

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.**

Wednesday, October 12, 1960.

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

**QUESTIONS.****LONG SERVICE LEAVE.**

Mr. FRANK WALSH—My question concerns some employees who were retrenched from the Railways Department, for example, during the depression, and their entitlement to long service leave. I understood that until the mid-thirties it was the normal practice for those people who wished to re-enter the Government service as daily paid staff to register at the Government Labour Exchange, of which Mr. Richardson was then Superintendent. If any of these cases are brought to the Premier's notice, will it be possible to ascertain from old records whether, during their periods of retrenchment, they applied regularly to return to the service?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Act does not deal with the matter in the manner the Leader has dealt with it. The Act states that where a person was retrenched because of the depression and no work was available for him, if he applied to return to his job as soon as it was again available he could be regarded as having continuity of service. The Act does not refer to whether or not he was registered in some labour exchange. That is not the point at issue. Records of when he returned to his job are available and they are accurate, and the Act lays it down that his entitlement depends upon his obtaining a certificate from the head of the service in which he was employed. No doubt the cases the honourable member has in mind relate to employees of the Railways Department who were retrenched and who subsequently returned. In many instances those men did not come back for several years, although their jobs were available much sooner and, consequently, the Railways Commissioner is not in a position to certify that they returned to their jobs as soon as they were available.

**RENT CONTROL.**

Mr. MILLHOUSE—Yesterday the Premier in answer to my question on notice about the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act gave some information to the House. The first two parts of my question were answered directly and in the third part I asked whether the Government knew how many houses and

premises were still under the provisions of the Act. The answer given by the Premier was expressed as coming from the Housing Trust and in its answer the trust said it did not know how many houses were now under control. I ask the Premier whether the Government, as distinct from the trust, has any other information about the matter and, if so, can he say how many houses or other premises are in fact under control?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—This information would not be known to any Government Department for the reason that since houses were placed under control various numbers of them have been decontrolled if they became subject to certain conditions, such as where a lease was entered into by the persons concerned. It need not be a registered lease under the Act, but could be a small slip of paper setting out the conditions of the lease privately as between the parties. At the moment the transaction takes place the house is decontrolled under the Act. Those facts could not be known to any department because it would not be necessary to register the transaction. I regret that as far as I know the information is not available from any source. I think that any estimate would be rather in the nature of a wild guess, because there are plenty of premises where the landlord and the tenant have never actually made an application for the fixation of rent. They have been content with the allowances that have been made in various ways by the Act and have not actually made application for the fixation of rent. I am afraid I cannot provide the honourable member with the information he seeks, but I can tell him the categories of houses that are not decontrolled. That, of course, is provided for in the Act.

**EMPRESS ELECTRONICS LTD.**

Mr. HUTCHENS—My question relates to a company known as Empress Electronics Ltd. The matter was raised by the member for Torrens recently and also by myself. Will the Premier have investigations made to see if the ex-sales manager of Van Houten Ltd., Mr. Charles Reid (who is a very prominent member of I.T.V. (S.A.) Sales Ltd. trading as Independent T.V. (S.A.) Ltd., once operating in Hindley Street, Adelaide) and 14 other former members of the Van Houten Company are now on the staff of Empress Electronics (S.A.) Ltd.; and in view of the many complaints received of the unsatisfactory trading practices of Empress Electronics (S.A.) Ltd. will the Premier, who has already made some

inquiries about this company's trading practices, watch the position in view of the unsatisfactory experiences concerning the other companies mentioned? I should mention that I.T.V. (S.A.) Limited trading as Independent T.V. (S.A.) Limited is now in voluntary liquidation.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—As the honourable member will realize, it is always wrong to presume that a person has not a good reputation unless something has been definitely proved against him, and I would not enter into any of those matters whatever. In respect of a question asked some time ago, I communicated with this firm and had some conversation with it to judge the nature of its business and see whether there was in my opinion anything contrary to the law in its mode of conducting its business. A member of this firm telephones a person he hopes will become a client and asks three simple questions. When the person answers the questions correctly he is told that he has won a prize and will have £50 deducted from the price of a television set if it is purchased from the firm. The complaint that has arisen is not in connection with the £50 but is that people believe that the £50 that has been cut off the price can be used as a deposit.

Mr. Hutchens—Would it not be correct to say that they have been led to believe that?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have not been privileged to get one of these prizes so I would not know, but as a matter of interest I asked this firm why it was taking this rather circuitous way to reduce the price of television sets—and that is what it amounts to, as the questions are such that I think even members opposite might be able to answer them. The firm told me that if it gave an outright reduction its supply of television sets would probably be cut off because some code operates among manufacturers which prevents price cutting. As far as I can determine, the firm is not doing anything contrary to the law, but I am not able to say whether or not there is anything which should be stopped. If I receive direct complaints which are substantiated by something more than hearsay, I will have them examined.

#### MELROSE WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. HEASLIP—Last week I asked the Minister of Works a question about the progress that had been made on the Melrose water scheme and although his answer was satisfactory it did not give all the information I

wanted. Has he any further information to give now?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—In answer to the honourable member last week I said that the scheme had been prepared and was ready for consideration by Cabinet. Cabinet considered the matter on Tuesday morning and approved the scheme at a cost of £45,700. This is a complete scheme for the township of Melrose based, of course, on Mr. Dickson's bore, the purchase of which was approved by Cabinet some time ago. A tank site has been selected on the south-east side of the town in the vicinity of the Cottage Hospital on the boundary of section 398 in the hundred of Wongyarra. Of course, that is to supply pressure to the town and to act as a storage for the town supply. I am informed that the district engineer is ready to start the scheme immediately; in fact, he was merely awaiting Cabinet approval before making a commencement. I cannot guarantee precisely the time of the completion because it will depend to some extent on the delivery of pipes and other matters. Asbestolite pipes are freely available at present and I would expect that there would be no hold-up on that account. I assure the honourable member that the scheme will go ahead as rapidly as possible under those circumstances.

#### X-RAY EQUIPMENT.

Mr. RALSTON—The *Advertiser* of September 29 published extracts from a report submitted to the Commonwealth Parliament the previous day by the National Radiation Advisory Committee. After dealing with some aspects of nuclear weapon fallout, the newspaper report said:—

The committee repeats its warning that there must be a balanced approach to the radiation hazards which might arise from medical practice. Great advantages are to be obtained from these practices but it is essential that the level of exposure should be kept to a minimum consistent with medical necessity, it said. South Australia, Queensland and Western Australia have legislated to require that all X-ray equipment for use on man be registered. The committee again urges Federal control of all potential radiation hazards. Although States have taken some action there has been much delay in implementing legislation and some do not have even minimum control over the uses of radiation, it says.

Can the Premier inform the House whether it is correct that all X-ray equipment for use on man is registered in South Australia and what qualifications, if any, are needed by persons operating X-ray equipment for use on man in this State?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—This matter has been the subject of some correspondence between the Commonwealth and State Governments. So that members may have a full report on it, and one which will set out precisely the present position, I will obtain a report from the Minister of Health and enable the honourable member to have it as soon as possible.

#### METROPOLITAN MILK SUPPLY.

Mr. JENKINS—Is the Premier aware that a practice of long standing in the delivery of milk to pick-up points for the convenience of vendors has been disallowed by the Metropolitan County Board? As scores of such pick-up points are used by all wholesalers, this will seriously disrupt the supply of milk to consumers. Will the Premier consider the desirability of placing the sole control of the supply of milk in the metropolitan area under the Metropolitan Milk Board?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The question involves some matters of policy. I do not think that the honourable member was in this House when the Metropolitan Milk Board was established. At the time there was a great demand for the whole of the metropolitan milk supply to be placed under one authority. There were a number of authorities then, the local boards of health having some control in the country, the Agriculture Department having some control, and the Metropolitan County Board having some control in the metropolitan area. There was great confusion and as a consequence I think that the supply of milk to Adelaide was not nearly up to the standard it should have been. When the question of putting it all under one authority arose, while it was possible to establish the Milk Board and give it complete authority as far as the country was concerned, there was great objection in the metropolitan area by the County Board because the board's milk revenue was the most substantial revenue it got.

Mr. Shannon—It paid their salaries.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes, it paid the salaries for all the metropolitan health authorities and they strenuously refused to hand over their control of milk, mainly, I believe, because of the financial results that would accrue to the board. This is an important matter and the Government would, of course, be very much concerned if anything to stop the proper distribution of milk took place. I will obtain a full report for the honourable member from the Milk Board and, if necessary, have the matter considered in Cabinet.

#### SECONDHAND TYRES.

Mr. QUIRKE—Some time ago I asked the Premier a question concerning secondhand motor tyres. When tyres are taken off vehicles and purchased by the motor trade they are treated under the legislation in the same way as tyres that somebody picks up and attempts to sell openly. These conditions are irksome to the trading companies, which have asked whether the Second-hand Dealers Act could be amended to exempt these tyres. Has the Premier a reply to my earlier question on this matter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Deputy Commissioner of Police reports:—

Business trends since World War II have shown a marked increase in the number of traders who attract custom by accepting almost any used article as a trade-in on new goods. This method is used extensively in selling a wide variety of goods, and the traders accepting the used goods as trade-ins cannot negotiate the sales unless licensed as secondhand dealers. There can be little doubt that many traders consider the provisions of the Second-hand Dealers Act and the Regulations thereunder as irksome, and the Police receive many inquiries from them with a view to establishing an easier way of complying with the provisions of the Act, and it can be safely anticipated that if any particular article was now granted an exemption from the Act, a flood of requests would follow for other articles to be exempted in a like manner.

As the Act now stands the Police are able to exercise a reasonable control over the great variety of used articles on the secondhand market, and thus prevent dishonest persons from finding a ready market for the disposal of stolen goods. An exemption granted to a tyre dealer who removed used tyres and fitted new ones to a vehicle, would, I feel, open an avenue of trading in used tyres which would be very difficult to police, and which would enable any service station proprietor who was so inclined to display used tyres for sale without any form of identification. To any query as to their origin he could say: "I have traded them. I don't know anything about them, and I don't have to know anything about them."

The purpose of the Second-hand Dealers Act is to regulate the buying and selling of second-hand goods, and for purposes incidental thereto and consequent thereon, and it must be agreed that the tracing and recovery of stolen goods is one of the accepted incidental or consequential purposes. Any amendment which opens an avenue to remove that advantage would be against the true intent of the Act, and whatever inconvenience may be caused to the trader is, I feel, outweighed by the many instances occurring where owners have had stolen goods returned to them and dishonest persons have been punished from inquiries conducted directly through the control afforded the Police by this Act. I consider that there should be no amendment to the Second-hand Dealers Act to exempt tyres removed from vehicles and replaced by new tyres.

**TEA TREE GULLY WATER SUPPLY.**

Mr. LAUCKE—Subdivision for housing purposes is rapidly proceeding within the Tea Tree Gully district council area and the need for a major water supply in the district becomes more pressing each passing week. Can the Minister of Works say what stage preparations have reached for the implementation of the major scheme required in the Modbury, Tea Tree Gully, Highbury, Hope Valley and Golden Grove areas?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—This request is before the department and was the subject of a deputation the member introduced to me some time last year. The development in some areas outlined was then of a rather scattered nature and, indeed, there was the over-riding factor that it was not possible then to support a major scheme because the trunk main had not been completed to the stage where the supply could be given. The position has advanced a little since then but I cannot answer all the member's question, particularly as it relates to a fairly large area which has been subdivided and is being rapidly occupied. One pre-requisite of the supply of services is that development shall be occurring and that there shall be tangible evidence that development will continue rapidly. The department cannot give a supply where no development is occurring, but frequently the department will take a chance in favour of the house builders, although at the moment of asking the development is rather scattered, if the people obviously intend to build and if development will occur. The department will then recommend that a supply be granted in anticipation of more building taking place. I shall have the matter examined and advise the member as soon as I can get the required information.

**GOVERNMENT HOUSE GUARDS.**

Mr. FRED WALSH—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked on September 7 concerning the guards at Government House?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have a report from the Deputy Commissioner of Police which reads as follows:—

In view of the increasing demands on the Force, it is very desirable that present members are employed where they can be of the greatest benefit to the community. Rather than replacing members "suffering from some disability or sickness", our investigations show that the employment of retired policemen and other weekly paid employees on guard duties at Government House would release five active police officers, whose average age is 32 years and average length of service four years, for "police duties". (In a letter to this office

dated 28/7/60 the secretary of the S.A. Police Association advised, "The Association at no time considered that the duties at Government House were in keeping with police duties".)

The action we have taken in this matter would appear to be supported by the members themselves expressing a dislike for the guard work, and also by the fact that we are finding difficulty in holding staff on work considered monotonous and distasteful.

Suitable rates of pay are at present being considered by an officer of the Public Service Commissioner's Department following an examination of the duties required of the various positions at Government House, and a comparison with similar work required of employees in other Government departments. Provision will be made in the rates for the fact that shift work will be included in the duties of guard and also that the appointees will be sworn in as Special Constables.

Experience has shown that these members are only called upon to exercise a restricted police function on very rare occasions, but they will be charged with the responsibility of safeguarding Her Majesty's representative in this State and we feel it is desirable that they be armed with the powers of a Special Constable.

**WHYALLA INTERSECTION.**

Mr. LOVEDAY—As the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Roads, probably knows, at the junction of McBryde Terrace and Playford Avenue near the bridge in Whyalla protracted negotiations resulted in the removal of the concrete island and, after further protracted negotiations, certain lines were drawn at that dangerous intersection where some serious accidents have occurred. The position now is that the local police authority, the Town Commission and the Combined Unions' Council are still satisfied that that intersection is not as safe as it might be, and consideration has been given to the placing of sandbags in position so that the police might observe where the ultimate concrete kerbing should be placed in lieu of lines. Will the Minister take up this matter with his colleague with a view to getting a quick decision about this intersection to render it as safe as possible for traffic?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Yes; I will take up the matter with the Minister.

**PORT PIRIE HARBOUR IMPROVEMENTS.**

Mr. McKEE—Has the Minister of Works a reply to a question I asked yesterday about wharf reconstruction at Port Pirie?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—No, I have not yet received a written reply from the General Manager of the Harbors Board but I am informed that Mr. Meyer (General Manager) desires to see me this afternoon in conference and I have no doubt that this is one matter

he wishes to discuss. It is a big matter having many implications. One problem is the supply of steel for the sheet piling necessary for wharf construction. We are suffering at present a shortage of certain types and rollings, which affects the position. The Chief Engineer mentioned that to me a week or fortnight ago but, after I have had a talk with the General Manager, I hope to be able to give the honourable member the information he desires.

#### MYPOLOGA WATER SCHEME.

Mr. BYWATERS—A sum was put on the Estimates for the commencement of a stock and domestic water supply for Mypolonga. Can the Minister of Irrigation say when the work is likely to be commenced and whether plans have been drawn up so that work can be started?

The Hon. Sir CECIL HINCKS—I investigated plans only this morning in that regard and have asked to discuss it further with the Director, who unfortunately went away yesterday very ill so there may be a short delay. However, I think that in the next two or three weeks I shall be able to bring down a report for the honourable member.

#### LAND SETTLEMENT.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Has the Minister of Lands a reply to the question I asked yesterday about Mr. Siviour of Merriton?

The Hon. Sir CECIL HINCKS—Yes. I have a reply regarding an application for a single unit proposition by Mr. C. F. Siviour. In December, 1957, Mr. E. R. Cawthorne offered sections 104 and 157, Hundred of Smith, 1,385 acres as a war service land settlement single unit for Mr. Siviour. The price asked by Mr. Cawthorne was £9,000 in excess of the Land Board's valuation of the vendor's interest and, when Mr. Cawthorne was advised, he replied in two words, "Not interested", and the offer lapsed. Shortly after, Mr. Cawthorne asked if the land could be purchased and allotted to himself as a war service holding; in those circumstances, he would accept the board's valuation. Mr. Cawthorne, however, was not eligible for allotment under the scheme.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Can the Minister say whether a neighbouring section in the same hundred was, in fact, purchased for settlement at a higher price than that at which Mr. Cawthorne offered the block? What was the price per acre paid for the neighbouring block, if it were paid? What was the price per acre at which Mr. Cawthorne offered the block, and if there was a difference in the price in favour

of Mr. Cawthorne's block, what was the basis of the differential of valuation by the board?

The Hon. Sir CECIL HINCKS—A block was purchased next to the block offered by Mr. Siviour to us. I have not the price of that, but in the case of this block Mr. Cawthorne valued it at £24,000, whereas the Land Board's valuation was £15,000. I shall get the balance of the information for the honourable member.

#### CORNSACK PRICES.

Mr. HEASLIP—Present harvest indications are that many cornsacks will be required. A month ago they were priced at 39s. a dozen, but the price has increased by about 10s. a dozen and today a bale costs about £50. As cornsacks are under price control has the Premier any comment to make on the increase of more than 25 per cent in the price?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The member for Murray (Mr. Bywaters) asked a similar question on October 4 and I promised to obtain a report, which I think will answer the honourable member's question too. The Prices Commissioner reports that although new cornsacks are not subject to price control, the position is kept under close examination by the Prices Department. The Prices Commissioner has reported that the increase this year is due to a steep rise in import costs which are outside the control of local merchants. South Australian prices are based on the weighted average of prices paid by all merchants for the full season's requirements and provide for the normal profit margin.

Last year merchants purchased 25,000 bales of which, due to the poor season, only 16,000 bales were required, leaving a much larger carry-over than usual of 9,000 bales. The lower prices paid for the 9,000 bales were averaged with the higher prices paid for this season's requirements to arrive at the current selling price. This is the usual procedure each year. Estimated requirements this season are 68,000 bales and provision has been made by merchants to have this number available. If the cost of the 9,000 bales carried over from last season had not been averaged in with the cost of this season's purchases, the price this season would have been £1 14s. 3d. a bale higher than it is.

Although import costs have risen this year due to the shortage of raw jute the current price of £49 1s. 3d. a bale (39s. 3d. a dozen to farmers) is well below the price reached in 1952 of £87 10s. a bale or 70s. a dozen. As regards once used cornsacks which are subject to control the Prices Commissioner has

found it necessary to increase the price from 26s. a dozen to 31s. 6d. a dozen in sympathy with the increase on new cornsacks. He has, however, also managed to retain supplies in this State at this price by agreement reached with merchants.

All members will realize that it would be a serious matter if the secondhand bags were exported to other States as they are useful for mill offal and such requirements. While the Prices Commissioner has had to slightly increase the price for these bags he has an agreement with the merchants that the bags will not be exported but will be retained in South Australia.

I anticipate that the honourable member may ask why the price of woolsacks has not increased this year. The reason is entirely due to the stock agents' taking time by the forelock and importing a full season's requirements at the lower prices that were ruling pre-season.

Mr. Shannon—We are also enjoying an advantage from the earlier purchase of wheat bags.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—If we had to purchase bags at the current overseas prices it would be extremely costly. I assure members that the Prices Commissioner will keep this matter under active surveillance because it could have serious consequences this year.

#### WHYALLA BRIDGE.

Mr. LOVEDAY—The Minister of Works is no doubt aware that proposals have been made for an additional bridge in Whyalla over the Whyalla to Iron Knob tramline from a point opposite Norrie Avenue and thence across to a point on the Port Augusta road. Can the Minister of Works obtain details as to whether this is a concrete proposal and when it is likely to be commenced?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I will ask the Minister of Roads for a report. I know that, during his absence overseas, it was suggested that the existing bridge was somewhat overloaded at peak hours and constituted a hazard. I believe that the authorities in Whyalla have discussed the matter among themselves. I am wondering whether the proposal now mentioned is in addition to the widening or the reconstruction of that bridge from Playford Avenue northward, or whether it is in lieu of such a proposal; whether the bridge he proposes is to relieve the present bridge from some of its load and therefore avoid the necessity for reconstruction, or whether it is intended to be

in addition to that proposal. Perhaps the honourable member might indicate that to me, and then I shall be able to inform my colleague as to the proposal.

#### GAWLER LAND.

Mr. CLARK—A few weeks ago I asked whether the Premier could obtain for me information whether rumours current in Gawler were correct that the Housing Trust had purchased land known as the Gawler aerodrome property. Has he now a reply?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—At that time I expressed doubt whether the honourable member's information was correct. I have now received the following report from the Chairman of the Housing Trust:—

The South Australian Housing Trust is not negotiating for the purchase of the Gawler aerodrome. As far as is known to the trust the land in question is not for sale.

#### FEDERAL AID FOR ROADS.

Mr. McKEE—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question regarding Federal aid to local councils for road construction?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—My colleague, the Minister of Roads, informs me that prior to June, 1959, the funds provided for roads to the State by the Federal Government were based on the petrol tax, and as petrol usage increased, funds to the State increased from year to year. Since this date, funds provided to the State are not related to the petrol tax, but are provided from general revenue, and are increased by a small percentage each year. This percentage increase is little, if any, greater than that received during the last few years of the previous Federal Act, and certainly does no more than provide for the increased traffic, having regard to increased wages and machinery costs. There is therefore no reason for any alteration in the method of allocating assistance to councils. This allocation is based on road needs, and not on any fixed formula, so that amounts received by a council will vary from year to year, depending on the needs of its district compared with the whole of the State.

#### WAR SERVICE LAND VALUATIONS.

Mr. KING—During the debate last evening on the Estimates the Minister of Repatriation said he would give me some information regarding the present state of the inquiry into valuations for war service land settlers at Chaffey, Loveday and other areas. Has he that information now?

The Hon. Sir CECIL HINCKS—Up to the present time 135 valuations have been completed. The programme for 1960-61 covers 72 new valuations in Loxton and Cooltong. The valuers will commence on the 19 blocks in Cooltong on November 1 and expect to finish the field work by the end of that month. They will then go on with the Loxton blocks. This is being done so that these 72 settlers can be advised of their valuations as early as possible. The valuing officers will then continue with the appeals cases. It has already been agreed that in fairness to all concerned, inspections should be made late in the season. The 135 plus 72 will cover all who have reached the assistance period except 23, but valuation is not required at this stage in those cases, as they will not be due for payments. The 19 will complete Cooltong except for one case not yet on assistance period.

#### PORT ROAD RAILWAY CROSSING.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Has the Premier, representing the Minister of Railways, a reply to my earlier question regarding the installation of automatic gates on the Port Road, Woodville, where the Grange train crosses?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Railways Commissioner reports that the suggested provision of automatic gates at the Port Road crossing on the Grange line has been examined, but the proposal is not recommended because of certain technical difficulties. However, the possibility of improving the protection of the crossing by the installation of additional flashing lights is being examined.

#### RAILWAY CROSSINGS.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Has the Premier, representing the Minister of Railways, a reply to my previous question regarding police action against motorists who fail to stop at the required distance from a railway crossing where there is a "Stop" sign?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Deputy Commissioner of Police reports:—

Our inquiries show that the majority of accidents at railway crossings are caused by the negligence of persons endeavouring to cross a line when electrical or other warning devices are operating, and not as a result of vehicles stopping too close to the railway line. The fact that 114 persons were prosecuted during the financial year ended June 30, 1960, for failing to stop within the specified distance from railway crossings is evidence that the police are already taking the necessary action where vehicles and pedestrians fail to comply with the requirements of the Act.

#### PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORTS.

The SPEAKER laid on the table the following final reports by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence:—

Blackwood, Plympton and Taperoo High Schools.

Campbelltown, Darlington, Modbury, Naracoorte South, Seaton Park, Sturt, Seaton North and Gilles Plains Primary Schools.

Enfield High School Additional Wing.

Gawler High School.

Keith Area School.

Ordered that reports be printed.

#### CAMPBELLTOWN CORPORATION

##### BY-LAW: FIREWORKS.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham)—I move—

That By-law No. 38 of the Corporation of the City of Campbelltown to control fireworks, made on June 15, 1960, and laid on the table of this House on August 23, 1960, be disallowed.

This is a very long by-law, but the principal part is in paragraph 1, which is as follows:—

No person shall use any gunpowder, fireworks or any explosive substance within the municipality, except with the approval of the council, provided however that approval of the council shall not be necessary for the use of any gunpowder, fireworks or other explosive substances on November 5 in any year.

It then goes on to give exceptions to the use of any explosive substances in any mine within the meaning of the Mines Inspection Act. The object of the by-law is to prevent the use of fireworks within the City of Campbelltown, except on November 5 or on other occasions, without the consent of the council. The second paragraph of the by-law lays down how that consent is to be obtained. One must lodge an application in writing and specify the purpose and place where it is desired to use the gunpowder, etc. Then the third paragraph provides that if the council approves of the use of gunpowder, etc., that will be evidenced by a certificate under the hand of the town clerk setting out a number of details. The final paragraph imposes a penalty not exceeding £20 for any breach of the by-law. Members will see that the by-law is drastic and members of the Subordinate Legislation Committee felt that it was harsh because it would prevent any Guy Fawkes party or any use of fireworks, however innocent, safe or well supervised, on any day but November 5, except with the consent of the council. As members will realize from the extracts I have read from succeeding paragraphs in the by-law, that consent can be obtained only in a cumbersome fashion, so

this would in effect mean that any child who wanted to let off fireworks on, say, November 3, could be told by his father that he could not let them off because he had not obtained the council's permission.

Mr. Stott—You do not think Parliament should suppress Guy Fawkes day?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—I do not think so. An objection to the by-law was taken and evidence was given to the committee. Subsequently, representatives of the council attended to explain to the committee the reasons why the by-law had been passed and it appeared that there had been complaints, legitimate in part if not in whole, about the noise of fireworks displays at the monastery of the Franciscan Fathers at Campbelltown.

Mr. Lawn—They have a Guy Fawkes day there once a week, don't they?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—No. According to the council, this happens two or three times a year. That is not frequent, but the council, having received complaints from ratepayers, inquired and found that under the present law and its present by-laws it did not have power to control fireworks displays or the letting off of fireworks. The main point of complaint was apparently the noise of the explosions and the lateness of the hour at which they took place. It was agreed by all the witnesses who came before the committee that that was the only reason why the by-law was passed. Objection was taken to the by-law by the Franciscan Fathers, and Father Romano Franchini attended before the Subordinate Legislation Committee to give evidence on this matter. He said that fireworks displays were always linked with religious feasts which took place up to seven times a year, although fireworks were not always used. He admitted that on occasion the fireworks had been let off a little late, even as late as 11 o'clock. The following is an extract from his evidence:—

You mentioned the hours of 5 o'clock till 9.30 or later at night?—Yes. When they complained we were a bit late at night; we finished about 11 o'clock. They put in the *News Review* that it was after 11 o'clock, but it was 11 o'clock.

Did the fireworks go till 11 o'clock?—They ended the feast and so that night it was at 11 o'clock, but it was in April.

Would you be prepared to finish the fireworks earlier in future?—Yes.

Until what time do you think you would like to have your fireworks?—In summer we could say 10 o'clock or before, and in the winter it could be 8.30 or 9 o'clock.

If you are allowed to continue to have the fireworks display, you would be prepared to agree to almost any time during the evening as

the latest at which you would have the fireworks?—Yes, we do exactly as you say. We want to be the first ones to give the example to others. We want to direct the migrants.

Mr. Hutchens—In other words, Campbelltown need not expect any further bother?

Mr. MILLHOUSE—That is so. The attitude of Father Franchini was that he was only too willing to abide by any reasonable regulation of the fireworks displays that might be imposed but felt that the total ban contained in his by-law was going too far. Subsequently he was asked by the Hon. A. J. Shard:—

Assuming that the hour of 9 p.m. was the latest that they could be exploded, would that meet with your convenience?

and he replied, "Yes." Subsequently, he emphasized that in fact there had not at any time been any danger from these fireworks displays but admitted that on a couple of occasions there had been sufficient noise and they had been sufficiently late at night to cause legitimate complaints. Subsequently, Mr. Ronald William Morris Johnson, Alderman of the City of Campbelltown, and Mr. John Taggart Leaney, the Town Clerk, gave evidence before the committee. It appeared from their evidence that the principal complaint was the lateness of the hour, which they put down as 10.30. At first, when asked whether they would be happy if there were some restriction on the lateness of letting off fireworks, they said they did not think it would meet the complaints of ratepayers, but subsequently they said that it probably would. They were then asked whether it was the intention of the council to prevent Guy Fawkes parties and things like that, and they said that in fact that was not their intention. Mr. Johnson said:—

It may be harsh, but what are we to do? Other fireworks displays are held about that time, and for them permission must be obtained. The ordinary display of fireworks obtained from traders is not so intense as others, and we have had no complaints about them.

The following is another extract from the transcript:—

A Guy Fawkes party may be held a few days before November 5, and under the by-law that would not be permitted. Is it intended to prevent such a party being held?—(Mr. LEANEY)—There is no intention that way.

I think the by-law should be framed in such a way as to prevent this type of party from being debarred?—(Mr. JOHNSON)—Yes.

It was obvious from the drift of the evidence of these two men that the by-law had in fact been framed more widely than the council intended. In other words, in the view of



members of the Subordinate Legislation Committee it is too wide, and the representatives of the council agreed with that view. There may well be some case for a measure of control over the letting off of fireworks. I saw in the press a week or two ago that the Municipal Association was considering whether or not there should be some measure of control, but the Subordinate Legislation Committee felt that the by-law as drafted was far too sweeping, especially as it had been framed to deal with one particular case and, from the evidence given by Father Franchini, it was pretty obvious that that will not recur in future.

That is all I need to say about the recommendation for disallowance except that, of course, the committee itself could not and did not suggest any amendment; its only function is to recommend disallowance *in toto* or not make any recommendation. In this case, whilst the committee had some sympathy for the council and the object it had in mind, it felt there was no alternative but to recommend the disallowance of the by-law because it trespasses on rights already established by law.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla)—This is one time when I can agree with the member for Mitcham because I feel that the by-law is far too stringent. I was pleased to hear him say that perhaps there should be some restriction on the use of fireworks, not so much because of noise but because of danger to other people. Recently at Whyalla a heavy cannon was thrown into an open-air picture theatre and had it exploded in a certain place someone could easily have lost his eyesight. The matter of the damage that can be caused by irresponsible people should be investigated in order to have the necessary preventive legislation. If there were some restriction on the power of the fireworks sold, as well as a restriction on the period during which they could be sold—possibly a fortnight or a month before Guy Fawkes Day—it would be an effective form of control. We must remember that today many functions are held where crackers are used harmlessly, and consideration would have to be given to their exemption. There should be some measure of control to provide effective safeguards.

Motion carried.

#### ASSEMBLY ELECTORATES.

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

That in the opinion of this House the Government should take steps to readjust the House of Assembly electoral zones and the

boundaries of electorates to provide a more just system for electing the House, which the Hon. Sir Thomas Playford had moved to amend by leaving out all the words after the word "House" first appearing, and inserting in lieu thereof the words "any reduction in country Parliamentary representation must correspondingly increase the tendency towards centralization of population and industry."

(Continued from October 5. Page 1180.)

Mr. CLARK (Gawler)—Because time was against me last week I have now to offer my second and final instalment of the argument I was advancing in support of the motion. I make no apology for doing it because I believe that this is one of the most important matters to be brought before Parliament this session. Last week I tried to show that Government members had deliberately attempted to misconstrue the meaning of the motion and make it appear that we were actually advocating fewer country members for the Assembly. I believe it was done because they could think of no effective argument. In fact, the only argument in this debate from Government members has been a sort of quibbling argument about "just" or "more just" representation. In the motion there is no reference to reducing the number of country members, and the Opposition does not support that at all. Last week I said that I would like to see more country members in this place. I said that the present electoral system hindered rather than helped decentralization, and that that was the purpose of the present set-up, and that, if not, it had that effect. I suggested that the gerrymander in South Australia should be removed to give country districts their first opportunity to flourish in the true sense.

The present position in this State is bad enough. We have possible action by another place hanging over our heads like the sword of Damocles. It is really a two-edged sword because we have the gerrymander as well. It appears obvious from this debate, particularly from remarks by the member for Torrens, that some Government members still plead ignorance of the meaning and purpose of the gerrymander. Mr. Coumbe had the temerity or impudence to quote Dr. Finer, but he forgot that a number of members in this Chamber have had the opportunity in a University course, and since, to study Dr. Finer's work, and we know the trend of his argument in this matter. I thought it was rather impudent

of Mr. Coumbe to quote a man of such standing and take something out of its context to give the impression that he said something that he did not say. We all know the form of Mr. Coumbe. He has a strong, sonorous voice, which he uses to advantage. He speaks out loudly and boldly and draws interjections. Usually he goes very well, but on this occasion, in the words of Shakespeare, he was "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

Mr. Jennings—Why did you leave out the line that came before that?

Mr. CLARK—It refers to a tale coming from an idiot. I would be the last to accuse Mr. Coumbe of being an idiot, but in this case the tale he told was idiotic. I think I should give the complete statement by Dr. Finer, which Mr. Coumbe may have intended to give. I think it gives the best definition we have had of "gerrymander," which is a word that is sometimes misused, and if not misused it is certainly not understood. Dr. Finer defined "gerrymander" in this way:—

"Gerrymander" means to arrange the shape of constituencies so that your own Party's majorities however small are spread over the largest number of constituencies, and your opponent's majorities are made as large as they can be in each constituency certain to be won by them, but restricted to as few constituencies as possible.

That is what has been done in the Gawler electorate. We can well believe what Dr. Finer has said about "gerrymander" because that is exactly what we have in our South Australian system. We have a so-called two to one system, but it is really about 3.4 to 1. Conversely, Dr. Finer said:—

To obtain democratic electorates constituencies must be sized according to convenience and equity. They must not be too large to prevent personal contact between members and electors. . . .

Then he went on:—

. . . and they must be as nearly equal in population as possible.

Surely everybody will agree that that statement is 100 per cent correct. Unfortunately it would be agreed by Government members that it is all right for every place except South Australia. If it will be of value to members I will be glad to have copies made of that statement by Dr. Finer about the way to obtain democratic electorates. I understand that the member for Mitcham is a very active member at his Party conferences, and possibly if I gave him a copy he would move it at his Party conference and possibly get a vote in its favour. Of course, it would not matter, for it would be regarded only as an expression of

opinion, even if he got it passed, and would be considered not to be binding on anyone.

The same thing applies to our electoral system. This system, election after election, allows people to give their opinion; it allows the majority regularly to vote against the Government, but the Government still remains the Government. In other words, the people of South Australia are treated like the members at a Liberal and Country League conference: their votes are recorded, merely as an expression of opinion and are not binding on anyone at all. My Party, on the contrary, as the motion shows, is plainly seeking electoral justice. It is not seeking to foist its electoral policy on the people of South Australia: it is merely asking the Government to take the steps to make the electoral system more just. Members of my Party want only electoral justice. We want the electoral boundaries drawn up without any management at all, and without any advantage to either Party, and that is all the motion seeks. A most cogent question posed by Finer is as follows:—

Are politicians so unfair as deliberately to produce or maintain inequitable electoral districts?

Mr. Quirke—They all are.

Mr. CLARK—I hope that given the opportunity Opposition members would not be, but I am afraid that in this House we have a majority—but certainly not members sitting on this side of the House—who are prepared to produce inequitable electoral districts for their own benefit. How they vote on this issue will provide the answer to that question. We are told that the electoral system must remain to help the country areas, but one might naturally ask: has the system really helped country areas?

I do not like burdening the House with many figures and do not intend to do so, but I shall quote some which should make members wonder whether this system has had the effect it ostensibly has. We now have about 61 per cent of the population in the metropolitan area and 39 per cent in the country, and obviously at this rate, by the year 2000, the ratio between the city and the country will be close to 75-25. In 1938-39 individual holdings in South Australia totalled 31,280, whereas now they total only 28,105, a decrease of more than 3,000, yet the population of the State has increased by about 56 per cent in that period. We know also that the metropolitan population in that time has increased by 70 per cent and the country population by only about 20 per cent. I believe the system in South Australia

has deliberately led to an over-emphasis on secondary industries to the detriment of primary industries. All this has been done despite the wise guidance of 26 worthy country members, including myself. Without going into detail I think it could be said that the system that allows this to happen—indeed, the system that encourages it to happen—is a system that is supposed to help decentralization in South Australia. We want to know: does it? The other night I quoted a few of the Premier's remarks on this important issue. The Premier, in all righteousness and sincerity, I trust, said at the official opening of the annual Federal Council meeting of the Australian Journalists Association only last year:—

The vast undeveloped areas of Australia are in a sense a reproach to Australia. In the next 25 years we have to populate this country and occupy it in the complete sense, not just by establishing a few capital cities.

Yet we know that Adelaide has grown faster than any other capital city, and the Premier probably had this fact in mind when he made those comments. I could not agree more with the words the Premier used on that occasion, and I am sure that all honourable members would agree, too; but how can those words of the Premier's be reconciled with his opposition to this motion? It was really little more than token opposition, but it was certainly opposition; yet the motion seeks to assist that very development the Premier says he is so keen on. We seek to do it by changing the system that in the past has hindered development. I hope all members will support the motion. The question at issue is not whether a Government is good or bad. I do not believe that question would have any validity as an argument, even if a system were devised to keep in office a Government that was the best Government we had ever had in South Australia. I am not admitting for one moment that the present Government is the best we have ever had.

Mr. Jennings—Who is going to decide that?

Mr. CLARK—That is the very point. Some Government members may attempt to justify a system that is basically wrong by saying to themselves, "I believe the Government has been well led and that it is a good Government." The people are the judge of that. I would not believe, even if that idea were true, that the end ever justified the means. Surely that must be the only reason why some Government members maintain this system by supporting it, for I cannot imagine any other reason.

The point at issue is not whether the Government is good or bad but whether it is the Government that the majority of the people want. If the majority of the people support it, under a fair and equitable system, then, of course, it should be the Government. However, under the present system a different story is obvious. Can the people change this Government? We have been told that they can, and I believe it is just possible under abnormal circumstances, but under normal circumstances, as things stand at present, there is but little hope of changing it. I am reminded of the words used in 1954 by the late Leader of the Opposition when explaining a Bill in this House seeking electoral justice, and I am also reminded of just how many attempts the late Leader made to bring justice to the people of South Australia. We shall carry on those attempts. The Leader on that occasion said:—

It is not our intention to perpetuate a gerrymander in favour of the Labor Party in South Australia.

It was not the Opposition's intention to do that in 1954, and I assure the House, despite some remarks that have been made, that it is still not the Opposition's intention to do so. In fact, it is the last thing my Party wants to do, and we do not attempt to do so in this motion. I hope honourable members will believe me when I say in all sincerity on behalf of my colleagues that all we seek by this motion is to get an admission from this House that the existing electoral system is not perfect and not just. If we get that admission, a just system should be easy to obtain. All we ask the House to do is to agree that the Government should take steps to provide a more just system. If any more evidence is required of our sincerity surely it is manifest in the fact that we are prepared to allow the Government we do not trust to make the moves necessary to ensure that our electoral system becomes more just. We are satisfied to do that because we sincerely believe public opinion in South Australia is completely against the gerrymander and, unless for biased reasons another gerrymander was brought about, would quickly bring it to an end.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra)—It is interesting to hear one honourable member say that his Party is prepared to trust another Party to do something in the interests of the speaker's Party. If that should happen it would be the first time in the history of politics that it has happened and I do not think it is likely to happen on this occasion. Politicians, as gentlemen, are in the main trustworthy people but, when they band together in Parties, my advice

is to put no trust in princes or political Parties because they will let you down.

This motion applies only to South Australia. The member for Norwood referred to Victoria, but, if we go any further, what about Queensland and New South Wales? Some of their systems are fair, but we cannot afford to throw stones anyway. Our Liberal Government has a gerrymander and it has been truly named, because it is an extremely good gerrymander for the Party in power. The only argument revolves around the fact that the Liberals have the gerrymander, but if the Labor Party were in exactly the same position as the Liberal Party now is any objection the Liberal Party made would go unanswered, too. We do not want to kid ourselves in this regard, but I frankly admit that I would like to see a change in the electoral set-up in South Australia because it is not a good set-up.

I shall illustrate my point by giving one instance only, the district of Stuart. Can anybody imagine anything more ridiculous than the set-up in that district? It includes the whole of Port Augusta and then runs south in a narrow strip taking in Solomontown below Port Pirie. Even the wharves at Port Pirie are in the district of Stuart and if anything could be more ridiculous than that I would like to hear of it. I should not like to see the number of country members reduced and I do not think the motion anticipates that. That is merely something that has been read into it. The motion simply asks for justice.

The Labor Party might ask for justice, but the Labor Party won't even get mercy out of this. If this is decided on a numerical basis and districts are based on their numerical strength, we must get the silly things we have in the present electoral set-up in South Australia. Let us consider the district of Frome. That district must be inevitably cut into two districts because, by the time the members of the factions that live in Adelaide have toured around Frome, they will all realize it is too big for one member to represent properly. That raises another ridiculous argument when we say that an electorate must have a certain number of people in it to remain a separate electorate. Frome covers a wide area and it should be cut up to provide one extra member for the northern areas. I shall not attempt to define the boundaries, but some of the present electorates are too large in area, although the required number of people may not be there. People are entitled to have contact with their representatives but if there are hundreds of

miles separating them, as in Frome, they cannot contact their member and it is impossible for one man to cover a district of that size. The late Mr. O'Halloran represented that district well, but a district of that size could contribute greatly to ruining the health of anybody who did his job properly apart from any other work which he might have to do.

I think ours is a bad electoral system and the arrangement of the districts in and around Adelaide is also bad, more particularly in relation to the Legislative Council, but there is a simple solution to the latter problem. If a straight line were run through the metropolitan area from east to west and the northern part constituted the Central No. 1 district and the southern part Central No. 2, Adelaide could be divided very nicely and that arrangement would always result in hotly contested elections for the Legislative Council. That is how the districts should be arranged, but at present the results of elections in those districts are foregone conclusions and the whole system is negated. Matters like that howl for remedies, but the remedy is not going to be produced.

Some districts in which Housing Trust activities have taken place have acquired a concentration of people and are now reaching astronomical numerical proportions. They do need realigning. South Australia needs more members to adequately represent it. We had 50 members in this House when we had a much lower population and even if that number was in excess of requirements the House is now understaffed with 39 members. That is one reason why this motion asks for a more just system. I agree that that is desirable, but I do not believe it is likely that we shall get anything but a facetious reply from the Government. We are not likely to get a real reply because there is no such thing as justice between political Parties in matters like this. I have been in politics for a long time and know it is useless to ask for this because we shall not get it. The Opposition knows very well that it will not get it. Party politics and the political life in South Australia today are at a very low ebb regarding the interest taken by people in them. I do not think any honourable member can deny that. There is evidence of it wherever one goes in the questions that people ask of their member, for they think it is polite to ask something or talk to him. I have been telephoned by members of a district council who wanted to know who were the members

of the Legislative Council for their district—and the whole council was sitting there! The clerk of the council rang me up because he did not know. That is pretty bad. Whose fault is it? I am not laying blame, but saying that knowledge of politics in South Australia is at a low ebb.

There was another place where I offered to dispense hospitality if any one of more than 20 people assembled there could name one of their Legislative Council members—and I did not have to dispense it! I did provide hospitality afterwards as a sort of thanksgiving offering for finding something out, but no-one knew his Legislative Council members. That is only one instance. Honourable members have experienced it time and time again. Many people in South Australia do not even know that we have a bicameral system of government. They are constantly confused by our having an Upper House and a Lower House; they have not the foggiest idea what it is all about.

Mr. Loveday—A good argument for the abolition of the Upper House!

Mr. QUIRKE—That lack of knowledge of the people applies to this House too. I think it is time some effort was made to instruct our children not in politics but in our Constitution and the civics associated with political life, to give them some idea of what it is all about.

Mr. Lawn—The gerrymander, for example!

Mr. QUIRKE—It could be explained to them that the Liberal Party is in power and that what it has it holds. That is the principle in politics the world over.

Mr. Loveday—Does the honourable member think the Education Department would allow that?

Mr. QUIRKE—No, I do not think so. It probably would if a Labor Government were in office, but it would not under a Liberal Government.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—They do not worry about it in New South Wales.

Mr. QUIRKE—Leaving facetiousness aside, I do stress that there is a deadly lack of knowledge—and “deadly lack of knowledge” is not too hard or condemnatory a phrase to use.

Mr. Clark—We used to teach civics in schools.

Mr. QUIRKE—Australia is probably the finest country on the face of the earth to live in. Its conditions are among the best in the world. It is messed around sometimes by a few of the people living in it, but the country

is not responsible for that. We have something here that is most precious to us, particularly to the generation that has seen so many countries lose what is precious to them. We in the southern seas thought we were in glorious isolation years ago. It does not mean that we, too, cannot lose something which, in the few moments we sometimes devote to thinking about it, we realize we hold most dear.

In Australia, and particularly in South Australia, there is no vital spark that awakens the people to a sense of their responsibility. This is our country; we have a Constitution. What is it all about; how does it function? Are those in authority acting in our best interests? Most people know nothing about it. Every three years along comes an election involving a thorough-going war between the political Parties. People are compelled, on sufferance of a fine of £2, to go to the polling booth and cast a vote. Many thousands of them, were it not that a directing card is handed to them, would not be able to cast an intelligent vote. If they took an intelligent interest in the election, they would not need a card.

Mr. Jennings—Without those cards you would not be here!

Mr. QUIRKE—I do not hand out polling booth cards. At Burra, Jamestown and Clare, the elderly people get a few of them, but the how-to-vote card is an insult to supposedly intelligent people. No-one should be under any misapprehension or have any difficulty about how to cast his vote.

Mr. Hall—What about the Senate? You might need one there.

Mr. QUIRKE—I do not know that one is needed for the Senate, either. We say—and the member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) has said it—“Labor won the last election on numerical strength; the number of people voting for Labor was greater than the number voting for the Liberal Party.” That was so and, if Labor could get all those people who voted for it into certain areas and more districts, it would probably win the government. However, I do not think that that is as factual as it appears on the surface, because today Party politics as we know them in South Australia consist of Liberal and Labor. If people are not Liberal voters they are Labor voters, and *vice versa*. In the metropolitan area the majority of people work in industry, working for what is cheerfully called “the boss”. They are working not for themselves in their own businesses but for employers. The idea is that, if a man is working for a boss, he is against the boss anyway so he votes Labor.

That often applies. They say, "We are working people so we must vote Labor." Others say, "We have a greater interest in things than many other people; we are Liberals." It is admirable from all points of view to have a just electoral system, but I want to know just what that just system is, and who is going to propound it.

Mr. Hall—The member for Adelaide!

Mr. QUIRKE—Does anyone mean to tell me that, if the Labor Party had the means of drawing up a just system, it would not colour it a little its way just as the Liberals colour things their way?

Mr. Lawn—There is no complaint as regards the Federal system; there is no argument about that.

Mr. QUIRKE—That is Australia-wide.

Mr. Lawn—We are all Australians.

Mr. QUIRKE—But this is a State system, which is entirely different. I do not want members to think that I am intruding something else. The Labor Party talks about a just system of voting, but what about its own card system, which so many people want to get rid of? There is a card system to get rid of the card system. Why not make that an open vote? I bet that it would be lost the first time it was put up. It is well-known that the number of votes controlled by one organization outweighs all the votes of the local committees.

Mr. Lawn—No!

Mr. QUIRKE—The honourable member knows that is true. The Australian Workers Union and the Vehicle Builders Union combined have the numerical strength.

Mr. Lawn—I do not always vote the same way as my co-delegates.

Mr. QUIRKE—I am not suggesting that the honourable member does.

Mr. McKee—That has nothing to do with this motion.

Mr. QUIRKE—It has when members talk about justice. The whole electoral system is so wrong that the people have lost interest in it. The average man who goes to the poll has no interest at all in it. Normally if he is a working man he votes Labor, but if he thinks he is something else he votes Liberal. Not all people are like that, but most are.

Mr. McKee—Personalities come into it.

Mr. QUIRKE—Yes, but I am speaking of the political knowledge of the people: their knowledge of our Constitution and how it works. The majority of the overall Labor vote is confined to the metropolitan area, but there is by no means an inconsiderable Labor vote in the country, as was revealed in the

Light by-election. Members claim that there is an unjust gerrymander in South Australia. There is a gerrymander. Any political Party will work things its own way in order to remain in power. There is no doubt about that.

Mr. Clark—In the terms of this motion we would not be able to do that.

Mr. QUIRKE—I am not saying honourable members would be able to, but in any event they have no hope of getting the motion carried. Even if it is carried the Government will not have to do anything about it. If the Labor Party got its thinking away from the metropolitan area, where it has overwhelming numbers, and contested country seats it would realize the position.

Mr. Jennings—We hold eight country seats now.

Mr. QUIRKE—Go after a few more! The interest the people take in the State's political life is directly related to the interest that is engendered in an election. At every election seats are not contested and at least 100,000 people are disfranchised.

Mr. Jennings—Because of the electoral system.

Mr. QUIRKE—No, because the Parties do not contest every seat.

Mr. Jenkins—That is why you never get real figures.

Mr. QUIRKE—Yes. At the next election let Labor candidates contest every district.

Mr. Fred Walsh—We have no big financial institutions behind our Party.

Mr. QUIRKE—I admit that, but perhaps the Labor Party could find men with sufficient interest in the Party's policy to do something about it. Why must every political candidate have his expenses paid by his Party? I do not say that it is entirely wrong, because there are some persons who would not be able to contest seats otherwise, and it is proper that the Parties should have funds.

Mr. Loveday—Are you suggesting that we have all our expenses paid?

Mr. QUIRKE—No. I know too well that members do not have all their expenses paid, but the idea that they should receive heavy expenses is wrong. I believe that some people would be prepared to contribute to a pool so that Labor could contest every seat. By nominating the best candidates, enthusiasm, which is lacking today, would be engendered in our political spirit. Let us resuscitate the political spirit of many districts. The Labor Party did much good in Light and people are

still talking about those who visited them seeking their votes. If a Party does its best, even though it may not win, no-one can find fault with it. The Parties are not doing their best when seats are not contested. People do not get a vote. I know of one district, which shall be nameless, where men have married and reared families, but have never had a vote for the House of Assembly. People who were 21 when one vote was taken were 34 when the next was taken. Are members going to claim that that is a good system? The whole thing is crook, to use an Australianism. There is no life in it! It is killing South Australia's political life.

Mr. Fred Walsh—We want to change it.

Mr. QUIRKE—But this motion will not change it.

Mr. Fred Walsh—It will if the boundaries are justly determined.

Mr. QUIRKE—I would redesign all districts, but this motion won't do it. It is an expression of opinion that will fall on rocky ground. We should try to revitalize political interest in South Australia.

Mr. McKee—The motion will do that, so support it.

Mr. QUIRKE—This motion won't do anything! I receive good support at the polls, but no-one turns up for my meetings. During the last election campaign I booked 14 halls in which to speak, including halls in the large centres of Jamestown, Burra and Clare, but spoke to a total of only 93 people. If I did not turn up, the people would want to know why, but if they were asked, "Did you go to hear Bill Quirke?" they would reply, "No, I didn't go. I intended to but—" Probably there was something on television far more important. I am reminded of the story of the Scottish chieftain who told his clan that he was going to celebrate his golden jubilee and he asked them to bring a bottle of whisky each and pour it into a cask so that at the appropriate time he could fill his goblet and propose the health of the clan. Sandy poured a bottle of weak tea into the cask and when the chieftain proposed the toast and quaffed his drink he threw his goblet away and shouted that he was being poisoned. Every member of his clan had brought cold tea. That is what happens with political election meetings in the country. People have the best of intentions, but they do not turn up. If the Labor Party put up some nation-rocking policy in opposition to the Liberal Party's policy our political spirit would be gingered up and we would get somewhere. Over the years our elections have been about the

dullest shows that one could possibly participate in. One cannot even get a fight.

Mr. Hall—The people are satisfied.

Mr. QUIRKE—Don't get that into your head! They are not! They are complacent. I cannot deny that we should have a just system. Contrary to the expectations of honourable members on this side, I never speak with my tongue in my cheek, and if I say that this thing is unjust it is because I am prepared to support such a motion as this; but it will not do anyone any good whether it is supported or not. I claim that the present system is unjust and would favour a more just system. No member in this House or the Legislative Council can say that the present system of electoral districts in South Australia is equitable and in the best interests of electors.

Mr. Clark—No one believes that.

Mr. QUIRKE—No, and much argument can be brought forward to show that it is not. We have the remote districts of Stuart and Frome, and then in Adelaide a concentration of population because of Housing Trust activities, and therefore we get an entirely false conception of votes, compared with the position if such votes were distributed more equitably. One could say much more in this debate, but it would not mean that we would achieve anything, but this debate gives me an opportunity to say what I believe to be the position, and it is one that is not good. That does not mean that I am criticizing the administration of the Playford Government. Its administration has been good, but the electoral system is bad. I think the time has arrived when we must ginger up the attitude of the people to their political life, and bring to them the urgency of the position as to what they should safeguard and get them to appreciate the idea that they are responsible for the Government they get; and when they get a Government they should follow its operations right through, so that from election to election they are able to judge the position. In the main, it is the infernal adoption years ago of the principle of the "haves" and the "have-nots". That permeates the present political atmosphere of South Australia but it should not. We want life in politics so that the people will know what they are doing, appreciate what they have and know what they will lose if ultimately they lose it. I support the motion.

Mr. JENKINS (Stirling)—I oppose the motion and support the Premier's amendment. My attitude is dictated by the effects on country areas if the motion is passed. If the policy announced by the Australian Labor Party at

its conference in June were adopted, it would have an adverse effect on country districts and would mean that there would be about 17 more members concentrated in the metropolitan area, with about equal numbers representing country electorates that now exist. Last week we heard from honourable members opposite a great outcry that country people were not being taken care of, but how they can reconcile that outcry with this motion I do not know. The following is an extract from the *Advertiser* of June 14 under the heading "Policy Changes by Australian Labor Party":—

Sweeping changes in the electoral policy of the South Australian branch of the Australian Labor Party were adopted by the Party's annual State convention in Adelaide last May. The main changes are:—Abandonment of the proportional representation system, which the A.L.P. has supported for about 45 years, for the election of members of State Parliament; adoption in its place of preferential voting; adoption of single-member instead of multiple electorates; enlargement of the House of Assembly from 39 to 56 members (along with the existing policy of abolishing the Legislative Council).

The State Leader of the Opposition (Mr. O'Halloran) moved the adoption of the platform committee's report, which was carried. He said that under the new policy, an independent electoral boundaries commission would provide electorates of approximately equal voting strength, on the principle of one-vote-one-value. Electorates would have a tolerance of one-tenth over or under the average.

Mr. O'Halloran said that although the new policy provided for an enlarged Assembly, the platform provision for abolition of the Legislative Council meant that there would still be a reduction in the total number of members of State Parliament. The platform committee had been unanimous that a reformed House of Assembly should not, in substance, reduce the present number of country seats.

Mr. O'Halloran said that although the new policy provided for an enlarged Assembly, there would be no reduction in the number of country seats. That implies there would be no increase and that the 17 additional members elected to this House would have to be elected from the metropolitan area. Therefore, there would be a great preponderance of members elected in the metropolitan area compared with those elected in the country. That would be a distinct disadvantage to country people. The member for Gawler said there would be no reduction in the number of country members. In view of the last paragraph I read, there would be 17 more members in the metropolitan area even if the same number of country members was retained. This would be to implement the Labor Party's policy of one vote one

value. The increase in city representation must centralize population and industry.

I should like to emphasize how much the Government has done to promote country interests by providing amenities such as water, roads, electricity and assisting councils by grants to promote the tourist trade. Government advances have made possible the establishment of milk processing factories in my district. There is a milk processing factory at Jervois, a small one at Hindmarsh Island, and others at Victor Harbour, Macclesfield and Mount Compass. Those factories provide a near-by market for milk and, because of the treatment and processing of milk, employment is given to people on the dairy farms and in the factories themselves. Behind all this, there are other Government activities through the Agriculture Department in promoting this industry in many ways. Most of these activities are unknown to most people.

I have before me a copy of a report supplied by the Minister of Agriculture a few weeks ago, showing some of the activities undertaken by the department, a number of which are in my district. I shall read them, because I believe that if we have a reduction in country members many of these activities will not be pursued. There would probably be much opposition from city members and we would not get the same results in country districts as if we had a strong country representation. The following is the report supplied by the Minister under the heading "Pasture Irrigation Research—South Australian Department of Agriculture":—

Irrigation offers tremendous possibilities for increasing pasture production in this State. This department is endeavouring to provide the necessary information to enable this potential to be realized. Most of the work being undertaken at present is being financed by the Commonwealth Extension Services Branch, the Commonwealth Dairying Branch and money from the Dairy Produce Board.

Current Research Projects.—(1) Milang irrigation centre. This was established in 1953 to demonstrate the potential of the country adjoining the lakes for pasture irrigation. For the first six years valuable information was obtained on the relative effectiveness of spray and flood irrigation, the potential of irrigated lucerne to fatten store cattle and the costs and establishment problems of irrigation schemes.

Over the past few years it has been apparent that extension work in pasture irrigation was limited by lack of information concerning pasture species for summer production, fertilizers and watering practice. It was, therefore, decided to increase the amount of experimental work at Milang particularly with



respect to spray irrigation. Information is now being obtained on—

- (i) determining the most profitable rate of application of water;
- (ii) increasing pasture production by the addition of suitable fertilizers;
- (iii) increasing production during the irrigation season by the use of pasture species capable of making growth during the summer months.

These things are of vital importance to the man on the land, if we are to keep up our primary production. The report continues:—

The first two aspects of the work are being studied in a comprehensive spray irrigation trial which comprises three levels of nitrogen application and three moisture regimes. These treatments are incorporated in a factorial design and the effects on dry matter yield, botanical composition and effective root zone are being determined. Information is also being obtained on the rate of water use and water extraction pattern under different watering and nitrogen treatments. This trial has involved a considerable amount of preliminary work in the preparation and calibration of moisture measuring devices.

The third of the above aspects is being studied in a trial in which 31 grasses and clover species were sown in swards in order to assess the total and seasonal production under irrigation with and without the application of nitrogen. A fodder crop trial has also been established, in which total and seasonal production of rape, millet, turnips, chow moellier and thousand-headed kale under irrigation are compared.

The SPEAKER—Order! I think that the honourable member is too wide of the mark. He may refer to the establishment of industries and so forth, but I will not allow him to debate in detail the various matters to which he has referred.

Mr. JENKINS—Then I ask your permission, Sir, to have it incorporated in *Hansard* without my reading its contents.

The SPEAKER—I cannot allow the honourable member to have it incorporated in *Hansard*. I have just objected to his debating the matter and giving the House full details of pasture establishments and so forth; I have ruled the honourable member out of order.

Mr. JENKINS—Then may I refer to two or three of the headings of this paper that have some application to the decentralization of industry? These activities support some of the industries in my district—milk, cheese, butter and dried milk production, and so on. I refer to South-East irrigation, investigations on the Murray swamps, demonstration work on irrigated pastures in the Adelaide hills, the Wanbi Research Centre, the South-East and the Murray swamps. Most of the work is being financed by the Commonwealth extension

services grant, the Commonwealth dairy grant and by the Dairy Produce Board. In my district experiments are being carried out on four or five properties. At Long Flat, experiments on permeability and drainage are being carried out on Mr. Oats' property, and a test is being carried out at Jerovis on Mr. Guglielmin's property on reclaiming saline soil. On the property owned by Mr. R. K. Llewellyn at Mypolonga (in the district of Murray) a sod seeding trial for growing winter vegetables is being carried out, and on Mr. Gordon Egel's property at Jerovis a trial of different species of fertilizer is being carried out. Fertilizer trials are being conducted at Wood's Point on Mr. Stoll's property. These things are of vital interest to the dairying industry which, through the activities of the Government, keeps people in country areas; it is necessary to have full representation for the country, although this would be denied if the motion were carried.

The widespread work for the extension of water supplies, electricity, roads and other amenities goes a long way to encourage people to stay in the country. Recently members visited northern parts of the State and saw some of the efforts of this Government to bring about decentralization. As the member for Burra pointed out, if we had equal electorates with a tolerance of 10 per cent it would be impossible to represent some districts. For instance, Frome covers an area three times as large as Tasmania. If country representation were taken away many of these things would lose their value. I oppose the motion and support the amendment.

Mr. RALSTON (Mount Gambier)—This motion is an earnest desire to have the electoral system, as it applies to boundaries, reviewed so as to have as just a system as possible. Early in the debate the member for Gawler quickly and effectively disposed of the arguments used by the member for Torrens in opposition to the motion. I was surprised how submissively and humbly the member for Torrens accepted the remarks of the member for Gawler, but I suppose he knew only too well that his contribution to the debate was based on false premises.

Mr. Lawn—Members opposite are used to being submissive.

Mr. RALSTON—I thank the honourable member for his help. The member for Burra said that at a certain district council meeting nobody knew who represented the area in the Legislative Council, and in another place, where more people were present, again nobody knew

the representatives. Recently, when speaking to a prominent member of the Liberal Party in Mount Gambier who canvasses for the Party and gives out pamphlets, I asked how many members of Parliament were accessible to the electors of Mount Gambier. He had no doubt about naming me, as I am there frequently, but, although there are four Liberal members of the Legislative Council for that district, he could name only one, and it was only after prompting that he was able to name the others. This argument was played up by the Premier, but I was satisfied that there was little substance in what he was saying.

The member for Stirling said that the motion would tend to create centralization of population and industry in the metropolitan area to the detriment of the country. Last week this House was debating something that would really denude the country of population and industry and, although Victor Harbour would be one of the first towns to suffer, I did not hear the member for Stirling protest on behalf of his district. Although there are 15 country members on the other side of the House, their silence was oppressive. Other speakers opposite have not been as fair and just as their opening remarks would have led one to believe they would be. I do not think this attitude was intentional, but was brought about because they had been forced on the defensive and read into the motion something which it did not contain and which it was not intended to contain. They were on the defensive because they had endeavoured to insinuate that some sinister motives were written into it to deny country electors a fair and just share of Parliamentary representation. They tried to imply that the Labor Party planned to reduce the number of country electorates, but, of course, those assumptions were a complete figment of their fertile imaginations.

Mr. Jennings—Futile.

Mr. RALSTON—“Futile” is perhaps a better word. The motion states:—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should take steps to readjust the House of Assembly electoral zones and the boundaries of electorates to provide a more just system for electing the House.

Although an amendment has been moved, it seems to me to be futile and without substance; it is only a confirmation of the existing position. This motion has been read several times by Labor members during this debate, but members opposite still assume that it contains words that are not there. When explaining the motion the late Leader of the Opposition, in a sincere and eloquent speech, made an earnest

appeal to the Government's sense of fairness and justice to recognize this and to remember something that the Premier had often said in this House—that there had been tremendous increases in the State's population in recent years. We ask members opposite to remember that those increases have been in the metropolitan area.

This motion is clearly intended to permit the Government to review the position; no strings are attached. We have not presumed to indicate by the motion that the Government should do this or that. It was purposely worded to allow the Government a free hand. I am not as cynical as the member for Burra, who said that the Government would not accept anything that had justice in it—at least, if he did not say that, it is what he meant. I hope the Government will accept the motion—there is no reason why it should not. It will then be the Government's prerogative to decide whether country electorates should be reduced or increased, or should remain exactly as they are. The same thing will apply to city electorates. If the Government decides that country electorates should remain as they are (and, as the present number seems agreeable to all Parties, I see no reason why they should be reduced or increased), the Government will then have to decide whether it is fair and just to accept 13 metropolitan members in this House and to ask them to accept the responsibility of representing 62 per cent of the population whereas 26 country members represent only 38 per cent. Does the Premier really think that 13 members are enough to give the problems of nearly 600,000 people in the metropolitan area the personal attention that is so necessary and desirable if effective political representation is to be achieved? In the Mount Gambier district, which I am privileged to represent, I estimate that there will be at least 10,000 electors at the next State general election, and the population will be well over 20,000. In many respects it is comparable with metropolitan electorates. If the population were doubled and there were 20,000 electors it would be impossible for one member to give proper personal attention to all of them. When we consider that each metropolitan member is expected to attend to the problems of on the average 23,000 electors, with each electorate having an average population of 46,000, it can be seen that there is a need to review the position in the metropolitan area, even if members think there is no need to in country areas.

I emphasize the wide terms of the motion. The hands of the Government are not fettered

in any way by it: the Government is as free as the air to make to Parliament recommendations which it considers to be fair and just. At the moment every elector must be wondering why the Government is so hesitant in this matter, and why it is putting up such a sham fight on imaginary issues. They wonder whether the Government is afraid that if the motion is carried, and out of decency it has to appoint an independent committee to investigate the matter of Assembly electorates, it is committing political suicide. Is this the reason why the Government is so hesitant? If it is not, and it is not afraid (and why should it be?) it must accept the motion without any reservation. Earlier in this debate the Premier said:—

I listened with much interest to the Leader's speech because it seemed to me that the motion was couched in moderate terms, but when it came down to the final result it was really a question of what the Leader meant by "a more just system". That appears to be the basis on which the Leader's speech should be considered. He knew that no-one on this side of the House would be opposed to a more just system . . .

The member for Burra seemed to be sure that every member on the other side would be opposed to "a more just" system. The Premier continued:—

. . . and that immediately meant that the motion was one we had to seriously consider, for if the Leader had a more just system to advance it was necessary that the Government should give him some support.

I emphasize the words "if the Leader had a more just system to advance". The Leader did not intend to advance a system. It was left to the Government, if it agreed to do so, to appoint a committee or make the decision itself. It is obvious that the Premier, as usual, completely dodged the issue. The motion places the onus of responsibility on the Government to recommend what would be a fair and just number of Assembly electorates. It places that responsibility fairly and squarely in the lap of the Government, and the Premier has endeavoured in every way possible to shirk accepting it. In his speech he did nothing but put up political windmills and tilt at them with great dexterity, and it was magnificent to behold. He attacked these imaginary problems of his own making with all the true fervor of a political Don Quixote and like that redoubtable warrior of old he slew his imaginary enemies with great courage and success, encouraged by the loyal support of his faithful Sancho Panzas, the members who sit behind the Premier, the whole 18 of them. The

population increase in South Australia justifies a review of Assembly electorates. The Labor Party freely acknowledges that, and it has no inhibitions where electoral justice is concerned. Surely the Liberal Party does not dispute the justice of the motion. It must agree that we have been more than fair in granting to the Government the unfettered right to make the necessary investigation, and they alone are given the opportunity.

Mr. Jennings—Why "they"? Why not "he"?

Mr. RALSTON—I am giving the Government members opposite the opportunity to express an opinion in this matter. The real problem facing the Liberal Party is this: has the Party that innate sense of justice to accept the motion? As individuals I feel sure Government members have, but the member for Burra said that as a Party he doubted it. He made some serious reflections on them as a Party. He thought that they got into a sort of wolf pack. I do not think that that is altogether a true statement, but I believe that that Party will oppose this motion, even if it realizes the inherent justice contained in it. Has the Liberal Party the courage to accept the motion, and to invite Parliament to appoint a Select Committee, or some other appropriate body, to investigate the matter of Assembly electorates and report to Parliament its findings and recommendations? I support the motion.

Mr. HALL (Gouger)—There has been much play on words in this debate. Members have referred to what is just, more just, and so on. Some Opposition speakers have used the words emotionally and have not proved that there is an unjust system at present. It is up to them to prove that the system is unjust. It may be unjust to some Labor members, but not to all the people in the State. Some conflicting ideas have been put forward by Opposition members, and to me they do not add up. They do not give me a clear picture of what is wanted. Members opposite want something that will give them a political advantage and something that will be to the good of the people, but to me it does not add up. The member for Gawler is not here at the moment. I stand in fear of him and I was careful to speak after him this time. We should try to understand what the Labor Party means when it talks about decentralization yet at the same time wants centralization of government. Some members opposite have said that they do not want to reduce country representation in this

Parliament and if that is so how can they support the motion? They cannot have it both ways. Obviously, they would abolish the Legislative Council, and if that is not a reduction in country representation they still have the opportunity to tell me what it is.

Mr. Coumbe—It is a definite reduction.

Mr. HALL—Yes.

Mr. Lawn—Come up to Frome next week and I will tell you.

Mr. HALL—The honourable member is the expert of the Labor Party on electoral boundaries. Recently he gave some advice to members on this matter, and said:—

I have not ascertained the position in Queensland because at the last two elections the Liberal and Country Party Government has been returned and it has not attempted to alter the boundaries of the electoral set-up.

I then interjected that it had done so, and Mr. Lawn replied:—

There has been no revision of the electoral boundaries in Queensland as one would have expected . . .

The honourable member said that there had been no redistribution. I have a copy of a Bill, which was passed and assented to on December 16, 1958, giving effect to a redistribution of the Queensland electoral set-up.

Mr. Jennings—Has there been a redistribution in Queensland?

Mr. HALL—Yes. There was also an increase in the number of members of that Parliament from 75 to 78. There is no need for me to go into details of the Queensland system because that refers to another State, but it shows that Mr. Lawn was entirely wrong when he said that there had been no revision. The member for Burra should be promoted from this Parliament to the diplomatic corps because his statements on this matter were magnificent. He expressed himself admirably. He was one of the first in this debate to realize the difficulties associated with country electorates. Perhaps he supports the motion because he feels that nothing will come of it. He has a good idea how the vote will go in this House. Opposition members know the member for Burra's thoughts in this matter. The member for Gawler (Mr. Clark) cannot understand the freedom of members of the Liberal and Country League.

Mr. Ryan—Give us one example of it.

Mr. Dunstan—What freedom has the member for Mitcham on this issue?

Mr. HALL—The member for Norwood has not looked hard if he has not seen the freedom that has been exercised by the member for Mitcham. He has used that freedom here

often, and I think he demonstrates the freedom of Government members. Members opposite are fond of the word "gerrymander"; it is a word that flows from the tongue easily and one that can be played with. The member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) just loves that word to roll off his tongue in this Chamber; it is a catch-cry. Members opposite speak of democracy, and one member said that my Party should not throw stones; but the selection of our candidates is always made by the local members of the Party. Do Opposition members say how their candidates are selected? Will they tell us how much local say is forthcoming in the choosing of an electorate's candidate?

Mr. Fred Walsh—How was Mr. Hams selected for Frome?

Mr. Dunstan—How was the member for Burnside selected?

*Members interjecting.*

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order!

Mr. HALL—The question that will most interest this State in the forthcoming by-election at Frome has gone unanswered. I ask again: how was the Labor Party candidate selected? He was not selected by the members of the Party in Frome.

Mr. Dunstan—What happened to Mr. Hams?

Mr. HALL—The member for Burra decried the amount of political ignorance that existed.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Did the voters in Frome pre-select Mr. Hams?

Mr. HALL—Their representatives did, in the most democratic way. The candidate for Frome was selected by delegates from the local branches.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Not according to press reports.

Mr. HALL—His election was certainly before the public. Let us put the Labor method alongside that, and compare them. The member for Burra mentioned the lack of political interest and political education in this State. I suppose that is so in many areas, but I think he perhaps exaggerated the position. He said that he had asked 20 people if they knew who were their Legislative Council members but none knew. He certainly exaggerated the position as far as my electorate and many other electorates are concerned. I give the people more credit in that respect. In fact, I think I would be safe in saying that in my electorate one-third of the people have voluntarily joined the L.C.L. "Voluntarily" is a very big word. It certainly would be at least 30 per cent, which says much for the district and for the Party to which those

people belong, because every one of them joined voluntarily. In the past the representation we have had from our members has certainly spread abroad a greater realization of the part this Parliament plays, for it brings to the notice of the public the names of the electorates and consequently the names of members. The member for Burra said that perhaps we could teach politics in schools, but I think that would be dangerous. It would have to be a very wide and elementary tuition, because everyone has his political beliefs and it is not feasible that people could always keep their beliefs separate from the knowledge they imparted. To contemplate teaching political awareness in schools would, I feel, be treading on dangerous ground.

Mr. McKee—You think the people should be kept politically backward?

Mr. HALL—It would certainly suit the Labor Party to keep them politically backward. Everyone knows the Labor Party is not gaining the votes of the young folk in this country; they are losing the young people of this country, and as the years go by that loss will have a greater influence in this State's political life.

Mr. Coumbe—Labor's policy doesn't appeal to the young people.

Mr. McKee—We get a majority of 50,000 in South Australia.

*Members interjecting.*

The DEPUTY SPEAKER—Order!

Mr. HALL—Liberal Governments liberalized the means test and introduced a workable national health scheme. The Liberal Party is the Party that is forward-looking and will attract young people. Obviously, the Labor Party is advocating decentralization of industry and at the same time advocating centralization of power. This motion would reduce the number of country representatives; Government members are asking the Opposition to prove that that is not so, but it has not met that challenge. Many things occur and have to be attended to in a country electorate.

Mr. McKee—Are you in favour of country workers' wages being reduced by 9s. a week?

Mr. HALL—It is no use bringing that matter into this debate: this motion deals with electoral boundaries. The member for Port Pirie has a small electorate which he could ride around on a push bike or on a horse—on a hobby horse, if it were named "gerrymander". If supporters of the Labor Party were politically educated they would be members of the Liberal Party; it is only because they have been kept backward that they remain on the Labor Party rolls. All honourable members

know that a district of any size involves much work. My district is only a medium-sized country electorate, 130 or 140 miles long and varying from a few miles to 40 miles in width. My constituents have their local problems and a knowledge of local conditions is essential to the conduct of affairs in an electorate.

In my electorate there is a road that we would like bituminized. One obstacle to the carrying out of this work was that there was no suitable material available as crushing for the base of the road, for which between 40,000 and 50,000 cubic yards of material were required. Research had gone on spasmodically for several years to find a suitable deposit. I suggested to the Highways Department that a search should be made in a certain area close to where I lived, and I am happy to say that the department found the material there. I do not say that eventually that material would not have been found, but I think that my action probably speeded up the request by a year or two and therefore helped solve that local problem. All members know the type of local matter that has to be attended to, such as making representations regarding alterations of time tables to assist, for instance, in the transport of school children.

Mr. Clark—Members have these things to attend to, no matter what Party they belong to.

Mr. HALL—That is my point. Members have to spend time on these things, and they cannot do so if their districts are too big, for they have no time to get around.

Mr. Lawn—What about Barker and Frome?

Mr. HALL—Members cannot easily get around big districts to attend to things; if they do they find it very wearing. A Government member from the west coast left at 3 o'clock in the morning to get to this House in time for the sitting.

Mr. Ryan—That was the first time he was in his electorate for years.

Mr. HALL—That is wrong; he is one of the hardest working members in the House. All the examples members opposite have raised support the fact that these electorates are too big now if those country members are to keep their health and stand up to their jobs.

Mr. Riches—Then you ought to favour a more just system.

Mr. HALL—The member for Mount Gambier said that we put up windmills here; if we do that, the Opposition certainly has the power to drive them. I could quote other examples of what is required of a country member, but I shall not weary members opposite with small

local matters. I am fully occupied in serving my electorate; in fact, I do not get enough time to study the things I should study in Parliament or to make use of the facilities that exist, for instance, in the Parliamentary Library. I am too busy on my electorate activities to study certain things or to assist in the government of this State to the extent that I would wish.

This is the question mark that hangs over the whole debate: how does the Labor Party reconcile centralization of power with decentralization of industry and people? This is not an unjust system. It may not be perfect in every way, but no one claims that it is. It is the best that can be worked out to serve the State in general, and the public at large is aware of that and supports it. We should avoid this business of dealing in emotional terms with words such as "gerrymander." I suggest that the member for Adelaide is quite wrong in his assumptions and I oppose the motion but support the amendment.

Mr. JENNINGS (Enfield)—I support the motion. After one of the most sublime speeches the House has ever heard from the Premier he then leaned over backwards to propose an amendment to the motion. Whilst in my long and illustrious career in this Chamber I have never reflected on the Chair I believe on this occasion that the Speaker must have gone to great lengths to justify the acceptance of the Premier's amendment as an amendment. Let me observe now that there were some rather startling admissions in what the Premier's amendment contained.

Mr. Clark—Do you honestly admit that you are ever startled by the Premier?

Mr. JENNINGS—Even I can be shocked. He said, *inter alia*, "Increased tendency towards concentration of population and industry." Doesn't that admit, in itself, that this tendency towards concentration of population and industry is going on apace in South Australia? Of course it admits it. We then heard some hoey (perhaps that is an unparliamentary word and I may be called to order) about this motion resulting in decreased country representation. The member for Gouger has failed to realize the position that has existed for about the 26 years that he has been in existence and the five years in which he has grown up. This motion is not designed to reduce country representation. Far from it!

Mr. Riehes—Only if the Government thinks that is more just.

Mr. JENNINGS—The real point is that if we, as a consequence of a just, a more just, a juster, or a juster just system (I won't quibble about words), encourage more people into country areas they will, automatically, have more representation.

Mr. Hall—That does not follow. You have to deal with the system as it applies.

Mr. JENNINGS—We only ask for justice, not for mercy. If the honourable member asked for mercy we would be more kindly to him. We ask for justice and we will temper our justice with mercy as far as he is concerned. I am glad some members opposite have helped me to make my speech.

I turn now to the speech of the member for Burra which I thought was one of the most cynical speeches I have ever heard in this House. He seems to adopt the attitude that because a person is a Party politician he is crooked but that a man may be a politician and he is all right. I believe all of us on this side have made very great sacrifices to be here and we make great sacrifices to stay here. Why are we any worse just because we are in the Labor Party than if we have been kicked out of the Labor Party as he was? That is what it amounts to. The member for Burra is supporting this motion at the moment although probably in the next breath he will do something else—

Mr. Hall—Didn't he say he would support the motion and the amendment?

Mr. JENNINGS—Yes, but there may be an alternative. He failed to point out that there was never an objection to the Federal system where both Parties have been in power alternately for many years, and that in New South Wales where there has been a Labor Government for 20 years there is no gerrymander or suggestion of a gerrymander even from the Liberal and Country Parties in that State. He failed to point out that in Western Australia where a Labor Government was in power for one or two terms with an offensive Upper House the only reason why the electoral system was not improved was because of the opposition of the Upper House. He did not state that in Tasmania the electoral system is fairly fair or justly just or whatever the member wants and that in Victoria the system follows exactly the lines of the Federal system—two to one. That system was established by the Cain Labor Government in Victoria and it has not been altered since and, as far as the abolition of the Upper House is concerned, let me say I, and all members on this side in this House, have for many years never made

any secret of the fact that we believed in the abolition of the Upper House.

Mr. Bywaters—In Victoria it was supported by the Country Party which was supposed to represent the country people.

Mr. JENNINGS—They were honestly country representatives. In New Zealand the Upper House was abolished by a non-Labor Government.

Mr. Hall—We are dealing with the individual need of South Australia here.

Mr. JENNINGS—The Premier talked about that and about France and proportional representation and I am now saying that the Upper House in New Zealand was abolished by a non-Labor Government and that in Queensland it was abolished by a Labor Government but since then there have been three non-Labor Governments and there has been no move to re-establish the Upper House.

Mr. Clark—A Commonwealth Minister told me he would not have it back for anything.

Mr. JENNINGS—They couldn't have it back anyway. I had intended saying something about the charmingly irrelevant speech of the member for Stirling but I am afraid if I got so far away from the motion I might be called to order long before the member for Stirling was eventually called to order. He was talking about fisheries, tuna, seals and all sorts of things.

Mr. Hutchens—In the final analysis his speech was no more fishy than any of the others.

Mr. JENNINGS—He honestly does not know what he is doing but some of the others honestly do know what they are doing. The member for Stirling made what he thought was a devastating attack on members of the Labor Party when he said that the Australian Labor Party had made a change in its electoral policy. There is no secret about that and we allow reporters from both newspapers and from radio stations into our conferences, which is more than the Liberal and Country Party does. That Party only gives information afterwards. We have nothing to hide. They come here knowing what goes on but our change in policy was made by a majority decision of the Party and indeed it was not so much a change because the fundamentals we have always believed in are still our fundamentals. We are quite big enough to meet the situation and to agree to meet any alteration in our situation as it affects the people we represent. We do not pretend to be like the elite on North Terrace where they can meet and come to a

decision and know very well it is only for window dressing and that it is not binding on anybody.

Mr. Jenkins—What is your Party's attitude on unity tickets?

Mr. JENNINGS—I do not know what the member for Stirling means by that interjection. I think that probably what he envisages as a unity ticket would be support for the Liberal Party by the Disguised Liberal Party, the D.L.P. I come back to the honourable member for Gouger, Mr. Steele Rudd! By the way, I must pay him a compliment: he is the most improved speaker in the House and he is still the worst! He asked, "How are candidates selected?" In our Party we know how candidates are selected; there is no secret about it. I think sometimes it is a bit of a mystery how candidates are selected in the Liberal Party. I remember one occasion when the member for Hindmarsh and I went on what we thought was an electioneering tour around the then Newcastle district, and we discovered from all the prominent Liberal people in that area that a certain person had already been selected as the candidate for that seat. We came back here, talked about it a little in the lobbies and heard that, even though the decision was made up there, no matter what it was, it would not be acceptable down here. Results proved that what we heard down here was correct.

Mr. Clark—What happened to the candidate?

Mr. JENNINGS—He is still struggling. The member for Gouger (Mr. Hall) when speaking about Federal seats did a great disservice to, in fact almost moved a vote of no confidence in, his colleagues Dr. Forbes, Mr. Kelly and others. They cover a wide area and represent approximately the same number of people as metropolitan members do.

Mr. Clark—They are doing as well as they can.

Mr. JENNINGS—Yes. I have told the House that I was grateful to members opposite who had prepared my speech for me. I need say no more at this stage except, as I said at the beginning, that there is only one reason why the Government will not accept this motion: it is too frightened to.

Mr. HEASLIP (Rocky River)—I rise to speak briefly, as would any country member with any interest in his district.

Mr. Clark—I beg your pardon!

Mr. HEASLIP—I realize the importance of the representation of country members and oppose the motion without any equivocation. The late Leader—

Mr. Clark—You said that he did not have any feeling for the country.

Mr. HEASLIP—I am not pinning it on to the late Leader; I am saying that any country representative who has the interests of his electorate at heart realizes the importance of representation. If those who are so strongly for this motion and are supporting it wholeheartedly will go up to the Frome by-election campaign and tell the electors that they are going to rob them of five members and give them—

Mr. Bywaters—Read that out of the motion!

Mr. Clark—Can you find that in the motion?

Mr. HEASLIP—I am taking this from the late Leader's speech, where he suggested that he would get his members to favour the abolition of the Legislative Council. All speakers opposite are in favour of that.

Mr. Clark—It has nothing to do with this motion.

Mr. HEASLIP—If it has nothing to do with this motion, why did the late Leader talk about it? It is all in *Hansard*, that the Labor Party is going to abolish the Legislative Council.

Mr. Clark—But it is not in this motion.

Mr. HEASLIP—Yes, if the Labor Party can bring it about. Its platform is the abolition of the Legislative Council and its desire is to replace the 39 members of this House by 56 members. Is that right?

Mr. Clark—That is so, but it is not in the motion. You are debating Labor policy.

Mr. HEASLIP—You do not disagree with what I have said so far, that you are in favour of that?

Mr. Clark—Yes.

Mr. HEASLIP—We will go on a little further. Members opposite want to get rid of the 39 members of this House and replace them by 56. In addition, they want one vote one value. Am I right still?

Mr. Clark—You are 100 per cent right, and that is what you object to.

Mr. HEASLIP—The honourable member knows the numbers in the country compared with those in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Clark—Your policy is sending them to the city.

Mr. HEASLIP—Over two-thirds of the people in South Australia are in the city and one-third in the country, and you want to give them equal votes. Every person in the metropolitan area will get a vote and there will be one vote only still in the country, which means that two-thirds of the representation will be in the metropolitan area. Under the proposed

scheme of honourable members opposite, Frome would not qualify for one representative; it would have to take in half of Rocky River or half of Burra to get sufficient votes for one representative. Yet members opposite are not going to take representation from the country!

Mr. McKee—Why didn't they put Solomon-town into Rocky River?

Mr. HEASLIP—Why not tell the House frankly what this motion means, that you are going to take away representation from the country and give it to the metropolitan area?

Mr. McKee—The honourable member is not even convincing himself.

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member must address the Chair.

Mr. HEASLIP—My apologies. The Opposition intends—and its late Leader said this; it is in *Hansard*—to take away representation from the country and give it to the metropolitan area.

Mr. Frank Walsh—That is incorrect.

Mr. Lawn—That is a lie. Give us the reference in *Hansard*!

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member for Rocky River.

Mr. HEASLIP—There is no question about that, and I will challenge members opposite—

Mr. Frank Walsh—What page of *Hansard* is it on?

Mr. HEASLIP—If the Leader likes to look it up, he will find it.

Mr. Frank Walsh—You could not find it.

Mr. HEASLIP—I could if I had the time.

Mr. Frank Walsh—Take your time and find it.

Mr. HEASLIP—I have not the page, but it is all in *Hansard*. All those figures are there and the Opposition has agreed with me so far that all the figures I have given and the propositions I have put forward are what honourable members opposite want: the abolition of the Legislative Council, 56 representatives in this House, and one vote one value. That must result in taking representation from the country areas.

Mr. Hutchens—Is that in *Hansard* or in your imagination?

Mr. HEASLIP—The abolition of the Legislative Council, the 56 representatives and one vote one value are all in *Hansard*. Any thinking person will have to agree that it will take away representation from the country.

Mr. Riches—It gives more representation in this House.

Mr. HEASLIP—What is the good of a House without representation of the country



people? I am saying it takes away representation from the country, and no-one can tell me it does not. No people are more worthy of representation than the people in the country.

Mr. Hutchens—We agree on that.

Mr. HEASLIP—If the honourable member agrees on that, why take away representation from them at a time like this, when prices are going down and particularly when wool-growers today are in a bad way and must have representation here. Any country member who is not seeing to that is not doing his job. If you expect one man instead of six men to represent an electorate like Rocky River or Frome, I say it is impossible for one man to do that.

Mr. Lawn—I think you are labouring, aren't you?

Mr. HEASLIP—No. The late Leader wound up his remarks by saying, "The point is that all men are equal, or supposed to be equal, under the law." If they are equal, are they not justly entitled to be represented in this House?

Mr. Lawn—Equally.

Mr. HEASLIP—Yes. It is impossible for one man adequately to represent such a huge area. The member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) represents an area of four square miles. Certainly he has a number of constituents but they only have to travel four miles to see him whereas some country people must travel 100 miles or more to see their members. If the country representation is reduced it will be virtually impossible for those people to be adequately represented in Parliament. They are just as entitled to representation as the people living in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Hutchens—Do you think that travelling is a disadvantage to representation?

Mr. HEASLIP—I do not think anyone will disagree that it is a disadvantage.

Mr. Hutchens—Is that why so many Liberal members come to live in Adelaide?

Mr. HEASLIP—It does not matter where they live, they must represent their constituents. I realize that the honourable member is having a shot at me because I live in Adelaide. I have reared a family and have established two sons on my property. They have taken it over. As one grows older one should make way for youth. However, in the last eight weeks I have travelled 400 miles each week-end to represent my constituents. I have used my own vehicle at my own expense. Aren't my constituents getting representation? When I lived in my electorate I had to travel back and

forth to the city every week, again at my own expense.

Mr. Ryan—Why at your own expense?

Mr. HEASLIP—Because I had no railway near my home. I lived in the country, not at Port Pirie or Port Adelaide. I represent country interests. Even if I had lived near a railway it would have taken me three days to do what I now do in a day.

Mr. Frank Walsh—You have good roads.

Mr. HEASLIP—Thank goodness! A sealed road runs almost to my old home. Only 12 miles is not sealed. I give credit to the Playford Government for providing sealed roads in country areas.

Mr. Riches—What makes you think that with 56 members there would be more difficulties about travelling?

Mr. HEASLIP—I was speaking of travelling within an electorate. At present I represent Rocky River which extends almost 90 miles from north to south and 40 miles from east to west, but if the Opposition's ideas are adopted I, or whoever represents the district, will also have to look after half of the Frome electorate, which will mean more travelling.

Mr. Ryan—Hasn't your district a Commonwealth member?

Mr. HEASLIP—I am talking of the State Parliament. I believe that the nearer to home the Government is the better. I do not believe in Canberra governing South Australia.

Mr. Riches—Why would there be greater difficulties with more members?

Mr. HEASLIP—I do not know what the honourable member means. Two and two make four, and that is the answer.

Mr. Riches—Why would there be bigger districts with more members of Parliament?

Mr. HEASLIP—Because there would be fewer country members.

Mr. Riches—More!

Mr. HEASLIP—Fewer.

Mr. Hutchens—Where did you get that idea from?

Mr. HEASLIP—With one vote one value two-thirds of the members would be in the metropolitan area and one-third in the country, which is opposite to the present position. Without doubt the country representation would be reduced. If the country is to have the amenities to which it is entitled, it must have adequate representation.

Mr. Riches—Do you think an independent inquiry into a just system would recommend other than adequate representation?

Mr. HEASLIP—I have heard the terms "just", "more just", and "justly", but a

thing is "just" or "unjust"; it cannot be "more just".

Mr. Dunstan—Have you ever read May's dictionary?

Mr. Clark—Go and read Murray!

Mr. HEASLIP—It is either "just" or "unjust"; it cannot be "more just".

Mr. Clark—It can! Go and look it up!

Mr. Lawn—Would it not be correct to say that the member for Gouger (Mr. Hall) this afternoon was "foolish", and that you are being "more foolish"?

Mr. HEASLIP—Country people are entitled to justice, just as are people in the city. The member for Gawler says I do not know anything about the English language.

Mr. Clark—Excuse me, I did not say that.

Mr. HEASLIP—The honourable member says that a thing can be "more just". I claim that, if it is "just", it is "just" and cannot be "more just".

Mr. Hutchens—This is only just "just".

Mr. HEASLIP—I have not had much education but, if a thing is "just", it is "just" and cannot be "more just". The member for Gawler says that taking away representation from the country and giving it to the metropolitan area will help decentralization. I have never heard of that before. If we take away representation from the country we will get fewer amenities in the country and there will be more centralization.

Mr. Clark—Do you want industries in your district?

Mr. HEASLIP—It is not a question of where the industries are: if we want decentralization we have to have industries in the country.

Mr. Clark—Some Liberal members cannot afford to have decentralization.

Mr. HEASLIP—I do not think that can be said of me.

Mr. Clark—Why are you opposing this motion?

Mr. HEASLIP—Because I want country people to be represented in this House.

The SPEAKER—Order! There are too many interjections. I ask the honourable member to address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. HEASLIP—The member for Gawler went on to say that this State has increased secondary industries to the detriment of country people despite the efforts of 26 country members. If the honourable member lived in the real country where cereals, wool, meat and so on are produced—

Mr. Clark—I was brought up in it.

Mr. McKee—I live in such a district.

Mr. HEASLIP—Then the honourable members should know that our best markets are our home markets. Secondary industries have helped country people sell their produce.

Mr. Clark—They have given country people jobs in the city to the detriment of the country.

Mr. HEASLIP—They have not been to the detriment of the country. Secondary industries go hand in glove with primary industries. We cannot afford to have primary industries fighting against secondary industries. They are both essential to any country. Primary industries can function without secondary industries, but not so well. Secondary industries are vital to primary industries because they create markets for the primary producers. There should not be a war between them: they should work in harmony. Last year, when we experienced the worst drought in our history, if we had not had the secondary industries developed in the last 20 years we would have been in real trouble. Yet members opposite claim that secondary industries are to the detriment of country districts. My constituents are able to use Murray water, and the residents of Booleroo will be using it by the end of this summer, but that would have been impossible had it not been for our secondary industries at Whyalla. It is wrong to say that secondary industries are detrimental to the country.

Mr. Hughes—Who said that?

Mr. HEASLIP—The member for Gawler.

Mr. Clark—That is not so.

Mr. HEASLIP—Look in *Hansard* tomorrow.

Mr. Clark—I said that over-emphasis had been put on secondary industry.

Mr. HEASLIP—That is a twisting of words.

Mr. Clark—I am not twisting words, but telling the truth, which is something foreign to you.

Mr. HEASLIP—The honourable member said, in effect, that secondary industries were detrimental to the country. Many country people today enjoy using electricity. Were it not for the secondary industries in Adelaide we could not have developed Leigh Creek and supplied country areas with electricity. We can thank the secondary industries in the metropolitan area for the country people's securing electricity at the prices they pay for it. Secondary industries go hand in hand with primary industries and are to the benefit of the country and not to its detriment. The member for Enfield (Mr. Jennings) was the last member to speak. He criticized the member for Burra (Mr. Quirke) as having made the most

cynical speech he had ever heard. I believe the member for Enfield made the most farcical speech I have ever heard and he lowered the standard of this Parliament.

Mr. Lawn—You aren't listening to your own speech.

Mr. HEASLIP—Members may criticize my speech, but the speech of the member for Enfield was the most farcical speech I have heard in the last 12 years. He said little about the motion. He spoke about other matters and conferred with members behind him.

Mr. Lawn—Will you tell us what your country representation is doing for country pensioners?

Mr. HEASLIP—The State is not responsible for pensioners. The Commonwealth looks after them; but they do receive concessions on the railways and trams. Any old age pensioner in the country who wants to come to the city to see his doctor may receive concession fares on the railways.

Mr. Ryan—No, he does not.

Mr. HEASLIP—If that is not correct, I apologize. I have always thought they did. Honourable members opposite cannot tell me that people in the country do not get cheaper rents than those living in the city. Mr. Jennings said that the motion was not designed to reduce country representation. That is just too silly for words, as it was so designed. It was also said that the passing of the motion would encourage more people to go to the country, and that if we had more people in the country, the country would get better representation. If that is not putting the cart before the horse, I do not know what is. Unless they have the representatives to work for them, we will not get more people in the country and such amenities as electricity and water. If Mr. Lawn will look at the Budget under the heading of "Pensioners" he will find that this year the Government is providing £7,500 to cover the cost of fares for pensioners who attend public hospitals and there is also provision for £27,300 to cover rail concession fares for pensioners; and a further £78,000 is provided for pensioners for tram and bus fares, yet the honourable member says that the State Government does not do a thing for them. Therefore, I should like those honourable members who have said that I was wrong to withdraw.

Mr. Hughes—You say that country pensioners can catch the train at Wallaroo and come to Adelaide.

Mr. HEASLIP—I didn't say that, but what I said was that the Government was assisting

country pensioners by granting them rail concession fares to come to hospital in Adelaide if necessary.

Mr. Hughes—Since it has been pointed out to you, you have now switched to hospitals.

Mr. HEASLIP—No. The honourable member said that I was definitely wrong. Mr. Jennings said that members of the Opposition make great sacrifices by being members of Parliament. I do not know what he meant by that. Again, I thought it was a silly remark, because no-one is forced to enter Parliament. It is purely voluntary.

Mr. Shannon—And many people outside want to be in.

Mr. HEASLIP—Exactly. For those honourable members opposite who are making this huge sacrifice, it is only a matter of their resigning and there would be many people ready to take their place. I definitely oppose the motion and support the amendment. As a country member, I cannot understand any other country representative supporting such a motion which will take representation away from country people.

Mr. FRED WALSH (West Torrens)—This is not the first time I have participated in such a debate, but in all the years I have been in this Parliament I have never heard so many misleading statements made by honourable members on the Government side. The Premier publicly gave our late Leader credit for his honesty, integrity and purposefulness, but shortly after commencing his opposition to the motion he more or less accused the late Mr. O'Halloran of misrepresentation and for saying something that actually had not been said by him. In his opening remarks the Premier said:—

I listened with much interest to the Leader's speech because it seemed to me that the motion was couched in moderate terms, but when it came down to the final result it was really a question of what the Leader meant by "a more just system". That appears to be the basis on which the Leader's speech should be considered. He knew that no-one on this side of the House would be opposed to a more just system, and that immediately meant that the motion was one we had to seriously consider, for if the Leader had a more just system to advance it was necessary that the Government should give him some support.

That is perfectly true. It should be noted that during practically every Parliament since I have been a member the Labor Party has introduced electoral reform Bills and on not one occasion did it receive any assistance from members on the Government side. It is true that we have tried to get their sympathetic

support, but it is utterly futile to attempt to influence them to support anything we put forward. The object of the motion is to provide a better system of electoral reform. Hence, the late Mr. O'Halloran moved his motion. In the final analysis, if the motion were carried, it would be the Government which would have to determine what steps should be taken. We do not even ask Parliament to do it. If the Government so desired, it could set up a committee representing both sides of the House to go into the question, solely with the object of bringing about a more just system. I challenge any honourable member opposite conscientiously to say that our present system is a just one. Government members know deep down in their hearts that it is not and that it is heavily weighted against the Opposition. However, we accept that. I suppose it is politics, but it is not in the interests of the people, and therefore we consider that the matter should be fully considered with the object of giving everyone, irrespective of who they are or where they come from, just representation in this Parliament. That was the motive behind the motion. From the Premier downwards, honourable members opposite have attempted to misrepresent the position and read into the motion something that is not there and which under no stretch of the imagination could be implied.

Anyone with the slightest knowledge of court procedure knows that it does not matter how a law is framed or what was said in Parliament in forming that law, the judge takes no cognizance of what was intended by Parliament, but only of that which is written into the law. If any member opposite attempts to suggest that in putting forward this motion the Opposition had as its object anything but a fair method of electoral reform, he is entirely wrong. As a political Party, we have a policy and if it were possible for us to implement that policy, unequivocally we would give effect to it if it was considered to be in the best interests of the State. It is for those reasons that we are sponsoring the motion. I ask leave to continue my remarks. Leave granted; debate adjourned.

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

#### DOG FENCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Sir CECIL HINCKS (Minister of Lands) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Dog Fence Act, 1946-1959. Read a first time.

The Hon. Sir CECIL HINCKS—I move—  
*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

Its objects are to amend the Dog Fence Act so as to increase the penalties for damage to and unauthorized removal of any part of the dog fence and to render both the person causing the damage or removal and his employer liable therefor, and to place upon the owner of any vehicle, the driver of which causes the damage or removal, the onus of proving that the driver was not at the material time engaged upon his ordinary employment or acting within the course and scope thereof.

The damage caused to vermin fences from time to time is causing sheep owners throughout the pastoral areas some concern, and representations have been made to the Chairman of the Pastoral and Dog Fence Boards by the Stockowners' Association of South Australia stressing the difficulties experienced in recovering penalties and compensation for such damage; in particular, for damage caused by vehicles. These representations were referred to the Crown Solicitor for advice. The Crown Solicitor considered that sections 43 and 44 of the Act required attention, and recommended that those sections should be recast with increased penalties and provision for compensation for damage. He also recommended that provision be made for the employer's liability for damage caused by his employee in the course of his employment and for placing upon the owner of a vehicle, the driver of which causes damage to a fence, the onus of proving that the driver was not, at the material time, engaged upon his ordinary employment or acting within the course and scope thereof. The Government agrees with these recommendations.

Section 43 prohibits wilful damage of any part of the dog fence for which the penalty is a fine not exceeding fifty pounds; and under section 44 a person who, without authority, removes any part of the dog fence or does any act whereby the fence ceases to be dog-proof commits an offence for which the penalty is a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds. The penalty for a similar offence under the Vermin Act is a fine not exceeding twenty pounds or imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months. The Government feels that the penalties under both Acts should be uniform, and should be a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds or imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months. Clause 3 substitutes for sections 43 and 44 of the principal Act new sections 43, 44 and 44a.

New section 43 (1) makes it an offence for a person, without lawful excuse (the onus of proving which lies on him), to

cause damage to any part of the dog fence. The penalty for the offence is a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds or imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months. Subsection (2) has the same effect as the repealed section 44 except for an increase in the penalty as stated earlier. Subsection (3) empowers the court in addition to or in lieu of any penalty imposable under the section to order a convicted person to compensate the person responsible for maintaining the damaged fence, for the damage.

New section 44 (1) makes the employer of a person who, in the course of his employment, damages or removes any part of the dog fence liable for the necessary expenses incurred in restoring it as a dog-proof fence. Subsection (2) provides for the recovery of those expenses in any court of competent jurisdiction. Subsection (3) provides that, where damage to or removal of any part of the dog fence is caused by the driver of a vehicle, the owner of the vehicle shall be deemed to be the employer of the driver unless the owner proves that at the material time the driver was not in the ordinary employment of the owner or acting within the course and scope thereof. New section 44a contains an interpretation which places beyond doubt that any gate or ramp pertaining to the dog fence shall, for the purposes of sections 43 and 44, be deemed to be part of the dog fence.

Mr. LOVEDAY secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Sir CECIL HINCKS (Minister of Lands) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Vermin Act, 1931-1959. Read a first time.

The Hon. Sir CECIL HINCKS—I move—  
*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

Its objects are to amend the Vermin Act so as to increase the penalties for damage to and removal of any part of a vermin fence, dog-proof fence or wire-netting fence and to render both the person causing the damage or removal and his employer liable therefor, and to place upon the owner of any vehicle, the driver of which causes the damage or removal, the onus of proving that the driver was not at the material time engaged upon his ordinary employment or acting within the course and scope thereof.

The damage caused to vermin fences from time to time is causing sheep owners throughout the pastoral areas some concern, and

representations have been made to the Chairman of the Pastoral and Dog Fence Boards by the Stockowners' Association of South Australia stressing the difficulties experienced in recovering penalties and compensation for such damage; in particular, for damage caused by vehicles. These representations were referred to the Crown Solicitor for advice. The Crown Solicitor considered that section 229 of the Vermin Act required attention, and recommended that provision be made for the employer's liability for damage caused by his employee in the course of his employment and for placing upon the owner of a vehicle, the driver of which causes damage to or removal of a fence, the onus of proving that the driver was not, at the material time, engaged upon his ordinary employment or acting within the course and scope thereof. The Government agrees with these recommendations.

Section 229 prohibits the destruction of and injury to any vermin fence, dog-proof fence and wire-netting fence, for which the penalty is a fine not exceeding twenty pounds or imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months. The penalty for a similar offence under section 44 of the Dog Fence Act is a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds. The Government feels that the penalties under both Acts should be uniform and should be a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds or imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months. Clause 3 substitutes for section 229 of the principal Act a new section 229.

Subsection (1) of the new section makes it an offence for a person without lawful excuse, the onus of proving which lies on him, to damage or remove any part of a vermin fence, dog-proof fence or wire-netting fence. The penalty for the offence is a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds or imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months. Subsection (2) empowers the court, in addition to or in lieu of any penalty imposable under the section, to order a convicted person to compensate the person responsible for the repair or renewal of the damaged or removed fence. Subsection (3) makes the employer of a person who in the course of his employment damages or removes any part of a fence liable for the necessary expenses incurred in repairing or renewing it.

Subsection (4) provides for the recovery of those expenses in any court of competent jurisdiction. Subsection (5) provides that, where damage to or removal of any part of a fence is caused by the driver of a vehicle,

the owner of the vehicle shall be deemed to be the employer of the driver unless the owner proves that at the material time the driver was not in the ordinary employment of the owner or acting within the course and scope thereof. Subsection (6) contains an interpretation which places beyond doubt that any gate or ramp pertaining to any fence shall, for the purpose of that section, be deemed to be part of that fence.

Mr. LOVEDAY secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### ENFIELD GENERAL CEMETERY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Sir CECIL HINCKS brought up the report of the Select Committee, together with minutes of proceedings and evidence.

Ordered that report be printed.

#### PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 1. Page 918.)

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I support the second reading.

Mr. JENKINS (Stirling)—I, too, support the second reading, but I would not have spoken in this debate if it had not been for certain statements by the member for Mitcham, who had to go 12,000 miles away to West Germany to find evidence in support of his opposition to the Bill. I will speak about things that affect us much nearer home. The great recovery in West Germany was a different proposition from recovery under price control in South Australia, because West Germany recovered from six or seven years of war devastation while South Australia is in the course of development and expansion. At this stage price control in this State is still needed. I shall refer later to the honourable member's remarks about West Germany. I have a book from which I shall read extracts, and they will offset what Mr. Millhouse had to say about Dr. Erhard's statement that price control was the chief factor in West Germany's recovery. When speaking on this Bill, in reply to the member for Gouger, Mr. Millhouse said:—

The member for Gouger will be able to see just what items are under price control, and I should be very glad if members who support this legislation would be prepared to justify some of the items.

I am indebted to the honourable member for having had inserted in *Hansard* without his reading it a list of the 20 divisions in which

items under price control are set out. Division 15 refers to superphosphate under the heading of "Chemicals". There are five or six references to building materials, and it is these two items that I want to mention in support of the Bill. The superphosphate price was reduced about three years ago by 24s. a ton, and through the activities of the Prices Commissioner that price has been retained, which is all to the benefit of the economy of rural industries. Over the three years the price has been held, because the superphosphate companies have been able to absorb the marginal and other wage increases. The Prices Commissioner was able to work out carefully the cost of the main constituent of superphosphate (sulphuric acid) and was able to make two or three reductions in costs. This enabled the companies to maintain that price for superphosphate. If price control were removed from superphosphate it is almost certain that the price would rise considerably. For every £1 a ton rise in the price there would be a correspondingly less quantity of superphosphate used in rural industries. It would be disastrous to those industries if price control were lifted from superphosphate.

Regarding building materials, some weeks ago the Premier said that the cost of a house in South Australia was about £500 cheaper than a similar house in Victoria. I think he was a little conservative and played safe, because figures I have show that the cost of a house of similar size, of similar materials and with the same built-in furniture in Victoria is £750 dearer than in South Australia. The additional price in the various States ranges from £1,000 to £1,350. The greatest difference is in New South Wales. It means that price control on building materials and building services in South Australia enables the money received from Commonwealth sources to be used for the building of 600 additional houses. Apart from this money, finance is provided by lending institutions for the building of houses, and this, in addition to the saving in the cost of schools, hospitals and other public buildings, means a colossal saving to the Government, and I cannot see why we should lift price control. It would be futile to remove the control on prices of building materials and building services, because we are now getting houses at cheaper cost and more of them, enabling our people to meet the deposit, and it also makes the repayments easier.

I now want to refer to the recovery in West Germany that was mentioned by the member for

Mitcham. He quoted Professor Ludwig Erhard, Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Economic Affairs of the West German Republic, and read extracts from a book entitled *Prosperity Through Competition*. In reply to an interjection, Mr. Millhouse said that the recovery in West Germany was entirely due to the decontrol of prices brought about by Professor Erhard. I want to quote from a book entitled *Mainsprings of the German Revival*, written by Henry C. Wallich, Professor of Economics at the Yale University. He gives various reasons for the recovery and says that the lifting of price control by Professor Erhard had some effect on West Germany, but I point out that the application of price control there is different from what it is here. The first extract states:—

The book is an attempt to come to grips with the "German miracle." The term is regarded with disfavour in Germany and rightly, in so far as it seems to imply that the revival was a phenomenon surpassing all understanding. But it would be equally wrong to see in the revival nothing more than the inevitable result of the famous German *Tüchtigkeit*, their ability to get things done. A great many circumstances and events beyond German control helped and the respective roles played by good management and good luck are not easy to unravel. Besides *Tüchtigkeit* there was foreign aid, the Korea boom and a host of other factors. That all these things came together at the right time and place is the real German miracle.

Another extract states:—

The factors which the author regards as the mainsprings of the German revival centre in three broad fields. One set has its origin in current history, the momentous events of the post-war years culminating in the East-West split. They have affected the life of every nation, but none more profoundly than Germany. A second set of factors resides in Germany's economic and human geography, if that term is permissible to describe the favourable industrial and resources structure of the country, together with the immigration of refugees and the inherent qualities of the German people. The third and last set comprises the policies that have been pursued, initially by the Allied Occupation, but later in growing measure by the Germans themselves.

A further extract states:—

Foreign aid of 4.5 billion dollars was a very material factor in the revival. It is true that the Allies took as they gave by imposing upon Germany burdens that in the aggregate exceeded this sum, in the form of reparations, occupation costs, restitution, coal exports, recognition of old debts, and others. But the weight of these burdens was carefully adjusted by spreading them over long periods, or by making them payable in German instead of foreign currency, and in other ways. Foreign aid, on the other hand, supplying foreign

exchange and investment funds from the very beginning came in a form and at a time that made it decisive. The Korea boom, another fruit of the East-West conflict, also played a vital role in helping Germany to her feet. Up to that time things had been going well enough, but it was widely felt that the harder part of the recovery job was still ahead. Few people believed that by the end of the Marshall Plan Germany would succeed in lifting her exports—then a little more than one third their 1954 volume—to a level that would make her self-supporting. The world-wide Korea splurge set off some remarkable fireworks in the German export industry. These industries specialized in machinery and other capital equipment, just the things that were most in demand, and they had excess capacity. Their competitors in other countries were for the most part solidly booked and now had to load up their production schedules further with urgent military orders from their own Governments. German exporters, with prompt delivery dates and good, reasonably-priced equipment, took full advantage of the unique situation. Within little more than a year they had pushed exports to a level that made further aid unnecessary.

Under the heading "Industrial Structure and Foreign Trade", there is this statement:—

These calculations proved to be as wrong as they had seemed plausible. The partition, if it had to happen, could hardly have gone much better from the point of view of the West. The area that before the war had had 56 per cent of the population retained about 61 per cent of industrial capacity. For most industries the cut came very close to that average. There were some, of course, where it did not; the electrical equipment industry, for instance, had only 38 per cent of its capacity in the West; the leather industry, on the other hand, had 72 per cent and suffered from excess capacity. Some smaller industries were lost 100 per cent. These losses, however, were made up rather easily. For a country with Germany's investment potential the rebuilding of a hosiery industry or a textile machinery industry presented no great problem. Excess capacity, on the other hand, usually was absorbed by the rapid expansion of the whole economy.

A further extract reads:—

In the end, therefore, Germany again found herself with the same well-rounded industrial structure that she had before the war. The main characteristic of this structure was its strength in the capital goods industries. Partition and subsequent investment intensified this concentration. At certain times in the past, when markets were lacking, these industries had been more of a liability than an asset. To the post-war world, however, they were as tailored to order. Capital goods were urgently needed for Germany's own reconstruction, and the entire world was clamouring for them. While countries relying more heavily on exports of consumer goods were running into protectionist trade restrictions abroad, Germany was supplying the machines for the

new protected industries. In the contemporary international climate Germany discovered that she possessed a quite remarkable export potential.

Further paragraphs all have the same bearing on the recovery of West Germany. I think some of these things go a long way to prove that the recovery of West Germany was not entirely due to the decontrol of prices. In South Australia, of course, the conditions are different altogether. The member for Mitcham lives in a metropolitan electorate, and therefore he would not be concerned with the effect of the decontrol of some of the items he seeks to have decontrolled. He would not be so concerned with the effect because his electorate is not directly concerned. He lives in a fully built-up area where building materials are not in such great demand as they perhaps are in some country districts or other districts where there is a great demand for houses. Had the honourable member considered those things I think he would have taken a different view of the retention of price control in this State. I support the Bill.

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

#### ART GALLERY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 31. Page 863.)

Mr. CLARK (Gawler)—I support the Bill, which is a simple amending Bill needing little comment. It increases the number of members on the Art Gallery Board to enable a quorum to be obtained more easily. I believe that on North Terrace we have two or three places of which we can be justly proud. One of those places is the Art Gallery, another is our War Memorial, and possibly—although some members may not agree with me—Parliament House is another. In explaining the Bill, the Minister of Education named the present five members and said that those members were persons who had the highest reputation and prestige in their respective fields, had travelled widely, had varied interests, and were fully informed as to the national and international trends in art. That was very high commendation, but I believe these gentlemen can live up to that reputation. The very fact that these members are busy men and have wide interests may militate against their being present to help make up a quorum at board meetings. The Bill therefore provides for an increase in the number of board members from five to seven from January 10, 1961. I believe this

will relieve the strain on these members. It will also ensure that a quorum will be present at meetings and that the necessary and effective work being done will be continued.

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

#### SALARIES ADJUSTMENT (PUBLIC SERVICE AND TEACHERS) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 31. Page 864.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition)—Although I support the second reading of this Bill, I am concerned with that part of the Treasurer's explanation which states:—

Provisions on similar lines to those in clause 3 were included in an Appropriation Act in 1955 but were, of course, limited to one particular increase.

I believe the history of this matter is that the Crown Law Department advised against a certain increase being granted in 1955, and it was found necessary, following a Crown Law opinion on the subject, to introduce a special Appropriation Bill and I understand this was done. In 1956, other people should have been entitled to increases in similar circumstances to those that arose in 1955, but I understand that the Government of the day, after again seeking advice, was not willing to make the necessary appropriation. However, I am led to believe that some persons received certain payments last year, from April 1 to June 11. These were considered to be over-payments, and whereas some persons on request returned the money others indicated that they would not refund it. Other people did not receive payment, although all these people were on more or less the same basis.

This Bill is to be retrospective to March 6 of this year. Assuming this Bill had been introduced in 1955, instead of the special Appropriation Bill, can the Treasurer say how many persons would have qualified for increases but have been denied such increases? Had a special Appropriation Bill been introduced to meet the position in 1956, some persons would have received the same concession as that which applied in 1955, and I am interested to know how many people would be affected. Will the Treasurer consider including in an appropriation those persons who have been similarly affected since 1955? Perhaps the Government would be prepared to report progress so that the matter could be further considered.

Bill read a second time.



In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—"Commencement".

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition)—I ask whether this Bill could operate retrospectively to 1955, although its commencing date is shown as March 6, 1960.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—Obviously, the Government would not be prepared to consider taking the commencement date of the Bill back to 1955. Each award has different circumstances associated with it and in some cases awards state that they are to be retrospective whilst in other instances they provide that they are not to be retrospective. There is always someone, irrespective of the prescribed limits, who does not benefit. This Bill represents a considerable concession and it was fully considered by the Government before it was introduced. If we were to date it back to 1955 we might find a case to take it back to 1949 and there would be no limit to it. If the Leader of the Opposition wants it taken back further I cannot promise him any support.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Can the Treasurer say how many persons received certain payments in June, 1959? Did some of those persons refund money to the Government? Did others refuse to refund money? Would an investigation into this matter be worthwhile?

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

#### LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONTROL OF RENTS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 1. Page 894.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition)—I support the second reading of this Bill. The Opposition has always advocated the continuance of this Act because of cases of hardship. We know that the Government is aware of our attitude. Should this House accept amendments from another place seeking to alter the legislation introduced by the Government? Previously, when similar legislation was passed by this House, the Premier stated that without this legislation rents might soar thus making it virtually impossible for some people, without considerable hardship, to rent houses. Many houses have been released from control and the rents of those premises have increased considerably.

The figures given by the Premier showed that the Housing Trust received 102 more rental applications for the year ended June 30,

1960, than it did for the year ended June 30, 1959. On the other hand the trust received 1,278 fewer applications for purchase houses in that period. That does not reflect on the Housing Trust but it indicates that the cost of houses has increased and retention of rent control for a further 12 months must be considered. The Housing Trust completed 3,174 dwellings during the year but I believe that number would have been greater if finance had been available. I know of instances where more houses could have been completed in the year ended June 30, 1960, if money had been available for the contractor to continue with his work. Lack of money affects house building because, instead of a building organization with a manpower team being able to follow on from trade to trade with the necessary materials available, the builder finds that his quota is determined by the sum available and, when that is exhausted, he must find other work to keep his force employed. That affects the overall position and the costs. I am sorry that the legislation provides only for a further 12 months' operation because I hoped that we could have extended it for longer. However, it is better to receive some consideration for people who otherwise might, if rents were increased, be harshly treated.

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

#### PORT PIRIE RACECOURSE LAND REVESTMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 7. Page 993.)

Mr. McKEE (Port Pirie)—On September 7 last, I was saying that, as a result of this measure, the school would be able to extend its recreation area. I am sure that all honourable members will agree it is most important that, wherever possible, we should make every effort to provide adequate playing fields for our children because active outdoor sport plays a great part in the development of their minds and bodies for future vocations. The land in question adjoins the Port Pirie high school and is at present being used by the school for recreation purposes, with the approval of the Trotting and Racing Club. For the high school with its present enrolment of nearly 800 children and an expected enrolment of approximately 1,000 in the near future, the present playing fields are inadequate. This additional area if made available would provide the necessary extension to those playing fields. At this

stage I should like to thank the Port Pirie Trotting and Racing Club for its generous action in making this land available. Also, I sincerely thank the Minister of Lands and his department for their co-operation in respect of this Bill. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

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

### BUSH FIRES BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 7. Page 993.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition)—This Bill is an attempt by the Government to consolidate the Bush Fires Act to make it more understandable. This State will face a great bush fire danger in the next few months and everyone should take precautions to try to prevent fires breaking out. Because of the abundant undergrowth this year in both the metropolitan area and the country, the bush fire hazard will be greater than usual. The first few clauses contain some variations in respect of subsidies. Clause 14 states *inter alia* :—

(2) The Subsidies Committee shall consist of three members appointed by the Minister.

(3) One of the members shall be appointed on the nomination of the Fire and Accident Underwriters' Association of South Australia. These are more or less Government appointments. Clause 24 provides that the Subsidies Committee may make a grant out of the Subsidies Fund to provide not more than two-thirds of the cost of any equipment and materials used in connection with fighting bush fires. Then clause 36 (1) says:—

This section shall apply to—

(a) every fire control officer appointed by a council or by the Minister for the area of a council; and

(b) every person appointed by a council as a member of the crew of a fire fighting appliance the property of or under the control of a council—

but shall not apply to any such officer or member who receives remuneration for his services.

We must thank the member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) for a provision that crews may be compensated for injury sustained during fire control training. Two types of compensation have to be considered. One applies to persons meeting with fatal or serious accident, and particular attention must be given to that. The other type of compensation will be computed on the assumption that the injured fire fighter earns a weekly wage equal to the living wage plus a margin of £1 or such other margin

as the council may fix by resolution. Will volunteers, other than members of a trained crew, who meet with an accident while fighting a fire be compensated for injuries suffered?

The Hon. D. N. Brookman—There is a Volunteer Fire Fighters Fund Act as well.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—If, in the opinion of an officer in charge, it is necessary to demolish a building or to burn private property to establish a firebreak, will compensation be payable to the owner? Many property owners insure against fire, but there are others who do not take that precaution.

Clause 50 relates to the burning of stubble on township allotments. There are many vacant allotments in my electorate and naturally this provision interests me. I understand that a council may stipulate conditions that must be observed before a fire can be lit, such as clearing the weeds a specified distance from a fence first. Under the Local Government Act I believe a council may undertake the work and recoup the cost from the landholder, but at times a council may not have sufficient manpower to do all the work in its district and damage could result if a fire broke out. Can the Minister inform me whether councils should have additional powers in this respect? Clauses 72 and 73 relate to smoking and throwing burning material from a vehicle. Our legislation has progressed in this respect because years ago it was necessary for pipes to have protective covers and men were almost debarred from smoking cigarettes. I think the compensation provisions may require further explanation, but this is essentially a Committee Bill and I shall listen with interest to the views of country members who are more concerned with this legislation. I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 35 passed.

Clause 36—“Compensation for death and injury of fire control officers and crews.”

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition)—If a fire control officer receives a greater salary than the amount provided as compensation in this clause, will he be entitled to a greater amount if he qualifies for compensation? If so, will the permanent fire control officers be entitled to higher compensation if they are injured?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Agriculture)—The answer to the first question

is to be found in subclause (3), which states:—

The amount of compensation payable on the death of or injury to a person to whom this section applies shall be computed on the basis that the weekly earnings of that person were at all relevant times an amount equal to the living wage plus a margin of one pound or such greater margin as the council may fix by resolution.

The council, therefore, has power to set the compensation at a higher rate if it desires. The second question is covered by subclause (1), which states that the provision "shall not apply to any such officer or member who receives remuneration for his services as such officer or member". That relates to permanent council employees who would normally be insured under the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act. Fire officers who are registered are not necessarily council employees. They may be farmers or anyone else officially appointed as fire control officers, or they may be members of a registered fire fighting crew who are not employed by the council. The provision does not cover a fire fighter who is not a member of a registered crew. He would be insured under the Volunteer Fire Fighters Fund Act.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I hope that it will not be necessary to have huge armies of volunteers to assist in fire fighting. If the margin is greater than the basic wage, plus £1, the normal provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act should apply to the personnel of a crew.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Can the Minister say to what extent the casual fire fighter is covered and what recompense he will receive if injured?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—He is adequately covered under the Volunteer Fire Fighters Fund Act. I know of two instances where payments have been made. One was in special circumstances and it was necessary to seek an interpretation of the Act to assure the relatives of the injured person that compensation would be paid so that he could be flown to hospital. This person had assisted in fighting a fire and was badly burned in a petrol explosion and subsequently died. In that case expenses for transport were covered. Another case concerned a man who was earning about £70 or £80 a week as a fisherman and he was generously compensated, but I cannot give the amount. If the honourable member would like more detail, I can get it for him.

Mr. BYWATERS—Subclause (5) provides that a council may by resolution fix and vary from time to time the amount of the margin

referred to in subclause (3). If a man is injured and the council fixes an amount that he considers to be insufficient, can he appeal to the Minister or to the advisory committee for suitable recompense?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—Not that I know of. The committee administering the Volunteer Fire Fighters Fund Act has nothing to do with this Act. Possibly he could appeal to the court, although I do not know of it, and I am not aware of any right he has to appeal to me.

Mr. BYWATERS—A man may hold a remunerative position and because of his appointment as an officer under the Act could suffer a great financial loss because of his activity in fighting a fire. A council is not infallible and some members of it may not have knowledge of the conditions under the Workmen's Compensation Act and unintentionally could cause hardship to him. I am a little concerned about this provision, because these things could happen and an amendment to the Act might be necessary later.

Mr. DUNSTAN—I also have misgivings about this provision. A council may choose to fix the margin at, say, 25s. above the basic wage and, despite the fact that an individual would be suffering a serious loss, that is what he would get from an insurance company. I do not think this is satisfactory; I think it would be preferable to have some provision closer to the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act. I cannot see the reason for giving councils this extra discretion. If a council is to be allowed to fix a higher margin, I think the base rate of the margin should be much higher than the council is allowed to fix under this provision. The Trades and Labor Council is concerned about this matter and will give some advice tomorrow morning about it. In view of that, will the Minister permit us to say something more about the matter, possibly tomorrow afternoon?

Mr. RALSTON—I agree with the members for Norwood and Murray. Subclause (2) (a) provides that every fire control officer or member of a crew shall be deemed to be a workman employed by the council which appointed him, and that council shall be deemed to be his employer within the meaning of the Workmen's Compensation Act. This applies to people appointed by control officers or other authorized officers but, when a permanent injury occurs to other workmen, the Workmen's Compensation Act applies and they can come before the court. If a workman's power

to earn is impaired throughout his working life, the damage could amount to many thousands of pounds, but under this Bill no provision is made to give fire control officers who are injured any right to have legal assistance. I have been assured by Mr. Kerr that he could not provide legal assistance to any fire officer or crew member appointed by a council, and I am sure the Government does not intend that a fire control officer or crew member should have to go to a court of law and use his own resources to obtain a decision. I am sure the Government feels that, if the Director considers a man has a just case, he should have the authority to obtain legal opinion. If a working man is prepared to accept a position of this kind but, due to accident, he is forced to give up work, he should not have to go to a court at his own expense to get a legal settlement. Will the Minister consider this aspect?

Mr. HARDING—I hope that, unless it is urgent to pass this Bill now, it can be deferred, possibly until next week, as so many things demand consideration. I have a copy of a letter sent to the Minister from a South-Eastern council setting out the duties of these people, and I also have in mind the recent fire that occurred in the South-East. I ask the Minister to report progress.

Mr. LOVEDAY—I am sure the Minister will agree that the importance of fire fighting cannot be over-stressed. To get full support, fire fighters must know that they are fully covered. If they have not got this confidence,

I do not think we can expect them to show the same enthusiasm. I think it is desirable that progress be reported to enable more consideration to be given to this matter.

Mr. CORCORAN—I also think the casual fire fighters constitute the majority of people fighting fires. They do this work readily and they would have a greater encouragement if assured that they had some provision for appealing instead of the responsibility being on the fire fighting service. In most instances they would represent the greatest number of people fighting the fire. There should be some right of appeal if the council does not do the right thing.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—Doubts have been expressed about there being any right of appeal. I am not certain of the position and the Parliamentary Draftsman is not here to explain it. The second reading explanation of the Bill was given on September 7 and some weeks have elapsed since then. Instead of reporting progress I suggest that we defer consideration of this clause until later. As clause 37 may be associated with the query on this clause, I move that clauses 36 and 37 be considered after clause 107.

Consideration of clauses 36 and 37 deferred.

Clauses 38 to 65 inclusive passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.28 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, October 13, at 2 p.m.