

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, October 29, 1959.

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

QUESTIONS.**NEW SATELLITE TOWNS.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—In this morning's *Advertiser*, under the heading "New towns urged in South Australia," appeared the following statement:—

It was time to start thinking about two or three new satellite towns for Adelaide in addition to Elizabeth, the general manager of the S.A. Housing Trust (Mr. A. M. Ramsay) said yesterday.

Mr. Ramsay was speaking at a convention of the Australian Gas Institute. I have no desire whatever to reflect in any way on Mr. Ramsay, who has given excellent service to this State in his capacity as Manager of the Housing Trust, but I am concerned about the suggestion that we are going to have planning started for two or three new towns in and near Adelaide. Will the Premier state whether, before deciding on any new satellite town in this area, a proper examination will be made of various other centres in the State where it may be possible to encourage industry and population to establish themselves rather than building new satellite towns in this already overgrown area that we know as the metropolitan area?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The policy of the Government in this matter—and no opportunity is lost in following it—is to encourage any industry, if possible, to go to a country town, and to assist it to do so. We will give much more assistance to an industry to come to South Australia if it is to be located in the country than to an industry coming to the metropolitan area. Some industries have been established as a result. I was rather interested in a question the member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday) asked in this House yesterday, when he said that the industrial sites at Whyalla had been taken up and that it would be in the town's interest for more industrial sites to be provided by the Lands Department. However, there comes a time when an industry has to be established in a place because of some location problem and it must go there whether we like it or not. Under those circumstances it is necessary for the Government to provide the services and the dwellinghouses necessary for its establishment. An example of that is the refinery

to be established on the South Coast. No other place in the State could provide the berthing facilities required for that refinery, and we will inevitably have to establish houses and services adjacent to that refinery for its employees. That is not something that is being taken away from any country town, but something that no country town under any circumstances could ever possibly achieve. I assure the Leader that the Government's policy is to assist country towns to the utmost, rather than to establish enterprises in the form of new satellite towns.

REPORT ON FERRY ACCIDENT.

Mr. KING—Can the Premier indicate the next steps to be taken following the tabling in this House of the Kingston punt inquiry report?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The report has been forwarded to the Highways and Local Government Department, and I have no doubt that the recommendations will be favourably commented upon. One recommendation that may take a little time to consider concerns the establishment of a second punt at Kingston, but I think the other recommendations can be adopted and given effect to almost immediately. A second punt at Kingston would require the purchase of a punt and the establishment of the necessary runways. That may take some little time and it may not be possible to give effect to that recommendation immediately. Apart from that, I think the recommendations were extremely wise and could be accepted by the Government without qualification.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENTS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—An article in this morning's *Advertiser* referring to pending road traffic legislation appears to refer to a second reading speech in Parliament. Does the Treasurer intend to introduce a Bill this session, and if so, when will we get a second reading speech on it?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Government intends to introduce two Bills on this topic this year and, in fact, I think that later this afternoon I may give notice of those Bills. This is a matter of great interest to many people. I have indicated to Parliament twice previously that we would introduce this Bill and that it would give effect to administrative changes. I consider that the whole purpose of Parliament is being nullified if the people of the State are to be denied the necessary information regarding measures that

are to come before Parliament. I have often heard the Leader informing his listeners about his proposals and I have been very thankful for the information he has conveyed to me.

TREATMENT OF CASUALTY CASES.

Mr. HUTCHENS—In the metropolitan area we have one Children's Hospital, which is doing a wonderful job and for which I have the highest respect, and also two Government hospitals, namely, the Royal Adelaide Hospital and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. It seems to me that it would be a great advantage if casualty cases concerning children under the age of 14 years could be treated at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Will the Premier take up this matter with the Minister of Health?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes. I believe that the normal procedure adopted is for casualty cases to be taken to the nearest casualty clearing station. Many children are taken to the Royal Adelaide Hospital, receive immediate attention, and are ultimately transferred to the Children's Hospital. I believe that the same applies to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I hope that the honourable member's suggestion can be incorporated in the general policy adopted.

WHEAT AND BARLEY HARVEST.

Mr. LAUCKE—Can the Minister of Agriculture say what is his department's current estimate for the 1959-60 wheat and barley harvests?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—The department cannot provide a satisfactory estimate at present. It is a particularly difficult one to make in view of the very valuable rains that fell in the mallee districts yesterday. The other day I was discussing prospects with the Manager of the Australian Wheat Board, and was told that the board anticipated a total delivery of wheat to it of about 5,000,000 bushels. That, of course, is necessarily a very chancy estimate. I think that the honourable member will understand why the board is not making any firm pronouncement. The Barley Board has told me that owing to the continued dry season it is not expecting the barley harvest in South Australia to exceed 6,000,000 bushels. Incidentally, this estimate was made before yesterday's rain, so therefore could be subject to a wide variation.

PRICE OF MILK DRINKS.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Has the Premier yet received a report from the Metropolitan Milk Board following upon a question I raised some

time ago on the price of milk drinks in milk bars?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—After it had been ascertained that milk drinks do not come within the definition of "milk" as defined by Part I of the Metropolitan Milk Supply Act, 1946-1957, and the Metropolitan Milk Board, therefore, has no control over prices of such drinks, I referred the matter to the Prices Commissioner, who reported as follows:—

Prices of milk drinks were last increased early in 1957, following decontrol in January of that year. The increases taken were 2d. on milk shakes and 3d. on malted milk shakes. Prior to the increases in 1957, prices of milk drinks had remained unaltered since 1952, despite cost increases over the period. Current costs of milk drinks have been investigated and, whilst the secrecy provisions of the Prices Act preclude the actual costings being quoted, it can be stated that the total cost of ingredients is somewhat higher than the figure referred to by Mr. Walsh in the House.

In addition, in comparing costs of selling bottles of aerated waters and milk drinks it must be taken into consideration that the former is simply taken from the refrigerator and handed to the customer over the counter whereas serving the latter involves a greater labour factor, together with the use of power and maintenance and replacement of dispensers (costing up to £30 each). As a result of the investigation, and taking all factors into consideration, the department is satisfied that the percentage margin of profit being enjoyed on milk drinks although quite good is not excessive in comparison with the average margins being enjoyed on the sale of bottled aerated waters. It is also mentioned that the present prices of milk shakes in this State are 2d. cheaper than in Victoria whilst the price for malted milk shakes is the same in each State.

INSPECTION OF PETROL PUMPS.

Mr. LAWN—Has the Minister of Lands a reply to the question I asked earlier concerning the inspection of pumps at service stations?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The Warden of Standards (Mr. Osborne) reports:—

All pumps in the metropolitan area were tested last financial year.

STATEMENT BY DR. FORBES, M.H.R.

Mr. QUIRKE—Yesterday, in reply to a question I asked concerning remarks made in the House of Representatives by Dr. Forbes, M.H.R., the Premier gave a reply which, he said, had been prepared by the Department of Lands. I recognize that someone other than the Premier prepared the statement as he does not usually indulge in such evasive replies. The statement is not an answer to

Dr. Forbes and completely ignores the main point of Dr. Forbes' statement. In order to clarify the position will the Premier reply to the following statement by Dr. Forbes which was not referred to in the reply given in this House:—

It should be borne in mind that the scheme had been proceeding for 15 years; that South Australia has consistently failed to spend the money available under war service land settlement, and that for the past four or five years the properties offered by the State to the Commonwealth had diminished to a mere trickle.

Whether that is correct or not I do not know, but I think that the answer to Dr. Forbes should be available and I ask if the Premier has a reply to that part of Dr. Forbes' statement?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—In the course of a day, in South Australia and in the National Parliament, many statements are made and it is not the purpose of this Government to go around correcting statements made by individuals who may or may not be well versed in the subjects they are speaking about. The honourable member can realize that Ministers would do nothing else but answer a lot of statements, and this would serve no useful public purpose. However, coming to the contention that South Australia has not carried out its obligations under war service land settlement, I emphatically deny it. Dr. Forbes has no basis for that statement.

Mr. Quirke—It concerned money, too.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—It concerned the carrying out of the programme. It is not always possible to spend money in compartments.

Mr. Stott—Just a minute: the Minister for Primary Industry made that statement.

The SPEAKER—Order! The member for Ridley must come to order. The Premier is replying to the member for Burra.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Returned Servicemen's League, which is probably the best informed body on this matter and which has the position well before it, has particularly commended South Australia's activities as the best in the Commonwealth. As a matter of fact, if it would interest honourable members, I have seen a letter from Dr. Forbes on this matter in which he said that he would always defend the action taken by his Government whether it was right or wrong. I can produce that letter if the honourable member wants to see it. Dr. Forbes has worked on the basis of defending his Govern-

ment. I am not concerned with becoming involved in a controversy with Dr. Forbes. The facts are that we were anxious to continue with war service land settlement in this State, but a lot of land submitted to the Commonwealth was rejected—we don't believe properly—and we were desirous of continuing even with single unit farms. In each instance our request was refused.

HOUSING PROGRAMME.

Mr. HUGHES—The General Manager of the Housing Trust, Mr. A. M. Ramsay, C.B.E., has stated that the population of South Australia is increasing rapidly (by more than 3 per cent annually), and since most people, especially immigrants, live in towns and cities, Australia needs big areas of new houses. He went on to say, "No more are miners expected to arrive, pitch tents and get to work as in the last century." I understand from inquiries that the normal waiting time for homes in and around Adelaide is six years. It is generally recognized that between 1962 and 1965 many young people, known as the war babies, will require homes, and as there is every likelihood of a serious shortage of homes for some years, will the Premier inform the House what steps are being taken by the Government to meet the expected demand?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—As honourable members know, the programme for each financial year has to be set out for Parliament and be approved by Parliament, but it is not possible to approve of a programme ahead of the current financial year. Under Parliamentary practice we deal with the financial year under discussion and it is not possible to project our minds forward. If the honourable member wants to see what is being done this year he need only examine the Loan Estimates, which have already been passed by the House.

Mr. HAMBOUR—Can the Premier say whether it is a fact that there is a six year wait for homes? In the last 12 months three persons in my district have applied for homes, and the homes are under construction for the small amount, in one case, of £200 deposit. I presume, although I am not sure, that the honourable member for Wallaroo (Mr. Hughes) was referring to rental homes. If so, were his statements correct, and what is the waiting time for houses for those prepared to put up the minimum deposit?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—A very short waiting period is involved for those

who put up a deposit to buy a purchase house. We go further than that: many migrants purchase their homes before leaving London. They are shown what they are like before actually leaving London. Each month we make available in London the number of houses for sale and have requests for more. At the present time the waiting period for purchase houses is very short indeed—in most instances much less than the time involved in building a house, because houses are already commenced in many cases.

However, rental houses are a different matter, because the Housing Trust rents are much lower than the normal standard rent for many houses provided by other people. Housing Trust houses are very attractive as a rental proposition, so many rental houses are applied for by people who are at present quite adequately housed. That gives an impression that there is a very great shortage of trust rental houses, which is not justified by actual figures. I think a better yardstick is that the last census taken in South Australia showed that the number of people to a house occupied in South Australia, omitting those not occupied, averaged 3.6, which I think is the lowest number in the Commonwealth.

Mr. HUGHES—The Premier said that the Government could only plan its housing programme according to its finances from year to year. When delivering his policy speech—and I quote from the *Advertiser*—the Premier said:—

A comprehensive five year programme of new and additional Government hospital buildings and services have been approved. This covers all parts of the State and will cost £15,000,000.

Speaking of roads, the Premier then said:—

A careful State-wide programme of road-works for the next four years has been prepared.

Can the Premier say how it is that the Government can plan for a five year programme for hospitals and a four year programme for roads, and yet cannot plan for its housing programme?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—A conference of Housing Ministers is to be held in Adelaide in the near future, the main purpose of which is to bring under the notice of the Commonwealth Government the fact that the present Housing Agreement under which we have been working for a period of years is now nearly completed, and it will be necessary for some action to be taken and for a future plan to be drawn up. Regarding

roads, we have been able to finalize a five year agreement with the Commonwealth, so we know what money will be available for roads for five years ahead. However, until we get a new housing agreement it is not possible to plan housing ahead.

MOUNT GAMBIER LINE SLEEPER ACCOMMODATION.

Mr. RALSTON—From personal observation, it appears to me that on the night train leaving Adelaide for Mount Gambier, and *vice versa*, the two sleeper carriages, which provide in all 40 berths, are well patronized, especially at week-ends and in holiday periods. There is undoubtedly a need for two such carriages. I have been informed that the Railways Department intends to provide the trains leaving Adelaide and Mount Gambier on Christmas Eve with only one sleeper each. I think it is reasonable to assume that the demand for sleeper accommodation then will be greater than usual. Will the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Railways, obtain a report on this matter and, if what I have said is correct, will he ascertain the reasons for such a decision?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Yes.

EMERGENCY HOUSING ACCOMMODATION AT LOXTON.

Mr. STOTT—My question refers to a settler at Loxton (Mr. Hicks) who had his agreement cancelled recently and is now in Daw Road Hospital and unconscious for several hours a day. Of course, he is unable to make immediate provision for his family. Will the Minister of Lands make arrangements for that man's family to occupy a house on the property at Loxton in the meantime? In the interim period will he ask the Housing Trust to make available a trust home at Loxton and until such time as the Housing Trust can make these arrangements—for it cannot be done immediately—can temporary accommodation be provided?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—In the first place, the district officer has already been asked to make arrangements to the best of his ability to assist Mr. Hicks' family with housing. I think only 13 of 1,000 had their leases cancelled because of mismanagement. I have assisted the other 12 and been successful in getting Housing Trust homes for them, and, in the majority of cases, jobs. This will be done for Mr. Hicks.

CHALLA GARDENS INFANT SCHOOL.

Mr. RYAN—On Monday I personally inspected the new infant school at the Challa Gardens school, and I believe that it is one of the most modern in South Australia. The structural work has been completed and the floors are of cement. The necessary floor coverings have been supplied and I have been informed that they will be laid by the Architect-in-Chief's Department. The school is urgently required to relieve the congestion in the Challa Gardens school. Has the Minister of Education had any information from the Minister of Works as to when the school will be handed over to the Education Department? Will it be this year, instead of leaving it until next year?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—No, but I shall be pleased to take up the matter with my colleague and let the honourable member have a reply soon, possibly next week.

MOORAK PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Mr. CORCORAN—Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked last Thursday about the inadequate sanitary services at the Moorak primary school?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The installation of a septic system at the Moorak school and residence was approved by the Education Department and forwarded to the Architect-in-Chief in April. Plans and specifications for the septic tank system are being prepared, and on their completion public tenders will be called. It is expected that the system will be installed early in 1960. Already this year arrangements have been made for the provision of 15 such systems in South-Eastern schools, and four are already in hand.

MEDICAL BENEFITS COMPANIES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—On October 20, in reply to a question I asked on notice, the Premier said that the Australian Medical and Accident Company Ltd. would shortly be reminded of its obligations to make the necessary return. Can he state whether that return has been submitted to the Public Actuary?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I would not know that in the normal course of events, but I will make inquiries for the honourable member.

TELOWIE CREEK SCHOOL BUILDING.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Minister of Education any further information on the possibility of providing Telowie Creek school with a

new building or on the negotiations that have taken place relating to a new site for the school?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Earlier this year, arrangements were made for the District Inspector of Schools (Mr. Gibbs) to visit the Telowie Creek school, which is in a rented building, and he advised that it was not satisfactory. Investigations were then put in hand with a view to obtaining a suitable site for a new school. An area of 1½ acres has been offered to the Education Department, and the matter is at present in the hands of the Architect-in-Chief to advise as to the suitability of the land for the purpose required. It is not intended to transfer the departmental building near Burra to Telowie Creek as it is too small. However, consideration is being given to the possibility of including a new school building for Telowie Creek in the list of timber construction schools which are to be erected in the first half of 1960. It is hoped that it may be possible to include Telowie Creek in this list. I will let the honourable member have definite information as soon as we are in a position to finalize the list.

RAILWAY SLEEPERS.

Mr. HALL—Recently I was shown some railway sleepers next to some railway repair work. Although they were new sleepers they were completely useless for repairing the track, as they were cracked beyond any service to the Railways Department. As sleepers are expensive, will the Minister of Works ascertain from the Minister of Railways whether they are inspected, who is responsible for their purchase, and whether the loss is stood entirely by the Railways Department?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I will bring the question to the notice of the Minister of Railways. Can the honourable member state whether the sleepers were of jarrah or local timber?

Mr. Hall—They were gum.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I will inquire of the Minister concerned.

TAKE-OVER BIDS.

Mr. LAWN—It seems the fashion these days among big businesses for take-over bids to be made. It came to my notice this morning that an offer had been made by the South Australian Bulk Handling Co-operative Limited to take over the South Australian Farmers' Union. Is the Premier aware of this, or has

he any information to give the House on this matter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—In this House in the last few weeks I have noticed a few suspicious circumstances—what may be a bit of a get together—but I do not know that it has yet come to a matter of business.

MILLBROOK RESERVOIR FENCING.

Mr. LAUCKE—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question concerning the dangers of the barbed wire fence surrounding the Millbrook Reservoir below Chain of Ponds?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have obtained a report on this matter to the effect that this fence replaced an old fence in which the two top wires were barbed as compared to only the top wire in the new fence. The department is not aware of any trouble experienced with the old fence and it is therefore not considered necessary to make any alterations to the new one. It is necessary to keep the public out of the reservoir reserve and if the barbed wire in the new fence was replaced with a plain wire it would make access to the reserve too easy.

NAILSWORTH GIRLS TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. COUMBE—Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked a short while ago on efforts being made by the department to acquire extra land for the extension of the Nailsworth girls technical high school, a matter which has been under consideration for quite a long time?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes. Following representations made by the honourable member and the members of the high school council, and also in consultation with officers of my own department, I have been endeavouring for a considerable time, without success, to obtain a suitable area of land for this purpose. I am pleased to be able to inform the honourable member that Cabinet recently authorized me to negotiate for the purchase of a large area of very valuable land on which to construct the new girls technical high school, and I hope to bring those negotiations to a successful conclusion in the very near future.

HENLEY HIGH SCHOOL PLAYING GROUND.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Has the Minister of Education any further information to give concerning the access to the land that has been

acquired for the Henley high school playing area in Cudmore Terrace?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The honourable member previously expressed some doubt as to whether there would be any rights of ingress and egress. I am pleased to assure him that although the actual site of the land is not yet determined, it is anticipated that the area in question will have a substantial frontage to Cudmore Terrace, and for that reason the question of access does not arise.

MOUNT GAMBIER BLUEBIRD RAIL SERVICE.

Mr. RALSTON—The South-Eastern bluebird railway service has now operated for some years. During that time representations have been made for an alteration in the time table to provide for a more reasonable hour for the departure of the daily service to Adelaide, which now leaves Mount Gambier at 6.20 a.m. I understand this matter is under review. Will the Minister of Works ascertain whether that is correct, and if so, whether a decision has been made regarding a new time table?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have not the information, but I shall seek it from my colleague, the Minister of Railways.

BUILDING OF HALLS BY HOUSING TRUST.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Large new housing areas are being built by the Housing Trust at Elizabeth, Whyalla and Hallett Cove, and one of the major problems for the residents in those areas is that they have no place whatever for social gatherings. We have the spectacle of hundreds of houses going up with no central point for a social gathering. The trust is unable, under its statutory powers, to do anything in the way of financing a building that would meet these requirements. I draw the Premier's attention to part of the Auditor-General's report, which is as follows:—

The authority of the trust to engage in certain building activities was questioned in my last report. In 1958 the Housing Improvement Act was amended to extend the powers of the trust. However, the attention of the trust for the past two years has been drawn to certain other of its building activities considered not to come within the scope even of its extended powers. The Crown Solicitor has now confirmed this view. As certain of the transactions of the trust for the year are *ultra vires* its statutory powers, a qualified certificate has again been given on its financial statements for 1958-59.

I further draw attention to the fact that these new areas are being largely occupied by

people from Europe and Great Britain who are used to having some point for social gatherings, and to amenities being just around the corner. Some of these people are moving out and going to the cities because they do not have a central point for social gatherings close to where they have been sent to work or where they have elected to go to work. Will the Government consider an alteration of the statutory powers of the Housing Trust so that provision may be made for suitable halls to be erected in those areas and financed by the trust, on some basis whereby the inhabitants could eventually meet the cost and so obtain these social centres? I draw the Premier's attention to the fact that halls of that nature would probably cost only between £15,000 and £20,000.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Auditor-General's report refers to a case where the trust did give some assistance to an area in the building of a hall. However, that hall was not built upon the trust's own land, and for that reason it did not come within the scope of the trust's powers. The trust has some limited power regarding the provision of amenities where it is building those amenities on its own land, but the case under discussion by the Auditor-General was one where the trust did, in point of fact, erect a building for social purposes on land which belonged, I think, to a district council. That was the objection raised by the Auditor-General: it was not covered by the Housing Trust legislation.

Mr. Loveday—The manager says he has no powers.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The trust has no power to build on land for which it does not hold a title.

Mr. Loveday—The trust has land at Whyalla.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I know. I am coming to that. I am merely pointing out that the Auditor-General's report was based purely on the fact that the trust has no authority to build on land that it does not own. I point out that every time the trust diverts expenditure to a purpose such as that mentioned it, of course, cuts down the number of houses it can build, because it is using all the money it has at present.

Mr. Loveday—It could recoup itself on the land.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes, it could recoup itself over a long period of years, in the same way as it recoups itself on the sale of houses, but it has no sources of

money other than the loans provided by the Government, and if it spends money on building halls and things of that nature it has that much money less for building houses. To give an idea of what is involved, a case came to my notice of the trust's having received an application for the erection of a hall at a cost of, I think, £86,000. It referred the matter to me, but I said that I believed it should not be gone on with, because for this amount a number of houses could be erected. The chairman of the trust saw me and said that an amenity hall was needed, but I said that I still thought that houses were needed more. When the trust did not build a hall, it was built by local enterprise, without the trust's assistance. That goes to show that local enterprise can achieve a good deal. It is done in nearly every town in the State. The trust will give some assistance to local enterprise for amenity buildings, but I do not believe that it is in the interests of the trust or of the State that the trust should be asked to undertake this obligation.

Mr. HEASLIP—In my electorate there are dozens of little towns which, by their own efforts, have provided halls where the people can gather. Some of these halls now require repairing or extension. If the trust or the Government is going to provide assistance in the building of halls in places like Whyalla, Port Pirie and Port Augusta and other big towns, will it be prepared to assist the smaller towns, such as those in my electorate, to repair or enlarge existing halls?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—My answer must be very much the same as that to the previous question. The Government believes that social amenity buildings are primarily the responsibility of the local communities. In the last few years we have seen a rather unusual experiment in the establishment of Elizabeth, and I was very impressed to see how quickly church organizations and other organizations moved to provide church halls, churches and recreation areas as the town began to spring up. I am sure that what has happened at Elizabeth will also happen at Whyalla, and we shall see church organizations and other welfare organizations prepared to play their full part.

REGULATIONS UNDER BENEFIT ASSOCIATIONS ACT.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—In the regulations under the Benefit Associations Act the words "claims admitted but not paid" appear.

Will the Premier consider having the words "intimated or" added after the word "claims"?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I should not like to say whether the regulation should be altered until I know from the Public Actuary what is involved. I will refer the matter to him and let the honourable member have a report next week.

BOTTLE MENACE ON ROADS.

Mr. CORCORAN—I have received the following letter from the South-Eastern Local Government Association:—

With reference to the problem of bottles left on public roads, and extracts from *Hansard* forwarded by you, I advise that the executive of this association at a meeting held yesterday expressed keen disappointment at the replies given in the House following your question, and would appreciate if this matter be not allowed to drop. It is still the considered opinion of members that an adequate deposit on bottles would result in an army of boys picking them up for the resultant profit.

Will the Minister of Works bring this matter before the Minister of Local Government to ascertain his reaction to this further representation?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I appreciate the request of the honourable member not to allow the matter to drop, but bottles are dropped, and that is the real problem. This problem has been investigated over a long period, but no real solution appears possible. I do not know whether the association can see any daylight on the matter, but if it can I am sure the Minister of Local Government will be glad to follow its suggestion. This subject has been before the House for some six years, because I brought it up in my early advent as a member, but so far no real solution has been forthcoming. Councils have power to legislate by regulation regarding the depositing of various types of rubbish on roads, and I believe there is a by-law on the table of the House now from one council on this problem—it relates not specifically to bottles, but to matter deposited on roads.

Mr. O'Halloran—Would bottles be classified as rubbish?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I think empty ones would be. It is agreed that they are a menace. Glass is permanent and does not, like ordinary rubbish, decompose over the years. I doubt whether the Minister will be able to offer any better hope than was given to the honourable member previously.

EYRE PENINSULA RAILWAY WORKS.

Mr. BOCKELBERG—Has the Minister of Works representing the Minister of Railways a reply to my recent question regarding trucking yards and ramps at Kielpa and Wirrulla on the West Coast?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—My colleague, the Minister of Railways, advises that the construction of a new platform at Kielpa is in hand, and it is anticipated it will be completed within two weeks. The construction of a new platform at Wirrulla will be undertaken after urgent repairs have been carried out at Puntabie. The Wirrulla platform should be completed early in the new year. The question of providing new trucking yards at Wirrulla is under consideration.

SCHOOL BUS SERVICES.

Mr. STOTT—The Minister of Education will remember that representations were made to me by the Upper Murray bus proprietors, who transport school children, that a request be made for the rates for running school buses to be increased. I understand the matter was referred to a committee for inquiry. Has the Minister received a report, and if not, when is it likely to be received?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—After receiving the deputation and having discussions I left the matter in the hands of the school bus transport committee, of which the Deputy Director (Mr. Griggs) is chairman. I have had several discussions with him and also with the Transport Officer (Mr. Harris). I have not received any final report but, I understand, Mr. Harris is in the Upper Murray districts this week investigating individual claims. On his return I hope to have a comprehensive report from the committee on which to base my final decisions.

SMOG NUISANCE AT PORT AUGUSTA.

Mr. RICHES—I ask the Premier, representing the Minister of Health, if he will take up with the Public Health Department a request made repeatedly by the Port Augusta Local Board of Health for an analysis and report on the possible effect on human life of the smog emission from the Port Augusta power station. The local medical officer has been much concerned as to the effect of smog following an analysis made available by the Public Health Department. No local person is in a position to draw definite conclusions from that analysis, and, for guidance and advice as to the actual position, Public Health Department experts have been asked repeatedly by correspondence

to tell us whether the particles are of a size or density that could injure health, but for some reason or other for nearly 12 months we have not been able to get a reply to that correspondence.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will endeavour to get a report for the honourable member.

SUPPLY ACT (No. 3).

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the Act.

RENMARK IRRIGATION TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended to the House of Assembly the appropriation of such amounts of the general revenue of the State as were required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

FRUIT FLY COMPENSATION BILL.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended to the House of Assembly the appropriation of such amounts of the general revenue of the State as were required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

SAVINGS BANK OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Savings Bank of South Australia Act, 1929-1958.

Motion carried.

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

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to enable the Savings Bank of South Australia to establish a staff medical and hospital benefits scheme. There is considerable doubt as to whether the bank, under its existing Act, may expend its funds for the purpose of such a scheme and clause 3 accordingly inserts in the principal Act a new section which will empower the trustees by resolution to make arrangements for the provision of a medical and hospital benefits scheme for officers, clerks and servants of the bank and pay out of the funds of the bank such sums as the trustees may determine in

accordance with arrangements made. Honourable members will recall that a similar amendment was enacted last year to enable the trustees to provide for a superannuation fund. This Bill is along similar lines.

I understand that the bank has already discussed the establishment of a medical and hospital benefits scheme with the staff and that the trustees have approved of such a scheme which is, I am informed, to be non-contributory on similar lines to schemes already in operation in many other banks. The position is, I think, that every bank now operating in South Australia, including the State Bank, has a small medical benefits scheme operating in connection with its staff, but as the Savings Bank is operating under a charter, which is fairly specific in its terms, there is considerable doubt as to whether the bank trustees could, if they so desired, inaugurate the scheme. I have seen the proposals and can assure honourable members that they will benefit the employees, but at the same time they are reasonable from the point of view of the bank. I commend this non-contentious Bill to members.

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

HALLETT COVE TO PORT STANVAC RAILWAY BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON (Minister of Railways)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The object of this Bill is to enable the South Australian Railways Commissioner to construct a railway from a point near Hallett Cove railway station to a point in section 578 in the hundred of Noarlunga, adjoining the site of the oil refinery to be established in accordance with the agreement made last year between the State and Standard-Vacuum Refining Company (Australia) Pty. Ltd. The area is to be known as "Port Stanvac." Clause 2 of the Bill incorporates the provisions of the Compulsory Acquisition of Land Act and clause 3 empowers the Commissioner to construct the railway and all works, buildings, and structures connected therewith. The route is indicated on a plan which has been deposited in the office of the Surveyor-General in Adelaide. The railway is to be of five feet three inch gauge and the Commissioner is empowered to enter into contracts in connection with its construction.

Clause 4 provides that moneys required by the Commissioner for the purpose of the Bill

shall be paid out of moneys provided by Parliament for the purpose. The State undertook, in its agreement with the company, clause 5 (d), to construct and maintain the railway and that agreement, as honourable members are aware, was approved and ratified by Parliament by the Oil Refinery (Hundred of Noarlunga) Indenture Act, 1958. Construction of the railway was recommended by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in an interim report dated July 28, 1959.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

MARKETING OF EGGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 28. Page 1296.)

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—As a Socialist I naturally support the Bill. After hearing Government members discuss price control and the suggested inquiry into the price of petrol, I was amused to hear the Minister introduce a Bill of this nature. As we have several new members this session it is refreshing to examine the history of this legislation. A Bill was first introduced in 1941, during a time of crisis, by a Government which claimed to be anti-Socialist. The then Minister of Agriculture (the Hon. A. P. Blesing) in introducing the legislation in the Legislative Council gave seven reasons for its introduction. They were:—

1. The poultry industry is one of great importance to South Australia.
2. South Australia has no legislation of any description for the marketing of eggs.
3. The altered marketing conditions brought about by the war have completely changed established methods in the poultry industry, and if the industry is to survive, some form of legislation is a necessity.
4. Evidence has been taken by the South Australian Wartime Egg Marketing Committee from all exporters of eggs in South Australia and also the producers' organization. It is the unanimous opinion of all interests mentioned that in the interests of the industry some form of legislation is necessary.
5. The present system . . . gives no incentive to the producers to improve the quality of eggs.
6. The consumers of eggs have little, if any, guarantee of the quality of eggs purchased.

7. The South Australian poultry industry is at present severely handicapped in the matter of co-operation with the other States in interstate trade, which represents more than 50 per cent of the production of the State. There are egg marketing boards in operation in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.

It is rather remarkable that seven reasons should be advanced by an anti-Socialist Gov-

ernment for the implementation of Socialist legislation. Since then responsible Ministers, in asking Parliament to extend the operations of the Act, have said that it was the unanimous wish of all concerned in the industry. On this occasion the Minister said:—

Although the operation of the principal Act was extended in 1957 until September, 1960, it is considered desirable, in the interests of the egg industry and stability in general planning, to introduce this amending Bill now rather than wait until the Act is nearly expired before doing so.

The Bill has been introduced early because it is in the interests of the egg industry—that is the producers—and stability in general planning—and Socialists approve of a planned economy. The Minister also said:—

The marketing scheme created under the Act has become an important part of the egg industry and orderly marketing is important in this State.

The first plank in our rural policy on marketing and finance is the encouragement of orderly marketing and the Minister could not have paid a higher compliment to my Party than to say that the marketing scheme created under this Act has become an important part of the egg industry and that orderly marketing is important to this State. Socialists realize that the orderly marketing of any commodity is in the interests of the industry and of the State. The Minister also said that the board is represented on the Australian Egg Board, which regulates the overseas export of eggs. Undoubtedly this legislation is wanted by all concerned with the industry.

I think the Minister also said that the Chairman of the Egg Board advocated the marketing of eggs on a Federal, rather than a State, basis. Of course, that is another plank in our policy. We believe that the marketing of goods should be properly planned by the Federal Government in the interests of the country. We have seen press reports of South Australian eggs going by road from Adelaide to Sydney and eggs coming back to South Australia from Sydney and Melbourne; and going to Sydney from Melbourne by road and vice versa. That proves that, although each State Parliament is doing its best to encourage the industry in its own State to give the best eggs to the public, its efforts are being largely thwarted by there being too many controlling bodies, six different States, instead of just the Commonwealth.

It is amusing to reflect that this type of legislation was introduced by an anti-Socialist Government. I am waiting to see the attitude

of Government supporters towards this Bill. I could not for one moment visualize its passing unanimously. My thoughts go back to a previous occasion when I secured the adjournment in 1954. Immediately I sat down, the then member for Burra (Mr. Hawker) rose and was very much opposed, so he said, to Socialism. He gave many reasons why the Bill was not in the best interests of the State, and said this:—

I doubt whether it is wise to extend the Act for as long as three years because we shall be faced with competitive prices and free marketing. It may be wise to review it again in another year, when we shall have had some experience of free marketing.

There are those who believe in *laissez faire*, that we should have no controls. At that time no member opposite was more opposed to Socialism than the then member for Burra (Mr. Hawker). He and the member for Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip) shared the honour (if it was an honour) on that side of the House of being the two most anti-Socialist members. The then member for Burra was criticizing the marketing of eggs because it was interfering with freedom, but said he felt the legislation should be continued for one more year. He said:—

However, I see no alternative but to continue this legislation for the time. He went on to say that it should be extended for only one year, because by that time we should have had some experience of free marketing.

Here we are, five years later, having a Bill put to the House again 12 months earlier than necessary so as to let all the people in the industry know that they have that security they have had since 1941 and hope will continue in future. Many, including non-members of Parliament, in 1941 opposed the legislation but, when the Bill came before the House again in 1945, it was introduced by the then Minister of Agriculture (the Honourable G. F. Jenkins). The then member for Semaphore (Mr. A. V. Thompson) asked the Minister if the Bill meant permanent control. The Minister said:—

Yes, until Parliament decides otherwise. Then Mr. Thompson said:—

I thought the producers did not want permanent control.

The Minister said:—

Producers generally are a sensible body of people and are just as human as other people. I agree that producers are just as sensible as any other section of the community; they want

what is best in their interests, even if it means Socialism. On this occasion, of course, I think more than one member on the Government side will oppose the Bill. As I have said before, the only consistency on that side of the House is its inconsistency, but let us see what honourable members opposite do on this occasion.

I have given the seven reasons originally advanced to the House why this legislation should be introduced. No-one will deny that the quality of eggs has improved greatly and that the industry has grown since the grading of eggs has been controlled. That has eliminated the chaotic conditions then existing in marketing and distribution of eggs. The members for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse), Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip) and Barossa (Mr. Laucke) have stated in no uncertain terms that they oppose price control, but this Bill continues price control in the egg industry. Only yesterday the member for Rocky River, on another matter, said he intended to oppose it but, when he realized that the Premier had said that supporting the motion before the House would mean the end of price control, he changed his mind.

The SPEAKER—The honourable member cannot refer to another debate now.

Mr. LAWN—I am not referring to another debate but I claim I am in order in making a comparison of consistency; and that is what I am attempting to do.

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member cannot quote the member for Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip) in yesterday's debate.

Mr. LAWN—All I say is that on other occasions the members for Mitcham, Rocky River and Barossa have stated that they are opposed to price control, which is embodied in this Bill.

Mr. Millhouse—There is one fallacy in the honourable member's argument.

Mr. LAWN—The member for Mitcham is the most egotistical member of the House, and he should keep out of this debate. He can follow me later. If there is any consistency on the other side of the House, the three members I have named must oppose this Bill, because it provides for the price control of eggs.

Mr. Millhouse—The honourable member does not understand the fallacy in his argument because of the iron discipline laid on him by his own Party.

Mr. LAWN—In fact, the member for Mitcham said he would keep on bashing his head against price control and he sounds now as if

he is doing that. Here is a piece of legislation embodying price control so let him bash his head against that. The member for Gouger (Mr. Hall) spoke for a long time on another matter and it was only in reply to my interjection as to whether or not he supported that Bill that he said "yes." Judging from his remarks, he opposed all price control, but he did at least say that many avaricious men operated in trading and manufacturing. There is no doubt that but for this legislation the same could be said of the egg industry. As the result of eight years of marketing in South Australia the producers want to know 12 months ahead whether the legislation is to continue. That shows how satisfied they are. The retailers, who were opposed to the measure in 1941, have indicated a changed attitude and now want the legislation. The consumers are getting a better quality egg than they did before 1941.

Mr. Heaslip—Why oppose the Bill?

Mr. LAWN—I am not opposing it. I said that as a Socialist I supported it, and I make no bones about that. I want to know the attitude of members who say they are anti-socialist. I have copies of the policy speeches they gave to the *Advertiser* and the *News* prior to the last State election, and some of those members said they were bitterly opposed to Socialism and Communism.

Mr. Ryan—They have repudiated those statements.

Mr. LAWN—Here is a chance for them to say whether they are opposed to socialistic legislation. The Minister paid the highest compliment he could to the policy of my Party and I have great pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa)—It is not often that I have the experience and pleasure of agreeing with legislation to which the member for Adelaide has given such vociferous support. He suggests that this is an occasion when we can show our consistency. I support the Bill wholeheartedly and consistently with the way in which the legislation has been dealt with in the past. The policy of orderly marketing is encouraged by the L.C.L. Party, provided that the producers first express their desires in that direction by majority vote, and then have a major say in the distribution of their products.

Mr. O'Halloran—Where did you get that policy?

Mr. LAUCKE—It is the policy to which my Party subscribes, and I agree with it. I commend the Government for introducing this

legislation early, a considerable time before the date of expiry of the existing Act. The legislation has led to stability in the industry. The egg and poultry industry in Australia is important. It is worth £4,000,000 annually in South Australia and £55,000,000 in the Commonwealth, of which £43,500,000 is attributable to the egg section and £11,500,000 to poultry meats. Because this Act has a direct effect on the wellbeing of the industry it is of considerable importance. It is an industry that has difficulties peculiar to it because the produce is extremely fragile and perishable. It has lost traditional and valuable markets overseas because of the self-sufficiency policy adopted by our best buyers in the past, such as the United Kingdom. Mr. C. F. Anderson, M.B.E., is the chairman of the Egg Board, and he has done a remarkably good job in the interests of the industry. He has had with him on the board Messrs. E. C. Harris, A. S. Hutchinson, and R. A. Macalister, all of whom are producer representatives; Mr. A. A. Osborn representing the wholesalers; Mr. A. C. Samuels the retailers; and Mr. L. Keane is the secretary.

—The members of the board have worked together very well. Mr. Anderson is dedicated to his work, and is a shrewd businessman and able administrator. He has led the board in an admirable manner and I pay a tribute to him for his work. I understand that no-one is understudying Mr. Anderson to learn the intricacies of the industry, particularly those related to marketing. A competent understudy should be appointed to be ready to take over when Mr. Anderson retires, but I hope that will not be for many years. At all times the producers should have competent representation, and the producers themselves should have a direct say from time to time as to who shall represent them on the board. I understand that there is some concern about appointments to the board by producers, but it is desirable to have the representatives elected by producers with a given minimum production necessary to qualify for the right to vote. The board determines the prices at which it will purchase eggs from producers and they become the wholesale selling prices in South Australia. The board has power to make deductions from the proceeds of sales to meet handling costs and selling commissions, and to make pool deductions to cover administration and other charges. These deductions, known as levies, are basic to the ability of the board to function.

I am keenly concerned that the number of eggs sold by the board last financial year—7,898,000 dozen—was 12 per cent less than in the previous year, although local and interstate sales increased by 18 per cent. The interstate trade accounted mainly for this increase, but much of it was not done through the board, and herein lies the point with which I am concerned. This means that direct sales by producers in other States are growing strongly, and the producers through these direct sales are short-circuiting the board and not paying levies. That could well lead to a stage where the board could not function or the loyal producers who supply their eggs to the board could be forced to carry an undue burden in levies. I will give figures relating to charges and the amounts the producer receives for eggs to emphasize that in my opinion there should be a flat rate of deduction or levy on all commercial eggs sold in South Australia so that every producer would do his part in finding the necessary finance with which the board may operate. Commonwealth equalization could be a matter worth considering, but we have had an excellent market in Sydney provided, of course, that there has been no undue wasteful movement interstate, the cost of transport for which would ultimately be carried by the producer and would therefore reduce his net returns for eggs sold.

If there could be a judicious movement between the States, that would be desirable but, at the same time, before any Commonwealth scheme were agreed upon, it would be necessary for this State to ensure that its interests would not be adversely affected by any central control. I have an example of what the producer is receiving for eggs at present; this is a typical example of a consignment of 60 dozen eggs to the board. Of that total 47 dozen and one were first quality at 3s. 10d. a dozen, one egg was of medium quality at 3s. 4d. a dozen, 11 dozen and 11 were second quality at 2s. 2d., two were classified as blood spots at 1s. a dozen and nine were smashed in transit. The gross return was £10 6s. 9d. The charges were—pool deduction of 2d. a dozen, 9s. 11d.; grading and commission charge, 5½d. a dozen, £1 6s. 3d.; postage and stamp deduction, 8d.; and cartage 12s. 6d. The total deductions therefore were £2 9s. 4d., leaving a net return of £7 17s. 5d. for 60 dozen eggs delivered to Adelaide.

Mr. HUTCHENS—There is no fortune in it, is there?

Mr. LAUCKE—There is not. This return is an average of 2s. 7½d. a dozen net to the producer, and this particular consignment,

which had 47 dozen top-grade eggs out of a total of 60 dozen, was a good grading. The pool deduction and the grading and commission charges, amounting to 17.1 per cent of the gross return for these two cases of eggs, is the proportion paid by certain producers for the maintenance of this organization. I can see a dangerous situation arising to the welfare of the board if more and more producers sell in other States without going through the board or paying levies. That could lead to a condition that could sound the death knell of the board, or the remaining producers supplying the board could have such levies imposed that their position would be impossible. That is dangerous and most undesirable and should be remedied before it is too late; otherwise, what the producers desire—the Egg Board, or orderly marketing—could go by the board.

The board is doing all it can to operate efficiently, as is revealed in the reduction in its cost of management. This cost, £37,000 last year, was £10,000 less than in the previous year, and represented 1.15d. a dozen on all eggs handled by the board compared with 1.22d. a dozen in the previous year. From this it can be seen that the board is watching its management costs and, although handling fewer eggs, which could have meant higher overhead, it has reduced overhead. This indicates that the board is doing its utmost to operate efficiently. In the interests of the industry and the welfare of the board I advocate that a levy at a flat rate be imposed on all eggs sold commercially in this State. If this is not done the future of the Egg Board will be jeopardized.

In the interstate movement of eggs, there are unnecessary transport costs, and overlapping of transport is ultimately paid for by the producer. That should be avoided, as far as possible, by mutual agreement between the various State boards. At the same time, I would not overlook the fact that we have found in the eastern States, particularly New South Wales, a worthwhile and helpful market. Having in mind the population of that State compared with ours, we have found it a good outlet for our production in the last year. It must not be overlooked that the total number of eggs exported in 1958-59 was 557,000 dozen compared with 2,720,000 dozen in the previous year. The proportion of the board's purchases in this State exported in 1959 was 7 per cent compared with 29 per cent in 1957-58 and 32 per cent in 1956-57. It will be seen that our export business is falling off very severely, and we must have openings for our production, which could be in the eastern

States. At the same time, if interstate movement of eggs is judiciously handled there could be a benefit accruing to producers in all States through cutting out unnecessary and excessive transport.

I should like to see further discussions with a view to establishing a Federal authority for egg handling and selling in Australia, as this would ensure a greater stability than a series of State boards. However, as I said earlier, I would be jealously guarding the interests of our own State in any such discussions on a uniform policy for the whole of Australia. I have much pleasure in supporting this Bill.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment; Committee's report adopted.

STOCK DISEASES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 28. Page 1296.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Edwardstown)—I support the Bill. The Minister, when explaining the Bill, referred to diseases affecting stock, animals and birds, and particularly to the effect on poultry of pullorum disease, which I understand is a very serious one. It had been thought that the Act as it stood provided sufficient control over the movement of such products as eggs, milk, cheese and the like, but this amendment has been found necessary and clarifies the position.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment; Committee's report adopted.

FRUIT FLY COMPENSATION BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 28. Page 1297.)

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I support the Bill which is, unfortunately, a very necessary one because of the incidence of the fruit fly in South Australia in previous years. I feel that every member of Parliament appreciates the work that has been done in an attempt to eradicate the fruit fly and keep the State free of the menace so prevalent in some other States. I am deeply appreciative of what those efforts mean to the fruit industry in South Australia, and also of what it means to the householder to be free of fruit fly infestation. The Bill provides for compensation to be paid to those people whose fruit has been stripped by employees of the Department of Agriculture. I feel that most people

are willing to co-operate with those employed by the department on this task. Of course, some householders may feel sore about it, but I consider that the payment of compensation is the right thing, as it encourages the public to co-operate with the department not only in the interests of the fruit-growing industry, but also in their own interests. I notice that provision is made for the payment of compensation when damage is done during stripping operations. I compliment those who have been engaged in this work, because I believe the greatest care has been shown and every endeavour made not to inconvenience the public but to protect their property. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill and hope that the department's efforts will result in there being no need for further action.

Mr. KING (Chaffey)—I also support the Bill and the remarks of Mr. Hutchens. I represent one of the principal fruit-growing districts in the State. The efforts of the Government in this work are highly appreciated, not only by the fruit growers in those districts, but also by those who depend upon the fruit industry for their livelihood. The contribution of the fruit industry, particularly along the Murray, to the general economic welfare of the State, is so important that although the compensation appears high, it is a small premium to pay for the protection afforded.

I have no criticism to offer of the work done. Although some people may think that their property is being interfered with, they would realize the true position if they stopped to think what ravages the fruit fly could cause to the industry in South Australia. The Government is to be complimented on the way it has tackled the problem, and the way in which the department has handled this rather onerous duty. I am pleased to notice the keen interest being shown by other States in this problem and feel sure that the example of South Australia has inspired similar action by other States. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Edwardstown)—I believe it is essential in the interests of the State that this menace to the fruit-growing industry should be controlled. However, I am concerned about some complaints received relating to compensation. The question arises whether the department considers the true value of the fruit it takes away from householders. I am not in a position to judge whether the quantities allowed are in accordance with what would be the total quantity

if the fruit was fully developed. I believe that the fruit fly has been located in my district on six occasions, and I am aware of some inconveniences caused to householders when their fruit is taken. There should be an investigation into the position as it relates to citrus fruits. Much of it is picked when it is green, and therefore I should like to think that in fixing compensation allowance was made on the basis of the fruit having reached maturity. Hardships are imposed upon those members of the public who attempt to keep their citrus trees healthy by spraying. I have yet to learn of any one spray that may be used on stone fruit trees and citrus trees without adversely affecting the citrus trees. This method of spraying is undeniably detrimental to citrus trees and the department has in some way altered its spraying methods but it has not yet achieved the most desirable method. This year there is a wide infestation of black aphid and the Minister has indicated the best types of sprays that may be used to combat this pest. In certain areas the detrimental effect that this pest has had on trees may be observed. Young growth has turned to dry wood and the same result may be observed in citrus trees.

I wait with interest to see whether fruit fly will be found in commercial fruit-growing areas. When sufferers are compensated is compensation based on the number of plants, the weight of the crop, the maturity of the fruit or some other factor? Could a more effective type of spray be used in order to eliminate possible danger to citrus trees? I support the second reading.

Mr. JENKINS (Stirling)—I support the Bill, which provides for compensation arising from measures taken to eradicate fruit fly. I sympathize with people who suffer by the stripping of their trees, with resultant fruit losses, in the course of the eradication of the fruit fly. This Bill will provide monetary compensation for that loss but will not make up for the pleasure they would derive from picking their own fruit. Up to June 30 last the department had spent £1,846,000 to control or eradicate fruit fly. That may seem a terrific amount but in actual fact it is not. I commend the Government and the department for carrying out this policy and for the stringent methods observed by them to eradicate fruit fly. That sum would be comparatively small compared with the losses in Western Australia caused through the ravages of the fruit fly. Two or three

years ago when I visited Western Australia I found that the State had lost in export trade about £1,500,000 a year and that amount was apart from the cost of the eradication measures taken and the losses caused by the fly to the growers. Judging from the amount of fruit which was condemned in the markets there each day the losses to the growers must have been substantial.

I think by and large the amount spent in South Australia in our attempt to eradicate the fruit fly is comparatively small when compared with the amount that could be involved if this State did not exercise the stringent control measures it does. I commend the Government for the measures taken and I endorse the sentiments expressed by previous speakers. I hope the Government and the department will continue their methods for the eradication of the fruit fly because its ravages could prove disastrous to the fruitgrowing industry in South Australia. Up to the present the fruit fly has been confined to backyard gardens, but in Western Australia the backyard gardener or the home fruitgrower is the one mainly responsible for the fly reaching the pupation stage and the fly then spreads throughout the commercial growing areas. I hope the pest never spreads to commercial growing areas in South Australia. If the eradication methods at present being employed are proving successful in eradication attempts let us continue with them.

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens)—I appreciate the work done by departmental officers in my district especially in Walkerville where a serious fruit fly outbreak occurred last year. In that area several commercial growers would have been seriously embarrassed had it not been for the sympathetic treatment meted out to them by the then Minister of Agriculture. These men could have been completely forced out of business if they had not received some compensation but, because guarantees were made to them, they were able to make other arrangements to carry on. I pay a tribute to the Department of Agriculture and the then Minister for the way in which they administered the regulations. That administration is appreciated by the people although some feel that the regulations are irksome. I believe that, in the main, the regulations have been appreciated by the people of this State and particularly by those who look at the position in a wider sphere. I commend the Bill and appreciate the work done in the past in the administration of these preventive measures.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Agriculture)—I appreciate the support given by members to this Bill but I wish to comment on one or two points. The membership of the compensation committee appointed to deal with claims has not been changed since the members were first appointed. The same members have been appointed each year an outbreak has occurred. The committee has been chaired by Sir Kingsley Paine who has the confidence of Mr. Strickland (the Director of Agriculture) and Mr. Ragless (a private citizen, and the other member). The Committee's policy is to give full compensation. I have often been asked whether compensation is paid if fruit is stripped when green and obviously worthless. For perfectly healthy immature fruit the householder is compensated on the basis of mature fruit. Every householder receives a receipt for the fruit removed from his property. I will admit that some householders' memories as to the quality of their fruit are rather dim, but there have been few complaints in relation to the number dealt with, which indicates that the committee does a good job and that the average person is moderate in his demands. Every person has the right to complain and to appeal to the committee. Some people appeal to their district member or come direct to me, but, in every instance where I have taken the matter up with the committee, the committee has adhered to its original decision which has indicated that it carefully considered the case originally. Not many people are dissatisfied with the treatment they have received. In some instances fruit is taken at a certain period. Ripe fruit may be removed in a week when it is of a lower value than it would be a few weeks earlier or later. Most householders do not know as much about market prices and values as the committee, which carefully investigates the value of fruits at various times. If members receive any complaints arising from the operation of this legislation I shall be happy to discuss it with them.

The member for Edwardstown (Mr. Frank Walsh) implied that the proclaimed areas for fruit fly control inexplicably stopped at the borders of commercial growing areas and that they apparently included only residential areas, but there is definitely no favouritism. Although fruit fly has never ravished a true commercial area, it has certainly affected many metropolitan commercial fruitgrowers. He also suggested that the sprays damaged the trees, and that is a widely held view. The

sprays are alleged to be responsible for all manner of ills: from killing trees to killing budgerigars and to affecting garden plants. It does not matter how often this matter is investigated some people will always believe that. The departmental experts strongly deny that the old sprays damaged trees and more lately they have changed to a different type of spray which, if possible, is even safer. Great care is taken in the mixing of sprays and there is constant supervision of fruit fly operations. People will no doubt say that the gangs will not annoy householders and behave badly while I am watching them, but on all occasions I have been impressed by the cheerful and friendly attitude of the gangs, who behave very fairly towards the householders. If complaints are made I am always ready to investigate them. The officers in charge of operations are anxious to secure the utmost public co-operation and they do not wish to irritate anybody. I thank members for their support.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Compensation."

Mr. HALL—Can the Minister say what proportion of the compensation is paid to commercial growers?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Agriculture)—No. It would be hard to define the commercial growers in the metropolitan area, because many would not depend entirely on their fruitgrowing. That figure would be almost unobtainable. The great majority of persons from whom fruit is taken are not commercial growers.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill reported without amendment and Committee's report adopted.

LAND AGENTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 15. Page 717.)

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood)—I support this Bill, which provides for some alteration in the machinery of the Land Agents Act, the granting of licences by the Land Agents Board, and the tightening up of land agents' dealings in accounts. Any honourable member, I am sure, will be happy that the provisions for the control of land agents' dealings in South Australia should be tightened in some measure. I have only this to say, that

I am distressed that the measure does not go as far as I should like it to go, but perhaps my criticism should rather be directed at the administration by the board than at the legislation itself. It is very difficult for us if we legislate to provide that a board shall have control of the activities of a certain class of licensed people and, if the board is not strict in its administration, for us to provide by legislation that it should be strict. Obviously enough, there is an administrative discretion in these matters and it is difficult for the Legislature to go further than it has done in some of its activities such as these.

But let me instance to honourable members the sort of thing that alarms me about the board's administration and about which I feel that some administrative action should be taken. It is true that this proposal provides that in future it will not be enough merely that an applicant shall be of good character, that that should be the criterion for the board as to whether he should be licensed as a land agent. Certainly in the old days people could obtain licences as land agents who had not the beginnings of an inkling of the duties of a land agent or of the basic practice of the Lands Titles Office. Some people who got land agents' licences had no idea how transfers were prepared or about the basis of the ordinary laws relating to forms of tenancy in South Australia under the Real Property Act. This Bill provides that the board shall see that people who get licences be fit and proper persons, so they must have better qualifications than being merely of good character. But there have been cases where either the land agent concerned was not a fit and proper person as far as his ability was concerned or fraud was involved.

Let me instance one example to honourable members. There was a case recently—I will not mention any names but I can inform honourable members privately about the matter—in my district where a land agent advertised that he had a cottage for sale. The lady who finally purchased this property went out to look at it and was shown one of a row of four cottages. The cottages were, in fact, in a fairly bad state of repair, though one or two of them were in a better condition than the others. The one that she was shown had been given a certain number in the street and she was told that this was the cottage that she was buying.

Mr. O'Halloran—Was she shown the best one?

Mr. DUNSTAN—Not actually; she was shown the second best one. She understood that she was getting the cottage—she was told that—and she paid a deposit on that designated cottage—not on anything else; it was that number in such and such a row. A contract was drawn up which was later presented to her and read through to her in précis form. It said that she was buying one undivided fourth share in the land comprised in certificates of title numbers so-and-so together with a cottage erected thereon known as No. so-and-so, in such-and-such street. She had no idea that in fact, of course, all that she was getting as a result of this transaction was one undivided fourth share in the whole row of cottages—because that is all that could be sold to her; that she was being made a tenant in common with four other people and that the words “together with a cottage known as No. so-and-so” were meaningless in law. But she took the thing at its face value because, naturally enough, she did not know the technical meaning of “one undivided fourth share.” She thought that related to the land. She could see quite clearly in the contract that she was getting cottage No. so-and-so. That is what the contract said. She was told she would get a certificate of title in her own name. A tenant in common is entitled to a separate certificate of title, but it was not explained to her that what she was getting was a certificate of title in common with four other people, and they had equal rights to the cottages. She paid a considerable deposit and went into the place. Some time later she received a notice.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Who kept the title deeds of that place?

Mr. DUNSTAN—Each of the four tenants in common is entitled to a separate title deed, but it is a title deed only to one undivided fourth share of the land. This was not explained to her. She did not get the title deed. At that stage no transfer had been executed. She went along buying this property until suddenly she got a notice from the local council to repair, and to repair not only her own property that she thought she was buying but the other dilapidated premises alongside. In dismay and amazement she rushed to her local member of Parliament, who then apprised her of the situation. In fact, she had not been sold a separate cottage at all: she had been sold one undivided fourth share in the whole row of cottages, and she had acquired no separate rights to the cottage that was supposed to have been sold to her. In

point of fact, the other tenants had as much right to come in there and occupy it as she had. She had acquired not only an undivided fourth share in the land but an undivided fourth share in the liabilities of the dilapidated properties.

I am distressed that these facts, which I have related to honourable members and which are undisputed, were referred to the Land Agents Board, but the board said that in the circumstances it did not think there was any action it could take. Either the land agent was so ignorant of the effect of the document which he had drawn up that he ought not to have been carrying on as a land agent, or, if he did know, he was perpetrating a fraud. The case was settled and the moneys were paid back to the lady without any admission of liability by the agent. The matter has been before the board, yet the board took no action.

Mr. O'Halloran—Is the agent still licensed?

Mr. DUNSTAN—Yes, and still doing a lot of business. What would be the position if a solicitor were to carry on in this way? He would be up before the statutory committee of the Law Society double quick. Why should a land broker be allowed to carry on in this way? Another case involved one of the largest land agent firms in South Australia. It was a case in which a man sold a property through the agent to a New Australian. Application was made to the Minister for his consent to the deal, and there was no reason why it should not be granted. Later the New Australian paid over a considerable sum of money to the agent. He had decided that he did not want to go on with the contract so he paid this money to the agent to get him out of it. The agent told the vendor of the property that he had cancelled the contract with the New Australian and that the application to the Minister had been withdrawn, but the vendor said that the purchaser had no right to withdraw his application to the Minister and insisted that the deal proceed. In due course the application to the Minister was granted, but before anything was done in the matter. The agent hung on to the money that had been handed to him by the New Australian to get him out of the transaction, and tried to insist to the vendor that he had authority to get the New Australian out of the contract, which the vendor could not enforce. The vendor took the matter to the board, which said that because action was pending it could do nothing. Again, why could it not do something? If action was pending involving a solicitor it would not stop the

statutory committee of the Law Society from doing something. Eventually money was paid to the vendor to cover the loss he incurred in re-selling the property. It was clear that the action of the agent was reprehensible in the extreme, yet that particular company is still licensed, and the board took no action.

When that sort of thing occurs I am at a loss to see how Parliament can legislate for effective administration. We have provided the board with the necessary powers but it does not seem to me that the board is exercising the powers over dealings of land agents that this Parliament desired it to exercise. When the Act was passed in 1955 it was felt that instead of having the system that had existed previously for the licensing of agents there would be a board with continual supervision of agents, in the same way as there is a statutory committee of the Law Society. It was hoped that this body of men would keep a check on the dealings of land agents and that the check would be effective, but it does not seem to me to be as effective as we would like. In these circumstances I have been unable to draft an amendment to the Bill, because it does not seem to me that the legislation is necessarily at fault, only the administration. I have a high regard for some members of the board, but it seems to me that the board is not as strict as it should be. The attention of the members should be drawn to the fact that we are concerned about the administration of the Act.

I am also concerned about the amendment which was written into the Act in 1955. In the original Bill of 1955 it was proposed that only brokers or solicitors were to be allowed to prepare documents under the Real Property Act, the purpose being to see that they kept a close check on all parts of the transaction, and that they knew the details of the transaction fully. The amendment allowed agents to prepare documents but there was still required a certification by a solicitor. It is difficult indeed for a solicitor certifying a document to be able to say that he knows the details of the whole transaction. Certainly there are cases where a solicitor works closely with a land agent and is able to keep a close check on the transaction, but there are many cases where that cannot be so. Of course, solicitors ought to heed the warning which appears in Odger's book on land titles practice. Every solicitor would admit that sometimes it is almost impossible to make a check once the land agent brings in a set of documents, and

certifications take place without it being possible for the solicitor to know the full transaction. The purpose of the certification is to see whether the transaction is correct under the Real Property Act. I do not see how a certification is possible in circumstances where a land agent, not working closely in association with the solicitor, prepares documents and then brings them to a solicitor and asks him to certify them as correct. Even though the solicitor makes inquiries of the land agent, it is not practicable for him to know all the circumstances of the transaction. In those circumstances, I do not think the Act as it stands is good enough in checking the transactions in the way originally intended. I think we shall soon have to look again at the legislation as a whole to determine clearly just how far we intend to go in the continuation of the institution of land brokers in South Australia and the difference between the functions of land agents, land brokers and solicitors. I do not think we can do that under this Bill, but I hope the time will come when we can reconsider the whole situation completely so that we will know just where we are going. I do not think that, as things stand, the administration is satisfactory or that the public is getting the full protection it ought to have. I support the Bill.

Mr. JENKINS (Stirling)—I support this Bill because, as the member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) said, there is a considerable need to tighten up the Act and the administration. From what he said happened in his district, it seems that there is certainly a need for something along the lines he mentioned. I am glad to say, however, that I have not had similar experiences in my district. The Bill contains three main tightening-up clauses, one of which is clause 5, which substitutes the words "a fit and proper person to be licensed" for the words "of good character." I do not know how much better these words are; they may have a tightening up effect and may give the board some more power in preventing a person from being licensed. Clause 7 amends section 35 by empowering the board to exercise a discretion whether it will accept a voluntary surrender of a licence. At present an agent in respect of whom an application for cancellation of a licence has been lodged can surrender his licence and thus deprive the board of its right to continue an inquiry into his conduct. This is a good amendment, because it gives the board some opportunity to bring action against a defaulting land

agent, which I think is necessary as a tightening up process. Certain people will probably be deterred from applying for a licence by the provision increasing the amount of fidelity bond from £500 to £2,000. Clause 21 increases the amount for which Commonwealth securities may be deposited in lieu of fidelity bonds from £600 to £2,250. These provisions could have a tightening up effect.

The member for Norwood mentioned the 1955 amendments that were moved by me. One was to defer the proclamation of the Bill until July, 1957, to give land agents practising at that time an opportunity to study and qualify as land brokers. That has proved to be satisfactory in one or two instances. Others who have not studied are still practising as land agents. The other amendment provided that land agents could still prepare instruments provided that they were certified by a solicitor, and the member for Norwood suggested that this amendment should be reconsidered. Representations were made to me by one land agent in my district to have this provision removed, but several others have asked me to leave it as it is, so I think the position should be left as it is pending some amendment that may be moved by the honourable member at some future date.

I recently asked the Registrar-General of Deeds how this amendment was operating and whether he was satisfied with instruments prepared by land agents and certified by solicitors. He said the provision was working very well and agreed that only two classes of people—land brokers and solicitors—should prepare instruments of this nature. I understand that in other States only solicitors are allowed to prepare them. There are two points in favour of land agents still being able to prepare instruments subject to certification. The first is that throughout this far-flung State are many small towns that have no solicitor within hundreds of miles, where land agents, and their fathers before them, have been practising for many years. In one instance in my district, the land agent's family has been in the business since 1884 but no instrument has ever been returned as unsatisfactory. This man puts through about 12 instruments a week that are certified by the local solicitor. The provision has operated to everyone's satisfaction. Under the amendment these people will still be able to satisfy the clientele that they have had for many years; they will still carry on their businesses and will not suffer any loss.

The position relating to land brokers may need looking at. Land brokers say that they must study and pass certain examinations but that land agents do not. Brokers must pay higher fees than land agents, who pay only an auctioneer's fee, I believe. That may be equitable, as in some cases land agents have more simple documents to prepare, the difficult documents going to land brokers. The land brokers claim they have difficult documents to prepare and say that there should be some reduction in fees because of that. I think they have something there. Of course, land agents are unable to prepare instruments without having to pay solicitors a certification fee, which has been mutually agreed upon at £1 1s. If they prepare many documents they would gain much by not having to pay the £1 1s. The other point in favour of retaining land agents and allowing them to prepare documents is that once they were prevented from preparing documents the fees charged would probably increase considerably; I say this because I believe the cost of preparing documents in South Australia is much lower than in other States where they can be prepared by solicitors only. In this field at present there are three competitors—land agents, land brokers and solicitors. When there was opposition to my amendment in 1955 solicitors were not so busy, but they are busy now and there is a shortage, so probably they would be only too pleased to do only the certification of instruments prepared by land agents instead of having to prepare the instruments themselves. I do not know that that is so, but I think it could be the position. I support the Bill, and I think the legislation will still function reasonably satisfactorily.

Mr. HAMBOUR (Light)—Proposed new section 60 states:—

A land agent shall pay all moneys received by him in his capacity as a land agent into a trust account not later than the next day on which his bank is open for business after the day on which he receives the moneys. Any moneys collected or received by a land agent as agent for any person and being rent, interest, principal, deposit, instalments, or other moneys whatever, payable under any lease, mortgage or contract for the sale of land, shall be deemed to be money received by the land agent in his capacity as a land agent.

I have received objections to that section, and I think all country members would find similar objections. Land agents in the country collect rents, and it would mean that if they collected £1 or £2 they would have to deposit it in the bank the following day. I do not ask for any major alterations, but I think that a certain amount should be fixed beyond which land agents could not hold money, say, £10, so that they would not have to run to the bank with petty amounts the following day. I ask the Government to accept an amendment of that nature, as I think it is a reasonable request. I think the intention of the legislation is to prevent the holding of larger amounts of money, and not that land agents should dash to the bank on the following day after receiving a very small sum. In Committee I will move an amendment whereby any amount up to £10 can be held.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.08 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, November 3, at 2 p.m.