

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, August 25, 1960.

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

ASSENT TO ACTS.

His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the following Acts:—

Soil Conservation Act Amendment.

Travelling Stock Waybills Act Amendment.

QUESTIONS.**SITTINGS.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Can the Premier say whether the Government intends Parliament to sit during the evening next week?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Government does not desire Parliament to sit at night, but the amount of legislation coming forward renders it necessary for the House to sit two evenings next week until about 9.30. The Bush Fires Act Amendment Bill and the Road Traffic Act Amendment Bill will occupy considerable time. They are both voluminous and contain much detail to be discussed at length in Committee. Under those circumstances the Government desires members to attend until 9.30 p.m. on Tuesday and Wednesday next.

CEMENT LINING OF PIPES.

Mr. HALL—Last year I expressed concern about the condition of water pipes forming much of the reticulation network of the Adelaide Plains area. I understand that the firm that has been doing cement lining for the department has been experimenting with the cement lining of 2in. pipes but has encountered a problem with the mechanical handling of the job. Has the Minister of Works anything further to report on progress made with this research?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Yes. The problem, which the honourable member outlined, related to the lining *in situ* of the smallest diameter cast iron pipes—the 2in. pipes. Until recently this was impossible with the progress made. Unfortunately, we have had a length of these small diameter pipes laid many years ago, but none has been laid recently because the department has long since realized that the 2in. pipe is too small for reticulation purposes and, invariably, where they have been laid, they have proved to be of too small a capacity. The cement lining company has now been

successful in evolving a method of lining these small pipes and tests were made, I think about two months ago, which, after much trial and error, proved successful, and the company is being let a contract for lining a considerable number of these pipes. At first sight it may appear that to line a pipe with concrete must reduce its capacity, but in fact, when the corrosion from the original diameter is removed and a small lining of cement mortar is successfully inserted in it, the capacity returns to almost the normal capacity of the pipe. The department is extremely pleased with the success of this work which will enable the reconditioning of considerable lengths of these pipes, thereby rendering them effective for many years and able to provide a much better service than has hitherto been possible from them.

DOCTORS' FEES.

Mr. TAPPING—On August 10 I asked a question about fees being charged by doctors who examined persons arrested for driving when under the influence of liquor. Has the Minister of Education a report from his colleague, the Attorney-General, on this matter?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—If I remember correctly, the dispute to which the honourable member referred concerned not only the fee charged by the police doctor but the type of evidence he was tendering to the court about the state or condition of persons charged with driving under the influence of liquor or a drug. As promised, I referred the matter to the Attorney-General and the Chief Secretary because it concerned the departments of both of them. I understand that the Attorney-General has obtained an opinion from the Crown Solicitor and that the Chief Secretary has referred the matter to the Commissioner of Police. I understand also that there has been a conference between the metropolitan magistrates on the matter, but neither of my colleagues is yet able to supply me with a reply for the honourable member. I hope to be able to reply next week.

MILE END GOODS YARDS.

Mr. NANKIVELL—With the concurrence of the member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) I wish to ask the Acting Minister of Railways some questions about the Mile End goods yards loading facilities. Recently, while investigating a railway accident on behalf of one of my constituents, who had a tractor seriously damaged in such an accident, I made several visits to

the Mile End goods yards where I observed the loading of heavy machinery and equipment. The facilities appeared to be inadequate, occasioning costly delay to those people carting heavy machinery on big transports. Will the Acting Minister of Railways secure answers to the following queries: (1) Has consideration been given to providing a traversing crane to handle loads of up to 10 tons, as the present crane is of 20-ton capacity and consequently slow in operation? (2) Why has the restricted length of track over which the present crane operates not been extended to correspond with extensions made to the electricity conductor line so that more trucks can be shunted on to this line at a time? (3) Why, in view of the responsibility and risk involved, not only to the department but to the consignee in the loading of oversized machinery and equipment, is this task not the responsibility of a supervising foreman but delegated instead to a porter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I believe the honourable member's question probably relates to the fact that an oversized vehicle loaded at Mile End got into difficulties in the tunnels in the Adelaide hills and, as a consequence, there may be legal proceedings. I will give the honourable member an answer to questions 1 and 2 as soon as I can. As to question 3, I will examine what is involved and give him a reply.

PORT AUGUSTA HOSPITAL.

Mr. RICHES—Over a considerable period representations have been made for an emergency power and lighting unit to be installed at the Port Augusta hospital. Several breakdowns have caused embarrassment to the hospital and could have resulted in serious consequences. This has caused concern to everyone associated with the hospital. When the Electricity Trust knew that the power would be off on two occasions because of its own transformer work it installed an emergency unit but further breakdowns occurred as a result of vehicles running into electric light poles. I understand that the Hospitals Department has referred this matter to the Public Buildings Department, and I have been asked by the board to request the Minister of Works to obtain a report from that department as to the progress of investigations into supplying an auxiliary unit.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I know that this matter has been discussed but I am not sure of the latest position. I will inquire and obtain a report for the honourable member.

RELAXA TABS.

Mrs. STEELE—Has the Premier a reply to a question I asked on August 9 relating to the control of sales of Relaxa Tabs?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes. In Queensland Relaxa Tabs may be sold only on medical prescription. There is no restriction in any other State. Taking these tablets in doses greater than those recommended by the manufacturer is harmful. This applies to very many substances that are freely available; for example, aspirin. Some individuals may be adversely affected by the recommended dose. On the other hand, it is contended that restriction of these drugs would lead to a re-appearance of the once very insistent public demand for illicit supply of barbiturates. This demand virtually ceased when Relaxa Tabs came on the market. Relaxa Tabs were recently restricted in Great Britain to sales on medical prescription only. The Food and Drugs Advisory Committee has recently considered the matter at a meeting attended by the Superintendent of Mental Institutions and Director of Mental Health (Dr. H. M. Birch) and the Deputy Superintendent of Parkside Mental Hospital (Dr. B. J. Shea). The committee decided to seek the full evidence on which the British decision was made. This has not yet arrived. As soon as it is available the committee will meet again and a recommendation will be made.

GAWLER BELT TRAFFIC ISLAND.

Mr. LAUCKE—The Gawler Belt traffic island at the junction of the Main North Road and the Gawler-Greenock Road has reduced the number of accidents at that point but safety could be further improved were that island lighted. The electric light pole in the centre of the island supplies power to a roadhouse across the way and I do not think it would be very costly to install lighting at this island. It would certainly be of real benefit to the travelling public to have this island adequately lit, and I ask that this matter be considered.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will have the matter examined, but I point out that lighting is normally the problem of the local government authority and that Parliament has given the Commissioner of Highways power to deal with lighting on two highways only—Anzac Highway and, I believe, Port Road.

COOPER PEDY SCHOOL.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Has the Minister of Education a reply to my recent question regarding the provision of school rooms at the Cooper Pedy school?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes. When the Coober Pedy school commenced at the beginning of this year its enrolment was only 22. It was then possible to get these numbers in the committee hall, where the school is still accommodated. However, the problems of accommodation are now being faced because, as the honourable member knows, the enrolment has increased to 39 and instead of the school using an area 20ft. x 20ft. it is now using the whole hall, which is divided by a curtain partition. The Coober Pedy Progress Association does not object to the use of the hall but points out that, when pictures are shown once a week, there is a great deal of arranging and rearranging to be done to prepare for the picture show and to have the hall put back in order for its use as a classroom. I am grateful to the association for the temporary use of the hall but it is not a permanent solution of the accommodation problem. Moreover, it is expected that enrolments will continue to increase rapidly. I am very sympathetic and doing all I can to assist in establishing a permanent school at Coober Pedy; I am sure the honourable member is also in favour of that. It is impossible to provide a new school at present but I shall give favourable consideration to the erection of some classrooms there next year.

COUNTRY SEWERAGE.

Mr. QUIRKE—For some time the Country Sewerage Advisory Committee has been visiting country towns for the purpose of determining priorities on sewerage for country towns. Anticipating sewerage at some time, councils and country people generally have installed septic systems, knowing that if a sewerage scheme came to their town they would be easily connected to the system. However, it has led to the position that, where there are impervious strata in the ground, some towns are rapidly being flooded out with the effluent from such tanks. It is not a happy position. The people do their very best, but the conditions now in some places are becoming obnoxious, through no fault of anybody. Could the Premier announce some order of priorities for these country towns so that action could be taken on these septic systems which, whilst working effectively, have resulted in the effluent running down the streets and gutters of some towns? The time has arrived when the Government's intention regarding country sewerage schemes should be announced. Will the Premier see if anything can be done in that regard?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The committee that dealt with this matter was almost entirely a medical committee which dealt with the question from the health point of view. The order of priority has been made available to any council sufficiently interested to ask for it, and there is no objection to those priorities being made known. Some councils which had originally asked to be considered later withdrew their applications because they thought they could avoid sewerage and the local rating contribution that would go with it. The priorities could be announced, but if the local authority was not willing for the work to go on, another priority would take its place; therefore, all the priorities have not been published. We do not know in every case what the local authority is considering in the matter. We can publish the priorities, but if the local council is not going to apply it could give completely erroneous information regarding a particular area. I will obtain further information for the honourable member.

FILM ON FARMING.

Mr. HARDING—Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to my recent question concerning a film on farming?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—The Deputy Director of Agriculture reports:—

A number of agricultural films have been produced by Commonwealth departments and also other State departments. The Wool Board has also produced a range of films concerning sheep and wool production. Others have been and are being produced by commercial interests and overseas governments. Working through the Department of Primary Industry, the Department of Agriculture maintains very close liaison with these developments and arranges to view each new film produced. Wool Board films are provided to us for general distribution to any groups that may be interested and who can assure us that they have a good projector and operator. Such other films as are produced in Australia or are available here and that are likely to be of use to the Department of Agriculture for extension purposes are purchased for us by the Department of Primary Industry out of the Commonwealth Extension Grant. Because we have no guarantee that these films will be replaced if damaged, they are reserved for use by departmental officers when addressing groups. With all films produced by the Department of Primary Industry, we are invited to comment on the proposed plan before they go into production. This ensures the South Australian interests are met if possible. We cannot identify the films specifically referred to by Mr. Harding, but the general situation outlined here will apply.

SUN BLINDS FOR SCHOOLS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question concerning sun blinds for the Marion high school?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The Director, Public Buildings Department, reports that tenders are due on September 7, 1960, for the erection of aluminium awnings over the windows facing east of the administration block at the Marion high school.

BOTTLES ON ROADS.

Mr. CORCORAN—My question relates to the menace created by the practice of throwing empty bottles on roads. A letter I received from the secretary of the South-Eastern Local Government Association states:—

At the annual conference of this Association, held yesterday at Naracoorte, the matter of bottles left on roads was again referred to, arising from replies received to previous applications for official action to combat it. After considerable discussion it was considered that the present position is so unsatisfactory that I was instructed to write direct to the Premier, and at the same time renew our request to all local members for their continued support. Will you please continue to use your best endeavours in an attempt to discover a satisfactory solution to a very pressing problem?

As the Minister of Local Government has apparently been unable to do anything in the matter, will the Premier consider the problem?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will have the matter examined and will obtain a reply for the honourable member in due course.

WATER ASSESSMENTS.

Mr. RALSTON—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question regarding water rating assessments?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The reply I have deals specifically with two properties the honourable member mentioned in his remarks, and also gives further information on the general position. The assessments on the Mount Gambier R.S.L. Buildings are as follows:—Club rooms, annual value £500, representing a capital value of £10,000; two shops, Commercial Street, at an annual value of £546 each, representing a gross rental of approximately £13 13s. per week; four shops, Bay Road, at an annual value of £416 each representing a gross rental of approximately £10 10s. per week. Waterworks assessments are based on the annual value, which according to the Waterworks Act shall be estimated at

three-quarters of the gross annual rental, or 5 per cent on the capital value of the fee simple. Possibly the intention behind the Act in fixing the basis of assessment at three-quarters of the gross annual rental was that the balance would represent the outgoings. In any case, the assessed annual values fixed on the shops are still on the conservative side when compared with the actual rentals, whilst the capital value of the club rooms at £10,000 cannot be considered excessive at present day values.

BLANCHETOWN BRIDGE.

Mr. STOTT—Can the Minister of Works say when tenders will be called for the construction of the bridge at Blanchetown, and will the £50,000 provided on the Loan Estimates be sufficient to cover the cost of the construction that will take place this year if tenders are accepted immediately and the work commenced?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—This matter comes under the purview of the Minister of Roads, and the Premier at present is the Acting Minister. I do not know when tenders for the Blanchetown bridge are to be called for. However, I will refer the question to the appropriate quarter.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—It will be some months ahead.

COST OF LIVING.

Mr. RICHES—Will the Premier, as Minister in charge of prices, make available to members the report of the Prices Commissioner on the relative costs of living in the metropolitan area and in the country?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Prices Commissioner has advised that prices of commodities in country areas are dependent on a number of factors. In some instances country prices are the same as or below prices in the metropolitan area and in other instances higher. The following is the position in respect to a few essential types of goods and services:—

Milk (controlled).—In many instances prices fixed in country areas, particularly those enjoying favourable climatic conditions, are lower than metropolitan prices. In other country areas where dairying is not undertaken and it is necessary to obtain supplies from distant milk producing districts prices are naturally higher.

Firewood (controlled).—With few exceptions, country firewood prices are below those fixed for the metropolitan area.

Meat (decontrolled).—When meat was controlled prices were fixed on the following basis:—

- (a) Pork.—Uniform maximum prices for the whole State.
- (b) Mutton.—Uniform maximum prices for the whole State with the exception of Iron Knob, Whyalla, and Upper Murray towns where the differential was 2d. per lb. above prices in the rest of the State.
- (c) Beef.—Uniform maximum prices for all towns within 100 miles radius of Adelaide and in the South-East; a differential of an extra 1d. per lb. in all other areas with the exception of Iron Knob, Whyalla, and Upper Murray towns where the differential was 2d. per lb.

Bread (controlled).—Prices are higher in country districts because whereas metropolitan bakeries are highly mechanized, country bakers are either only partly mechanized or have no mechanical equipment. In addition, many country bakeries have only a very limited turnover.

Groceries and Foodstuffs (largely decontrolled).—Prices are generally slightly higher in the country due to the freight factor. However, in some localities items such as eggs, cream, and honey and other farm produce have always been lower than in the metropolitan area.

Clothing and Footwear (controlled).—Country prices are slightly higher in most instances due to the freight factor. However, a number of proprietary brands of clothing and footwear are sold at the same prices in the country as in the metropolitan area.

Services (controlled).—Footwear repair rates, together with charges for most building services, are the same in the country as in the metropolitan area.

CUSTON TRUCKING YARDS.

Mr. NANKIVELL—The question of providing trucking yards at the Custon siding has been the subject of unsatisfactory discussion between the Tatiara District Council and the Railways Department. I believe that previously the department based its argument upon old figures collected in a survey by Mr. Schumacher many years ago, but that recently a more favourable survey has been conducted. In view of that and the representation made to me by both the Tatiara District Council and the residents of Custon, will the Acting Minister of Railways have this matter re-examined?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes.

GURNEY STREET (EDWARDSTOWN) MAIN.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question regarding the water main in Gurney Street, Edwardstown?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Last summer only two complaints were received about poor water pressures in Gurney Street, and in both cases they were due to defective services, which were subsequently renewed. Following a recent request for an improved supply, a pressure survey was carried out in the area and the Engineer-in-Chief is now having estimates prepared with a view to recommending the enlargement of the mains in Gurney Street and Wooton Road.

BUILDING BY-LAWS.

Mrs. STEELE—There have been at least four instances in my electorate in the past few weeks when constituents have approached me complaining of buildings being erected on properties adjacent to their own which, whilst conforming to the building by-laws, have had a detrimental effect on the value of the existing properties. In three cases parapet walls erected on the boundary fence parallel to the existing house have had the effect of greatly decreasing the natural light as well as being an eyesore. In the other case, a parapet wall being the back wall of a garage under construction comes within 7ft. of the frontage to Portrush Road, Toorak, and is completely out of keeping with adjacent properties. Will the Government examine this problem with a view to considering alterations to the relevant by-laws which are acting to the detriment of existing properties?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The question is obviously one of some difficulty. The building by-laws are not designed for the purpose for which the honourable member desires them to be used. The matter is more properly controlled by the council's zoning by-laws which can control properties and buildings erected in any particular zone, rather than the building by-laws, which are merely designed to see that buildings are constructed according to a standard that is safe and healthy. I suggest that this matter is one for the consideration of the local council in relation to its zoning by-laws.

JERVOIS BRIDGE.

Mr. TAPPING—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked on August 16 about restricting traffic over Jervois Bridge?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes. Mr. Jackman, the Commissioner of Highways, reports:—

As Jervois Bridge is in a poor state of repair and will of necessity have to be available to traffic for some considerable time until a new bridge is constructed, it was considered advisable to impose restrictions both with respect to speed and load. As a result, 15 m.p.h. speed limit signs were erected on April 7, 1960, and 5-ton load limit signs on May 5, 1960. To avoid completely disorganizing the tramways service, the Tramways Trust was given permission to continue to run its buses over Jervois Bridge until other arrangements had been made. The trust, however, was requested to alter its route to cross the Port River over Birkenhead Bridge as quickly as possible. The Tramways Trust took immediate steps to install overhead cables on another route to run their trolley buses over Birkenhead Bridge and including Carlisle Street.

It was subsequently discovered that the Engineering and Water Supply Department proposed to construct a sewer along Carlisle Street. This work would occupy 3-4 months, and would prevent the Tramways Trust from using Carlisle Street as part of their route during the period of construction. The trust therefore approached this department and asked for permission to run approximately 50 per cent of buses which had previously used Jervois Bridge to again use that bridge whilst the sewer was under construction. Permission was granted, subject to the condition that a speed limit of 6 m.p.h. would be observed, that there would be no passing or overtaking on the bridge, and that the buses would cross the bridge as close to the centre of the bridge as practicable. It is considered that if these conditions are observed, the safety of passengers is not endangered. However, it would be most undesirable to allow all heavy traffic to use the bridge, as these conditions could not be imposed on the general traffic. As soon as the sewer is constructed and Carlisle Street is available for traffic, all the tramways buses will be taken off Jervois Bridge.

CELLULOSE AUSTRALIA LIMITED (GOVERNMENT SHARES) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 11. Page 578.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This matter has quite a history and I intend briefly to recount it on somewhat the same lines as the Treasurer when he introduced the Bill. This company was commenced in 1938 by a vote from what was then called the Surplus Revenue Act, enabling the Treasurer to underwrite the issue of shares to the extent of £100,000, provided that other persons had previously underwritten the shares to the

face value of twice the amount of the value of the shares underwritten by the Treasurer. Under the underwriting agreement the Treasurer was called upon to take up shares to the value of £23,273. In the early years the company experienced considerable difficulties and the Government gave further assistance through the Industries Assistance Corporation. A further £4,655 was subscribed as share capital. I am not sure whether my memory of the Industries Assistance Corporation is correct, but I believe it was a semi-private body, established by a number of well-intentioned people with the object of providing a fund to assist small or new industries. It was subject to some Government subsidy. When this corporation ceased activity and went into voluntary liquidation in 1946 the shares were transferred to the Treasurer.

To aid the survival of the company, in 1943 the Treasurer, under the Industries Development Act (1941), guaranteed £100,000 of the company's overdraft with the State Bank. By 1951—and this is where the position changed entirely—the company was able to cook fresh capital, and by the Surplus Revenue Amendment Act (1951) the Treasurer was authorized to take up a further £20,000 worth of shares. Of this amount the Treasurer took up shares to the value of £18,300, and in the same year the guarantee of £100,000 was dispensed with. At that stage the Treasurer was holding 46,228 ordinary £1 shares. In 1957 the company made a further issue of capital on the basis of one for two and the Treasurer, by authority of the Cellulose Australia Limited (Government Shares) Act (1957) took up his full entitlement of 23,114 ordinary £1 shares. The present holding of the Treasurer is 69,342 ordinary £1 shares. The present authorized capital of the company is £800,000, so that the Government has less than a 9 per cent interest in the company. However, the shares are at present being quoted at more than £6 10s., so the Government's equity is worth approximately £450,000. To take up the Treasurer's entitlement of convertible notes, as provided for in the Bill on a three for two basis in the next few months, will cost £104,013, and a further £104,013 if the Treasurer exercises his right to take up further ordinary shares at the end of next year on a three for two basis, making a total expenditure of £208,026. My only criticism of the present Bill is the final clause which empowers the Treasurer to dispose of the shares when he deems it appropriate.

Mr. Millhouse—That's the best part of it.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The Bill makes no provision as to where the proceeds should be credited. The member for Mitcham comes in with a loud hurrah when he learns that the Treasurer can dispose of the shares when he deems it appropriate. He and other members want the Government to assist in financing all shaky organizations. They want the Government to be on the losing end of the stick all the time. However, when the Government becomes involved in a shaky transaction (as this undoubtedly was in its early stages) and it subsequently becomes a gilt-edged security, then they want the Government to get out as soon as possible and leave the field of profit-making to the member's particular god—private enterprise.

Should not Parliament retain the right to say if and when the shares shall be disposed of? After all, Parliament is voting this money out of the Loan fund and it ought to have some say about when and how the shares shall be disposed of. If the shares are disposed of there should be some provision whereby the money should be returned to the Loan fund from which the original investment came. However, they are minor matters. I agree with the principle contained in the Bill. It is a principle we might have more of: partnership between the Government and private enterprise which would lead to the best of both systems being combined in order to make for the progress of industry. I support the second reading.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham)—I regret that I must inject a word of warning into this debate. As I expected, the Leader warmly supported the second reading, but I am afraid I cannot do so with such warmth, although I do not oppose the second reading. I think this measure, as did the 1957 Bill, illustrates the difficulty into which a Government can fall when it starts to participate in commercial undertakings. As a business proposition, I have no doubt that the Government is wise to want to take up these shares and notes that are being offered, but I do not believe that as a general rule a Government should participate in the ownership of an undertaking that can be conducted by private enterprise. I say that is so as a general rule, although I know that at times there are exceptions to every rule and I am prepared to acknowledge that it was probably a good thing that the Government participated in the founding of this enterprise which, as the Treasurer said, has been of benefit to the State. However, that time has now passed.

As the Leader said, by 1951 the position had changed entirely. It was no longer necessary for the Government to participate directly in this enterprise to keep it on its feet because since that time it has been very definitely on its feet and is now obviously able to exist without any further Government support. That is the position in which we find ourselves today. This illustrates the difficulty into which a Government falls when it takes part in a private company. The problem is, when should a Government get out? I cannot help feeling that when £1 shares are quoted at £6 the time has passed for the Government to get out. I do not see, as I emphasized at the beginning, that the Government should not take up these shares now, but—and here I part company with the Leader—the Government should carefully consider quitting its shares as quickly as possible once it has got the commercial advantage out of the new issue. I am afraid that I said the same thing in 1957.

Mr. O'Halloran—Do you suggest that the Government should hand over the Electricity Trust to private enterprise?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—That is entirely different. We are talking about Cellulose Australia Limited, in which the Government is a minor shareholder and which can obviously be run successfully for the benefit of the State by private enterprise. I say there is no need now for the Government to be directly concerned in this enterprise for it to continue.

Mr. Hall—The money could be applied elsewhere.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—Yes, it could be used elsewhere. There are many ways in the Loan Estimates in which money can be spent to develop the State—and, of course, the money for these shares comes from the Loan Fund. Because of this, the money cannot go to other things. There is no doubt that the money could be raised commercially by this company quite readily. I do not believe that an undertaking such as this should continue to be associated with the Government of this State. I understand that the British Labor Party, when its members are not squabbling amongst themselves on whether they should give up or maintain Socialism, advocates this very method of socializing industry. I am entirely opposed to that and, therefore, although I do not suggest for a moment that the Government should not take up these shares and the note issue, I do not think that the Government should go on indefinitely being a shareholder in Cellulose Australia Limited.

Mr. HEASLIP (Rocky River)—I oppose the Bill and have no reservations about my opposition. I do not think it is the function of any Government to buy private shares with Loan money. As I said in 1957, it is not the function of any Government to borrow money at five per cent and invest it in a commercial enterprise at eight per cent. Where will we finish if we do these things? If it is all right to do this in relation to this company, is it not all right to do it with other private enterprise? We have just borrowed £30,000,000. Why are we not putting this amount, which was borrowed at a low rate of interest, into such companies as Adelaide Cement Co. Ltd. or the South Australian Rubber Mills and getting between eight and 10 per cent in return?

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—We have a fairly large sum in the Adelaide Cement Co. Ltd.

Mr. HEASLIP—There are no shares. The Government lent this company a large sum through the State Bank, and I know that, when the company had made sufficient profit to repay much of it, it re-invested the surplus at eight per cent and 10 per cent instead. The State Bank took a dim view of this, yet in this legislation the Government is doing it. What is the difference? We are doing the very thing that the State Bank said it was wrong for the Adelaide Cement Co. Ltd. to do.

Mr. King—When did the State Bank say that?

Mr. HEASLIP—Ask the General Manager what he thinks of it! The company is now repaying the money, but for many years it did not repay. It met its commitments, as it was bound to do, but re-invested the surplus at higher interest rates. It was wrong for that company to do this, but in this case the Government is doing it and it is all right! This is not the function of any Government. The money borrowed by a Government is to provide hospitals, roads, railways, transport, houses, water, electricity and other things for the people of this State; the Government does not borrow money to re-invest. We know that from all the things I mentioned the Government will not get a direct profit, although there will be an indirect profit to the State. It is wrong to suggest that we take these shares, particularly at a time such as this. I know that members opposite wholeheartedly support the measure, as it is part of the Socialist platform that the Government should run all enterprises, but I

do not agree with that. Inflation is all around us, and we all agree that there is too much money and people are outbidding one another to buy a certain limited number of goods, yet this Government is borrowing money from the Commonwealth Government to compete with private people in subscribing for these shares. What could be more inflationary than that?

We know the money is available to take up these shares, but the Government is competing with the other people who are willing to provide that money and is using the money when it is so unnecessary to use it. I do not disagree for one minute with the Government's attitude in 1938 when it put this industry on its feet. Had it not been for the Government's action the company would have gone bankrupt. The Government propped it up and got it going, and at that time it subscribed and took up 23,000 shares. By 1951 that industry was on its feet and able to repay the money it had borrowed from the Government. Seeing that it was on its feet then, why should any Government continue to prop it up by buying shares?

In 1957, when I opposed the Bill, the Government invested more money and brought its holding up to 69,342 shares. The member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) condoned the Government's action, but thought there should be an orderly method of disposing of them. Clause 4 of this Bill gives the Government power to dispose of these shares. I draw the attention of the House to the Treasurer's statement in 1957:—

I assure members that the Government does not intend to exercise that power to sell shares. It is merely enabling power that could be used in exceptional circumstances.

I do not think the Treasurer has changed his views since then. We bought the shares in 1957, and unfortunately there has not been an orderly disposal of them.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—Does the honourable member wish me to break my assurance to the House?

Mr. HEASLIP—I do not know what assurance the Treasurer has given the House.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—The honourable member just read it.

Mr. HEASLIP—Yes, and that is why I oppose the Bill. If the Government is to continue that policy and take up a further new issue of shares, it will own the company, and it will be a socialistic company owned and run by the State.

Mr. Clark—What's wrong with that?

Mr. HEASLIP—I do not stand for that. I believe in private enterprise, and I believe that where money can be privately subscribed no Government should compete.

Mr. O'Halloran—Haven't you read the Bill?

Mr. HEASLIP—Yes.

Mr. O'Halloran—Don't you realize the Government must always be a minority shareholder?

Mr. HEASLIP—As far as members are concerned, that is so, but it is already the biggest shareholder in the industry, to the extent of 15 per cent, and it has the greatest one-bloc voting power in the company.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—The estimate I made was that it was 15 per cent.

Mr. HEASLIP—Yes, the Treasurer said it was about 15 per cent. The Government is the largest shareholder in this company.

Mr. O'Halloran—That is, after it has bought these shares, but at present it is not the largest.

Mr. HEASLIP—I think the Treasurer said that the Government was the largest shareholder at present, and that it would still maintain that 15 per cent or thereabouts in the company after it had taken up this issue. Why is the Government doing it? During the recent debate on the Loan Estimates all Opposition members were crying out for more money for housing and other things. The Deputy Leader wanted more money from the Loan Estimates for education and housing; the member for Burra (Mr. Quirke) said that there was not enough money for housing, and that the position was more chronic today than it was years ago. I am not saying what attitude the member for Burra will adopt on this Bill.

Mr. Quirke—You don't doubt that one?

Mr. HEASLIP—I know that all Opposition members are behind the Bill and will support it. The member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) wants more money for a gaol at Port Augusta, and more money for education. The member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) said that the State has spent less *per capita* on education than any other State except Queensland, and he wants more money spent on education in this State. Even the Leader of the Opposition spoke about more assistance for purchasers of old homes, and he, too, wanted more money spent.

Mr. O'Halloran—If we get a few propositions like this one we will have plenty of free money.

Mr. HEASLIP—That is a long range view. What Opposition members are asking for is more money today, not in 10, 20 or 50 years'

time: they want it now for education, roads, gaols, housing and everything else, yet here they are supporting a Bill that will take from them about £500,000. Those shares that have been spoken of as being worth £6 each are not worth £6 a share; the value is 36s. 6d. for every 5s. share, and if they were sold today on the Stock Exchange their total value would be almost £500,000. Members opposite who are asking for more money are subscribing to the spending of this money and tying it up in the cellulose industry instead of making it available for more houses, roads, or schools or whatever they are asking for. I cannot understand their attitude.

Mr. Hutchens—It is not the only thing you can't understand.

Mr. HEASLIP—I know that their platform is for the State to own everything, and I know that this Bill is tending their way, but they cannot talk with their tongues in their cheeks and they cannot have it both ways. I oppose the Bill.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa)—As I see it, this question has two distinct aspects. The first is a forthright query: shall the Government take up certain convertible notes and shares proposed to be issued to existing shareholders? My answer to that is "Yes." I feel sure the Government would be remiss in its duty as custodian of the public purse were it not to accept this opportunity to take up that which is offered to it now. I am in complete accord with the Government's recommendation that these notes and shares be taken up. I point out that there is power for the Treasurer, if he deems it appropriate, to sell all or any of these shares. The power is there and it is exercisable.

The second aspect of this Bill concerns the merits and demerits of the Government's participation in industry generally. Quite candidly, I like to see enterprise, owned and conducted privately, attending to as much industry as possible, but this particular industry is closely allied with the very big State outlay in Government forests. It is ancillary, to a degree. We accept Government sawmills as a means of disposing of our timber. At the same time we give the private sawmills as much timber as they can consume in their mills; there is no close province in it for Government activity only. The activities of Cellulose could well have been a branch of the sawmill activity itself, so I see nothing in this that runs across the principle to which I subscribe of keeping Government activity away

from an industry that could be conducted by private individuals. I see virtue in the Government's keeping an interest in an organization that is so necessary, bearing in mind the easy and profitable usage of certain by-products of the forests. The two are very closely allied, and therefore in this instance I favour taking up the shares and the notes, and I feel that the principle to which I subscribe is not being breached in the activity.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—The member for Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip) has suggested that I have already stated my policy on this matter, but perhaps I had better restate the policy to which I subscribe. I know the member for Rocky River is a sound business man and that he can look after his own business interests very satisfactorily. I am certain that if he were in the same position as the Government is in this matter he would take up the shares that are now offered to the Government as an original shareholder. I am equally certain that if there were any surplus shares that people did not want he would have them also. I think the honourable member would willingly assist the people who did not wish to take up their shares.

With the member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke) I feel that up to a point this is getting a little away from what we call straight-out private enterprise, but not so far away—and in this I agree with him 100 per cent—that we should not keep a finger in the pie where it is of such vital interest to our huge investment in the State forests. We must protect that investment. No-one knows what policy will be pursued by Cellulose in the future. The 15 per cent holding by the Government cannot direct the policy, and although we have two directors at present they are there, I suggest, on sufferance and could be removed if the company decided to run its own affairs. The 15 per cent shares will not override 85 per cent of the shareholding. I suggest that it may become necessary for this Parliament to take further steps in the future if this company became a little too arrogant in its approach to our forestry problem. I feel that in this instance we are justified in keeping a fairly active interest in a matter where we are so vitally concerned.

I shall refer to one more matter because, after all, it is our duty to examine every aspect of legislation. We may have to look at clause 4 in Committee. That clause empowers the Treasurer to dispose of these shares at his own absolute discretion—when he likes, to whom

he likes, at what price he likes. With the present Treasurer I have no fear with such an open cheque. I think the member for Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip) is not looking at this as clearly as he usually looks at things. He is getting cautious about it; he does not pass around many open cheques! In this instance, we are in effect giving, if not this Treasurer then some Treasurer some day, an absolutely open cheque. In my opinion that is bad legislation, for this is what it could lead to: a Treasurer exercising his powers under this section of the Act (after this Bill becomes law) could exercise that power and sell the shares in this company to some person or persons or to another company who sought to control Cellulose Australia.

The Treasurer of the day could give such people an opportunity to take control, especially if he could get what he thought was a good price for the shares. He could be called to task by his fellow members of Parliament if he did that but, unfortunately, it would be a *fait accompli*. He would have the power and there could be no readjustment of the affair. The House could not say, "We will sack you to rectify this." It could not be rectified for he would have legally sold the property of the State, though unwisely as Parliament would suggest at that time. That is something we should seriously consider. Here, I should like the assistance of the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse). I will suggest a simple safeguard that may or may not meet all cases. If shares were sold at market value, I suggest they should be sold by public tender whenever they were disposed of.

Mr. Millhouse—I support that if you also say that it should be done within two years.

Mr. SHANNON—Regarding the time factor, I do not think it desirable that I should tell the Government what is going to happen in two years' time. I myself do not know—otherwise I should be very wealthy in two years' time, for I could invest my little bit to advantage. I do not know, and I am not going to ask the Government to know; so I shall not put a time factor on it. Therefore, whether or not the honourable member supports me in my further safeguard that any shares sold should be offered by public tender is a matter for his decision. I shall not influence him in the matter any more than he can influence me in the matter of the time factor, so we are all square on that.

I am not absolutely clear in my mind about the proper way to achieve what I want to achieve—a proper safeguard in the interests

not only of the State but also of the Executive, upon whose shoulders we thrust this responsibility. In fact, it is not even the Executive: it is one member of the Executive—the Treasurer, whoever happens to be the Treasurer of the day. With those few comments, I intend to see if I can get something drafted to meet the problem that I foresee.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra)—In discussing this question, I read what the Treasurer had to say in introducing the Bill. I have not the slightest doubt in my mind that this industry was saved by the intervention of the Government when its position and continuance were in doubt. There is also no doubt that the forests, which are State-owned, supply much of the raw material for this mill, and that the administration has been good. It is a flourishing concern and is of value to the State. All that is admitted, but I still think there is an element of danger in this. I do intend not to oppose the measure but to sound a note of warning with other honourable members who have sounded this note of warning. To allow something that is right and proper for the Government but wrong for the electors of the Government is a bad principle, and that is what we have here. It reminds me of betting and the Lottery and Gaming Act and the argument that, provided the Government can take income from betting, then it is a perfectly moral thing that betting should take place; but, if it does not get anything from it, then it is not a moral thing to do.

People are being accused today of indulging in hire-purchase, borrowing money on short-term at a low rate and putting it into hire-purchase. We know that it is being done, that money is being invested at a low rate, at a difference of 3 per cent anyway, and put into hire-purchase. We condemn that because that is a deliberate profit being taken from inflating the cost of the article to the consumer. Anybody will condemn that. Yet we are doing precisely the same thing: we are using borrowed Loan money at a lower rate of interest than that which we hope to obtain when we invest it in this. There is not the slightest difference in principle between the two things, one of which we condemn and the other of which we are now praising as a good business deal. Certainly, it is a good business deal. There is not the slightest doubt in the world about that. I have no objection to a Government making money out of deals like that.

I do not oppose this measure but I cannot see how the members of the Opposition here can support this measure so vociferously and whole-heartedly whilst they must condemn utterly something that embodies exactly the same principle, or lack of principle. That certainly applies to Government members on the other side who support it. That is my attitude to it and I only use it as a note of warning. I would not vote for this second reading were it not for the fact that this mill is so inextricably linked with the State-owned forests and plays such a part in the maintenance and disposal of the products of those forests. The Government had to intervene in the first place in order to save this industry, and it is entitled to some return for what it did for the industry. But do not let us applaud this too strongly because it will probably be only a few hours, or a few days at least, before we shall be condemning the principle in another Bill. I support the second reading but I do not like the principle involved—that it is right for the Government to do something but utterly wrong for somebody else to do it. This principle can go very bad.

Mr. CORCORAN (Millicent)—I support the second reading of the Bill. The member for Barossa (Mr. Laeuke) made a vital point when he mentioned that the functioning of this mill meant the using up of much of the thinnings from our pine timber. To bring a tree to proper maturity involves certain activities in thinning. That timber, instead of being thrown out, is being used for pulpwood in the Cellulose mill, and put to some good use. Were it not for that, it would just rot away there. Were that not done, we know the type of tree that would be produced. I am glad to know that the Government came to the rescue of Cellulose Australia when it was staggering for financial help and existence. It almost went out, almost passed into oblivion, but the Government came to the rescue and helped it function again. It is a godsend to the people of Tantanoola and Millicent that such a mill is functioning in their midst. It is hard to assess its value to those people. It is continuing on a sound, stable basis. There is no doubt about that. It is a wise investment. If the member for Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip) could purchase the shares that the Government is purchasing at the same price of £1 a share, he would not hesitate if he had the money to invest in it. I know now that the company would continue to

operate whether it had Government assistance or not. The Government first came to be involved by lending financial help, and is now only exercising its rights. So far as I am concerned, it is a good example of the decentralization of industry.

The mill was first established there not because we had a forest there. I do not know whether that had any influence on the minds of those responsible, but I think it may have had because the forests were nearby, it had suitable water, and it had natural means of disposing of the refuse. I shall not speak on this at any length although I know a lot about it for I was a supply officer at the mill for some time and dealt with the pine timber. I know what it means to the forests to have that thinning work carried out. I am glad to know that the Government is there and has a voice there to the extent it has. I have no doubt that those who speak against the measure in principle now will vote for it but, if they are so ardently opposed to it, let them vote against it. The Bill will go through. I am happy to know that Cellulose Australia Ltd. is functioning and flourishing as it is. Another £3,250,000 is to be spent there. My only regret is that the engineer in charge some months ago is today stricken down with an incurable malady and will play no further part there. I refer to Mr. Harold Simpson.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—One or two questions should be answered. In the first place, the operations of Cellulose Australia Limited are directly and intimately connected with the welfare of our forests. If the Government had not promoted this company, the Government itself would have had to undertake the work. Our forest thinnings had to be utilized. What was the alternative to this company? Most members who spoke do not know about the proposition that came before Parliament when a previous Government was in power. It was then suggested that we should hand our forests over for nothing to a company which even demanded the right of clear felling a vast area. The member for Onkaparinga will remember the debate. The matter was referred to a Select Committee. An interesting point was that the industry was not to be established in South Australia. That was the alternative to the establishment of Cellulose Australia Limited.

It is a lot of rot for members to talk about the Government not being interested in this company now that it is profitable. If it were

not profitable we apparently could have as much interest in it as we wanted, but because it is a paying concern it is apparently immoral for the Government to have an interest in it. We had to take all the responsibility of establishing the company; we had to pick it up when it was in the hands of the Official Receiver; and we had to re-organize the management, using the services of the then Railways Commissioner. Now that the company is profitable we are told we should discontinue our association with it, notwithstanding that every day the company becomes more vital to our forests. If members examine the position they will realize that slowly but surely cartons are taking the place of boards. They have many advantages: they are simple to use and effective for packaging purposes. Cellulose Australia Limited will in future be able to determine the price we receive for our thinnings. Under those circumstances why shouldn't we have some say in the company's management and in its ownership?

It is rather amusing that members who frequently oppose this type of legislation are among the first to advocate loans from the State Bank for other undertakings, claiming that they are sound and that the bank is not taking a risk. We should be negligent if we forfeited our interest in this industry. We do not want to control the company or to increase our holding in it. We are not going on to the open market to buy shares; we are merely taking up our entitlement. It is a purely business undertaking. There is not one member who has spoken against this Bill who would not do exactly what we propose, if he were in our position.

Mr. Heaslip—The Government is not private enterprise.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The honourable member complains that the Government does not run its business like private enterprise. In this matter we are running our business like private enterprise, and he still complains. He says that because this is a profitable business we should hand it over to private enterprise. Apparently the Government can participate in any unprofitable undertaking. The Government, in developing the pine forests, has tried to encourage private enterprise to process half of the timber produced leaving the State mills to process the remainder. That was the policy the Government instructed the Forestry Commission to pursue many years ago, although we then realized that we would get a full return from our product.

We did not seek to take over and completely nationalize the production and milling of timber. Conditions have changed and now a mill requires more than a bench and saw. That type of mill cannot adequately cure timber after it has been sawn, nor can it efficiently saw timber in competition with mechanically operated plant. The old type of mill is proving disadvantageous to the district because when it is moved to a different site the area it vacates is littered with sawdust and mill offal which constitutes a serious fire hazard, particularly in summer. The heaps of sawdust inevitably catch alight and there is always a fire danger.

The Government has done its utmost to ensure the effective use of our forests. If anything can stop effective production, it would be the Government's declaring its unwillingness to continue its holding in Cellulose Australia Ltd. How can we persuade others to engage in industries ancillary to forestry production if we pull out? I thank members for their consideration of this Bill. This project is sound, and it is in the State's interests that we continue to have some small say in the production that comes directly from our forests. Our participation will ensure the development of the district and I believe will be of advantage to shareholders in the company and to the public generally.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1. to 3 passed.

Clause 4—'Disposal of shares.'

Mr. SHANNON—I have conferred with the Parliamentary Draftsman and the Treasurer and have ascertained that there are ample safeguards to prevent any Treasurer, whether he be of this generation or the next, from acting as though he had been handed a blank cheque. The Auditor-General will exercise an effective control, and there are legislative safeguards as well. This clause can, with safety, be left as it is.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ENFIELD GENERAL CEMETERY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 11. Page 576.)

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—In the absence from the Chamber of the member for Enfield, I indicate the support of the Opposition for this Bill. Appreciating that it has

to go to a Select Committee, and being confident that it will be fully examined by that committee, I wish to make only one or two brief observations. The Opposition is confident that it is a desirable measure and has been assured by the member for Enfield, who has made some investigations, that there is a desire for the measure. We believe that the Enfield cemetery is so situated that it is necessary to do everything possible as a Parliament to see that it may function to provide every possible service in that area and in the metropolitan area generally. I understand from the comments made by the Minister in his second reading speech that this trust has experienced some difficulties but that it has done reasonably well. However, due to financial limitations, it has been unable to provide sufficient burial space and it lacks a modern crematorium, but it has been assured by another body that if it can get Parliament's consent this work can be carried out at no cost to the State. I am confident that the Bill is desirable and that it will lead only to good; I therefore support the second reading.

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens)—I support the Bill which, of course, is not a lively subject and is not likely to quicken the interests of members greatly. The Enfield General Cemetery, which was set up under Act of Parliament in 1946, is of great interest to the residents of the northern suburbs and also of the rapidly expanding district of Tea Tree Gully. For some years since the cemetery was established the trust had difficulty in developing certain areas under its control partly because existing cemeteries were not completely filled and partly because crematoria were offered in other cemeteries. There is a very good crematorium in the southern part of the city, and it has attracted much custom. Whilst I do not wish to talk about competition in this regard, a great deal of custom has been attracted to the other side of the city. On the northern side of Adelaide the Church of England cemetery on North Road, which has been open for many years, is now almost completely filled, and people will no doubt have to look further northwards to this new cemetery. Incidentally, it was to have been an Anglican cemetery, and the land was purchased for that purpose, but it was transferred to the trust and various denominations now have their own sectors. Although that has been desirable it has had the unfortunate effect of making expansion and development expensive, as each denomination requires its own sector to be developed whereas, if it had

been developed by one denomination, it could have been developed more economically.

Despite the alterations made to the Act following the appointment of a special committee in 1956, this trust cannot now pay its commitments to the Government for advances made to it. It has been suggested that another organization should operate within the bounds of the Act on a new system of payment before need. Although that is a new system in relation to this cemetery, it has been adopted in relation to the Centennial Park cemetery where a person who wishes may provide a burial plot for himself and family before it is required. Other cemeteries have the advantage of having funds available before the need arises to use the blocks, and they can use the money to develop their cemeteries as a whole, to lay them out in a tasteful way, to provide gardens, trees and shrubs and to give the place a pleasant and peaceful appearance. This position has not been provided for at the Enfield General Cemetery, however, but this Bill allows this to be done.

It has been reported that a company is interested in erecting a crematorium on a site to be provided but the trust has no funds to build one: it cannot even pay back its obligations to the Government. I feel that, with the growing demand for this type of burial, this is an opportunity that should be grasped. If this Bill is rejected the development of this cemetery will be retarded for many years. As this Bill is a hybrid Bill and has to go before a Select Committee, I am sure it will be passed, but I point out that the recommendations are the unanimous recommendations and decisions arrived at by members of the board of the trust, many of whom I know personally, and I can vouch for their integrity and probity. I have great pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Bill read a second time and referred to a Select Committee consisting of Messrs. Jennings, Laucke, Nankivell and Ryan and the Hon. Sir Cecil Hincks; the Committee to have power to send for persons, papers and records, to adjourn from place to place, and to report on Tuesday, October 4, 1960.

COUNTRY HOUSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 24. Page 769.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—The purpose of this short Bill is one with which I entirely agree. The money pro-

vided by the legislation is especially earmarked by Parliament for the purpose of erecting small homes in country districts for pensioners, widows and other people of limited means and provides for a rental of one-sixth of their present income or £1 a week. The houses that have been built in many country towns with which I am familiar have been of inestimable benefit to certain of these people. This Bill will enable another 40 houses to be built for people who, through no fault of their own, have been unable to provide their own accommodation.

As I have said before, the provision of shelter is an important factor in community life. If people are unable to afford their own shelter it is the duty of the community as a whole to assist them in every possible way. This is not giving something away; it is simply establishing a building system under which these people will be provided with housing, and the rents derived therefrom will be used in turn to build further houses, so the number of houses built will gradually increase and, of course, as time goes on they will increase more rapidly. The Housing Trust is to be commended for administering this scheme free of cost, and I am satisfied that the money to be appropriated to build these additional 40 houses will not be required for the purposes for which it was originally collected. I therefore have great pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla)—I have pleasure in supporting this Bill; my only regret is that the money is insufficient to build more houses of this type. In Whyalla there are no houses of this type but the time is fast approaching, if it is not already here, when this town will need some of these houses. Some widows and many pensioners find themselves in great difficulties in paying council and water rates owing to the way in which they have been increased. I have no doubt that many of those people, if they had the opportunity to move into a house of this description, would do so after selling their property or relinquishing their tenancies. Many of these people find it impossible to get reasonably good but small accommodation with low rates attached to suit their needs, and there is a grave and increasing need in the community for houses of this description to be built to meet those needs.

I hope that in the future we shall see still more money provided for the special provision of houses of this type. Many pensioners and widows now occupy homes in highly rated areas and are finding that the rates are too high.

They wish they could pay their way but they are unable to do so, and they find there is no suitable house available that they could purchase if they moved from their present tenancies or ownership. If more houses of this description were available I am certain that many of those people would move into a situation where they could more easily meet their commitments, and they would be much happier in so doing. Furthermore, a small home is much more suitable for them in their declining years. It is with very great pleasure that I support the Bill.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa)—I, too, warmly support this Bill and endorse the sentiments expressed by the Leader and the member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday). I feel its provisions constitute one of the worthiest allocations of public funds I have ever had the pleasure of supporting. It is heart-warming to have noted, in the original provision of £360,000 for this purpose, how much happiness was given to those fortunate elderly folk who were allocated these houses. This £100,000 now to be allocated will bring the total to almost £500,000 for this very laudable purpose of ensuring comfortable and very conveniently set-out houses.

It is good to see that we are hereby providing for the comfort in their declining years of those who cannot supply a house for themselves. I have much pleasure in supporting this Bill and I hope that more money will be allocated to this worthy fund each passing year. As this State grows older there is a greater need for older citizens to be provided with houses of their own, and this scheme, which provides for houses in country areas, is indeed delightful because many country folk who desire to remain in the country will be able so to remain and enjoy the way of living they have experienced all their lives. I have applied for several of these houses on behalf of very worthy applicants. So far I have not had the pleasure of being informed when I will be allocated these homes, but I am hoping that I will be allocated two at Greenock in cases where I have no doubt great happiness will be afforded to the applicants. I am happy to support this Bill.

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray)—Like other members who have spoken on this Bill this afternoon I am happy to give it my full support. I congratulate the Housing Trust on the very fine effort it has made with the money available to it from the previous grant by the Commonwealth Government. All these

houses are nice to live in, and it is fitting that people in the declining years of their lives should have all the modern comforts that go with a house of this type. Some of my constituents have been blessed by the fact that they have been able to go into these houses in the last year or two. We have 12 such houses at Murray Bridge and another three at Tailem Bend. I know that the demand at Murray Bridge is still acute, for there are many worthy people there who desire to live in these houses. Indeed, Murray Bridge is a desirable place in which to live, both for elderly people and young people.

One successful application for one of these houses concerned two elderly people who were living in a type of shack close to the river. They were getting on in years, and it was not desirable for them to live just above the water, but they were feeling the pinch very badly and they occupied this place because it was all they could afford. They have now moved into one of these better type houses. I have visited them, and it is good to see them so contented and settled in a nice, brand new house with all modern conveniences. I am happy to see that the Government has taken unto itself the task of providing another 40 of these houses out of money it has found lying idle. If it has any more money lying idle I suggest that it look around to see where it could provide more such houses as these. The money would be very well spent, and the Government would be creating a real service to people in the latter part of their lives.

I have been told that 800 pensioners are waiting for flats or houses of this type in South Australia, and some have been waiting since 1955. Whereas this Bill will provide for another 40 of these houses it is still a long way from meeting the needs, and that is why I say that if there are any other moneys available they could easily be allocated for this purpose. The money received from these houses goes into a fund to enable other such houses to be built. Elderly spinsters and widows cannot get these houses because they are made for couples or people with limited means.

Mr. Shannon—A widow with a family can get one.

Mr. BYWATERS—Yes, but I am talking of elderly widows who live on their own.

Mr. Loveday—Two widows living together have been accepted.

Mr. BYWATERS—Elderly ladies very often like to be on their own. I wonder whether a block of flats could be built in some country

area where this need is very great. Some elderly widows and spinsters would like to have their own little places. This has been done in certain cases in the metropolitan area, and if it were done in the country it would meet a need. Possibly houses could be built to cater for these individual cases at no extra cost. They could have their own entrances, and possibly a sitting room and a small kitchen each would be sufficient. If such houses could be divided into four with separate entrances I think it could overcome the difficulty, and perhaps that suggestion could be looked at. I realize that the number of these houses is limited and that there is a great demand for them, but if accommodation could be provided in the way I have suggested it would fulfil a great need.

This is a good Bill and should not be delayed. I appreciate having had the opportunity to say a few words on it, and I thank the Government and the Housing Trust for their foresight and the work they have done with the money that has been made available.

Mr. CLARK (Gawler)—I strongly support this amending Bill. I believe there is nothing more important than a house that one can afford. Of course, the best thing is to own a house, but that is very difficult for people with limited means. This legislation has provided an opportunity for some elderly widows in poor circumstances to get into a place where they can be comfortable and where they can afford to live. Several of these houses have been built in my district, and I am rather proud that I have been able to help some people obtain them. I know others who would like these houses, and like the member for Murray I am putting in my claim.

I remember soon after I came into this House in 1952 one of the first speeches I attempted to make was on the Leader's motion for a similar measure to that in this Bill. I think it is well sometimes that the House should be reminded that not all the bright ideas originate with the Government. At that time we were not successful in the motion, although our aims were similar. We believed that many elderly people were not anxious to be forced into homes, or forced out of their own locality.

Mr. O'Halloran—We also advocated what the member for Murray suggested this afternoon.

Mr. CLARK—Yes. I was glad to hear the member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke) mention that most country people, when they become

too old to carry on the daily labour most of us have to do, are only too happy to settle down in their own locality amongst their own friends. These were the things we advocated in 1952. As I said, we were not successful, but I think perhaps we can take a little credit in thinking that possibly the seed we attempted to plant then has borne fruit, although at that time it did not appear that it would do so. I warmly support this Bill with the feeling that much good can still come to people as a result of the measure.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra)—I rise particularly to support the member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday) in his remarks, because the same problem applies in practically all country towns where rates and taxes of all descriptions are catching up with people who occupy houses. The fact that people have cheap rental houses has enabled them to meet those costs of taxes and rates, but these charges are continually increasing and, while we are providing these houses for people at £1 a week, we should also do something for those people other than those in this type of house who are meeting the impact of these rates. In this case they do not meet the rates, but we need now to consider something other than that amendment to the Local Government Act passed last year, which really is not much use. Something more than that is necessary to tend the needs of the elderly people of this State.

As they are elderly people and these houses are built for a specific purpose, I think perhaps they have an unnecessarily large amount of land around them. When a house is built for elderly people, they do not want a large area around it for it burdens them with keeping it clear of weeds, and so on. The areas are not as large as normal, but I think the areas at the backs of the houses could be reduced and more houses be built on them because elderly people do not have the capacity for cleaning up large areas around their houses. Where we build houses even with a normal building block, if we build houses back to back and provide a septic tank, we need a lot more land because any area will become saturated under those conditions. Where we build these small blocks of low rental houses, I think it would be easy to make one disposal tank for them, and it could be done without causing any difficulty at all in many places. It is a good idea. This multiplicity of separate tanks, one to every house, is not a good idea, because people have to dispose of their

effluent and the ground becomes saturated, particularly when those houses are built in a block.

Mr. Shannon—It is hard to know when a person puts wrong material into the tank.

Mr. QUIRKE—I do not think that point has sufficient weight to stop this being tried, because it certainly does not work the other way. If there is some difficulty as regards some foreign matter appearing other than what is supposed to be disposed of, that can be remedied from time to time. I support the Bill with the greatest pleasure and ask, in support of the member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday), that something be done other than what was done last year, if it can be devised to help people whose water rates and other forms of expenses are continually increasing while their incomes remain comparatively static. We come across cases where real hardship is incurred by people who own their own houses and who, because of the charges on them, find it difficult to make ends meet. That is particularly so in the case of the single person, the widow or any person living alone, whose income is based upon the one pension. Those people have a particularly hard time.

Another factor is that it is difficult for those people to sell those homes if they want to live somewhere else, so they are in a cleft stick. I draw the attention of the House to that in the hope that something can be done to further help these people, who are worthy citizens and have been so all their lives. They are citizens probably as good as any the State has ever had, yet, in the eventide of their lives when we give them houses like this, they still suffer considerable privation owing to the way costs are overtaking them.

Mr. HARDING (Victoria)—I support this Bill. It is impossible not to reiterate what has already been said; we are unanimous on this. Strange to say, there is not a trust rental house in Naracoorte. That is unusual for a country town. In another part of my electorate, Nangwarry, there are no houses other than rental houses, because the Woods and Forests Department owns them. This is not a Housing Trust area.

This matter of cheap rental houses for elderly people is most important. In Naracoorte we have only four. I hope that at the earliest possible moment we may be able to get more houses in such a large place. Honourable members may suppose that in Naracoorte, where the Housing Trust has seen fit to build only purchase houses, everybody is wealthy, but that is

not so. Several times I have endeavoured to find houses for widows, and the only houses I could find were substandard with no modern conveniences at all. I hope the time will come when that will no longer be the position.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—The provision of houses for widows and elderly people with substandard incomes is one of the best things done by the Government. That it has been most acceptable in all districts is evidenced by the debate thus far. I am reminded that the problem of providing a house of a reasonable standard for people on small incomes has been with the Parliament of South Australia for many years, and that the Housing Trust was originally set up to deal with that very problem. It was thought then that private enterprise could provide houses for people who could pay an economic rent, and the original idea of the establishment of the Housing Trust was to provide houses for people on substandard incomes, who are the people whose need this grant is specially designed to meet. The Housing Trust, of course, has gone into a wider field and, generally, has applied its energy to providing standard houses for those who can pay an economic rent. The experience of my district is on all fours with that of other districts: that there is, in addition to the need for standard houses, an ever-increasing need for this type of house for the pensioner.

I stress the need for single unit houses for elderly people. This is a particularly serious problem in Port Augusta and I have learnt from the debate this afternoon that our town is not singular in this, but that many other places are similarly situated. There is just no answer to the problem of the elderly woman who needs housing and cannot find a congenial companion with whom to occupy an ordinary Housing Trust home. There is need for a number of single unit houses as well as the provision being made by this legislation. We wish that the grant could be twice as much as the amount set aside because, if it were twice as much, it could all be used upon that deserving section of the community.

I should like to endorse the plea that has been made—although it does not come within the scope of this measure—that somewhere along the scale of social services some provision should be made for relief of the heavy burden of taxation borne by pensioners and elderly people owning their own houses. With the increase in water and corporation rates, insurance and other outgoings, many home owners are paying out in those charges more

each week than the rental charged for the houses provided under this legislation. That is the situation being faced by those owning their own homes. They have limited incomes and yet are required to pay in outgoings more each week, many of them more than a pound a week, than is being asked in rent for houses provided under this legislation. If anything can be done to ameliorate their plight it will have general support. I support the Bill and hope that similar legislation will be introduced next year.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—I support the Bill in order to draw the attention of the Government and its supporters to the position of the aged, not only as regards housing but also in other respects. The policy of my Party includes the establishment of centres for the housing and care of the aged all over South Australia, not just in the metropolitan area. This Bill provides for housing in certain country centres outside the metropolitan area, and it has the Opposition's wholehearted support. I do not intend to dwell on what has been said, but some glowing tributes have been paid to this Bill and the manner in which the Government hopes to provide housing for our elderly people in the country, without driving them into the metropolitan area where many finish up in homes. Some elderly people are not able to look after themselves in a house of their own. The Opposition believes in the establishment of country hospitals with rooms where elderly people can be cared for in the district in which they have lived, if not all their lives at least for many years prior to their incapacity, and where they can be visited by relatives and friends. Unfortunately, however, today at Parkside the doctor in charge has a map of South Australia indicating the areas from which persons have been sent to his establishment to be cared for in their later years. Those people could well be looked after in the areas in which they have lived all their lives. Additional rooms could be provided at the local hospitals to cater for their requirements. Members opposite have commended this legislation, but I remind them that the Labor Party has for many years advocated this provision. It has gone further and advocated the provision of hospital accommodation for the aged and sick in country areas, instead of moving them to Parkside.

Mr. JENKINS (Stirling)—I support this Bill, which empowers the Treasurer to make a grant of £100,000 to the Housing Trust from the Home Purchase Guarantee Fund for the

building of houses for aged people in the country. Members who have such houses in their districts have commended them, and although there are none in my district at present, the hope remains that there will be. This legislation could be described as an extension of one of the most humane social service measures we have ever had before us. I am pleased that the revolving fund will continue and will provide additional houses, and I trust that further grants may be devoted to this purpose in future. Many good things start with small beginnings, and in this case I hope the scheme snowballs until ultimately all aged persons in country areas are accommodated.

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

STATUTES AMENDMENT (PUBLIC SALARIES) BILL (No. 2).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 11. Page 576.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I am somewhat distressed at having to deal with a Bill of this magnitude at this late hour; however, I shall endeavour to handle it with all the lucidity of which I am capable. The Bill simply provides that the officers of the State whose salaries are fixed by Statute shall receive the same or equivalent allowances as those officers whose salaries are fixed by the Public Service Board, and that the same degree of retrospectivity shall operate. This is perpetrating an act of justice and I support the Bill.

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

PUBLIC FINANCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 11. Page 578.)

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla)—There is nothing controversial in this short Bill which makes two amendments to the Public Finance Act, and it is my privilege to indicate the Opposition's support. The first amendment is simply a substitution of the name of the Reserve Bank for the "Commonwealth Bank" as a result of Commonwealth banking legislation. Naturally, members of the Opposition regret the necessity for this amendment because they feel that the alterations to the Commonwealth Bank have not improved the position of that bank in

relation to the interests of the people. The second amendment gives effect to procedure in regard to trust funds and provides for certain economies in the financial procedure followed under the Act.

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

MONEY-LENDERS ACT AMENDMENT
BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.45 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, August 30, at 2 p.m.