaries generally rose during that period, and in that year his salary was fixed at £2,000. In 1951 it was increased to £2,500, and the deputy president's salary was fixed at £2,100. Three years ago those salaries were raised to £3,250 and £2,750, but if the president's salary was fixed in relation to wage standards in 1920 he would get about £5,525.

It seems that the president and deputy president of the Industrial Court have not had salary increases in line with other sections of the community. Both officers hold important positions and are entitled to much credit for the maintenance of industrial peace in South Australia. I think the court has the respect and confidence of representatives of employers and employees who appear before it from time to time, though they may not always be happy with the court's decisions in respect of wages and conditions. I believe the Government is following the right course in fixing the salaries of its officers on the basis of those applying in other States. I have no quarrel with the clause making retrospective the salary increases to the president and deputy president, but when the court fixes salaries and wages it should make any increases retrospective too, particularly when a considerable time elapses before an award is made. It seems that a certain amount of unnecessary delay has occurred in increasing the salaries of the president and deputy president, and I support the second reading.

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

EXPLOSIVES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 29. Page 1471.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—It is rather a pity to be discussing this Bill today. It would have been more appropriate to discuss it tomorrow, when we shall celebrate the failure of the late lamented Mr. Guy Fawkes to deal at least with the buildings of the British Parliament.

Mr. Quirke—What about this place?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I do not know what effect the efforts of Mr. Guy Fawkes would have had on the British Parliament if they had succeeded, but I regret that the celebrations which will give much joy to young people tomorrow may also result in a few minor accidents. I join with those who have issued a warning about the careless use of fireworks, and I hope that warning will be heeded. It is tragic that some occasions for rejoicing are turned into occasions for sorrow as a result of carelessness in using fireworks. The member for Burra (Mr. Quirke) suggested a few moments ago that it would not be wise to encourage anybody to have designs on this place, and to some extent this Bill guards against that. At present we have a fairly effective control over the storing, sale and use of explosives, but this Bill has been rendered necessary by new methods that have been adopted in recent years. What were comparatively harmless substances when used by themselves become dangerous explosives when used in combination. As the Act does not provide for the control and inspection of places where these substances may be stored, it has been found necessary to provide for inspections and to declare certain substances under any regulations that may be made. Inspectors will have power to inspect places where explosives to be used for blasting are stored. I can foresee no difficulty under the Bill; therefore I support the second reading.

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

SAVINGS BANK OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 30. Page 1502.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This afternoon the Government is certainly having a field day. As Leader of the

Opposition I find it impossible to oppose much of the legislation being considered. For many years the Opposition has been thinking along the lines of this Bill. Some years ago I pointed out that action was necessary and I think I referred to the matter in my last policy speech. The Bill removes the limit of £2,000 on ordinary deposits, which was fixed in 1947. In 1948 when we provided for deposit stock in the Savings Bank being issued we fixed a limit of £2,000. This is now removed. In his second reading explanation the Treasurer significantly said that the limits were first imposed in the early days of savings banks, probably for the purpose of restricting their growth. I believe that to be correct because when they were introduced there was a natural abhorrence on the part of captains of high finance at their intrusion into the banking system. They have resisted each amendment of the Act since, but up to the present there has been no press criticism of this Bill.

Mr. Quirke—The other people are doing it themselves now.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yes. Most of the trading banks have their savings banks, which they find a lucrative business. Of course, when the Bill reaches the Legislative Council there may be objection to some of its provisions, but I hope not because I think the entire Bill should be adopted. I believe in people's banks, and as far as possible the costs of transactions to the people should be reduced to the absolute minimum and the benefits accruing to them raised to the maximum. Our Savings Bank has a long and proud record in helping primary producers to improve their properties and in assisting the building of houses. The removal of the limits will strengthen the position of the trustees by encouraging more money to flow into the bank to be used as I have mentioned. The limit on the amount which can be withdrawn without notice from ordinary deposit accounts is also removed. In connection with the withdrawal of deposit stock, section 60a of the principal Act, passed in 1948, provided that stock could be withdrawn by a depositor on the basis of £10, or any multiple thereof, with varying terms of notice according to the amount to be withdrawn. This provision is to be removed and deposit stock can be redeemed on the basis of £10, or any multiple thereof, on one month's notice.

If a husband or a wife dies leaving a savings bank account there is provision in the Bill for the widow or the widower to

withdraw amounts up to £600 without the need to prove the will or to take out letters of administration. This is a wise procedure because the present figure of £200 was fixed when the value of money was much greater than it is today. The Bill provides that the trustees can make arrangements with the South Australian Superannuation Fund for bank employees to come under the provisions of the Superannuation Act. I believe this is complementary to the Superannuation Act Amendment Bill now before the House. The Bill supersedes the present provisions in the Savings Bank Act, which I understand have been in vogue since 1875, under which a retiring allowance of one month's salary for each year of service can be paid to a retiring officer, subject to certain conditions that may be laid down by the trustees. Under the new proposal the employees will have their rights under the old scheme retained unless they desire to transfer to the new scheme. Officers joining the bank after the passing of the Bill will become contributors to the new scheme. That will be an advantage, particularly as in the earlier years it will provide these officers with greater security for their wives and families in the event of serious illness or death than was provided under the old scheme. I understand the bank trustees have unanimously recommended the proposals in the Bill; therefore I have much pleasure in supporting it.

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

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 23. Page 1389.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I give my wholehearted support to this Bill as far as it goes; my only complaint is that it does not go far enough. I understand it embodies the recommendations of the Workmen's Compensation Committee, and it is obvious that in introducing it the Premier was searching for arguments in its favour. The arguments he used were quite sound, and as a matter of fact they are the arguments I have used on previous occasions when introducing Bills to make comprehensive amendments to the Act, pointing out that South Australia is lagging behind the other States in this regard. The Premier promptly used those arguments to support the amendments to the Act recommended by the committee. Since the appointment of the Workmen's Compensation Com-

mittee, progressive improvements have been introduced into the legislation—improvements that would otherwise not have been introduced—and great credit must be given to the Trades and Labor Council representative, Mr. O'Connor, for the part he has played in endeavouring to remove anomalies and injustices which in the past were characteristic of the Act.

In brief, the Bill proposes to increase the maximum weekly payments for married workmen from £12 16s. to £13 10s. and for single workmen from £8 15s. to £9 5s., compensation at death, where the workman leaves dependants, from £2,350 to £2,500, funeral allowances from £60 to £70, and the maximum total for weekly payments for specific injury from £2,600 to £2,750. The proposed amounts do not, of course, satisfy this side of the House, but they are at least an improvement on existing amounts, and probably represent as far as the Government will go at this stage. Some years ago, when the various items were increased, it was provided that the new scale of weekly payments was to apply to existing cases, although limited by the pre-existing maximum, and a similar provision could have been included in this Bill.

The Act as it now stands is defective in that it does not provide completely for travelling between home and place of employment. This provision is included in all other Compensation Acts except the Western Australian Act, which has the same provision as our own Act, namely, one that covers the workman while being transported by his employer. I propose to move in Committee, subject to an instruction that I will have to obtain from the House, that the relevant section of the Act be amended to provide for complete cover. I see no reason why we should limit compensation for an employee who is killed or injured in travelling to or from his place of employment to those travelling in a form of transport provided by an employer. This matter assumes more and more importance each year as the spread of our city and suburbs requires workers in industry to live farther and farther from their places of employment. As a result of the growth of population and traffic, the hazard becomes greater in proportion to the spread of the city and suburbs and the distance between the worker's home and his place of employment. There is also an impact on the worker who lives so close to his place of employment that he can ride a push bike there. Tens of thousands do that—some because they live close to their employment and

others because they cannot afford to pay fares regularly. Looked at in any way, the worker's journey to his job is just as much a part of his employment as his work on the job, because if he did not travel he would not be there to do the work. Because of this, I feel there has been an omission on the part of the committee and the Government, and I propose to test the House on this matter by moving at the right time an appropriate amendment, which I have placed on members' files this afternoon.

The Bill also provides a more satisfactory approach to the problem of medical, hospital and other allied expenses incurred by an injured workman. I accept the Government's assurance that the new provisions will obviate the difficulties encountered under the old section 18a in the matter of procedure and other aspects of this particular form of compensation, although I am not sure of the meaning of the regulation-making powers provided in clause 6. Considerable difficulty has been experienced by workmen and unions seeking to protect their interests in obtaining a clear interpretation of this provision. The fact that no rules of court had been provided was alleged to be the reason why one particular matter could not be settled, and a union was put to considerable expense in trying to clarify the position. I believe it was ultimately clarified to the satisfaction of the union, and of course the injured employee received the benefits to which he was entitled, but in this law, at least, there should be no possibility of misunderstanding or difficulties of interpretation. Although some workmen, as members of trade unions, have the advantage of expert advice from union officers who have made a study of this legislation, other workmen, precluded by various circumstances from being members of such organizations, have no-one to assist them. Considerable expense is incurred by unions in protecting the interests of their members under workmen's compensation where there is ambiguity in relation to certain provisions, and there was ambiguity in relation to the provision regarding medical hospital expenses. The difficulties of those precluded by circumstances from being members of unions are greater still. However, this Bill effects considerable improvements, so I have pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens)—I have pleasure in supporting the Bill, on which I feel the Government is to be congratulated. I am happy that the Leader of the Opposition agrees with its principles. He has foreshadowed an amendment dealing with travelling to and from work.

I will not discuss that matter now as I shall have an opportunity in Committee. The main purpose of this Bill is to bring our procedure into line with the procedure in other States in relation to recent adjustments to the basic wage in South Australia. That is the basis of the recommendation of the Workmen's Compensation Advisory Committee, set up some years ago as a result of representations from both sides of industry.

Workmen's compensation has grown in its application in recent years, not only because more and more people are coming into industry and more industries are coming within its scope, but because wages are rising. If we examine the amount of insurance written by various companies, we find that workmen's compensation represents more than one-third of the business they now write. This shows that the benefits this legislation bestows on workmen involve a considerable expense to the community. Since 1911, when this kind of legislation was first introduced, the weekly rate for compensation has been a little higher than the basic wage. As the basic wage is now £12 16s. it is proposed to increase weekly benefits under the Act to £13 10s., and in that regard I wholly favour the Bill. Certain adjustments are to be made for payments for death, funerals, and ambulance services, and to dependants, but most claims come under the heading of incapacity: workmen receive injuries, some minor, some serious, and spend a few days, a week, or even a month away from work. I am concerned with that and am pleased to see that an upward adjustment has been made. Not only does this measure cover such injuries, but it also deals with disease which can be proved to be directly the result of a worker's employment.

The scope of the Act is not generally appreciated by the public. Most people think it deals only with manual workers, but that is not so. Though manual workers are more liable to injury, clerical workers, apprentices and domestic servants are also covered by workmen's compensation. The measure must meet with the approval of the Opposition.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—I support the Bill, but do not join in the previous speaker's praise of the Government. There is only one provision of note in the Bill—that relating to hospital and medical expenses. I heartily endorse that provision, which the Opposition has fought for for years. It has figured in our policy speeches at various elections and we have moved in this House for its inclusion on many occasions. This Government delays progress as long

as possible and only takes action when it can no longer delay. The Bill brings compensation, in money values, up to date because of three recent basic wage increases—10s. in 1956, 10s. in 1957 and 5s. in 1958. I am pleased that all medical and hospital expenses are to be paid, but would like to know the exact meaning of clause 6 (4), which states:—

The Governor may by regulation prescribe the maximum amounts which may be charged and recovered for any medical, hospital, nursing or ambulance services the cost of which is payable as compensation under this section. I do not know why that is necessary unless the Government believes that hospitals and doctors may take advantage of the provision and that charges for services rendered may soar as a result. In that event the Governor could issue regulations to protect employers from overcharges.

I take this opportunity of again pointing out anomalies which still exist in the Act and which, if not altered this year, will be altered next year by a Government Party of which I shall be a member. Firstly, we must examine to whom the Act applies. Mr. Coumbe said that there was a belief in the community that it only applied to manual workers. That has not been my experience. I have been surprised at the lack of knowledge among manual workers of their rights to compensation. I have known of many workmen who suffered injury, but did not claim compensation. Others did not make claims for many months and then claimed only because workmates told them of their entitlements. My union has dealt with several cases where workers have claimed but have been refused compensation by the insurance companies. It is only when these workmen have sought assistance from the union that they have obtained their rights. When a workman does not approach his union the insurance companies refuse compensation and save an untold sum. The Vehicle Builders' Employees Federation, of which I am a member, recovers thousands of pounds annually in respect of such cases.

Under our legislation workmen's compensation is confined to those persons whose salaries or wages do not exceed £35 a week. Let us examine the situation in the impoverished States. This Government claims that South Australia is the best in the Commonwealth, that it has the highest savings per capita, that industries are coming here and that it is flourishing whilst other States are not so well off. He also claims that our unemployment is the lowest. In New South Wales there is no

limit on the amount a person can earn and still be entitled to compensation. All casual workers, even boxers and wrestlers, are covered by compensation. The only people exempt in New South Wales are those who provide entertainment free of charge. A similar position applies in Queensland and in Western Australia which State, incidentally, the Premier claims is always in financial difficulty and appealing for further Federal assistance. Similar provisions apply to Commonwealth employees or employees working under Commonwealth awards. In Victoria the ceiling is £2,000 a year. In Tasmania the position is the same as in South Australia.

If a man loses his genital organs—and there have been about half a dozen cases in recent years—he is not entitled to compensation. The Workmen's Compensation Committee, appointed by the Government to inquire into this Act and to make recommendations, was supplied with information concerning such injuries two years ago, but the injured person receives no compensation, merely his weekly salary during his time of incapacity. It has even been suggested that the only means of recovering would be for the wives to take civil action in the court.

The former member for Mount Gambier, the late Mr. Fletcher, raised the question of a girl who had her hair caught in a machine at Mount Gambier. She lost all her hair and is forced to wear a wig for life. Apart from her weekly salary during her period of incapacity she received no compensation. That is wrong. Likewise, facial disfigurement is not covered by the Act, but it is in Queensland, though this Government considers that is not one of the most progressive and prosperous States. This Government is not concerned with the loss a girl has sustained if she has to wear a wig, but only with her value to an employer. If she cannot prove her value as an employee is impaired, she is not entitled to compensation, but her opportunities of marriage are greatly affected. Further, her opportunities of becoming a model are prejudiced, and even her opportunities of obtaining other employment.

Mr. Bywaters—Apart from all the embarrassment she suffers.

Mr. LAWN—Yes, but the Government says that because she can still work a machine she should not be entitled to compensation. I disagree with that attitude. The Bill increases the maximum payment for death from £2,350 to £2,500, and I shall now quote the maximum payments applying in other States

at January 1, 1958. Those amounts could have been increased in some States during this year, and we are now only bringing some of our maximum payments up to those of some other States. In New South Wales the maximum payment for death is four years' earnings, but any payment made prior to death is not deductible. The maximum there is £2,750, plus amounts payable to dependants, and this applies in other States too. In Victoria the maximum amount is £2,240, and any payment made prior to death is not deductible. In Queensland the maximum is £2,500, plus £75 for each dependent child or step-child. In Western Australia the maximum is £3,000, plus the amounts payable to dependants, in Tasmania the maximum is £2,240, and in the Commonwealth £2,350. Those figures show that South Australia is out of step with amounts payable in other States and the Commonwealth.

The Bill increases the maximum payment for total incapacity from £2,600 to £2,750, but in New South Wales there is no limit. In Victoria the maximum is £2,800, and in those two States an employee (with the approval of the board in Victoria) may elect to take payments for life instead of a lump sum. In Queensland the maximum is £2,800, and in Western Australia £2,750. In Tasmania the maximum is £2,340 and in the Commonwealth £2,350, and the liability under the Commonwealth law is unlimited in the case of total and permanent disablement.

I stress that workmen's compensation in South Australia is payable only in respect of accidents arising out of and in the course of employment. Some members of a union of which I was secretary injured their wrists through the constant use of pliers, and some employees using dreadnought files developed a tennis elbow, but workmen's compensation is not payable to them because they did not have an accident. However, these injuries are covered by the Acts of New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland, and I ask the Minister to tell me why employees injuring themselves through using tools should not get compensation. One man using a dreadnought file on the top of a motor body had to be constantly looking upwards. He injured his neck, but the insurance company refused to pay him compensation. At the appropriate time I will say something about compensation for employees injured in travelling to or from employment. I support the Bill and hope that before long South Australia will be able

to boast of an Act as good as, or better than, any other Workmen's Compensation Act in the Commonwealth.

Mr. FRED WALSH (West Torrens)—I support the second reading, but regret that there is so little enthusiasm on the part of many members for this important piece of legislation. Any Bill designed to protect the welfare of people injured through no fault of their own in their employment is one that should concern the whole community, particularly members of Parliament. The Government has included the recommendations of the advisory committee in the Bill, but what concerns me most are certain things that have been omitted. It seems that the advisory committee has based its recommendations on provisions of other States, and that is a good policy because it brings South Australia fairly well into line with them. Although the provisions laid down under this Bill are not as favourable as those in some other States, we are at least following the correct trend, and I hope that before long South Australian employees will be treated as well as others.

I did not agree to the appointment of an advisory committee on workmen's compensation, for I thought that Parliament itself should determine questions of workmen's compensation, but I confess that certain improvements have been made to our legislation during the last three years since the establishment of the committee. The committee's chairman, Sir Edgar Bean, has the confidence and respect of all parties, though some members do not agree with all the committee's findings, but that is only to be expected. Since its inception the committee has had before it the coverage of workmen going to and from their places of employment, which coverage applies in all States except South Australia and Western Australia. Sir Edgar has been steadfastly opposed to it because he believes that an employer should not be expected to cover his employees in this way. The Opposition strongly disagrees with his view. I hope that with the passing of time his opinion on this matter will change. The Leader of the Opposition argued that a man would not be at his place of work if he had not travelled to it, but I will go further and say that a man would not have been at the particular spot where he met with an accident if he had not been going to or from his work. More than once it has been argued by Government members that a workman may not travel directly to his home after leaving work, but if the matter can be

adequately covered in other States it can be covered here. I know of several instances where workmen have been injured, one of them fatally, almost on reaching the employer's establishment.

Mr. Harding—Are members of Parliament covered in this matter?

Mr. FRED WALSH—No. It is a matter of looking after ourselves. We cannot come under this Bill because we are not workmen in the true sense of the word. It is not an absurd suggestion because I believe that a member of Parliament is entitled to as much protection in going to and from Parliament House, and engaging in his Parliamentary duties, as anyone else. It is a matter worthy of consideration. The amount payable where a workman dies leaving dependants has been increased by £150, and again it seems that a comparison has been made with the rates in the other States. The present minimum amount of £500 in connection with full dependants of workmen dying has been increased to £800. There has been no increase in this amount since 1947, so the additional £300 is justified. The funeral allowance is increased from £60 to £70. The present allowance would probably not cover funeral costs today, and probably £70 is much nearer the mark.

In adjusting these compensation rates we should get away from fixed amounts. We should fix a fair figure to be the base rate, and from there could work on percentages, according to the fluctuations in the living or basic wage. Only by doing it in this way can we properly retain value in the various rates. In various directions in the payment of amounts to employees I have always supported percentages rather than fixed amounts. Reference has been made in this debate to the Labor Party policy on workmen's compensation. The amendment foreshadowed by the Leader of the Opposition is in keeping with a plank of the platform of the Labor Party. Compensation for injuries to a workman travelling to or from work has been a plank for many years. Members who have been here a fair time know that almost every session Parliament considers a similar amendment to the Act. This happened even before the appointment of the advisory committee.

Although we mainly concern ourselves—and rightly so—with compensating workmen for injuries, we should concern ourselves with preventing accidents. That is fast becoming the policy of Governments and other interested

people in other parts of the Commonwealth and other parts of the world; four out of six States have already had conferences on this matter. Only a few weeks ago a conference, convened by the Minister of Labor and attended by all interested sections of the community, was held in Canberra. In April last the new Victorian Government convened a preparatory conference to consider having a convention on industrial safety in Melbourne on December 8 and 9, and a schedule was laid down. This conference will be opened by the Governor of Victoria (Sir Dallas Brookes). On the afternoon of December 9 Mr. J. A. Reid, Company Safety Engineer of General Motors-Holdens Ltd., will deliver an address at 2 p.m., followed by Mr. D. Lovegrove, M.L.A., who will deliver a paper at 2.30 p.m. The convention will then go into open forum at 3.25 p.m. and subsequently there will be a review of the proceedings. This is to enable anyone interested in industrial safety to participate in the deliberations, and express views without coming to decisions. This could result in suggestions being made to the Government of the State of Victoria that would bring about industrial safety.

I suggest to this Government that it consider convening a similar conference here. Nothing but good could come of it, and I know that both sides of industry would be prepared to participate and give the best of their knowledge to help protect the people who are compelled by circumstances to work in industry, particularly in factories with a considerable amount of machinery. Now that mechanization of industry is increasing, I could not imagine a more appropriate time for such a convention. If this Government does not consider doing this, and there is a change of Government, one of the first moves of a Labor Government will be to convene a conference. As I shall have an opportunity in Committee to discuss the aspects about which I am most concerned, with these few words I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time.

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

That is be an instruction to the Committee of the whole House on the Bill that it has power to consider an amendment of section 4 of the principal Act to provide for travelling between place of residence and place of employment.

Motion carried.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 8 passed.

New clause 2a—"Liability of employers to workmen for injuries."

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I move to insert the following new clause:—

2a. Section 4 of the principal Act is amended by adding after paragraph (b) of subsection (2) thereof the following new paragraph:—

(c) While the workman is travelling between his place of abode and place of employment; provided that the accident does not occur during or after any substantial interruption of or substantial deviation from his journey made for a purpose unconnected with his employment.

The present provision is contained in section 4 (2) of the principal Act which provides:—

(a) While the workman in the course of a daily or other periodical journey of the workman between his place of abode and his place of employment (whether such journey is to or from work) is being conveyed by a means of transport provided either by the employer or by some other person pursuant to arrangements made with the employer.

(b) On a journey taken by the workman during ordinary working hours between his place of employment and a trade technical or other training school which he is required by law to attend, or which he attends at the request of the employer.

In the Commonwealth legislation and in the Acts of all other States except Western Australia, full provision is made covering workmen travelling to and from work. Western Australia has similar provisions to ours. New South Wales first established this principle about 12 or 13 years ago and it has worked satisfactorily. The Committee should realize that the Commonwealth law provides for compensation in these cases and that in South Australia some workers are employed by the Commonwealth, including railway employees, postal workers, customs officers and men engaged at the Long Range Weapons Research Establishment at Salisbury. They are covered by workmen's compensation when travelling to and from work. Many private firms are engaged in activities at Salisbury similar to those carried out by the Long Range Weapons Research Establishment. Their employees are not covered and if a worker is killed on his way to or from work his widow and family receive no compensation, but a Commonwealth employee involved in a similar accident is covered by compensation and his widow and family receive full benefits. I understand a situation like this arose about two or three years ago. One worker was a Commonwealth employee whose widow and family were provided for, but the widow and family of the workman employed privately were not entitled to any compensation.

I do not want this amendment to disturb the prevailing sections of the Act. We are content with the provision that a person travelling in an employer's vehicle or a vehicle provided by the employer shall be entitled to compensation. If my amendment is carried that provision will become redundant because all employees will be covered, but I do not propose to move for its deletion at this juncture, because I have had experience in the past of having a provision struck out of existing legislation and the provision intended to replace it being rejected.

It has been suggested that it would be difficult to interpret the words;

"During or after any substantial interruption of or substantial deviation from his journey made for a purpose unconnected with his employment."

An almost identical provision has appeared in the New South Wales legislation for many years and as there has never been any dispute I do not think we need fear. The journey to and from work is just as essential to a man's employment as his actual attendance and his exertions at his place of employment. He cannot be employed or do his work unless he goes from his home to his place of employment. He has to return to his home after he has fulfilled his obligations to his employer in order to rest and fit himself for his obligation on the following day. It has been suggested that this provision might be limited to his journey to his place of employment. Whilst there might be some merit in that because it would be half way to our objective, I see no reason to compromise. I believe a man would be more accident-prone on his return journey when fatigued after his daily labours than on his forward journey when fresh after a period of rest. In my opinion the principle embodied in this provision is sound. It is necessary for a worker to travel to and from his place of employment in order to do his job. Of course, as I pointed out earlier, our city and suburbs are spreading. The speed of traffic is increasing, resulting in more traffic hazards, particularly for the man on foot or on a push-bike or even for the man in his own motor car—in the case of those workers fortunate enough to possess motor cars in which to drive to work. There is always the danger of collision with the heavy vehicle. This applies particularly in industrial areas where many heavily laden vehicles bring equipment to or take the finished products away from the factories. I submit that all the facts favour my amendment. If we want to do substantial

justice to the workers of this State and bring them into line with those in four of the five other States, I urge the Committee to agree to my amendment.

Mr. LAWN—I desire to support the Leader of the Opposition. One can only conclude that this amendment is fair and reasonable. The Government should see its way clear on this occasion to accept immediately, and not in two or three years' time, a suggestion from the Opposition. We are not asking for the moon in this amendment.

Let us consider the position in other States. The Commonwealth and Tasmania have a similar provision. Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales have a similar provision for workmen coming to and from employment, but these three States go further than that. If a man is off from work as a result of injury or accident arising out of or in the course of his employment and is in receipt of workmen's compensation and is on the way to a doctor, chemist or hospital to receive treatment for that injury, he is covered for further injury or accident arising out of such travelling.

Mr. O'Halloran—In three States?

Mr. LAWN—Yes—New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. The amendment does not go as far as the provision in those three States; it simply asks that when travelling to or from employment a workman shall be covered for workmen's compensation. In Western Australia workers are covered only to the extent of an apprentice travelling to or from a trade or technical school in working hours. South Australia and Western Australia are the only two States that have not some provision protecting the workman and his wife and children.

We live in a country claiming to be a Christian, civilized democracy. We, the Legislature, should be able to see our way clear to provide insurance coverage for the wife and children of a man who is travelling to fulfil a service to the community because, when all is said and done, whether it is production in a primary or secondary industry or whether it is a service to the community, they are making some effort to build up the living standards of our people.

There are workmen living near me—and this applies elsewhere—who work for the Postmaster-General's Department. From the time they leave home until they return home after completing their shift, they are covered

for workmen's compensation; the wife and children are protected should anything happen to the husband or father on his way to work, during working hours, or on his way home from work. Some compensation is payable to the wife and children in the event of the breadwinner losing his life or suffering some accident or injury whereby he is deprived of his employment for some time, or if he should meet with an accident rendering him totally incapacitated for life.

Other people living near me who work in the Commonwealth Department of Aircraft Production are in a similar position to those I have just mentioned. Again, other people living near me work for the aircraft production factory at Finsbury. This is a privately-owned factory, but it is producing aircraft components for the Commonwealth Department of Aircraft Production. The factory at Parafield is a Government department producing aircraft components for the Commonwealth Government. These employees travel mainly on public transport. Some have their own vehicles but I have in mind rather those who travel on public transport to go into the city and on to Finsbury. They are not covered during the time they go to and from their employment, but they are like their neighbours who go to work on aircraft for the Commonwealth Government. Those workmen going to Parafield to work for the Commonwealth Government are covered but those going to Finsbury to perform work similar to that done at Parafield are not covered for workmen's compensation because they are working for a private firm governed by the laws of South Australia.

The Premier has often said that all legislation introduced in this House to alter the law should be remedial. If ever there was an example of a proposition being put forward in this House to remedy in law a gross injustice, this is it. Some two years ago, I referred in this House to a workman who was going to the aircraft factory in Finsbury. He fell off a train inside the Finsbury works and was killed. His wife and children did not receive a penny; in fact, they did not receive any payment for the day's work that he went to do at Finsbury because he did not even start work. That man's pay ended the day before. Although he was killed on the way to work to produce aircraft for the defence of this country—he was not going home to make aircraft for himself or toy aeroplanes for his children—this Government said that his widow and children were not worth a cracker; he

was killed on his way to work; he should have waited an hour or so and let it happen after he commenced work.

I put it to the House that that is not the position that should obtain under the laws of this State. When I was secretary of the Vehicle Builders Union, one of our members who was going home between 1 and 2 o'clock in the morning, having finished his shift at about 1.30 a.m., was cycling up the Port Road. He was hit by a motor vehicle and killed. Consequently, he did not know the number or type of the vehicle that hit him. No compensation was payable to him or his dependants. During the Address in Reply debate I referred to another workman who was killed on his way to work and no compensation was paid.

When His Excellency the Governor opens Parliament he often says that the workers of South Australia produce more per head than the employees of other States, but what is the Government prepared to do for them? Those in other States are covered against accidents occurring when going to or returning from employment. Are not our employees worth as much as they are? I am optimistic that the Government will accept the amendment instead of the opinion of one man. The advisory committee consists of one representative of the trade union movement, one representative of employers, and a chairman appointed by the Government. The employees' representative has often asked for a provision relating to accidents occurring when going to or returning from work, but the employers' representative has consistently refused to agree to it. Therefore, the committee's decision has been the decision of the chairman, who has been of the opinion that workmen in South Australia should not be covered in this respect. Why should one man decide this question? It is the Government's responsibility.

Mr. JENNINGS—No, Parliament's.

Mr. LAWN—Yes, but as the Government has a majority of members it is the Government's responsibility. Why should one man not be covered against an accident in going to his work when his neighbour is covered under a Commonwealth Act?

Mr. BYWATERS—I support the amendment, and every member who is humane will support it. Party politics should not come into this matter, and I appeal to all members to support the amendment. Recently a close friend of mine was killed one morning when going to work in Murray Bridge. The court

held that the motorist who ran into him could not be held responsible, so no claim could be made against him. My friend was employed by Hustlers, whose main office is in Victoria, and I telephoned the secretary to ascertain the position about compensation for his widow. I was assured she would get compensation, but it was later found that the South Australian law prevented the firm from paying the widow, yet she would have been paid if my friend had been employed in one of the firm's branches in New South Wales or Victoria. We should correct this anomaly in our legislation.

Mr. RICHES—I support the amendment. I do not know of any industrial legislation which is more keenly desired by employees than a provision to protect the families of employees injured in going to or from work. Since it is provided in the other States and for Commonwealth employees, a serious anomaly exists here. We have men in South Australia working alongside others and performing the same duties and they consider they are suffering a great injustice because they have not the same compensation rights.

In Port Pirie we have Commonwealth and South Australian railwaymen working side by side doing the same work but, whereas the Commonwealth employee is covered for compensation if injured while travelling to or from work, the South Australian employee has not the same right. At Port Augusta Commonwealth and State men work side by side, but only the Commonwealth employee is covered. No disability has been felt in those States where this provision operates and there has been no increase in costs and nothing to indicate that a mistake has been made in granting this coverage.

At Port Augusta men working at the power station are conveyed from the town to their work in buses provided by the Electricity Trust and, because the buses are chartered by the trust, under the Act the employees are covered for compensation; but in the new year this will be altered. With the construction of a new road, the trust will not continue to provide transport and this must be provided by the employees themselves. Although they are indirectly employees of the Government and at present enjoy the compensation coverage, it will be taken away from them in the new year unless the amendment is carried. I urge the Government seriously to consider that aspect. If carried, the amendment will not be costly to anyone and will not work to the disadvantage of the State. If it could be shown that

costs would be increased and that South Australian industry might be placed at a disadvantage compared with industry in the other States or that some disability would result, let us hear about it. No honourable member opposite has yet told us why South Australia should not have this provision.

Mr. FRED WALSH—I was hoping that some Government supporters would give their views. It cannot be denied that the amendment is reasonable. Anything based on justice is fair and reasonable, and we submit that this amendment is based on justice. No other motive was behind it. It is an injustice to deny to the workers of South Australia something afforded the great majority of workers throughout Australia. Similar legislation was introduced in the other States and in the Commonwealth Parliament by Labor Governments. Although Liberal Governments are in office in Victoria, Queensland and the Commonwealth they have taken no steps to amend the legislation and take this privilege away, showing conclusively that no great hardship is being imposed upon employers and that they are happy to allow the protection to continue. That in itself should appeal to Government members. The time is not far distant when the Government will accede to it, even if it does not accede to it now.

To those who may fear that employees will, for instance, call at the local hostelry on their way to or from work, I say that position is covered. It could easily be proved that a worker did not go to his work without substantial interruption or deviation on his journey. In that case the employer would be protected. We are asking for protection for the man that goes to his work by as short a route as practicable and does not deviate. I know the Leader of the Opposition feels that if we get a little bit it will be a step forward. That would be all right with regard to the man who works ordinary hours. He naturally would go to work by as short a route as possible, although on his way home he might not do so. The man going home after shift work would go straight home. If he left work at 11 p.m. or midnight, or 6 a.m., he naturally would go home as soon as possible, and if he did not he could not expect any protection. We are concerned with the *bona fide* employee—the one who plays the game. He is the one who we say should be protected.

I will quote examples to show how close people can be to being covered by the provisions of the Act. A man working at Port Adelaide went to his place of work and parked his car on a nearby allotment provided for the purpose. He had to cross that allotment belonging to his employer, then cross the road to get to his place of employment, and in doing so he was knocked over by a lorry and killed. The case was taken to the court, which ruled against the claimant. Another employee was going on shift work in the afternoon. As he was about to enter the gates of the establishment where he was employed he fell off his bicycle in attempting to avoid a lorry which was coming out through the gates. He broke his collarbone and was away from work for some time, but was not entitled to compensation. I could enumerate other borderline cases. The Act does not cover circumstances such as those I have mentioned, and people have to suffer thereby.

The Act provides that where transport is provided by the employer the employee is covered if he meets with an injury. During industrial disputes or stoppages of transport many firms provide transport for their employees to and from their place of employment, and while so travelling they are covered by the provisions of the Act. However, the day the stoppage is over and the employees have to find their own transport, they are not covered by the Act. That is another instance of a borderline case. Something should be done about it, and the only way it can be done is by adopting the Leader's amendment, which I appeal to the Government to support.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

SUPREME COURT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

In Committee.

(Continued from October 23. Page 1383.)

Clauses 1 to 4 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.39 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, November 5, at 2 p.m.