

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, November 16, 1960.

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

DEATH OF SIR MALCOLM McINTOSH.

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

That the House of Assembly expresses its deep regret at the death of the Hon. Sir Malcolm McIntosh, K.B.E., a former Minister of the Crown and member for Albert, and places on record its appreciation of his public services; and that as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased gentleman the sitting of the House be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

There are few honourable members who have not, during their political career, had occasion to confer with Sir Malcolm McIntosh when he was Minister of Works. His services as a Minister of the Crown extend back further than his holding of that portfolio, which he held in latter years. If one examines the records of South Australia's political life he will see that Sir Malcolm held many portfolios at various times. He probably holds the record of any British Parliament for length and continuity of service as a Minister of the Crown. Few of the important works that this State has undertaken in recent years have not been under his portfolio and under his personal control. I believe that the people of South Australia generally recognize that they owe a great debt for the development of this State to the department of which he was for so long Ministerial head. His public services were given freely and were effective. During the time that I was associated with him (and for many years he was my colleague) I always felt that if Sir Malcolm undertook a job he would do his utmost to see that it was well done.

He was a delightful comrade and a gentleman; he did not wish anyone any harm; he never bore anyone any ill will; he was vigorous in debate, but when a debate concluded and the issue was settled that was the end of it so far as Sir Malcolm was concerned. He never harboured any grudge, and if he were not successful in the debate he took defeat in the spirit that is so necessary in Parliamentary affairs where compromise has to be effected from time to time.

I know how devoted Sir Malcolm and Lady McIntosh were and how they shared each other's lives, and I express deepest sympathy to Lady McIntosh and the family on their sad bereavement. I know that the motion will

commend itself to all members and all people of this State, who owe a great debt to this remarkably fine administrator and gentleman. Just how heavy is the burden in certain departments is not usually recognized, and probably one of the heaviest portfolios is that of Works Minister. Not only is it necessary always to plan ahead and to plan so that ample facilities will be available to meet the growing demands of the State's economy, but the Minister is virtually held personally responsible if there is any breakdown in services anywhere. No matter what time of the night, the Minister is on the telephone and is virtually considered to be responsible for any breakdown. Sir Malcolm bore all those heavy duties uncomplainingly.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition)—I join with the Premier in his remarks about the late Sir Malcolm McIntosh. Members of the Opposition extend their deepest sympathies to Lady McIntosh and the other relatives. When I look opposite I can count probably five members who have been here all the time I have been here, so many members must have gone since I came here. I pay a tribute to Sir Malcolm for his administration. If members asked a question he went to no end of trouble to give the answer and in debate he went out of his way to give the fullest possible information to the House. His loyalty to his staff was outstanding, as was the work performed under his administration while he was Minister of Works. We on this side of the House sincerely endorse the sentiments expressed by the Premier. We regret that his illness was so long and, I believe, entailed much suffering. I support the motion.

Mr. STOTT (Ridley)—I associate myself with the motion moved by the Premier and supported by the Leader of the Opposition about the passing of a colleague and friend, the late Sir Malcolm McIntosh. I had the pleasure and privilege of knowing Malcolm McIntosh long before he entered Parliament—way back when he came from Victoria and established himself in business at Pinnaroo. When he was in the Murray Mallee district he soon became well known throughout the whole of the district as a friend among men. The confidence people had in him at that time enabled him to become elected to Parliament for the district of Albert, and to continue as a member for Albert (with his colleague, Mr. Fred McMillan) for 12 years.

At the 1933 elections, when I first contested Albert, both he and I were successful, and

for the five years from 1933 to 1938 we both represented that district and were colleagues. I can speak with much feeling and knowledge of a great man and a great friend during the whole of that period and throughout the whole time I have known him. It is strange, but nevertheless true, that although we had many differences of opinion we never had a cross word. Honourable members who recall Sir Malcolm in debate in this House will know, as the Premier said, that he was vigorous in championing his own opinion, which he would put in his forceful way. He was a delight even to have a difference of opinion with, because after a matter had been thrashed out he would say, "Well, let's go and have a drink for old times' sake," or something like that. Although we did not always agree we remained firm friends throughout.

I also had the pleasure of knowing Sir Malcolm's family. The son and daughter have grown up and established properties in the Murray Mallee at Coonalpyn. Sir Malcolm was popular in the House because he had a jolly personality. His Scottish ancestry will ring in this Chamber for many years to come, because in order to get a point home he often used to quote the words of the famous poet, Bobbie Burns. Once, when we had a difference of opinion he said to me, "Now, you must always remember the words of Bobby Burns: a man's a man for a' that." I think that that good philosophy governed the whole of Sir Malcolm's life: whatever his views, and whatever public avocation he took, one can always remember him by that phrase, for he remained "a man for a' that", and was a man throughout his life. He was always a trier.

I agree with the Premier that he bore no ill-will to anybody. He could have a vigorous difference of opinion, but he did not think any the less of a person because that person held a different opinion. He had a proud record in public life, and his family can look back to this record with much pride in a man who did well in the public life of the State. His length of time as a Cabinet Minister will probably not be equalled for many years to come. The personality of Lady McIntosh, always a delightful person, is reflected in both the son and the daughter who, if they emulate the example set by their father, will also do well in public life in this State. To Lady McIntosh and her family I extend the deepest sympathy, with the thought that in their darkest hour of sorrow they can be

proud to be the wife and children of such a good man and citizen of South Australia.

Motion carried by members standing in their places in silence.

[Sitting suspended from 2.15 to 2.35 p.m.]

QUESTIONS.

INFLATION CURBS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I desire to ask the Treasurer a question following his recent visit to Canberra to attend the Liberal Party Conference. Were the panic proposals announced by the Commonwealth Treasurer last night endorsed by the Federal Executive of the Liberal Party? Further, does the Treasurer agree that the implementation of this policy is in the best interests of South Australia?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The proposals were not endorsed by the Liberal Party of Australia: they were not submitted to it so they could not be endorsed. The only statement made when I was there was made when the press was present, and it was given full publicity. The functions of the Liberal Party of Australia are entirely different from the administrative functions of the Commonwealth Government. As regards the Leader's second question, I have not had the proposals submitted to me by the Commonwealth Government and do not know their full ramifications. If the Leader would like me to stick my neck out a little, I would say that some of the proposals would be entirely within the scope of the Commonwealth Government and would not be subject at all to consideration by the State Government. One or two of the proposals could, I believe, be discussed with profit by the Loan Council. On a future occasion perhaps the Loan Council could discuss those things.

Mr. RICHES—I have been informed that country people who have approached the banks for loans for developmental works, other than of an agricultural nature, and for the provision of amenities in country centres, have been told by the banks that no funds are available, but at the same time they have been advised that the banks would handle an application for a loan from a finance company at a higher rate of interest. Has the Treasurer had any advice of this situation obtaining in other districts and can he say whether the proposed increase in bank interest rates, as envisaged in the Commonwealth Treasurer's statement, is likely to embarrass the State Government by increasing costs?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—In respect of the first question, the Commonwealth has set up a Development Bank and applications that have come to me asking for assistance for developmental works were treated sympathetically by that authority. In fact, I was surprised at the extent of the assistance given by the Commonwealth Development Bank, provided the application were for a developmental project. The bank has no authority to participate in day to day general banking, but for developmental projects it has not only funds but also the goodwill to make substantial advances on any project that has any chance of succeeding, particularly on land development. If members have any applications of a developmental nature, I suggest that they refer them to the Commonwealth Development Bank. I have found that that organization has been doing a good job and, provided that the project has been reasonably sound, has been prepared to make substantial advances, particularly for land development.

Regarding bank interest rates, there were a number of proposals. I have not had any memorandum on this and do not intend to express a general opinion upon what is, after all, an intricate proposal to solve a problem, or to say what I approve or do not approve. However, I heard the Commonwealth Treasurer say that it was intended that life assurance companies would be compelled to put 30 per cent of their funds into Government securities. I believe that, because of the tremendous assistance given those associations through the taxation laws, that requirement is well justified. In fact, this change from Government securities to all sorts of miscellaneous securities has come into our economic life recently. I remember when the Loan Council, in considering its annual budget, could rely on substantial sums being made available by insurance companies. As the concession given in the Commonwealth Budget to insurance companies in fostering the business of insurance companies totals over £30,000,000, I believe this is justified. In fact, for a long time I have been concerned that the insurance companies have been taking their business away from the general development of the State with which their welfare is so intimately associated. I believe that one or two other proposals will have a beneficial effect in raising Commonwealth loans. There was no suggestion that the bond rate would be increased and, if it is not, there will be no effect on State finances.

MINNIPA RESEARCH CENTRE.

Mr. BOCKELBERG—Can the Minister of Agriculture give me any information regarding the appointment of a manager to the Government Research Centre at Minnipa? If he has not been appointed, can the Minister tell me when he may be appointed?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—No, but I will certainly let the honourable member know at the earliest possible moment when this post has been filled.

SCHOOL CARETAKERS.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I understand that a trial period was agreed upon for the appointment of caretakers at three primary schools, including Woodville. As there is much public interest in this, can the Minister of Education say when applications were called, when the appointments were made, what are the duties defined for the caretakers, and what are the salaries paid?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Applications were called some weeks back for appointments of caretakers at Paringa Park, Woodville and Forbes primary schools. Caretakers have been appointed to each of these schools as follows: Paringa Park on September 5, 1960; Woodville on September 19, 1960; Forbes on October 3, 1960. The duties to be carried out by the caretakers are:—

- (1) cleaning of portion of the school as allotted by the head master, together with all windows, sheds and lavatories;
- (2) supervision of all cleaning contractors under the direction of the head master;
- (3) general oversight of school grounds, buildings and property generally; and
- (4) attention to minor repairs and such other duties as may be allocated by the head master. A caretaker receives a weekly wage of £15 3s. I emphasize that these three appointments were made on an experimental basis and, after a trial period, reports will be obtained from the headmasters as to the success or otherwise of the experiment. As a result of those reports, I shall consider whether or not I should recommend the appointment of more caretakers in other large primary schools.

YOUTH TRUST.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—In this morning's *Advertiser* is a lengthy article by Stewart Cockburn

headed "U.K. Youth Report: Many Points for S.A."; which states, in part:

A blue-covered, 135-page report presented to the House of Commons this year by the British Ministry of Education could give S.A. many of the answers it needs to the juvenile delinquency and immorality problems now worrying us. The Albemarle Report, as it is now widely known, followed a two-year inquiry by a distinguished committee headed by the Countess of Albemarle into youth needs in Britain. It recommended a far-reaching 10-year development programme for a special National Youth Service.

Later in the article the author mentions the Youth Trust which was formed in South Australia in 1958 to do substantially the work of a national youth service, but which does not yet seem to have gained much support in the community. I refer the Premier also to the report of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board which was tabled in this House last week. In view of the above press article I wonder whether my first reaction to the board's report that nothing could be done directly by the Government is a good one. Can the Premier say whether the Government will consider whether there are ways, either financial or otherwise, in which it could assist the Youth Trust in its work in South Australia?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes, I will look at that.

LOXTON SPORTSMASTER.

Mr. STOTT—Some time ago the Loxton primary school was anxious to appoint a sportsmaster and approached the Education Department, but for some reason the department was unable to get a suitable person. A local resident, with some knowledge of sport, has devoted much time to training the children. Approval was sought to pay him for his loss of time but this was refused by the department and, consequently, the man was unable to continue providing this service, and the school is without a sportsmaster. Will the Minister of Education examine this matter to see whether a sportsmaster can be appointed to this school?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—All appointments, transfers and promotions of teachers are made by me on a recommendation of the Director of Education and I would not have any personal knowledge of this matter. As the honourable member has asked me to give it my personal attention I shall be only too pleased to do so and to let him have my decision as soon as possible.

CIVIL DEFENCE.

Mr. COUMBE—Early this session I asked the Premier a question about civil defence follow-

ing on a conference between State representatives and the Commonwealth Government. The Premier then indicated that, following that conference, the States had indicated their willingness to co-operate with the Commonwealth authorities to a minor extent in a civil defence programme and had intimated how far they were prepared to go financially. They asked the Commonwealth Government to agree to certain submissions. Can the Premier say whether the Commonwealth has yet reached a decision on the States' submissions about financial aid and whether that has been communicated to the States?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—As far as I know, the Commonwealth Government has not reached any decision on this matter. We have had no communication from it. If a decision had been reached I should think that we would have received a memorandum concerning it.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS.

Mrs. STEELE—Last week the Premier outlined a scheme to establish a rehabilitation centre for alcoholics, legislation for which, he was reported to have said, would be prepared for the next session of Parliament. He further said that among the highly trained staff to be used at the centre would be attendants who would be trained to supervise occupational therapy. A recent survey disclosed that there were only seven fully qualified occupational therapists in this State, only two of whom were on the staffs of Government hospitals. Further, there are no facilities here for such training. Will the Premier say whether the Government will investigate the position with a view to establishing a training centre for occupational therapists here or, alternatively, offering scholarships similar to those already offered in veterinary science, and under the same conditions, to students with the required qualifications to undertake courses provided by the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—From time to time the problem mentioned by the honourable member arises. It obviously is not practicable to establish training centres for what is, after all, a limited number of persons. We have found that the best method of filling vacancies is calling for applications on a world-wide basis and providing fares for successful applicants to come to this State. We are having a considerable success through this method in filling vacancies. On the general question, I doubt whether it would not be too costly to establish a centre for training

when we will have only one institution of this type which, as far as we can see, will probably have only 100 occupants.

SCHOOL EMERGENCY EXITS.

Mr. RYAN—At the request of the committee of the Port Adelaide primary school, I inspected the school last Monday and the committee pointed out an anomaly in relation to fire escape drill. In the prefabricated rooms at that school the minimum jump that the children would have to make from the sill to the ground is 4ft. 6in., and in some cases it is 5ft. They must make this jump on to asphalt after climbing through a small window. The staff and the committee are greatly concerned because they believe this is jumping from the fire into the fat in that there is a possibility of physical injury in carrying out fire drill. Will the Minister of Education take up this matter with his department, in conjunction with the Public Buildings Department, to see whether some suitable arrangement can be arrived at whereby there will be no possibility of physical injury to children carrying out fire drill?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be only too pleased to comply with the honourable member's request and take up this matter with the Director of Public Buildings, but I hasten to add that, in company with the Director of Public Buildings, the Director of Education, several members of Parliament and other responsible people, I have seen fire escape demonstrations. We all thought that, although the arrangement might not have been ideal, it was sensible and could be carried out by all children of various ages without risk. However, as the honourable member has seen this for himself and is obviously concerned, I shall be pleased to re-investigate the matter.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY: LOWER SOUTH-EAST.

Mr. HARDING—I was pleased to see in yesterday's paper that the Electricity Trust was to build 55 miles of 33,000 volt line in the Coonalpyn Downs area. Will the Premier say whether building this line will delay building the proposed 132,000 volt direct line to the Lower South-East?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—No, the two things are not directly connected. The 11,000 volt line is being erected for the purposes of local development. Ultimately a large power line will be going right through. As far as the lower South-East is concerned, we are now expanding the power supply that will

come from Nangwarry by developing another unit there. I think it was always planned that it would be some years before the main line would be extended to the South-East. It was proposed to put the power line, I think, through as far as Bordertown this year, but there was some hold-up in negotiations and I think that plan has been somewhat delayed, although I fancy probably only to the extent of one year from the original date. I can obtain information on the general proposals for the honourable member. This particular proposal does not in any way prevent the main one from being implemented.

SOUTH-EASTERN SLEEPER ACCOMMODATION.

Mr. RALSTON—My question concerns sleeper accommodation on the South-Eastern railways. The members for Victoria (Mr. Harding) and Millicent (Mr. Corcoran) associate themselves with me in this question, as they, too, use the South-Eastern railways for a considerable period during the year and realize that it is an obsolete and outmoded service. Although the Railways Commissioner has recommended that there be no further trial period during the coming year of using modern sleepers on that line, most South-Eastern people disagree with that view; they consider the trial period during July and August was rather badly arranged and provided not a modern sleeper service from the South-East to Adelaide and return at all, but merely a service from Adelaide to Mount Gambier and return. The people desire a further review of this matter. Will the Minister of Works ask the Minister of Railways to arrange for a further review with the object of providing a trial service leaving Mount Gambier on Monday night and returning on Tuesday night, or, alternatively, leaving Mount Gambier on Friday night and returning to Mount Gambier on Sunday night?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I will seek a report from my colleague.

COURT OF DISPUTED RETURNS.

Mr. SHANNON—Can the Minister of Education, representing the Attorney-General, say whether it would be a breach of etiquette for a legal practitioner, who is a member of the Court of Disputed Returns following a by-election, to appear at a count of votes conducted by a returning officer and argue the admissibility or otherwise of ballots cast at that election? The member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) did so appear at Peterborough last night.

at a count and scrutiny of the votes in the Frome by-election. Will the Minister say, or ascertain from the Attorney-General, whether any action should be taken in this matter?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The honourable member has asked me whether I would give my opinion or obtain the opinion of the Attorney-General. I should much prefer to refer the question to the Attorney-General for his opinion, because he is the head of the legal administration in this State, and, secondly, because I am not aware of the particular facts or circumstances which led up to the honourable member's question. I might say that, in my opinion, a Court of Disputed Returns is one of the highest courts, if not the highest, in the land, and I think it should be so treated by every member of the Court of Disputed Returns from its inception. I remember years ago (when I was much younger) that I was a member, with the late Sir Charles Abbott, of a Court of Disputed Returns, and he and I tried to adopt the same judicial attitude throughout the whole of the proceedings, as did the eminent judge who presided over the court, and I am sure that even our lay colleagues (I think the late Mr. Lacey was one) approached the whole court proceedings with that same judicial attitude. I would hope that history would repeat itself with any further court proceedings that might be established under the authority of Parliament.

Mr. HUTCHENS—My question refers to a question asked this afternoon by the honourable member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) in regard to a by-election at which the member for Onkaparinga appeared as the official scrutineer for a candidate named Hams. When referring the honourable member's question to the Attorney-General, will the Minister of Education apprise the Attorney-General of the fact that Mr. D. A. Dunstan was present at the count as the official scrutineer for Mr. Casey, and that any other associations he might have were purely incidental?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes. I shall be only too pleased to convey that message to my colleague, the Attorney-General, but I should like to add, if I may, that the decisions of the Court of Disputed Returns should not only be just, fair and impartial but should undoubtedly be manifestly seen to be just, fair and impartial right from the outset of the proceedings to their conclusion.

Mr. RICHES—The Minister said that the Court of Disputed Returns should not only be just, fair and impartial in its deliberations,

but that it must appear to be just, fair and impartial. I feel that it could be held that that comment was designed to imply that there may have been practices on the part of some members of the court that would not measure up to that standard. As the Minister is a member of the Court of Disputed Returns I ask him whether he does not feel that the questions directed to him today have not led him into expressing an opinion that could be held to be prejudicial to such an inquiry?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I am not aware of any facts or circumstances which have led to the questions asked by the members for Onkaparinga and Hindmarsh. They appear to know much more about the circumstances than I do.

INSPECTION OF FISHING CRAFT.

Mr. JENKINS—My question is prompted by the sad loss of the fishing cutter *Marco Polo* in the South-East. Two or three fishing cutters have been lost at sea in the last year or two. Can the Minister of Marine say whether there is any inspection by the Harbors Board of the seaworthiness of such craft, and if there is not, will he consider perhaps a yearly inspection of fishing craft on our coast?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—This matter has exercised my mind, the mind of the Harbors Board, and, indeed, in an indirect way so far, the mind of Cabinet, as to the advisability or necessity of implementing the inspection and certification that the question suggests. One problem associated with it is to weigh the benefits obtained against the burden to be borne by the industry and the members engaged in that industry regarding its implementation. I regret, as much as the honourable member does, the loss of life at sea. It does occur, and it has occurred, but fortunately not with a great degree of frequency on the South Australian coast. Apparently it has occurred in the last day or two, although I still hold out some hope that the people concerned may be found alive. I discussed the question with the Harbors Board earlier this week. We have considered what steps are necessary regarding the size of craft, for instance, and the type of craft that should be included. It seems impossible to frame and to police regulations which would cover those craft down to the very small ones which, after all, only venture short distances from shore for this purpose. The matter has not escaped notice; it has been discussed many times, and we are trying to determine a policy which Cabinet could consider and on which it could make

determinations. It would be a basis for discussion, at any rate, as to what it would be proper to do, having in mind that the cost (not a small cost) of survey and certification would have to be borne by the fishing industry itself. Indeed, probably one major problem contributing to loss of life at sea is changeable weather, and even experienced people going to sea are sometimes caught with a change in weather conditions which they cannot foresee and which their instruments cannot foretell accurately. That frequently causes loss of life at sea, particularly on our South Australian coast, where a change of weather comes in from the far Southern Ocean without much warning and severe storms are suddenly encountered. We have given much thought to this matter and I hope in due course to be able to evolve something for consideration by the industry and certainly by Cabinet.

KANGAROO INN SCHOOL.

Mr. CORCORAN—My question concerns the purchase of a site for the proposed new area school at Kangaroo Inn. The people who would be served by this school are tired of waiting for some finality to be reached, and as they approach me, I, in turn, approach the Minister of Education. The area involved is owned by Mr. Engelhardt of Mount Benson, who has assured me twice that the 16 acres on which the proposed school is to be erected is available at £30 an acre. Bearing in mind that it is white gum country and highly suitable for the site, the price would not be abnormal, although the value of the land may be reduced because of its isolation. The Minister has said that the land has to be valued by the Land Board, and I wish the board would hasten in the matter and so relieve me and the Minister and satisfy the people of the area. Has the Minister anything further to report?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Protracted negotiations have taken place regarding the site. I am just as anxious as the honourable member and the residents to obtain a site for this much-needed Kangaroo Inn area school, but the Government is to a large extent bound by the valuations of the Land Board in relation to the purchase and sale of land, and I am sure the honourable member and, in fact, all members of the House, would prefer that that state of affairs should continue, because it would be irresponsible for any Minister of the Crown or, in fact, the Government of the day, to purchase land without a valuation by some independent and competent board

such as the Land Board. The board has valued the land and considers that the price asked by the vendor greatly exceeds its valuation, even on a freehold basis. I understand that the land in question is not freehold, but perpetual lease, and I believe that it would not be competent for us to accept the price at which the land is being offered. As we have reached a deadlock, it appears to me, without disclosing the method, that the only way in which we can finalize the matter is to take other steps to acquire the land.

HAWKERS.

Mr. QUIRKE—My question concerns the Hawkers Act Amendment Bill. The Treasurer will remember that, when this Bill was before the House, I obtained an adjournment to satisfy myself on one or two matters and succeeded in clarifying them. Another matter of considerable importance has now come before me. There are established businesses in the hands of individuals, particularly Watkins and Rawleigh, who have operated for years. In fact, one who has operated for 29 years will, if the intention of this Act is carried out, have to pay a fee to enter various district council areas. I have evidence to show it will cost one man at least £400 a year if he has to pay his fee every month when he makes his round. These people do not interfere with local trade as do so many itinerants who go into country towns and walk out leaving the country storekeeper to carry credit on purchases made. In this case they take orders for the next month, deliver them and then take further orders. As the type of line they sell is mainly a specialist line and their operations do not conflict with those of anybody else I know of, has that matter been considered in regard to the Act, which, if carried out to the letter, would cause great havoc among many one-man businesses that have been painstakingly built up over a long period of time?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I should like to have the honourable member's question fully analysed so that I can give him a considered reply. If the reply is not available tomorrow, I will post it to him after the House has adjourned. My own recollection of the position is that this matter is left largely in the hands of the local council concerned. Many councils have never taken any action under the Act. One or two have charged fees but, as far as I know, the type of trade that the honourable member has mentioned has not in any way been adversely affected.

CABINET RESIGNATION.

Mr. LAWN—A paragraph from the "Odd Spot" in today's *News* headed "Young Idea" is as follows:—

They were having a "Who Am I" quiz for the youngsters in the "Channel Niners" show yesterday. "I am the Premier of South Australia. Who am I?" a boy was asked. He did not have a clue. So they gave him another chance—"I can see through steel walls, I can fly, and bullets can't hurt me, Who am I?" Quick as a flash came the answer to that one—"Superman!"

As the people apparently do not know who the Premier is, and as he has been to Frome and, apparently, they do not want him up there, will he tender the resignation of his Cabinet?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will give that matter very serious consideration.

SMOKE ABATEMENT.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—A letter, which I believe the Premier also may have from the Health Inspectors' Association of Australia, states:—

At the recent Federal Conference of the above Association the following resolution was adopted:

"That in view of the increasing industrial expansion in Australia and the increasing amount of legislation being enacted by various States, it is felt that provision should be made to conduct courses in air pollution prevention and smoke abatement for all Health Inspectors."

Has the Premier any knowledge of the matter or has his Government considered it?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The letter would normally be dealt with not by my department but by the Department of Labour and Industry. However, I will secure a reply for the Leader.

ABSCONDING DEBTORS.

Mr. CUMBE—Has the Minister of Education a reply to my recent question about absconding debtors?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—No, I have not a reply. I discussed the matter with the Attorney-General and we obtained a lengthy report with an opinion from the Crown Solicitor. I referred it to Cabinet, where it was considered. It was then referred to the Chief Secretary because the Police Department is rightly interested in this matter. The Chief Secretary will refer it back to Cabinet for further discussion, but so far no decision has been made. As soon as one is made, I will let the honourable member know.

NANGWARRY POST OFFICE.

Mr. HARDING—I understand that the Woods and Forests Department is negotiating with the Commonwealth Government about the building of a new post office at Nangwarry. Will the Minister of Forests obtain information on the matter and advise me when negotiations are completed?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—Yes.

WATERFRONT AMENITIES.

Mr. RYAN—Some time ago I sought information from the Minister of Marine as to the future intentions of the South Australian Harbors Board in the building on the waterfront at Port Adelaide of certain amenities that would normally be built by the employers but, as it is Harbors Board property, they are not allowed to provide the amenities. The Minister replied that he would confer with the Chairman of the South Australian Harbors Board, in view of his recent interstate trip, as to his intention regarding amenities. I ask this question now because last Friday night, in the early hours of the morning when there were no facilities available, some men were threatened with dismissal because they were at least half a mile from their depots, sheltering under the verandah of a nearby hotel. I also ask whether the minutes of a recent conference of harbor authorities held in Adelaide can be made available because I believe that some proceedings at that conference were connected with amenities.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The honourable member had not indicated that the two matters that he now links together were in any way related, but I feel they were, and properly so. As regards amenities on the waterfront, as I indicated to the honourable member earlier, the General Manager and Chairman both went to other States to see for themselves the amenities provided at other ports. They have discussed the matter with me once or twice since their return. Only on Tuesday morning of this week, in a conference lasting two hours with the Harbors Board, this matter amongst other things was further discussed. The General Manager intends to bring down to me shortly some plans or concrete proposals for amenities on the waterfront at Port Adelaide. As regards the release of copies of the proceedings at the recent port authorities conference, I must advise the honourable member that by long practice of the port authorities and by agreement between all of them the proceedings of the conference are conducted in committee without

the attendance of the press, and the statements made as a result of the conference are always made by agreement through the chairman of the conference at the time. The proceedings are not made public, nor are they circulated. That practice has been in operation for many years, and the conference itself proposes that that practice should continue.

COUNTRY SUBSIDIZED HOSPITALS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Premier a reply to my recent question about the accommodation at country subsidized hospitals?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Minister of Health reports that subsidized hospitals receive and treat all indigent patients needing treatment. They are patronized only to the extent of 50 per cent of their overall capacity so that there should be ample beds available to meet an emergency caused by an outbreak of infectious diseases.

PORT AUGUSTA HOSPITAL.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question about the installation of an emergency power plant at the Port Augusta hospital?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The Electrical Engineer of the Public Buildings Department recently visited Port Augusta and conferred with the hospital board and staff on the nature of an emergency plant that might be necessary to meet requirements. Mr. Scott has returned and has framed a report to the Director of Public Buildings which, as yet, neither the Director nor I have seen. I believe that agreement was reached with the hospital authorities on the size, capacity and type of the plant. As soon as the Director has examined the report, which should be within a day or two, he will place it before me for further consideration.

RAILWAY BUILDING ACCOMMODATION.

Mr. LAWN—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my further question concerning business premises in the Adelaide railway building?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I undertook to obtain a report from my colleague, the Minister of Labour and Industry, as to whether or not the business carried out in the premises was in accordance with the Factories Act. I have received the following report from the Minister of Labour and Industry:—

An inspector of factories visited the premises, which are subject to the provisions of the Industrial Code relating to factories, on Sep-

tember 10, 1960. The work area is suitably laid out and complies with the requirements of the code. Spray painting is conducted in a spray booth and any fumes or over-spray are carried away to the atmosphere both by window ventilation and an exhaust fan located in the northern wall. This compared favourably with spray painting conducted in other factories.

INDUSTRIAL ELECTRICITY.

Mr. RALSTON—Yesterday, in reply to a question I asked about special tariff rates for electricity, the Premier quoted from a report by the Chairman of the Electricity Trust indicating that the trust arranges special tariff rates for industry where the circumstances justify it. Can the Premier say what circumstances justify the granting of special tariff rates to industry and what industries enjoy this privilege?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have no specific knowledge of this matter but I imagine that an industry that takes power continuously would be able to justify a special tariff rate. Most industries only take power for short periods. Another factor that would justify an industry asking for a special rate would be if it were taking a substantial quantity of power that was necessary for its successful operation. On occasions we have supplied water under special conditions to enable an industry to function. One of those industries, incidentally, is in the honourable member's district.

FIBROUS PLASTER.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I have received from the Secretary of the Plasterers Society (Mr. Cavanagh) a letter in which he states that in the contract for the Mitchell Park boys technical high school no provision was made for certain battens that had to be used and that this would bring the cost of the gyprock board up close to cost of fibrous plaster sheeting. On his behalf, will the Minister of Works review this matter to see whether it is possible to use fibrous plaster similar to the material used by the contractor in the Mitchell Park primary school? Mr. Cavanagh also asks whether the Public Buildings Department could supply and fit gyprock in the Adelaide Police Court building job at a rate comparable with that of fibrous plaster.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—It has become almost general practice for contractors tendering for schools and other Government works to submit prices for gyprock and for fibrous plaster. Each tender is examined in the light of the prices submitted and where there is approximately no difference between the cost of the two materials Cabinet has adopted the

practice of awarding contracts to fibrous plaster which is manufactured in this State. It is general practice in the Public Stores Department and other departments which purchase goods to exercise a slight discretion in favour of South Australian-made articles wherever there is a close proximity in cost. Last Monday Cabinet approved a tender that provided for the two alternatives, and although fibrous plaster was slightly dearer it will be used rather than gyprock which is not manufactured here. If the honourable member will let me have the letter from which he quoted I will try to get more specific information on the points raised.

COUNTRY SEWERAGE RATES.

Mr. RALSTON—Can the Minister of Works tell me what sewerage rate, if any, applies at present in the Naracoorte and Port Lincoln districts?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I am afraid I cannot tell the honourable member offhand what the actual figure is.

Mr. Quirke—I hope it is enough!

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—In fact, the country sewers rate is rather favourable.

Mr. Quirke—Is it going to remain that way?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Yes. Although country sewerage is extremely costly in relation to the number of people served, the rate is favourable. If the honourable member will allow me, I will bring details down tomorrow.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE'S DEPARTMENT.

Mr. RALSTON—I believe the Minister of Education has a reply to my recent question about the Public Trustee's Department.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The Attorney-General has advised me that it is not considered necessary at this stage to establish branch offices of the Public Trustee's Department in country areas, as the volume of work offering would not meet the expenses involved.

PARLIAMENTARY SUPERANNUATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

SUPERANNUATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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of the general revenue of the State as were required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

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

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Superannuation Act, 1926-1958.

Motion carried.

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

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This short Bill deals with only one matter. The Bill is not intended to be a revision of the Superannuation Act as such; that Act is reviewed from time to time and will be examined possibly before the next session to see if any alterations are required. However, one matter was reported to me as requiring action similar to that taken in connection with the Police Pensions Act Amendment Bill and the Parliamentary Superannuation Act Amendment Bill. This affects the Superannuation Act, and I desire to have it adjusted this session.

The object of this short Bill is twofold. The principal amendment to the Act is effected by clause 5, which increases existing pensions payable to contributors who have retired since January 1, 1949, in respect of the first 10 units of pension by one-seventh. Members will recall that in 1958 an increase was made in respect of contributors who had retired on pension before January 1, 1949. Clause 5 will increase the value of the first 10 units of existing pensions which were not increased by the 1958 amending Act. The pension increase will be one-seventh for those in receipt of up to £8 15s. 0d. while pensioners who are receiving more than £8 15s. 0d. a week will receive an increase of 25s. a week. The increases will be effective as from December 1, 1960. Clause 4 makes a consequential amendment in relation to widows of pensioners who have retired between January 1, 1949, and December 1, 1960. The 1958 amendment made provision for widows of pensioners who retired before January 1, 1949, and clause 4 makes a similar increase for widows of pensioners who have retired since that date.

The other amendment is of an administrative order. It expressly empowers the Superannuation Board to reimburse the Treasurer out of the Superannuation Fund the costs of

administration of Part VI of the Act relating to voluntary savings. The voluntary savings fund is in fact administered by the board and it appears reasonable that fair costs of administration should come out of the fund which incorporates all moneys paid in pursuance of the voluntary savings scheme.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

POLICE OFFENCES ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 3).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 15. Page 1824.)

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I support the second reading of this Bill, which gives to conductors or drivers of private buses and to members of the police force a statutory power to remove a person from a private bus if that person is carrying on in an offensive manner. The offences are clearly stated in the Bill and I do not intend to deal with them in detail, except to say that employees of the Municipal Tramways Trust have these powers under the trust's by-laws. I remember, when I was a conductor and the by-law was not in operation, that an unfortunate mental defective travelling on a bus was behaving in such a manner that he was eventually charged, although not for what he did while on the bus. I had no right to do other than request him to leave, which I did. However, he ignored the request and as his conduct was so bad the driver agreed that in the interests of the passengers we should take a chance on the consequences, and we removed him from the bus. Obviously, there must be many people who become offensive while travelling on buses, but, as the law now stands, nothing can be done until a charge is laid. It is then, of course, too late, as the decency of many people has been offended and much damage done. I believe that this legislation is necessary and that it will provide comfort where otherwise discomfort might be caused, so I have pleasure in supporting the measure.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham)—I, too, have pleasure in wholeheartedly supporting the second reading of this Bill. Some months ago I was approached by the Metropolitan Omnibus Operators' Association, which pointed out that, as the Railways Department and the Municipal Tramways Trust had this power to deal with obstreperous passengers on their vehicles, there seemed to be no reason why private bus operators, of which there are many in the metropolitan area performing a vital service to the community, should be in a

different position. I made representations to the Government and was delighted that, as a result of my representations and, no doubt, those of other persons, this Bill was introduced. I think it is an excellent measure that gives private bus operators, conductors and drivers the powers they need to deal with such emergencies as those mentioned by the member for Hindmarsh.

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

NATIONAL PLEASURE RESORTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 15. Page 1824.)

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I apologize for the absence from the Chamber of the Leader of Opposition, but assure the House that he has thoroughly examined the Bill and does not object to its provisions.

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

BOTANIC GARDEN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 15. Page 1825.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition)—Section 15 of the original Act states:—

In case of any injury to, or the destruction of any animal or plant belonging to the garden, by any dog, goat, fowl or other animal trespassing within the garden, the owner of the dog, goat, fowl or other animal shall be guilty of an offence against this Act and liable to a penalty not exceeding two pounds, and shall, in addition, be liable to pay the value of the animal or plant so injured or destroyed, and in default of payment may be imprisoned for any period not exceeding one month, unless the payment be sooner made.

I agree with much in the second reading explanation. Clause 3 of the Bill inserts a new section which prescribes a penalty of a fine not exceeding £50 or imprisonment for three months, and goes on to say:—

On convicting a person for an offence against this section the court may, in addition to the penalty or punishment that may be inflicted for the offence, order that the person shall pay to the board such sum as the court considers just by way of compensation for the destruction or damage caused by that person, and that in default of payment of such sum the person shall be imprisoned for a period not exceeding three months, unless the sum be sooner paid.

Is not the penalty of three months' imprisonment too great? I ask that the maximum term

of imprisonment be one month. Some dog owners would not realize that dogs were prohibited in the Botanic Garden. Children should be encouraged to take an interest in the park and garden, but they may have a dog they wish to take for a walk, and are they aware that dogs are prohibited? A notice to that effect appears on the entrance gate, but I have seen pet dogs in the park. The Bill provides a penalty for committing wilful damage, and although on present-day money values the maximum fine may not be excessive, I do not agree with the provision for three months' imprisonment, and consider that one month's imprisonment would be sufficient deterrent. Will the Minister consider a reduction to one month? With that reservation, I support the second reading.

The Hon. Sir CECIL HINCKS (Minister of Lands)—I appreciate the Leader's interest in this matter. There has not been an increase in penalty since 1860, and the penalties that were applicable then would surely not be applicable today. The maximum fine is £50, and the maximum term of imprisonment is three months. I think the court would consider the nature of the crime. Some dreadful things have happened in the park and garden. On a recent inspection I saw the damage to some ornamental trees that had been planted along the river bank from the zoo towards Hackney. These have been pulled up twice and thrown into the river. On occasions fires have been lit and could have destroyed the whole of the park and garden. I would think that for an act of vandalism of that nature three months' imprisonment would hardly be sufficient. Some minor offences such as the dumping of rubbish are not so terribly serious, and I think that in those cases the penalty imposed by the court would be only sufficient to fit that type of crime. I ask the Leader to reconsider his feelings on the matter, because I am sure he will concede that a fine of £50 or imprisonment for three months for the worst type of offence, namely, the lighting of fires of a serious nature in the garden, would not be too high.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Wilful damage to property of board".

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition)—I am prepared to concede validity of the Minister's point regarding the maximum fine, considering present-day

money values. I believe that our younger citizens should be imbued with a sense of civic pride. Even though I sympathize with the Minister's objective and believe that damage must be prevented, I consider that the penalty of three months' imprisonment provided in the Bill is too high, and I ask the Minister to seriously reconsider it and provide a maximum of two months' imprisonment.

The Hon. Sir CECIL HINCKS (Minister of Lands)—I am happy to agree to the Leader's request.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I move—

In new section 15a (2) to strike out "three" and to insert "two".

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 4 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

GARDEN SUBURB ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

HIRE-PURCHASE AGREEMENTS BILL.

The Legislative Council intimated that it had agreed with the House of Assembly's amendment to its amendment No. 3 and that it did not insist on its amendment No. 28 to which the House of Assembly had disagreed.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.

The Legislative Council intimated that it had agreed to the House of Assembly's amendments.

NATIONAL PARK AND WILD LIFE RESERVES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 15. Page 1826.)

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray)—I support this Bill. It is apparent that the last three Bills before the House—the National Pleasure Resorts Act Amendment Bill, the Botanic Garden Act Amendment Bill and this Bill—are closely related. They all purport to bring the provisions into line with the present-day cost of living. Clause 3 illustrates the need for the wording of the Act to be amended, firstly in regard to the Mayor of the City of Adelaide, who now is the Lord Mayor of the Corporation of the City of Adelaide, and, secondly, in regard to the changes of names that have occurred in relation to the Botanic Garden. These provisions are machinery and necessary to correct the wording of the Act.

I am concerned that at this late hour Bills are coming before the House that we have had no opportunity to examine. In only the last few minutes we have had these three Bills put on to our files. Although they do not appear to be of any great consequence from a debating point of view, it would be appreciated if we could have them earlier. A full session has been available to get these Bills ready, yet now in the dying days of the session we have them before us for the first time. They could be controversial but we have had no opportunity to examine them. This Bill seems to be perfectly in order. There is rather a steep increase in the fine under section 7 of the principal Act, from £5 to £100, but it is necessary to impose a heavy fine to dissuade people from doing these various things. This increase is warranted. If anyone wilfully damages the beauty of our natural reserves, he should be penalized heavily. I notice that the fine is not linked with imprisonment. The Act did not provide for imprisonment before, and it is not provided for here. It is purely a matter of a fine. Anyone who maliciously damages the parks should be convicted and severely penalized, because we have a board of officers who devote much time to ensuring that the national parks and wild life sanctuaries are preserved for the benefit of people who appreciate them.

I compliment Professor Cleland on the excellent work he has done and the keen interest he has displayed during his chairmanship of the board. He has to a great extent surprised people much younger than himself. We admire his energy, zeal and enthusiasm in this field. He is a man of untiring energy who has devoted much interest to these matters, and the enjoyment he gets from his work compensates him for the time he spends, for he is really wrapped up in his work. He genuinely desires to preserve the reserves under his control. He is keenly interested in the natural fauna and flora of South Australia. We are fortunate in having good men prepared to give their time unselfishly to see that other people enjoy the things they are so interested in. I appreciate the work they have done in the hills. The secretary to the Commissioners is keenly interested in his work and has done much to develop the reserve at Belair. Now he is embarking on a camp site there for the benefit of the people of this State.

Provision is made in the Bill for the Commissioners themselves in effect to fine a person £1 where there is a minor breach of the regulations. This is a good provision because this

treatment of a minor offence by way of a small fine will obviate delay in the courts. I am surprised that clause 5 (9) says that where a minor offence is brought to the Commissioners' notice by a police officer, half of the fine (10s.) should be paid to the Treasurer but, where it is brought to the notice of the Commissioners by either a private person or one of the inspectors, the whole amount goes into their funds. I know that a large sum is not involved, but why should 10s. go to the Treasurer when a police officer is involved? The whole amount should go into the fund to assist the Commissioners, and perhaps the Minister may explain this provision. I believe this legislation is good and meets present-day needs. The penalties will serve as a deterrent to people who cause damage. I commend the work of the men who voluntarily give their time to ensure that the public enjoys the advantages of a national park and wild life reserves.

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

NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 15. Page 1833.)

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I support the second reading. Nursing is one of the most noble professions with which females can be associated. The Bill recognizes the value of their services to the community. In the short time at my disposal since I secured the adjournment of this debate I have discussed the Bill with persons associated with this profession. Every endeavour should be made to recruit women as nurses because it is obvious that nurses are needed. Indeed, the Minister of Health at a recent graduation service at the Adelaide University said that the annual shortage of trained staff in Government hospitals was 147. Anything that can be done to encourage persons to this necessary occupation is to the good.

Clauses 4 and 5 alter the constitution of the board. It is difficult to understand why provision was made in the initial legislation for a board member to be a person who was not a member of either the Royal British Nurses Association or the Royal Australian Nursing Federation, but in the past many nurses were not members of those associations and the authorities wanted all nurses to be represented on the board. I understand that

clause 6 was requested by the medical profession as well as the nursing profession. It will enable the board to prohibit a nurse from performing specified functions when it is possible that she might, by so doing, spread disease. This is a most necessary provision.

It is also provided that a person who has not practised for five years must undergo a refresher course before being registered in any branch of the nursing service. I understand that at present a person can remain registered by paying an annual fee, even though she does not practise. The member for Wallaroo (Mr. Hughes) expressed some concern to me about the position of country hospitals which sometimes, through the illness of members of their staff, call on the services of a retired matron or retired sister. I can appreciate the need for a refresher course, in view of the rapid changes in nursing techniques and because of the new drugs and scientific instruments now used, but the Government should ensure that country hospitals will not be prejudiced in securing relieving staff. I agree that nurses should be fully qualified, but this aspect should be considered.

Clause 9 amends section 26 of the principal Act which provides that only one fee shall be payable by a person whether registered on one register or more. The amendment removes the provision concerning one fee, and is in line with similar legislation in other States. I do not object to the provision enabling the board to cancel a person's registration for non-payment of the annual retention fee, but I believe that some notice should be given to persons who have not renewed their registration. I realize that the cost would be considerable. The Minister explained that 300 notices were sent out at a cost of £55 and only £60 was received in fees, but money is not the paramount consideration when health is involved. We must ensure the continuation of country hospitals and it could be that an active and hardworked matron in a country hospital could, through being overtaxed, overlook the payment of the registration fee and be automatically deregistered after six months, thereby seriously inconveniencing the hospital. The Government should examine this aspect and, if necessary, amend the Act again next year.

Clause 14 is designed to enable nursing aides to be registered at 18 years of age instead of 19 as at present. This sounds very good, and I believe it would be good if put into practice, but I was amazed to be told by many people

that although last session, in order to relieve hospital staff shortages and to allow to become nurse aides people naturally gifted in nursing but unable to pass educational and health examinations, we passed legislation to permit nurse aides to come in and assist in nursing, working only under the supervision of qualified persons, no action has been taken by the Government to teach nurse aides. If that is so, I feel that the legislation is a mockery and is worthless. However, as most aspects of the Bill are desirable, to get it through I am prepared to support it without moving any amendments, but I ask the Government to examine the matter to see if some of the aspects I have mentioned require amendment to bring about the smooth working of our hospitals.

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

SEWERAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 15. Page 1829.)

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—I oppose this Bill, as I have opposed this type of legislation right from the start. Country sewerage has been debated in this House since 1938, and possibly even before that year. Country members have mentioned it, it has been featured in policy speeches, it has been the subject of conferences and at long last the Government has been in earnest in carrying out sewerage schemes in certain country areas. In 1946 the Government sought to do precisely what this Bill seeks to do (that is, to take off any upper limit to the ratings the Minister may impose in country areas) but Parliament would not agree. The rate in the metropolitan area then was about one shilling in the pound on rental values and it was proposed that the two shillings in the pound rate in country areas be struck out, but Parliament objected to that and finally fixed the rate of one shilling and ninepence in the pound.

In 1955 the Government again sought to give the Minister the right to fix any rating that he wished for country sewerage areas. Objection was taken then and the matter was referred to a committee. There was a move that the whole matter be examined by a Select Committee. In fact, the Opposition of the day understood that that was going to happen, but a committee that was not a Select Committee was appointed to inquire between Parliamentary sessions. The terms of reference were limited to determining only one matter: whether the

existing rate of one shilling and ninepence in the pound should be allowed to continue or whether some other rate should be permitted.

I was a member of that committee and in fairness to the Government point out that the approach was more liberal than the approach in some eastern States that are often held up as yardsticks. I think that every member associated with the investigation would admit that the practice of throwing the onus of financing country sewerage schemes on local government could not work in this State. Even if subsidized in some cases by the Government, no local council would be able to finance a sewerage scheme, and the committee recommended that additional finance be provided. It also unanimously recommended that the Minister should not have the power he is now seeking. Instead of giving him the right to raise the rate to any figure, it fixed an upper limit of two shillings and sixpence in the pound.

I want members to realize that that was twice the rate that now applies in the metropolitan area, and residents of country areas have already discovered that they cannot afford to pay twice as much. We have been told recently that it is cheaper to live in the country than in the metropolitan area, yet we are faced with these ever-increasing charges. The rate for the metropolitan area is now one shilling and threepence in the pound and for the country two shillings and sixpence in the pound; this Bill seeks to strike out the country rate and to permit the Minister to raise it even higher.

Mr. Quirke—Isn't that in the metropolitan area too?

Mr. RICHES—The Minister has the right to increase the metropolitan rate, but has not raised it above one shilling and threepence. A person who has purchased a Housing Trust house in Adelaide would pay a sewerage rate of about £7 a year, but a person purchasing an identical house in Port Augusta would pay £13 15s. We think that that is a sufficient discrepancy and we cannot support a measure that seeks without good reason to sanction this increase. The Bill provides that this change is to take effect in the current year. We have not been told what the increase would be; we have been given one reason only—that the Government requires an increase. No other case has been made out. I ask the House to remember that the amount the householder has to pay for sewerage is determined by the assessment as well as the rate, and members know that there have been increases in the assessed values of properties all over the State. Water rates have been increased throughout the State not so much because of an increase in the

actual rating as because of an increase in assessments. This existing rate of 2s. 6d. in the pound would represent much larger payments by the sewerage ratepayer than would have obtained two or three years ago before the increase in the assessments. Further, not only is there the increase based on the higher assessments, but now the Government is asking us to agree to the removal of the sections introduced in 1955 in order, in effect, that the sky can be the limit on country rating.

With great respect, I suggest the Government has not made out a case with which the House can agree, and the Opposition will oppose the Bill in its entirety. There could have been a change in the value of money and if a case could have been made out that money values only had changed and that the Government therefore wanted an alteration in the 2s. 6d. rate, we could have been told that that was considered necessary despite the increase in the assessments, which will bring in more money. If that had been the position it could have been explained to us when the Bill was introduced, but we have had no such explanation. Twice previously Parliament, after exhaustive investigation by committees, has not been prepared to have no upper limit on this rate; it has seen fit on every occasion to fix the upper limit, and I think it would be well advised to again insist on that at this juncture. The Minister in his second reading explanation said:—

Subsection (3) of that section (section 75) precludes the Minister from fixing, under subsection (1), a minimum sewerage rate payable in country drainage areas.

He can fix the rate, so long as it does not exceed 2s. 6d. in the pound. In other words, it precludes him from fixing a maximum rate. What is the effect of all this? Since the existing rate of 2s. 6d. in the pound was fixed I know of several of the larger country municipalities which are desperately anxious to secure a sewerage scheme but which have had to report to the Government that, whilst a sewerage scheme is necessary, they are not at this stage able to afford it. In the light of that, are we justified in supporting an increase in these charges which are already high? I think most members of this House know that members have been approached by people—I take it that members opposite have had the same experience as members on this side of the House—who are gravely concerned at the increases that have already taken place this year in water rates and other charges upon the land and houses they occupy, and this impost could be as heavy as any of the others.

The Minister has not given any indication of what increase he seeks in these rates. Unless we are all going to do what the late Leader of the Opposition suggested when this matter was before us in 1955, namely, all clear out from the country and live in the city where we can get cheaper rates and more advantages, we have to have some justification for an increase in that part of South Australia where the rating is already 2s. 6d. compared with that part of the State where it is 1s. 3d. In every case the services are provided by the Government, through subsidies from the public purse. The Opposition thinks it is high time the Government endeavoured to place the country dweller on a comparable standard with the city dweller, rather than to make the discrepancy greater, which is what this Bill does. It is a short Bill, and one that might have gone through because the explanation of it at first blush seemed to be reasonable enough. However, when it is examined it is found to be a Bill that certainly cannot be accepted, and it is not one that lends itself to amendment because the 1955 Bill was a simple measure which merely inserted the sections dealing with country sewerage and fixing the upper limit of 2s. 6d. in the pound of the rental value as the maximum rate.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—This Bill does not alter that.

Mr. RICHES—It just wipes it out.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—You read the Bill carefully.

Mr. RICHES—It repeals the provision that fixes the upper limit.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—No, it doesn't; it gives power to fix the minimum rate. The provision fixing the 2s. 6d. remains in the Bill, which merely gives the Minister power to fix minimum charges in country drainage areas.

Mr. RICHES—The Minister's explanation states:—

Section 74a (1) of the principal Act provides that, subject to subsection (2) of that section, the sewerage rate in a country drainage area shall be an amount not exceeding 2s. 6d. in the pound fixed by the Minister by notice published annually in the *Gazette*. Subsection (2) of that section, as I have mentioned before, fixes the minimum amounts payable in a country drainage area as £4 per annum in the case of land, or land and premises, drained by sewers, and £1 per annum in the case of other land or other land and premises. Clause 3 repeals subsection (2) of that section and makes a consequential amendment to subsection (1). The clause has the effect of removing the statutory amounts fixed by the section as the minimum sewerage rates payable in country drainage areas.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—But it does not affect the maximum rate of 2s. 6d.

Mr. RICHES—The explanation continues:—

Section 75 (1) of the principal Act provides that, subject to subsection (3) of that section, the Minister may fix a minimum sewerage rate payable in respect of vacant lands and lands and premises (other than vacant lands) comprised in any assessment. Subsection (3) of that section precludes the Minister from fixing, under subsection (1), a minimum sewerage rate payable in country drainage areas, that rate having been fixed by section 74a (2). Clause 4 accordingly repeals subsection (3) of section 75 and makes a consequential amendment to subsection (1) of that section. As the Government thinks it desirable to have new minimum rates fixed for country drainage areas with effect from the commencement of the current financial year, a new subsection (3) is inserted by clause 4 into section 75 of the principal Act in place of the one repealed. Under that new subsection express power is conferred on the Minister, with respect to those areas, to fix a minimum sewerage rate payable in respect of the current and the succeeding financial years.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—To fix a minimum, but not a maximum rate. I assure the honourable member that what he is saying is not correct. We do not take out the operative parts of sections 74 and 75 at all.

Mr. RICHES—If that is correct, it puts a different complexion on the matter and removes much of my objection to the Bill. I frankly admit that I only received a copy of the Bill this afternoon, and my examination of the position has had to be made on the statement handed to me. I accept the Minister's assurance in the matter. He has removed the concern uppermost in our minds, and I therefore will not pursue the matter any further.

Mr. CLARK (Gawler)—I had intended to speak on this matter at some length because I was of the same opinion as the member for Stuart. However, knowing the Minister of Works I am willing to accept his assurance. No doubt when he closes the debate he will give us an unqualified assurance on this matter. As honourable members know, I am deeply concerned with country sewerage. I think that all members will agree that we want to see as many industries as possible in the country. Indeed, we passed legislation this year which will, I hope, assist in that way. The opinion I had closely paralleled that expressed by the member for Stuart, and I therefore will not pursue the matter at this juncture provided the Minister's assurance removes my doubts. If I cannot obtain that assurance, I shall have something to say in Committee.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla)—From what I had heard I was under the same impression as the two previous speakers regarding this matter,

but I am happy to accept the Minister's assurance. If subsection (2) is struck out it removes the minimum, but I should like the Minister to tell us the precise reason for removing that minimum and to say whether that means that in future the full rate will be charged in all cases and there will be no minimum. I should like to be reassured on that because at the moment I cannot see the reason for striking out that minimum. I could understand the minimum being raised in view of the difference in the value of money, but no doubt the Minister will explain that more fully.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON (Minister of Works)—I should like to clear up one or two matters. I appreciate that the Bill has only been on members' files a short while, and I understand any misapprehension regarding it. I assure the House that there is no sinister or hidden purpose in the Bill. I agree that the explanation was a little complicated because, although the main issue was simple, several consequential adjustments in the wording of the Act were necessary and that somewhat clouded the issue. The purpose of the Bill is purely and simply to remove from the Act that section which prevents the Minister from fixing minimum charges; it does not take out any of the operative parts which limit the fixing of maximum charges, nor does it interfere with the general sewerage rate in country areas.

Mr. Clark—That will still be 2s. 6d.?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Yes, and that will still be in the Act. I have before me the Act. I got it so that I could read to the House the sections as they would be when amended by the Bill. I think I am correct in this interpretation. Clause 3 of the Bill reads:—

Section 74a of the principal Act is amended—

- (a) by striking out the passage "Subject to subsection (2) of this section, the" in the first line of subsection (1) thereof and inserting in lieu thereof the word "The".

If honourable members will look at page 81 of the South Australian Statutes of 1955, they will see that section 74a would then read as follows:—

The sewerage rate in a country drainage area shall be an amount not exceeding two shillings and sixpence in the pound fixed by the Minister by notice published annually in the *Gazette* as the sewerage rate for all country drainage areas.

I think that resolves the doubts of the member for Stuart (Mr. Riches). That subsection

remains, but subsection (2) of the present legislation, which says:—

The minimum amount payable for sewerage rates on any land, or land and premises, comprised in an assessment and situated in a country drainage area, shall be—

- (a) four pounds per annum in the case of land, or land and premises, drained by the sewers;

- (b) one pound per annum in the case of other land, or land and premises,

is deleted. Section 75 of the principal Act is amended by striking out the words "Subject to subsection (3) of this section" at the commencement of subsection (1). Then we have also the striking out of subsection (3), which reads:—

The Minister shall not fix, etc.

The Bill reads that the Minister "may" fix, etc. We strike out "shall not", and insert "may". The Bill reads:—

The Minister may, with respect to any land or any land and premises situated in a country drainage area, fix a minimum sewerage rate payable in respect of the financial year commencing on the first day of July, one thousand nine hundred and sixty and succeeding financial years.

So the matter that exercised the honourable member's mind—that the Minister would have power to raise the maximum rates above 2s. 6d. in the pound—is not correct. The Minister will not have power to do that. That is the meat of the whole Bill.

Mr. Clark—What is the reason for this minimum?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—There are minima of £4 and £1 fixed by the present section 74a. That cannot be altered except by an amendment of the Act, because it is written into the Act. It is desirable to increase that slightly. I will give the honourable member the figures. Both the Waterworks Act and the Sewerage Act provide the Minister with the power to fix rates, but the minimum rate for the country drainage area is the only part of the rate fixation programme that is not in the hands of the Minister.

Mr. Clark—A minimum would be fixed in this case?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—There is a minimum in every Act which the Minister in every other case except this one may fix. Where the assessments are low, a matter of only shillings is involved. The only object of the minimum is to see that every service returns a reasonable rating, and the reasonable rating is the minimum rate.

Mr. Clark—Would many people be affected by that?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The proposed increase is slight at this stage, so I doubt whether it will affect many people. It will affect some, but not seriously. In the case of tenements in the metropolitan area, for example, the minimum is £5; and on vacant it is £2 10s. It is proposed to make the minimum in the country the same. The effect is not likely to be widespread.

Mr. Quirke—It will have an effect on vacant land?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I do not see any objection to that.

Mr. Quirke—The tendency is to see that there is not so much vacant land.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I do not see any great problem there. I ask the House to approve the Bill.

Mr. Ralston—Did I understand the Minister to say that the minimum rate for vacant land would be £2 10s. and for tenements £5?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Yes.

Mr. Ralston—In a copy of the *Gazette* dealing with Sub-Area 4, it is pointed out that the minimum charges will be £2 10s. for vacant land and £10 for other than vacant land.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I do not know that drainage area, but there is a slight variation between certain drainage areas in the metropolitan area involving a variation in charges. It is not the same for the whole metropolitan area. I cannot comment upon that.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—“Amendment of principal Act, section 74a.”

Mr. RICHES—I said I would oppose each clause of the Bill, for we did not get a clear understanding from the second reading explanation by the Minister. That was all that we had available to us. Two or three members on this side of the House who read that speech were under a complete misapprehension. Had we had a copy of the Bill and been able to compare it with the principal Act, what the Minister has stated to be the intention of the Bill would have been perfectly clear. I consider that the Bill is an improvement on the existing legislation and desire to support it.

Clause passed.

Clause 4 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

MOTOR VEHICLES ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2).

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 8. Page 1704.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition)—My information is that some of the things mentioned in clause 3 are used by the oil companies in the manufacture of the liquid fuel they distribute. I do not object to the Bill: I support its second reading.

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens)—I support the Bill, which, in effect, is a safety code not only for the industry concerned but also for the general public. This skeleton Bill lays down the foundation upon which the regulations can be made. Nothing in the Bill sets out conditions; it merely provides for regulations which, when they eventually come before this House for approval or otherwise, need attention. This is an attempt to get uniformity throughout Australia in the handling of these products that are becoming so popular these days and have come on to the market only in recent years. They are used mainly in the country, sometimes by industry but also by people in caravans and small boats. In that regard the need for safety measures is most important. The regulations will be promulgated by a competent committee comprising the Chief Inspector of Factories, the Director of Chemistry, a representative of the oil industry and two representatives of the liquid petroleum gas trade. This product will increase in quantity when the Hallett Cove oil refinery comes into production and it is important that these regulations be introduced as soon as possible. The Bill has my complete support.

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

EARLY CLOSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 15. Page 1840.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition)—Whenever the question of early closing is discussed we should consider the overall position. If we extend the trading hours of shops that employ labour then the cost of goods to the consuming public will probably be increased. The Opposition will

oppose any move to extend the trading hours of service stations in the metropolitan area. Under the present set-up, immediately a motorist travelling on the South Road passes over the Sturt Creek, he can obtain whatever fuel or spare parts he needs at any time of the day for seven days a week. This locality is in the subdivision of Clarendon under the Electoral Act and in the district council area of Meadows, and immediately beyond the Sturt Creek there are service stations for at least half a mile.

Mr. Millhouse—It is very convenient.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—If so, why the need to open service stations in Adelaide? Immediately a motorist travelling north passes over the railway line at Gepps Cross he can obtain similar facilities. There is no need to extend the trading hours of service stations in the metropolitan area. I recognize that the Royal Automobile Association is greatly concerned with the motoring public, but I see no need to impose further hardships upon the persons normally employed in service stations. If we extend hours to permit the sale of spare parts, will there be an additional charge on such goods on Sundays? Will it be vital for the motorist to be able to secure parts then? I believe that by extending the hours we will impose additional costs on motorists. If an emergency arises a motorist can obtain petrol from the Yellow Cab depot in Gawler Place or at Kintore Avenue by signing a form. The R.A.A. can assist a motoring tourist passing through Adelaide from another State whose vehicle develops a mechanical fault. If the trouble necessitates extensive repairs and spare parts and requires the motorist to remain an extra day in Adelaide that would not be an imposition: indeed, it might be an advantage.

If petrol is to be supplied through vending machines, will the oil companies favour supplying and erecting such machines? I doubt whether the petrol marketing organizations in South Australia need them. If it is a question of zoning service stations in the metropolitan area to supply petrol at week-ends on a roster basis, no doubt we will receive complaints that some service station proprietor is being deprived of his livelihood because a nearby service station has been included in the zoning whereas his station has not. Only a limited number of service stations will be involved, and who will select them? Will they be selected by the illegal method of drawing a number out of a barrel? How many service stations in the square mile of Adelaide can supply the necessary spare parts and the facilities of a workshop?

Many service stations have workshops in a different locality from the premises serving petrol. If we permit such stations to open and supply spare parts, will they be permitted to open their workshops and who will pay the extra for the services sought by the Royal Automobile Association? This body should have had another look at this matter before it made representations. I consider that this provision is not in the best interests of the motoring public.

Section 25c of the principal Act deals with petitions relating to early closing and, although there is no time limit for interested parties to commence taking petitions to extend closing hours, counter-petitions must be lodged within the limited period of four weeks. In some cases between 3,000 and 4,000 signatures are obtained on petitions to extend hours and those in opposition must find as many signatures within four weeks.

Mr. Hutchens—Would those signatures be obtained as a result of signatories getting a wrong impression?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Many people who sign petitions believe that they are signing to extend the hours of small shopkeepers and so to assist those people and to provide a service to the travelling public, but they subsequently find that the petition includes both large and small establishments whether employing labour or not.

Mr. Hutchens—And the people have only one month to do what might require two years to accomplish?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—That is feasible. There is no limit to the time for obtaining a petition but there is a limit of four weeks in which to obtain a counter-petition.

Mr. Clark—Are you certain that is correct?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Section 25c provides that, and in Committee I shall have something more to say about it. When travelling in the country recently I had to choose between eating in a cafe, in which there were so many fumes that I could not stay, and waiting until the meal hour at the hotel. I have used restaurant facilities provided in service stations in many parts of the State, and they provide good meals. People who provide meals for travellers, particularly over week-ends and on holidays, should be encouraged, and I hope that they will be able to manage without engaging extra labour and that they will provide a good type of meal so that people from the metropolitan area will not have to take hampers with them. Some of our local beach resorts have deteriorated so badly, and have so much rubble on the beaches, that people may have to use Wallaroo and

other country seaside resorts where there are good facilities. I hope that at these places food will be provided to local residents as well as to tourists.

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—Although I support the second reading, I am somewhat concerned about clause 32, which enables the Minister to permit service stations to sell petrol and spare parts on Sundays and public holidays. This provision is unnecessary, and will place any Minister in an unenviable position.

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

Mr. HUTCHENS—At the adjournment I was discussing clause 32, which I oppose. I do so firstly because I think its provisions are unnecessary and undesirable, and that they can be detrimental in more ways than one. The allocation or rostering by the Minister of five or six petrol stations each week obviously must force retailers who have no desire to trade on Sundays to apply to do so because they are competing with those stations that wish to trade. A member of the public who knows that he can obtain supplies of petrol or spare parts on a Sunday obviously will often wait until Sunday to do so and will thereby create trading, and the fact that he goes to petrol station A on one side of the road and leaves station B that he has traded with for years means that the proprietor of station A will do his utmost to secure that person's patronage for the remaining six days of the week also. One could not blame the proprietor of that station for doing that and the proprietor of station B, being fully aware of this, will certainly also apply for the right to trade on Sunday. I cannot see how a Minister or any other person can permit one proprietor to open on Sunday, yet refuse the other proprietor across the road permission to do likewise. That is the position the clause will create in the metropolitan area. The poor unfortunate employee must be considered. He will be compelled to work on the Sunday.

Mr. Jenkins—He may be glad of it.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I will deal with that aspect presently. The member for Stirling could be correct in that assertion. The unfortunate part is that the awards under which these people work prescribe a period that they must work as overtime, if requested. An employee who has religious beliefs cannot refuse to work: he is compelled to do so. The member for Stirling said that that employee might desire to come back to work for a few more shillings, but I submit that this desire to obtain a few more shillings by

looking for overtime always works to the detriment of these people. We who have had experience in the industrial world find that when an employer goes into court he invariably says his employees can earn so much money, and the unfortunate employee who under this rostering system will be denied the overtime will be penalized because a certain amount of overtime is worked generally as a result of the rostering system.

Mr. Jenkins—The proprietor could employ somebody from outside and not his regular employee, if the latter objected.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I assure the honourable member that under the award that will be impossible, and I ask the honourable member to show how it would be possible. These provisions are unnecessary, because the people who live in the metropolitan area have no difficulty in getting their supplies on a Saturday. When the metropolitan stations are closed, there are other stations just outside the metropolitan area where most city motorists can obtain their supplies. When these five or six stations are open, most people in the metropolitan area will have to travel a similar distance to that which they must today because, after all, only a few stations will be open. The unfair part is that while they are to be rostered there is no indication at all of the rostering system to be used. If the Minister could give such an explanation it might break down my prejudice a little. I submit that this rostering could go by favouritism; therefore, it is unfair, unreasonable, and unnecessary, and could operate to the detriment of many people. I am sure that most retailers do not want it, and I am confident that the motoring public in general do not desire this change in the law.

I must confess that I was somewhat surprised, amazed and disappointed to hear the Leader this afternoon commenting on the method of gaining signatures for a petition for an extension of trading hours, and saying that people were only given four weeks to counter-petition. In any area this could go on for years, unbeknown to the people who might be opposed to it, yet they have only four weeks to counter-petition. The position is most difficult, because once a person has unwittingly signed a petition—and the Leader said that some people had done so unwittingly—the need for the counter-petition takes some time to publicize. I hope that something can be done to remedy this position. I am concerned about the people who are unwittingly asking for the extension of trading hours. I appreciate that in many other States there is an extension of

trading hours, and I admit that to compete in the tourist industry it is necessary to agree to extend trading hours. I admit that, but many people who are asking for extended trading hours must realize eventually that further extensions will result. I believe that the very people who demanded the extended trading hours will find that a principle will be broken down, that we in South Australia will be working on seven days of the week instead of five days, and there will be no proper Sabbath as we have known and enjoyed it. I do not oppose many clauses, but I am concerned about clause 32 and I oppose the principles it will establish.

Mr. CUMBE (Torrens)—I support the Bill. It contains many machinery clauses, most of which are acceptable to members. Much controversy seems to centre around the provisions relating to the sale of additional goods in shops and the sale of petrol after hours. The sale of additional goods in shops will result in a further service to the public. The items to be included are mainly an extension of the list of goods already available in many shops. Those that are specially mentioned are eggs, bacon, sausages, uncooked rabbits and uncooked poultry. Many allied goods are already available and freely purchased, but many shopkeepers find that customers demand many of the items I have mentioned which they are not permitted to sell, and rather than lose custom they freely sell these goods and as a result both the purchaser and the shopkeeper are breaking the law as it stands today. The inclusion of these items will remedy that anomaly and, after all, this extension applies mainly to delicatessens and small shops; it will not rock the world in any way. I favour the inclusion of these items in the schedule of permitted goods. It means that a practice already followed will be legalized, and many shopkeepers will be relieved of the embarrassment of either selling the goods illegally or having to refuse to sell them. It will not in any way affect the hours that are already worked by many of these delicatessen proprietors, and I suggest the public as a whole will welcome the inclusion of these additional items. The type of shop that will benefit is the typical "shop around the corner", and I feel it is a good thing that such shops will be permitted to sell these extra goods after normal trading hours.

The matter of petrol sales has been canvassed by various speakers this afternoon. Those provisions will extend to South Australia, and to Adelaide in particular, a service that is freely available in some other capital cities, either

by slot machines or the manual handling of petrol. The motoring public is increasing rapidly in this country; at present more than 2,500,000 vehicles are registered and on our roads, and the number is increasing rapidly each year. We have only to look at the output of Australian manufactured cars, apart from those imported, to see the rapid increase in the number of vehicles on the road. This provision will provide another service to the public. Whilst the member for Hindmarsh (Mr. Hutchens) said just now that the motoring public would not welcome it, I submit that the motoring public would welcome this further service; I cannot see why it should not.

The present position is that, if anybody in the metropolitan area wants to buy petrol on a Saturday afternoon or Sunday, he has to go to Darlington or Gepps Cross to get it. Obviously, he will go out there to get it. Persons employed in those stations are working those hours. It is now suggested that petrol outlets be provided so that people who want petrol can get it in certain localities without having to go that distance. I fail to see why we should take away that privilege from the motoring public when there is a demand for this type of thing which will grow month by month. I favour a rationed method of providing these outlets to the motoring public.

The slot machine, which is in vogue in some States, will come here before long and provision is made for that in this Bill. Those are the two main points being canvassed at the moment. Most of the other clauses are machinery, dealing with certain provisions of the Act, such as shopping areas, types of shops and classifications of shop assistants and other people. Most of those are not being contested at the moment. These provisions are wise and bring the Act up to date, because many sections were written years ago. Some are out-of-date. Also, we have today new classifications of many shop assistants and people working in shops. I welcome the inclusion of those clauses. This Bill is a step in the right direction and will mean a further service to the general public, especially the housewife and the motoring public.

Mr. FRED WALSH (West Torrens)—I do not like any tinkering with early closing and I think the less we attempt in that direction the more popular we are likely to be. Some people tend to want to provide services for any and every occasion for which there may be some small demand. If a motorist wanted to buy petrol at any time of the day, on a Sunday, a Saturday afternoon or a holiday, he would wait until the last moment before he bought

any. The same applies here: if shops are open until 11 o'clock, somebody will be going into a shop just before 11 p.m., or at 10.30 or 10.45 p.m. to make a purchase because he will know that he can get it at that time. We should regard this problem from the point of view of how it affects the general public.

Many clauses are purely machinery, and one cannot object to them; but clause 32 could have been omitted. It provides for a licence being granted in certain circumstances by the Minister on a roster system or in any other manner that the Minister may determine. It also provides for coin-operated machines, but it goes further than the question of the supply of petrol and lubricants: it includes spare parts. The honourable member who has just resumed his seat said that slot machines existed in other States. That is true to a limited extent outside the main cities of Melbourne and Sydney, but they are in general use in overseas countries. However, the slot machine will not provide the spare parts; it will provide only the petrol. Any motorist who runs his life methodically should see that his petrol tank is filled with petrol for week-end driving before the petrol stations close. I do that myself. I cannot remember if I have ever purchased petrol on a Saturday or Sunday within 100 or 150 miles of the metropolitan area, but maybe I have once or twice. Usually, I fill my tank on a Thursday or Friday evening, and that sees me over the week-end. If it does not, it is too bad.

As other members have said, one has not to go far out of the metropolitan area before one can obtain all the petrol one requires. The net result of the Bill will be increased competition between the garages. The Minister himself will find that, as a result of the applications made to him for licences, if he grants a licence to one garage proprietor for the purpose of selling petrol, lubricants and spare parts, if there is another garage proprietor adjacent, he may find difficulty in refusing to grant him a licence. I should not like the Minister to be in that position. What is meant by "in such other manner as the Minister thinks fit" I cannot appreciate. The likely manner in which the Minister would act in issuing licences other than as in paragraph (b) has not been made clear.

As regards the closing of shops, time after time deputations have waited on the Premier and the Minister of Labour and Industry, from both the Trades and Labour Council and the appropriate union, for the closing of shops at 11 or 11.30 a.m. on a Saturday, both times having been suggested. The original plea was

for the closing of shops altogether on a Saturday, as obtains in New Zealand. I do not know of any serious complaints from the general public there; at any rate, they have got used to it by now because it has operated for 20 years. If it is good enough to operate in New Zealand, surely it is good enough to operate along sound lines in South Australia.

Mr. Ryan—They may be more advanced in New Zealand.

Mr. FRED WALSH—They are, particularly in regard to legislation that protects the interests of employees in industry. On each and every occasion that these deputations have gone to the Premier, their requests have been refused. We know the big influence of the departmental stores. They have certain rights to open even longer than they do. They can, if they wish, remain open until 12 noon on Saturday, but they have agreed to close at 11.30 a.m.

Let us compare shops and petrol stations with chemists' shops, which close at 11.30 a.m. on Saturday and do not open again until 7 p.m. on Sunday. They have certain options in respect of opening on a Saturday night if they so desire but, among themselves, they have determined not to open on a Saturday night and they open on a Sunday night. True, in one or two metropolitan districts there is provision for a chemist's shop to be open all day. For instance, in Hindley Street one chemist's shop remains open for 24 hours of the day, but on Saturday night there is provision in certain areas for one chemist's shop to be open between 7 and 8 p.m. However, they are few and far between, and the general public is not catered for in respect of necessities. They can get prescriptions made up on the order of a doctor in urgent cases, but many items in a chemist's shop are proprietary lines that cannot be purchased anywhere else and one could not get them even on a doctor's order because he possibly would not prescribe them. However, people in the habit of using certain proprietary lines may run out and find they cannot get them until the chemist's shop opens at 7 p.m. on Sunday. Compare that with the case of the petrol station.

Again, many proprietors of motor garages and petrol stations are separated, because of the intense competition. Some garage owners have seen fit to lease the petrol station to somebody else rather than run it themselves because they prefer to run the repairs side of the business and leave it to somebody else to run the risk of losses in the sale of petrol because of the intense competition. The spare parts that those people can offer are only minor; they would not be able to supply some

things required by a motorist in an emergency. If motorists run up against anything like that, they can go outside the present prescribed area and get the petrol or spare parts they require. There are things to be looked at before we start to tinker with trading hours in this or any other industry.

Clause 33 provides for increased penalties. The member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) referred today to penalties in another Bill and said he did not object to them provided it was only a question of relating them to money values. If we attempt to relate these penalties to money values as they were when these provisions were first inserted either in or before 1935, for a first offence there was a £10 fine and for each subsequent offence a £25 fine. Let us presume it was in 1935 that these penalties were inserted. If we equate them to present-day money values, the fines should be at least £30 and £75 for employing a person after the statutory time of closing. Section 50 (1) states:—

Every shopkeeper shall on some one weekday in each week allow to each shop assistant employed by him a half-holiday from one o'clock.

It is now 12.30 p.m. The penalty is prescribed. At present if an employer directs his employee to work during the afternoon he can be fined £10, which was the penalty prescribed in 1935. Money values have changed since then and an equivalent penalty today would be £30 for a first offence and £75 for each subsequent offence. As far as possible, penalties should be equated to the money value at the time they are incorporated in the legislation. If an offence is serious the court will impose a penalty related to the maximum penalty prescribed. We should remember that the object of any penalty is its deterrent value. I support the Leader's contentions regarding the matter of counter-petitions. I do not know whether we will have an opportunity of amending the Bill, but I support the second reading.

Mr. HEASLIP (Rocky River)—I support the Bill. I think I can claim to have been the member who suggested that petrol stations should be permitted to open on Saturday afternoons, Sundays and public holidays. As a country member I frequently visited the city late at night or on holidays and, having travelled many miles, found my petrol tank empty.

Mr. Frank Walsh—You should have filled it up before you came to the city.

Mr. HEASLIP—I did.

Mr. Jennings—Who put a hole in it?

Mr. HEASLIP—No-one, but I would not put that past some people in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Fred Walsh—You would not ask for an Act of Parliament to be amended merely to suit your wishes, would you?

Mr. HEASLIP—No. I seek amenities for country people who visit the city. A visitor from the country, whose petrol tank is empty, should not be forced to travel 10 miles out of the city to get enough petrol to come back, which is what it amounts to.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Couldn't you have picked up petrol the other side of Gepps Cross?

Mr. HEASLIP—Yes, but that is 15 miles from Glenelg. A person could go from Glenelg to Darlington to get petrol to enable him to travel to Port Pirie or Appila, but that would mean an additional 20 miles.

Mr. Hughes—If he were going to Port Pirie he could get petrol at Gepps Cross.

Mr. HEASLIP—Yes, but he might not have enough petrol to get to Gepps Cross. Darlington is only about seven miles from Glenelg. I have often had to replenish my petrol supply and have had to travel out of the city to get it. Adelaide is, I think, the only capital city where a person must do this. I am glad that the Government is legislating to enable the voluntary opening of some petrol stations in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Ralston—Do you know of any service station that wants to open?

Mr. HEASLIP—I know that certain associations representing motorists want them to open. I do not represent vested interests. I do not represent one section of the community. I represent the whole community, and intend to keep on representing it.

Mr. Ryan—You can get petrol in your district so you don't have to worry.

Mr. HEASLIP—I am speaking about when country people visit the city and cannot get petrol. I wholeheartedly support clause 32 which will enable the selling of petrol on holidays, Saturday afternoons and Sundays. If we want to cater for tourists then we must provide this facility. The member for West Torrens mentioned the selling of spare parts. I have been in the invidious position of having my car break down and not being able to secure a replacement.

Mr. Hutchens—Why didn't you pay the Royal Automobile Association?

Mr. HEASLIP—I have gone to the R.A.A. and have not been able to get spare parts. It is illegal to sell spare parts on Sundays or public holidays. This Bill will legalize the sale of spare parts and petrol. What is wrong with that? Clause 36 will enable the sale of

eggs, bacon, sausages, uncooked rabbits and uncooked poultry. How often have members gone to a local shop, sought these articles on a public holiday or Sunday, and found that the shop was not able to sell them? How often have members purchased these goods illegally? Employees are working and it would not cost any more to permit them to sell these articles. The Bill will enable the provision of another service to the community.

The member for West Torrens tried to compare chemist shops with petrol stations, but there is no comparison. Chemists can and do sell at any time and that is not illegal, but it is illegal for a person to sell petrol in the metropolitan area at certain times.

Mr. Ralston—Do you think every petrol station should be permitted to open if it wishes to?

Mr. HEASLIP—Yes, by all means allow them to open, but do not compel them. Certain chemist shops in the metropolitan area remain open for 24 hours a day, but if I go to a petrol bowser out of hours and the proprietor supplies me with petrol he commits an offence. It is wrong that people should be forced to commit illegal acts when they are doing the right thing by supplying a traveller with petrol. If we hope to attract tourists we must keep abreast of the times. I support the Bill.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood)—I intend to discuss clause 32 and will not advert to the other clauses which have been adequately covered by other members. It seems extraordinary that members should come here and decide that, because certain irresponsible motorists demand that other people should work seven days a week, they should have to do so. Where is the need to have additional petrol outlets available in the city area? Any motorist by filling his tank on a Saturday morning has a minimum of 120 miles of motoring under his car's bonnet, and if he wants additional petrol he does not have to go more than six miles to get it. In those circumstances how can it be said that it is necessary to place upon the people who are running service stations the need of opening, because that is what will happen?

Once some service stations open, other stations will have to open in order to keep their gallonage up. People in this occupation today have not had their margin allowed under the Prices Act increased proportionately to the increase in costs. They have had their margins kept down to an extraordinarily low level. In addition, this Government's policy has been to permit oil companies to build many unnecessary petrol stations which have reduced the gallon-

age of existing private service station proprietors who have been in a cleft stick because of the one-brand petrol agreements they have been forced to sign. They have been operating on a reduced gallonage because of the policy of the oil companies to drive them out of business. They are faced with increasing costs and will now be required to open on Sundays. This is completely unfair to those private service station proprietors who are struggling to make a decent existence for themselves and their families. Added burdens are being heaped upon them by this provision. Why? Because people such as the member for Rocky River (Mr. Heaslip) travel to the city from the country, pass service stations all the way down and do not bother to fill their petrol tanks before they arrive in the metropolitan area, or are too lazy to travel the necessary miles to get petrol when they arrive!

Interest was expressed in the need to get spare parts at all times, and that may seem necessary to some people. Why is it that we suddenly say to the people in this service, "Because we feel we would like to be irresponsible, you are required to work long hours for little return. Faced with rising costs, you will be forced to open and work beyond the normal hours of work of other people in the community in order to supply people who are either irresponsible or completely lazy"? I see no reason why these people should be deprived of the same leisure that we give others in the community. Why should they not be able to close up their businesses and have a certain amount of leisure time at week-ends? Why should they be forced to go back to keep their gallonage in this way? Where is the virtue in running a roster system with certain stations dotted around the metropolitan area? Where is the virtue to a motorist at Norwood of having a service station open in West Torrens? He can already go to Highbury to get petrol, so how will it help him to have a service station open in some other part of the metropolitan area?

Mr. Stott—Some States in the United States of America have vending machines.

Mr. DUNSTAN—If the only proposal were that vending machines be installed, I do not think there would be the same objection, but that is not the proposal: it is that these stations will be open, and will need to be open, to sell the things described in this Bill.

Mr. Ralston—Who will have the privilege of being able to remain open?

Mr. DUNSTAN—That remains to be seen. Why is the privilege to be given to some and not to others? It was suggested by the member

for Rocky River that, as the board of the Royal Automobile Association said that this was desirable, we would be doing what the public wanted in this matter, but, although I have spoken to many members of that association, I have yet to be convinced that the board, in this and in many other matters, is representative of the average member.

Mr. Riches—Its members are never consulted.

Mr. DUNSTAN—When were they consulted in this matter?

Mr. Ralston—Was the South Australian Institute of Automotive Industries consulted?

Mr. DUNSTAN—I know what the Automobile Chamber of Commerce thinks about this matter, and it seems extraordinary that the member for Rocky River can say that we are looking after the public by putting special burdens on a small and deserving section, which works hard enough for its returns now, and is in fierce competition with the oil companies all the time to manage to keep going as small and independent proprietors. If this is the sort of representation of the public that the honourable member goes in for, all I can say is that he is not particularly concerned about the average members of the public—those involved in this matter who will be disadvantaged by this measure. I think that the provision is unreasonable and unnecessary, and I should like to know why the Government has changed its attitude. I can remember when the Royal Automobile Association asked the present Attorney-General that some measure such as this be adopted. The immediate reply was, “Why should I legislate for irresponsible motorists?” That reply is as valid now as it was then, so why the change?

Mr. Jenkins—There must be a few thousand irresponsible motorists who go to Darlington on Sundays. I have seen hundreds there.

Mr. DUNSTAN—If they have been so careless as not to fill their tanks, a trip to Darlington will not hurt them. Once or twice I have forgotten to fill the tank of my car on Saturday mornings and have not had enough petrol for what I intended to do over the week-end. I was irresponsible, so I went to Highbury to obtain petrol. I cannot see why a motorist should not do that. As under the roster system he will have to make a trip around the metropolitan area in any case, why alter the present position which gives reasonable working hours to these hard-working people? I know garage proprietors in my district who work extremely hard to keep their small businesses going under the present difficult conditions due to the action of the oil companies in building extra stations and thus reducing

the gallonage of existing stations. I remember a reply given by one of them to another constituent who was at the station at the same time as I. This constituent, who was a relative of a former Liberal Party Minister, said, “I would really like to be able to get some petrol on Sundays if I wanted it.” He said, “Well, miss, do you like to go to church on Sunday mornings?” She said, “Yes.” He said, “Do you like to sleep in sometimes?” She said, “Oh, yes, of course.” He said, “Well, so do I.” I do not see why these people should be deprived of the things that the average member of the public expects, and that is precisely what this will do. I hope that the House will not agree to the provisions contained in clause 32.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 11 passed.

Clause 12—“Amendment of principal Act, section 25c.”

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition)—I move to insert the following new paragraph:—

(ba) by striking out “four” in paragraph (b) thereof and inserting “eight”.

The principal Act provides that if a returning officer certifies that a petition has been duly signed the Minister shall publish, in the *Gazette* and in two newspapers circulating in the shopping district to which the petition refers, a notice setting forth that the Minister has received a petition for the abolition of the shopping district and fixing a date, being not less than four weeks from the date of the last publication of the notice, within which a counter-petition praying that the shopping district be not abolished may be presented to the Minister. My amendment seeks to increase this period to eight weeks. It may take 12 months to obtain a petition, yet only four weeks is allowed to obtain a counter-petition. I have been told that recently a petition signed by over 3,000 people was obtained at Port Pirie and that an officer of the Shop Assistants Union could not obtain enough signatures within the month permitted. I consider that eight weeks would be a more reasonable period, and I ask the Minister to accept that in lieu of the four weeks provided in section 25c of the principal Act.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON (Minister of Education)—I have read the section of the Act and the Leader’s amendment, and after considering his explanation I think the proposal is by no means unreasonable and I accept it.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 13 to 31 passed.

Clause 32—“Amendment of principal Act, section 49.”

Mr. FRANK WALSH—As I indicated earlier, the Opposition opposes this clause, for it considers that the amendment will go further than is intended. I believe that until recently, at any rate, a motorist could purchase petrol and oil at the Yellow Cab depot in Gawler Place, and I also understand that these items can be obtained in Kintore Avenue on condition that a certain statement is signed. This amendment allows the purchase of spare parts at the week-end. A visiting country motorist could obtain petrol and oil at one of the service stations just outside the metropolitan area, for instance, at Darlington, in portions of the hills area, or just beyond Gepps Cross.

Who is to determine which service stations will open at the weekend? I know that as a result of the week-end trading in the Darlington area much business is being lost to the area by the Edwardstown district, and the position will be accentuated by this provision enabling traders to sell spare parts on Sundays. What spare parts are to be sold and by what firms, and what staff will be necessary to perform this function? In an emergency could not spare parts be obtained just outside the metropolitan area? Will not the opening by these spare part traders offer an inducement for the purchase of those parts? Will hire-purchase facilities be available to help motorists buy these spare parts? How many service stations can supply these spare parts and, of those that can, how many have workshops available to carry out repairs on Sundays or public holidays?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—There is nothing revolutionary about this clause; we are not breaking new ground. All we are doing is endeavouring to follow the example set us by other mainland States. The roster system is, and has been for some years, in operation in Perth and Brisbane, and is working satisfactorily. Publicity is given to rosters regularly in the week-end press and the various licensees exhibit the rosters there. It works smoothly in Perth and Brisbane. The slot machine system is working in Victoria and New South Wales. I have not heard any outcry against the systems operating in those four States.

There will be nothing compulsory about this provision if it becomes law. All we are doing is giving permission to the appropriate Minister to endeavour, as he sees fit, to put a limited system into operation. If the Committee negatives this clause, then we are compelling the Minister to refrain from carrying out an experiment. The Minister of Labour and

Industry is eminently to be trusted to negotiate with the Royal Automobile Association and other parties to see how far he can go towards getting an amicable arrangement in a limited capacity. That is all he and the Government desire to do at this stage. It would be a reflection on the capability and integrity of an esteemed Minister of the Crown if he were not given that opportunity. Parliament is the watchdog of the Executive at any time and, if a limited experiment is not a success and does not meet with Parliament's approval, Parliament can soon suspend it and either amend the legislation or have nothing further to do with it.

The Committee divided on the clause:

Ayes (17).—Messrs. Bockelberg, Brookman, Coumbe, Harding, and Heaslip, Sir Cecil Hincks, Messrs. Jenkins, King, Laucke, Millhouse, Nankivell, Pattinson (teller), and Pearson, Sir Thomas Playford, Messrs. Quirke, Shannon, and Stott.

Noes (13).—Messrs. Bywaters, Clark, Corcoran, Dunstan, Hughes, Hutchens, Jennings, Loveday, Ralston, Riches, Ryan, Frank Walsh (teller) and Fred Walsh.

Pairs.—Ayes—Messrs. Hall and Nicholson and Mrs. Steele. Noes—Messrs. Lawn, McKee and Tapping.

Majority of 4 for the Ayes.

Clause thus passed.

Clauses 33 to 35 passed.

Clause 36—“Amendment of principal Act, second schedule”.

Mr. QUIRKE—I move—

After “toilet soaps” in paragraph (c) to insert “toilet tissues”.

This is an oversight that I think must be remedied. The necessity for the amendment is self-evident.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—This is a necessary and desirable amendment, which I accept.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 37 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

BOTANIC GARDEN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

DAIRY CATTLE IMPROVEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

PARLIAMENTARY SUPERANNUATION
ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 15. Page 1824.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition)—I certainly support this Bill. I believe that the provision to reduce the minimum qualifying period from 12 to 10 years is gratifying. Some members of this House who are paying into the fund could do so for 24 years or more and be defeated at an election when 49 years of age, yet under the present provisions not receive any benefits. However, the Bill will enable them to receive certain benefits and improves the legislation. I am most concerned with the conditions of ex-members and the widows of ex-members. I have information that discloses that during the last financial year £7,560 was paid to ex-members and £3,971 to the widows of ex-members, and that the balance of the fund at June 30 last was £114,782. Today we paid a tribute to a former member who died yesterday, and a few weeks ago we paid a tribute to a member who died whilst serving the people in this State. These men both rendered yeoman service in the State's interests, and their widows will receive a 12½ per cent increase in their pensions.

The ex-member for Port Adelaide, well-known in this House for many years, married for a second time. His second wife, much younger than himself, has done much in his interests, yet he will receive only an additional 12½ per cent. In my opinion this is a hardship and the Treasurer should consider increasing the percentage. After all, when these members contributed to the fund monetary values were more in line with the superannuation benefits they subscribed to receive and an increase of 12½ per cent is not really fair when related to present-day values. The proposed increase will mean that they will receive an extra 30s. a week.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 8 passed.

Clause 9—“Existing pensions.”

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition)—Is the Treasurer prepared to consider a greater percentage increase than the 12½ per cent provided in the Bill?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—This percentage was determined after an examination of all relevant information available to the Treasury. I point out that this year Parliament has approved of police pensions being increased

by 12½ per cent, and pensions to certain public servants being increased by about the same percentage. I would not be prepared to vote for a greater increase. This increase was not provided for in the original scheme but, under the circumstances, I believe it is justified.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

WINE INDUSTRY.

Mr. STOTT (Ridley)—I move—

That the prayer contained in Petition No. 1 from commercial growers of wine grapes in the electorates of Ridley and Chaffey for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the wine industry, be granted.

I wish to make it clear that the petition I presented in no way reflects on the work the Prices Commissioner did in fixing the prices of grapes last year. The petition came as a result of a meeting convened in the Upper Murray districts, to which all growers were invited, which decided to request that a Royal Commission be appointed to examine all aspects of the wine industry. The growers feel that they have been frustrated by the continued refusal of winemakers to increase the prices of grapes. They feel that after the investigation by the Prices Commissioner there was sufficient evidence that growers, in accordance with the report, were entitled to higher prices than the winemakers were prepared to pay. Notwithstanding the report, some winemakers were not prepared to carry out his recommendations. Consequently, the growers feel that because of the refusal of winemakers to pay the full prices recommended by the Prices Commissioner, a full investigation of all aspects of the wine industry should be made by a Royal Commission.

Some contradictory statements have been made about this, with which I will deal in a moment. The Prices Commissioner in his report said that grapegrowers were grossly underpaid, and there was a difference of opinion about the matter. On April 27, the member for Chaffey, who represents a wine district, and of whom we should take notice, said:—

The outcome of all this was a report by the Prices Commissioner, which was very good, a particular point being that the wine industry was in a very precarious state in more ways than one.

On April 4, the Hon. C. R. Story, who knows a good deal about this industry, in another place said:—

I do not believe that the wine industry is in such a parlous position that it cannot afford to pay £2 10s. a ton increase as recommended by the Prices Commissioner in his last report. I

think that amount could be paid on all varieties of grapes, and on the rarer types a little more could be paid. That is the first thing I want to say: that the grower is not really getting the benefit out of the increases that the retailer has put on a bottle of wine. Many people talk about the increase of 6d. a bottle, but that has not been passed on.

On page 5 of the Australian Wine Board's report for 1960 it was stated that the sale of brandy in the Commonwealth had reached an all-time high. In this report (at page 9) appeared figures relating to the export of wines to the United Kingdom compared with South African exports. These figures showed that Australian wines were rapidly catching up with sales of South African wines. In 1953-54 we exported 750,657 gallons of wine, which increased by 1959-60 to 1,125,830 gallons. In the meantime, South Africa's exports increased from 1,305,707 gallons in 1953-54 to 1,550,993 gallons in 1959-60. Page 10 of that report deals with trade in general, and shows that there has been a steady increase. Total exports of fortified wine in 1959-60 amounted to 1,752,457 gallons, and in 1958-59 they were 1,749,012 gallons. Sales within Australia also increased from 9,304,649 gallons in 1958-59 to 9,960,161 gallons in 1959-60. In the *Advertiser* of August 18 the following report appeared:—

“Australians' taste for light table wines, including sparkling types, was still growing,” the Minister for Primary Industry said today. Mr. Adermann said that the Australian Wine Board's report, tabled in the House of Representatives today, estimated that nearly 3,000,000 gallons of wine would be bought in 1959-60. This compared with 2,679,000 in the previous year and only 1,753,000 in 1955-56. In the four years 1955-59, consumption of sauternes and similar types had risen by 70 per cent, dry red wines by nearly 60 per cent and dry white wines by 30 per cent. The 1960 vintage was estimated at 150,000 tons of grapes, 27,000 tons below the previous year and 10,000 below average. This was due to an unusually dry season.

The report on page 14 deals with brandy, and says that its consumption increased from 535,371 gallons in 1951 to 819,254 gallons in 1959-60—an all-time high. The significant point about this is that in 1955, when 581,864 gallons was sold, the excise on brandy was reduced by the Commonwealth Government, after which consumption jumped to 819,254 gallons. It is interesting to note that the grapegrower, through a levy imposed by the Commonwealth Government, this year paid a total of £109,000 which was used to give publicity within Australia as well as the United Kingdom and Canada to Australian wines. When growers first moved for fairer prices the winemakers filled the press with

statements that would not bear investigation, as the Wine Board's report clearly showed. Instead of having the hard times they try to make the public believe they have had, it has been the most prosperous and stable decade ever experienced by the wine industry, as proved conclusively by the Wine Board's report.

One statement made by the industry was that, if the prices of grapes were increased, a subsidy from the Commonwealth Government would be required. Questions to that effect have been asked in this Parliament. If that is so, the winemakers should solidly support the plea for this Royal Commission, which will provide them with the evidence they need to obtain a subsidy. In the *Advertiser* of November 10, under the heading “Prejudicial statements in petition,” the following report appeared:—

South Australian winemakers, who had a capital investment of about £60,000,000 in the industry, could be relied on to see that it did not collapse, the president of the Winemakers' Association of South Australia (Mr. J. Penfold Hyland) said yesterday. Some of the statements made in the petition tabled in the Assembly on Tuesday, and comments made in other quarters recently, could be highly prejudicial to the interests of growers themselves, he said. A petition signed by 600 commercial growers in the Ridley and Chaffey electorates said the wine industry in South Australia was in danger of economic collapse, and asked for a Royal Commission to inquire into all aspects of the industry. The petition said winemakers had failed to pay reasonable cost-of-production prices for grapes. “The Winemakers' Association has no fear of any disclosures that might be made to a Royal Commission,” Mr. Hyland said.

From this we can see that the winemakers will have no fear if this Royal Commission is set up. The Prices Commissioner, on page 8 of his report, states:—

The Department is satisfied that the growers have a care for an increase on wine grape prices of £2 10s. 0d. a ton in the irrigated areas and £4 a ton in the dry areas.

The report also says:—

The winemakers are not in a financial position to pay this increase yet on the other hand it has offered advice that the Commonwealth Government would not be prepared to pay a subsidy until such time as a full inquiry is made regarding the financial position of the wine industry.

Now we have the opportunity to have the fullest possible inquiry into all aspects of the industry, which is the wording of the petition. As I have just said, the winemakers themselves have no fear of a Royal Commission, so we should grant the prayer in the petition that this Royal Commission be set up. Another reason why the winemakers should support the

request of grapegrowers for an inquiry is that in the new irrigation areas that have been developed along the river, particularly in my district, the winemakers do not show any evidence of poverty. They have always said they can buy grapes more cheaply than they can grow them. That is particularly so along the river, where the winemakers use the most expensive means of irrigation—the overhead sprinkler type. As members can readily see, that type of spray system with channels costs much capital. Firstly, a pump-house must be constructed along the river, pipelines must be installed over the vineyard, and the water goes into the pressure system.

Growers who have been in the industry for a long time could also grow light bearing types of grapes more cheaply than the winemakers, but to encourage them to do so higher prices would have to be paid, just as winemakers will incur higher production costs an acre. I do not wish to mention the names of the firms concerned, but I think that members probably know the names of the winemakers now gravitating to river districts where there is plenty of water and the soil lends itself admirably to the production of these types of grapes. These people are leaving the Barossa Valley and going to the river because they are able to produce the raw material right on the spot. Growers feel that not the least reason for the development of the new irrigation areas is the desire to get rid of surplus profits and keep down income tax. If the winemakers go into a new project such as that, with channels and spray system, they of course get the benefit of the 20 per cent in the income tax field. This practice is not peculiar to the wine industry. I emphasize that I do not blame the winemakers or say anything derogatory about them in that regard. This practice has grown up and is resorted to by many professional men such as doctors and dentists. I also know of some members of the legal profession who have acquired land in country districts, some of it under scrub, and by buying at a cheaper rate because the whole of it has not been cleared they obtain beneficial results in their income tax returns and are helped to get rid of some of their surplus cash.

The Prices Commissioner's report states that a financial review of winemakers' profit and loss accounts and balance sheets discloses that only reasonable returns are being enjoyed and that the ability of winemakers to pay is limited. I contend that the ability of the winemakers to pay more would be greater if they showed more business enterprise in their capital investments. I have just referred to the change that is taking place with some of the prominent

proprietary concerns gravitating to the river districts. Since the war the winemakers have invested large sums in wineries in the Barossa Valley to provide crushers, storage tanks, etc. That has been done since the war in a district that has been proved, by the gravitation of many concerns to the river districts, to have the lowest capacity in the Commonwealth for producing grapes.

Normally industry, before it starts to make any capital investment, wants to know where the raw material is to come from. The raw material of the winemakers is grapes, and they have to cart these about 150 miles, as they are doing at present, from the river districts to distilleries in the Barossa Valley, which is costing them £4 a ton. Had that money been invested wisely shortly after the war instead of being invested in new capital equipment in the Barossa Valley, and had those winemakers gone to the river districts at that stage, they would have saved at least £3 a ton, because the raw material is right on the spot in the river districts. Having learned that lesson of the wrong capital investment at the wrong time, the wine industry now says it is not in a financial position to pay more. If that is so, why is it that some proprietary concerns were prepared to follow the recommendation of the Prices Commissioner and some were not?

A Royal Commission would be able to investigate that aspect of capital investment and would be able to show by a thorough investigation that the gravitation away from the Barossa Valley would have improved the winemakers' position. In a few years' time, when those companies are able to get into full production, they will find themselves in a much better position than they are today. We have to recognize the foresight of some winemakers who are gravitating to the river districts because they can get their raw material on the spot. The economics of that move more than offset the cost of transport to their distilleries. The report also states that in view of all the circumstances associated with the industry the increase was £2 10s. a ton in irrigated areas and £4 a ton in dry areas. There is a question to be answered there, and it is something I am not happy about. Probably other members who are in the wine industry and have a better knowledge of the economics of the subject could put my thinking right. What worries me is what economic principle allows an increase of £4 a ton for grapes grown in the non-irrigated areas and only £2 10s. a ton for those grown in the irrigated areas. That is

the question I should like a Royal Commission to examine. I should like the Commission to point out the economic basis of that statement, for I cannot follow it.

Mr. Quirke—I can.

Mr. STOTT—Possibly the honourable member can. That is the type of thing that many growers in the river districts want answered. It is estimated that about 80 per cent of the wine sold under the labels of the Barossa wineries comes from the irrigated areas. I want the honourable member to explain, if he can, why the increase is £2 10s. a ton for these grapes grown in the irrigated areas and £4 a ton for those grown in the Barossa Valley, although the grapes for 80 per cent of the wine sold under the labels of the Barossa wineries are grown in the irrigated areas. Grape growing, of course, provides a very high ratio of employment. It is usually accepted that about 15 acres in the irrigated areas keeps one person employed. The grape-growing industry should therefore be protected for that reason.

We have to see that the growers get a favourable price because of the employment offered by the industry in the river districts. We have to face facts. If we as a Parliament get a full inquiry into this matter it will be found that the Barossa Valley has some patches that have badly deteriorated because of actions by winemakers in not paying growers full prices in that area for some years. The result is that those growers are not able to keep their present plantings in full production, and some grapes will have to be pulled out and new types put in. The river areas, settled prior to the first world war and in the years immediately following, are already suffering from lack of finance. There are in some of these settlements large areas under vines that should be removed entirely and planted with grapes more suitable for today's requirements. Not only the grape vines but the trellising has deteriorated to such an extent that large areas have to be retrellised; the posts, in the 40 years they have been there, have frequently rotted away, and there are modern methods of trellising which should be implemented. However, the rate that has been paid to the grapegrowers by the winemakers does not allow them to get sufficient capital to pull out those vines and to grow the types the winemakers want to meet the modern demand, and consequently they cannot trellis their vineyards or put them in the state required for modern working. The winemakers, by not keeping the grapegrowers in production, are doing great disservice to themselves.

It is all very well for the Premier to advocate, as he did once, that the winemakers should form themselves into one big union, but I maintain that that would restrict the trade and encourage restrictive practices. I do not think we want that. The growers in the River Murray areas feel that not only would that curtail the actions of the winemakers but would control the prices that the winemakers would be allowed to pay for grapes. This actually happened prior to the last vintage, when one man was buying for practically every big winemaker in Australia. The grower who had been in the habit of selling to what we will call winemaker A found that his grapes were taken by one man; he was under the impression that the same firm that he had been selling to in the last vintage and the vintage before that would be getting his grapes, but he subsequently found, when he received his first cheque, that he had sold to many of the others. In fact, he did not know to whom his grapes had been sold. In other words, this single buyer bought the crops and allocated them to whichever firms he desired. Despite that, they are all regimented here. For instance, everyone has to pay 21s. for a bottle of brandy. In Sydney, South Australian brandy—Maison Marnay—is still being sold for 18s. 6d. a bottle, and other South Australian brandies are being sold in Melbourne at 17s. 6d. a bottle. It is well-known that South Australia is the vineyard of the Commonwealth.

I do not wish to delay this debate unduly. I do not think honourable members would want to take any drastic action or make any direct approach to bring relief to the wine industry without the fullest and most exhaustive inquiry being made, and the only way that can be done is by the appointment of a Royal Commission to cover all aspects of the wine trade, including the winemakers, the growers, the liquor trade, and the hotels where wine is sold. Such an inquiry could provide Parliament with a complete answer to this problem of the wine industry. The problem is not new, for it has been with us for some time.

I suggest that until such time as we get the fullest and most exhaustive inquiry into the wine industry the growers will go downhill. They are in economic difficulties now, and with the inflationary trend of today, with more drastic measures being applied by the Commonwealth Government, in its wisdom, to halt inflation, those difficulties will worsen, and instead of the costs to these growers being reduced they will be increased. The growers look to the State Parliament to do something to relieve the industry, and if no action is

taken they will be much worse off than they are today. This is a Constitutional measure in that it petitions Parliament by a prayer to appoint a Royal Commission to go into all aspects of the wine industry, and is surely preferable to Parliament's being exhorted by more forceful means to take some action.

The sooner this Royal Commission is appointed the sooner this inquiry can be made, the sooner Parliament will be apprised of all aspects of the wine industry, and the sooner the Government will be able to frame legislation to give effect to the Royal Commission's report. We will then have firsthand information of the economic position of the grapegrowers. We will be able to ascertain from that report whether the winemakers are able to pay increased prices, and whether the change that is taking place today, with the trend in vogue of transferring to the river districts, is going to pay dividends. I believe it will, because the capital investment being made there now by the winemaking firms proves that they have confidence in that area to produce the types of grapes they want. Many growers have told me that they look a little cross-eyed at the proprietary wine firms' going into this district and sowing a certain acreage of grapes for their own purpose. They say to me, "What is going to happen to we small growers with 15 or 20 acres?" If these people go up there in such a big way, taking broad acres and putting them all into vineyards to supply their own distillery, what will happen to the small grower with his 15 to 20 acres? Will he be shut out? What is the handicap? What is his economic future? These questions have been hurled at me for some time. I have not the complete answer to that. Parliament would be wise, before taking action to assist this industry, to get all the facts. We want all the facts. Let us get the facts and find out what the trouble is in this industry. Let us appoint a Royal Commission to go into all aspects of it. Parliament will then be furnished with all the information it requires and can, in its wisdom, take any action it deems necessary.

We have seen reports from economists. One was recently tabled in the Commonwealth Parliament. Honourable members of this State Government would not have had the opportunity of studying this report in regard to the dairying industry. It contains some startling revelations. It goes so far as to say that some dairy farmers in Victoria should close up altogether because there is no economic future in their primary industry. It recommends the aggregation of individual properties, that they should get together and diversify

their efforts into sheep and things like that. That was recommended only after the fullest and most exhaustive report. I do not know whether I agree with the findings of that report, as I have not yet studied it sufficiently, but there is a primary industry suffering from economic difficulties. That applies today not only to the wine industry but also to the dairy industry. Some years ago we found the same thing happening in the wheat industry, but fortunately, by hard and long battles, travelling down a rocky road, we were able to bring that industry to a secure and prosperous position. However, that was not done without a Royal Commission first being appointed to investigate all aspects of the wheat industry. That set down the basis on which we should establish the foundations for putting that industry in a good economic position.

I know enough about Parliaments and the philosophy of different views of members of Parliament to appreciate that they always come down on the side of being hesitant or cautious in acting or taking a direct step without all the facts first being placed before them. I could not expect any honourable member in this Chamber to take action to rectify the economic position of this industry without the fullest inquiry into the facts. Let us have them. Having got the facts, we can appreciate whether these statements of the winemakers and grapegrowers are true. Let us get the facts by means of an independent Royal Commission. Let us study them and then take the action necessary for this industry. It is an important industry. The Commonwealth Government agreed to place in the Loxton district the big Loxton soldier settlement scheme, which is an outstanding success. Many of those settlers are engaged in growing wine grapes and stone and citrus fruits, the overall policy being to try to keep a balance between citrus and stone fruits and grapes so that, if one market failed, the other markets would be there to assist the particular grower who had failed.

That means that the State Government has a stake in this industry in the River Murray areas. The State Bank of South Australia, which has financed the Loxton Co-operative Distillery, has big investments in the large distillery there, and therefore in the industry. The Commonwealth Government is seriously concerned with this industry because let us remember the money it collects in excise and the revenue that this industry provides. The whole Commonwealth Government, its Treasury, the State Government, the State Bank and everybody involved in it cannot afford to let this thing drift any longer. We have to get

the answer to put this industry into a safe and secure position.

This Royal Commission will do much good for the wine industry of South Australia. There can be nothing wrong in granting the prayer of this petition, which simply asks: "Let us appoint a Royal Commission to go into all aspects of this industry." There is never any harm done by a full inquiry. Nobody, least of all the grapegrowers in my district, is asking for Parliament to act without first having an exhaustive inquiry into the industry. All they ask for is an inquiry to inform Parliament on all the aspects. Surely no honourable member can see any fault in having the fullest inquiry into an industry which has sufficient proof from the Prices Commissioner that it is in economic difficulties. The grapegrower had his prices down, and the winemaker was not prepared to pay the prices that the grower wanted until the Prices Commissioner said so; then some were able to pay the prices that were recommended, and some were not. That position has to be rectified. The grapegrowers from the river districts are not asking that Parliament should force the winemakers to implement the Prices Commissioner's recommendation. The Prices Commissioner has no power to compel the winemakers to pay these prices. Before the grapegrowers want any compelling action against the winemakers, they say, "Let us look at the winemakers to see whether they are in such a parlous position that their funds are limited and they cannot pay this £2 10s. a gallon increase that the Prices Commissioner, after going into this aspect of it, said they should pay." So they are fair about it; they are not unreasonable. It is a justifiable request, that we look at all sides of it. They say, "Let us look at the winemakers' side and, in turn, let them look at our side. We will put our case in evidence before the Royal Commission and Parliament will have all the facts before it so that it can then act which way it likes."

I strongly recommend this motion to the House. It is full of merit. It is a reasonable request—there is nothing unreasonable about it. It simply asks that the fullest inquiry be made into an industry that needs a helping hand. They do not come along with a grandiose scheme asking for legislation to give a guaranteed price for grapes; they do not ask for that. They say, "Find out what the facts are through a Royal Commission. We shall know all the facts and prepare our case on the findings of such a Commission." They will accept that. They have put in a petition signed by 650 growers.

I have had much discussion since this petition has been presented by the grapegrowers in the

River Murray areas and am confident I have expressed their views. I sincerely hope that the House will grant the prayer of this petition. They have observed the requirements of Standing Orders. The petition was passed by the Clerk as being in accordance with Standing Orders. It contains a prayer and is in reasonable language. Not only is it a reasonable request, but I put it to honourable members that they can do nothing else but grant the request from an important industry that contributes so much to the revenue not only of the State but of the Commonwealth as well. I commend the motion to the House and hope that it will be agreed to.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra)—I have much pleasure in seconding this motion. For many years, unfortunately, an atmosphere of suspicion has existed between the grapegrowers and winemakers. Today a position has been reached where nothing but the fullest inquiry will resolve the difficulties that belong peculiarly to the growers. From my inquiries, I do not think that the proprietary winemakers themselves would object in any way to placing the fullest possible evidence before a Royal Commission. Last year, in answer to representations, the Premier placed the matter in the hands of the Prices Commissioner. At this stage I want to pay my tribute to the exacting investigation that was made on that occasion by Mr. Murphy and his assistants. In short, they came to certain conclusions and in their report they recommended that the winemakers could pay £2 10s. a ton for irrigated grapes and £4 a ton for non-irrigated grapes, additional to what had been paid. I have no hesitation in saying here that every winemaker in South Australia could, without causing any economic chaos to his position, have paid those prices as recommended by Mr. Murphy, but some of them did not. The fact that they did not further increased this distrust that today exists in the industry, particularly on the growers' side. An investigation is necessary. The industry provides so much money and a living for so many people, and it has become so important, that any threat that it should dissolve into chaos should be averted at all costs. I support the petition of the growers that this investigation be made into the industry. From what I have obtained from the winemakers, I think they would welcome it. Mr. Murphy, in his report, says that they are not making very great profits, and the winemakers say that too. The growers flatly do not believe it. That is the position. We have to resolve that question, and it can be resolved only by the fullest possible inquiry. For that reason, I support this petition.

The member for Ridley (Mr. Stott) said that he could not understand why, if £2 10s. a ton was suggested as the increase for the river districts as against £4 a ton in the non-irrigated districts, £4 could not apply to the river districts as well as the non-irrigated districts. If the grapes on the river—and I say this with great respect—are worth £4 a ton more, then the grapes in the Barossa Valley and Clare are worth £6 a ton more. There is not the slightest doubt that grapes from a non-irrigated area have a character that possibly the river grapes will never have. As everybody realizes who knows anything of the history of this industry, in France, in Germany along the Rhine, in Spain and in Portugal there are small areas of country where the soil and climatic conditions impart a character peculiar to that district. So true is that that it is even a fact that in France and in Germany along the Rhine individual vineyards have a clearly defined character that cannot be produced half a mile away from that vineyard. There are so many factors that influence it. For instance, sugar in grapes is governed by the square leaf area, the amount of sunlight, and the amount of moisture. They are only three factors in the metabolism of that plant, but they are governing factors in the production of sugar. There are other complexities that I shall not go into: the transmutation of carbon into sugar which takes place through the action of the leaves. That happens in conjunction with the soil character, so it is not possible in any one district to have, say, 100 acres of land which one can claim will produce exactly the same character in a particular wine. What is more, year by year the same land will frequently produce a slightly different character, depending upon conditions. So complex is this trade, and so fine is the art of the winemaker, that to say that grapes should be worth an overall increase is not correct.

Mr. Jenkins—There is also the question of costs.

Mr. QUIRKE—It is not unusual in some irrigated areas to produce 20 tons of Gordo grapes to the acre. The Gordo is a dual purpose grape: it can be dried into lexias or processed into wine. It is a mass-produced vine in irrigated conditions. The same vine in a non-irrigated district will not, in many instances, produce more than two tons an acre, but there is a vast difference in the product from those grapes. If the Barossa Valley goes out of producing wine grapes and only the river areas remain, South Aus-

tralia will never again produce the type of wine it produces at present. I know that I am sticking my neck out, but the grapes grown under hard conditions (non-irrigated conditions) are always better in character from a winemaking point of view than those grown on sunlight, air, water and sand. It is a fact that winemakers regard grapes grown on the highlands in non-irrigated areas—producing about two tons an acre—as precious for their winemaking processes. In the Adelaide foothills small areas of grapes are grown on precipitous slopes which cannot be ploughed or worked with mechanical implements. Members might think that they would be uneconomic, but the addition of the juice of those grapes to a much larger volume of extracted juice will impart the character of that small quantity.

Mr. Stott—And so the winemaker will pay a premium.

Mr. QUIRKE—In order to maintain economy among the growers in the Barossa Valley it is essential that higher prices be paid there. The winemakers would not lose by so doing. I am connected with this industry and know something about it. Winemakers could have paid the prices recommended by the Prices Commissioner without detriment to their economy. Some did pay them. I regarded his report as a challenge and the winery with which I am connected abided by his recommendations. We did not pay, and have not paid, the full prices as a first payment, but we superimposed them upon our first payment of the year before. If a small co-operative winery can do that without being bankrupted then big proprietary wineries could do so.

This question must be resolved, and something must be done about prices for the next vintage. The stability of the industry demands that something be done for the next vintage. I could speak at length on the complexities of the wine industry and of the winemakers' trials and tribulations. It is not all honey mead to be a winemaker. One can have trouble with the intricate processes of modern winemaking, but it is essential to maintain the non-irrigated areas, notwithstanding the vast improvements made in river wines. The river wines are splendid, but they have not the character of the non-irrigated wines, and they never will have. The higher character of the non-irrigated wines is used to build the character of the river wines and the combination

of the two makes an excellent wine of which South Australia can be justly proud. A Royal Commission, as petitioned for, can do nothing but good for the industry. It will forever remove that atmosphere of suspicion that now exists and that alone is the first step towards stability in the industry. I hope that the prayer contained in the petition will be answered by this House acceding to the request for a Royal Commission to inquire into the industry.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa)—Allow me at first to trace the history of grapegrower-winemaker relations as I have noted it through many years. The Barossa Valley has been my home since childhood and I have grown up with the grape-growers and the winemakers as my friends, and I have some appreciation of the problems, aspirations and disappointments, particularly of the grower, in the industry. For 25 years I have noted that in the parleying over prices for grapes as between grower and maker there has been an atmosphere of mutual distrust. That was forcibly brought home to me when I became the member for the Barossa district, and when I got direct complaints from the growers about the prices received for their products. At all times I sensed a feeling of distrust.

When an inquiry was sought and agreed to I was delighted. I thought it was the opening up of a new era and that for the first time in the history of the viticultural industry there would be an independent arbiter to determine the need of the growers for a reasonable price for their products and the ability to pay on the part of the winemaker. I attended meetings of growers in the Barossa district with the Prices Commissioner and the members of his staff. The evidence given to them was, I believe, genuine and down to earth, and it was backed with written declarations in respect to incomes. The Prices Commissioner has access, as no other person has, to the inner financial operations of grower and maker. I felt that there could not be a more competent authority to come to a determination on this vexed problem of what was the basic need and the ability to pay.

The report by the Prices Commissioner was indeed comprehensive. He said that since 1952 wine grape prices had declined although wine prices had increased, and that surveys carried out by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics in 1954 indicated that current prices were unprofitable to the growers. He pointed out that the growers were continuing to incur increased costs, that there was a need, follow-

ing on the representation of winemakers, for increased prices and a speedier method of payment in respect of grapes supplied to wineries.

It was on this basis that a complete inquiry was made. A reference was made to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics Survey of 1954 which had arrived at a certain figure on the cost of production for both dry farming and irrigation areas. When brought up to date with the increased costs that existed at June 1, 1959, there was a deficiency of £1 8s. 1d. for irrigated areas and £3 10s. 11d. for other areas. The report further said that the growers in the non-irrigated areas (and I speak particularly for Barossa area) had not been receiving for their grapes a price that would enable them to have sufficient reserves to replant their vineyards in a given time. It is due largely to the inability to replant through inadequate prices being received that we have the present low yield of 1.64 tons an acre. The fact that grape production in the Barossa district is declining is due in no small measure to the inability to replant, because of unremunerative prices being received.

This investigation by the Prices Commissioner was based on sound premises. They were the need on the part of the grower, and the ability to pay on the part of the winemaker. The Prices Commissioner reported that the department was satisfied that a case existed for an increase in wine grape prices, and that relief in some cases was urgently required. He said that that conclusion had been reached after consideration of all the factors associated with the industry. He pointed out that the department was mindful of the cumulative effect that basic wage and marginal increases had had in the industry. He came to what he regarded as an equitable solution when he recommended an increase of £2 10s. a ton in the irrigated areas and £4 in the non-irrigated areas. He pointed out that from the figures to which he had access, and declarations received, the winemaking industry could not pay more than £1 5s. in view of the prevailing price of the finished product. He recommended a certain increase in the price of wines that would enable the makers to pay it. For the first time in the history of the viticultural industry in this State we had a situation where the grower could not say to the maker, "Yes, you can," and the maker in reply say, "No, we can't." This sort of thing has marked the relationship between the grower and the maker. We now have a firm determination of what is fair and reasonable for both parties, and it was determined by the most competent

and authoritative person in the State, or for that matter in Australia, because he has access to figures to which no other person or party has access. I am indeed disappointed that the winemakers did not pay the increases recommended.

Mr. Quirke—Some did.

Mr. LAUCKE—Yes, but in the main they did not. I was most dismayed when, after having obtained increases in the prices of wine, the only increase paid to growers for the 1959 vintage was on Tokay, of which only about 2,000 tons is grown in South Australia, and there was also a small increase in the price of distillation grapes. The increases were so infinitesimal that I felt that it was desirable to get down to taints in this matter and to have an outside authority determine what was fair to both parties. Whilst I was disappointed that the grower did not receive that to which he was justly entitled in the view of the Commissioner for the last vintage, a weighted average increase of £2 15s. 6d. a ton was paid in non-irrigated areas and £1 1s. 3d. in irrigated areas. I speak particularly for the non-irrigated areas of the Barossa Valley and in the Modbury and Golden Grove districts, where £2 15s. 6d. was the best increase the growers had had for many years. In my opinion the Commissioner achieved a lot in his first year of action on behalf of the whole industry.

The interests of grapegrowers and winemakers are inextricably interwoven; their interests are common, and it is necessary that there should be co-operation between them so that the mistrust of past years could be forgotten. In the approach made in this inquiry, I feel we have attained a far better atmosphere for both parties. We have not given this new system a real trial yet. I regret that that which has been proved to be a major improvement in its first year of application may not be applied to a second vintage to see if it can achieve that which is so necessary for the grower and the winemaker. Winemakers have benefited from increases in the prices of wines made since the announcement of the Commissioner's findings, and I can see no reason why the balance sheets should not now reflect the advantages gained by winemakers. These will enable the Commissioner—who I hope will be acting again as arbiter—to prescribe what he determines is basically needed for a decent return to growers, having in mind ability to replant their vineyards after a reasonable period and a margin of profit. I feel that this can be achieved under our present system.

I have a high regard for the winemaking section of the industry. The old families of the Barossa have been instrumental in developing prosperity in that district for many years, and they have been pioneers in a wonderful way. I know that many of them have had living standards no higher than those of the ordinary businessman operating in a small way. They have been builders, not dividend payers; they have put back their earnings into their businesses and have built up industries of which we can all be proud. I do not think that a Royal Commission into the affairs of winemakers, grapegrowers, resellers and the whole gamut of interests throughout the industry is warranted at this stage. With respect to the petitioners and those who sponsored the petition, I think this petition's presentation is premature, as we have not given the other system a fair trial. I hope we will allow the new approach to be given a reasonable trial.

I have one objective: it is my aim to achieve for growers a payable price for their product. I will do all I possibly can to ensure that, but I would like to do it in a decent and businesslike manner, firmly, and without change of approach for the time being. I am determined in my efforts to achieve for growers the price to which they are entitled—

Mr. Stott—They did not get it last year.

Mr. LAUCKE—No, and I expressed my regret and disappointment at that.

Mr. Stott—Why go on with something that proved to be a failure?

Mr. LAUCKE—It was not a failure. It was the first move for many years for an increase in prices, apart from the boom year of 1952 when about 14,000,000 gallons was taken out of bond and prices were paid that were higher than those paid in the following vintage. In non-irrigated areas, the increase of £2 15s. 6d. was the biggest increase in any one year, for many years. I feel that the Commissioner's recommendation of an increased price, whilst most disappointingly not paid by all makers last vintage, will be paid this vintage because, as I have already said, the increases in the prices of wines since the announcement of the findings should be reflected in the financial statements of makers by now, and that will allow them no excuse for not paying the price determined by this independent and highly authoritative arbiter.

Mr. Stott—They did not have any excuse last year.

Mr. LAUCKE—Would a Royal Commission achieve any more?

Mr. Stott—What harm would it do?

Mr. LAUCKE—If a Royal Commission at this stage could be shown to me to be a more effective method of attaining the objective more quickly than a continuation of the present system I would support it. However, rather than upset a new approach to the problems of the industry, and to give this present system a longer trial, I think we should defer the question of setting up a Royal Commission until we see that the present system will not work.

Mr. Stott—You do not agree with the winemakers or the grapegrowers?

Mr. LAUCKE—I would like to continue to have an independent party with access to the facts and figures of both parties. I would be prepared to again support the Commissioner. I would not doubt his decision when the game is played and, when the determination is made, I would accept it. I have completely backed the inquiry in the past. I attended growers' meetings and advocated the retention of this system, complete acceptance of the recommendation, refusal to parley privately with the winemakers for any variation in price, and adherence to the Commissioner's decision. I certainly do not have a bob each way, but I am prepared to accept an independent tribunal's determination in any given case.

Mr. Stott—That is what we are after.

Mr. LAUCKE—You have not given the present system a fair trial because we have not had a chance in two vintages to see if we can attain to what we have aspired. We attained a far better foundation to achieve a fair thing for grapegrowers in this industry during the inquiry set up last year. I should like to see it continued for this vintage before other action is taken.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I have known the problem fairly well as it is one that has been investigated by my department. Last year the Prices Commissioner made an exhaustive inquiry into the industry and he performed a great service in two or three ways. He undoubtedly helped the industry to minimize its cut-throat competition and I believe the ethics of selling wine, as a result of his recommendations and efforts, have greatly improved. With the complete co-operation of all sections of the industry he investigated the prices paid to growers. This matter, in my opinion, arises entirely out of the question of prices. I do not think that the Royal Commission is requested for any other purpose than to inquire into prices. One or two other things have been talked of today, but, in my opinion, having discussed this matter with growers' organizations, having attended

meetings of growers, and having attended a number of conferences with winemakers, I find that the big issue is prices. I do not believe that the extraneous matters that have been added to the petition add anything to its weight. The question is purely and simply an argument about prices.

There is no law that this State could pass which would compel the winemaker to pay a price. We can make it unlawful for him to pay any other price, but we cannot compel him to pay a price. That has never been done and it cannot be done. It would, in fact, be unconstitutional if we attempted to do it. Any action taken can only be action that will ventilate the facts. Last year no one disputed the facts that emerged from the Prices Commissioner's inquiry. The Prices Commissioner found that, upon the price then being obtained by the wineries for wine, there was a possibility of the wineries paying about 25s. a ton more for their grapes, but, if there was to be a greater increase than that (and he said a higher increase was justified on the cost of production), then the price of wine would have to be increased to cover the extra cost of the grapes. The amount available as the matter stood then was 25s. He then made some recommendations on increases to take place in the price of wine.

Two things emerge: The Government, through the State Bank, is probably the biggest supporter of the wine industry in Australia and a much bigger supporter than any private bank. We have large outstanding commitments to the wine industry, particularly to the co-operative wine interests. It is interesting that from my experience on the banking side of the business, and without Mr. Murphy's knowing anything about that, my knowledge completely confirms his statement, because I found the co-operatives were demanding more and more finance to enable them to carry on. I speak of the wineries and that supports the report that Mr. Murphy made and the fact that unless wine prices are increased there cannot be an increase of more than 25s. a ton in the price for wine grapes.

Mr. Hutchens—Are the co-operatives made up entirely of growers?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Yes, they are completely co-operative. Many signatures upon the petition are signatures of people who supply their grapes to co-operative wineries and not to private wineries. We are receiving embarrassing requests from the co-operatives for increased financial assistance to enable them to compete with proprietary wineries. We have helped the co-operatives and

they are doing a good job. It is the policy of the Government to continue to support them.

Coming to the question of the Royal Commission, members must realize that if a Commission is appointed as requested by the member for Ridley, we cannot expect a report from it for at least two years. It would not have the machinery that the Prices Commissioner now has, nor the big volume of information which he has been accumulating over nearly two years and which, by law, he cannot make available to any authority because under the prices legislation his information is completely confidential. He could not make it available to a Royal Commission, and the Commission would not have the staff the Prices Commissioner has. A Royal Commission would not, in my opinion, have as much power as the Prices Commissioner has to investigate any matter. The Prices Commissioner's powers of investigation have been wide and have gone much further than a Royal Commission's powers. Firstly, we have in the Prices Commissioner somebody who has a staff of 60 thoroughly trained people already on the job. He has at least 18 months' investigation behind him, and he is now fairly well advanced regarding his recommendations for next year. If we appointed a Royal Commission it would supersede the Prices Commissioner's investigation, and we could not expect a report within two years.

Mr. Hutchens—Does that mean that no variation could be recommended?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Obviously, if Parliament expresses a vote of no-confidence in the Prices Commissioner, who is now making the investigation, the Government will pull him out and appoint a Royal Commission. That is the logical thing. We have had some recent experience of this type of thing. Another allied industry (the fruit canning industry) has been in great difficulty. The Government appointed Sir Kingsley Paine and two other members to investigate that industry. That committee knows that the matter is urgent and that the finance of a number of canneries depends on its report, but I think it has been inquiring now for two years and we are still awaiting its final report.

If the House desires the appointment of a Royal Commission to supersede Mr. Murphy's investigations, I can only say that Mr. Murphy has plenty of other work to do. However, I believe his investigation was the soundest that has ever been made of the industry. It is rather interesting that while we have this

objection from a section of the industry, two other sections that represent much larger numbers have asked the Government to ensure that Mr. Murphy's investigation continues. I feel that the proper action to be taken in this matter, if the industry is not to be completely let down, is to let Mr. Murphy complete his investigation this year.

Mr. Corcoran—And give his recommendation a longer period of trial.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The wine industry has not in all instances been able to implement the wine price increases he recommended. We are selling wine interstate and overseas, and in competition with other interests. The wine industry was able to effect some increases that Mr. Murphy recommended. I think it did so almost immediately in South Australia, but in some other places it has not yet been possible to implement those increases. It is therefore not a clear-cut issue that Mr. Murphy's recommendations last year were disregarded by the wine industry; that is not correct. The wine industry did not give effect to all his recommendations, but in fairness to the wine-makers we have to remember that they were not able to achieve in their price results all the recommendations Mr. Murphy had suggested regarding the industry.

I believe that if the industry is not to be completely let down and allowed to go back to what it was prior to last year, the proper course is for Mr. Murphy to continue his investigation and determine the prices that should be paid for the forthcoming harvest. Whatever merits a Royal Commission may have, it certainly could not get any information that would be worth twopence as far as the forthcoming harvest is concerned. By the time the Commission was established the vintage would already be here. I feel the proper course is for this matter to be left over for the present and for Mr. Murphy to be allowed to complete his investigation. If we find any reluctance on the part of any section of the community to give effect to a fair determination, this matter can be taken up again. If we gave effect to what the member for Ridley has recommended we would deprive the industry next year of what I believe will be most important recommendations for it.

Mr. KING. (Chaffey)—I oppose the granting of this petition at this stage, because I have carefully considered the matters that have been raised and fully discussed tonight. I do not

think it is necessary for me to elaborate on these matters. The member for Ridley (Mr. Stott) has discussed some aspects of the problem and given some information, not all of which is correct. The member for Burra (Mr. Quirke), who is well experienced in the wine industry, has spoken on some aspects of the production of wine in the dry growing areas. I compliment my friend, the member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke), on the masterly way in which he described the conditions in his district, the grapegrowers of which, I understand, met and decided to support the Prices Commissioner's investigation.

I have spent the greater part of my life in the fruit industry and in delving into things in an effort to produce better conditions for growers. As many members will know, as far back as 20-odd years ago I was able to assist the growers in my district in presenting the case that gave them the first drainage scheme. I also conducted a big inquiry into frost damage, and produced recommendations which proved successful, not only in the river areas but also in other grape-growing areas. I have probably compiled more grapegrowers' income tax returns than most people in this House and probably more than most tax agents. I have had much experience as a finance officer in packing sheds, and I have delved into the statistics and know the interplay between the dried and fresh sides of the fruit industry. Nobody is going to pull the wool over my eyes as to the needs of the industry and how they can best be achieved.

I still object to those people who would attempt—and they are still doing so today—to make the wine industry a political football. I think that is entirely wrong. The difficulties of the industry have been appreciated and fully understood by the recognized body for the grapegrowers, namely, the Grapegrowers Council of South Australia. That body represents most growers in all areas. The secretary of that body, Mr. Ellsworth, is possibly the best informed man on the wine industry in Australia and I am sure he would throw his efforts behind the Prices Commissioner in what he has done. River growers who sell to the proprietary wineries have had a thin time for a long period. Fifty per cent of the grapes grown on the river are processed by co-operatives, which have consistently paid prices better than those of the proprietaries and much better than the cost of production figure of the Prices Commissioner. He looked into the cost of production figures drawn up by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and was able

to qualify those figures and say that they were practically correct. In fact, he said that they were a little lower than the bureau said.

I prepared the first cost of production schedule of the wine and grape growing industry which was used by the Australian Dried Fruits Association and became the basis of inquiry by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. I have pointed out the difficulties that the grapegrowers were running into by selling haphazardly to the proprietaries, and by the lack of business methods in making selling contracts. They delivered grapes to the wineries without knowing who the carrier was or the distillery or winery to which the grapes were to be delivered. I do not think they ever lost a load of grapes, but the bargaining power was gone. The Grapegrowers Council is in the process of making arrangements with the winemakers for a conference on prices in the first week in December.

I have considered this matter of a Royal Commission and I should say that if one were appointed and we lost the services of the Prices Commissioner, in one vintage alone the growers in my area could lose £100,000; because immediately a Royal Commission was announced winemakers would say, "You have lost confidence in the Prices Commissioner and we will sit back and see what happens." If the inquiry continued for two years, the loss could be £200,000. The State could be faced with the cost of the Royal Commission and growers would be worse off than they are today. The interests of growers would be best served if the inquiry now in progress were continued.

I daresay that shortly the Prices Commissioner will be able to present an interim report which would give an indication of the ability of the wine industry to make further contributions to growers. That being so, we should be unwise if we took any steps that prejudiced the position. Only this year I took a deputation from the grapegrowers and other interests in the industry to the Minister of Irrigation and pointed out the difficulties being suffered. He took a reasonable attitude and agreed that the rates for irrigation should be the same as for the previous year. It would be a big step forward for the industry if machinery could be set up to provide, as Mr. Laucke pointed out, for an arbitrator who was respected by all the parties and who would have access to the full records not only of the growers, but of the winemakers.

When the inquiry was instituted last year I spent much time with the Prices Commissioner and made available rather extensive records for

his benefit, and I know he used them in arriving at his findings. Of course, he had access to the records of others who were prepared to give information. The Grapegrowers Council made available its records, which were of great assistance to the Prices Commissioner, because he got reliable information based on years of experience in the grapegrowing industry.

I should like honourable members to consider briefly what would happen if a Royal Commission were appointed. First, it would have to be set up and terms of reference determined. It would then have to meet and decide the line of inquiry and from whom it would take evidence. This would include the growers, about 70 winemakers in this State, hotel-keepers and restaurant and club proprietors. It would have to examine the liquor laws and distribution in the other States, and in addition would be plagued with the usual pressure groups who would want to buy into the argument. Only about 15 per cent of our wine products are sold in South Australia. There is doubt whether the Commission could compel witnesses in the other States to give evidence and therefore the inquiry could be restricted.

The Premier said that the inquiry might take two years and we do not know what the findings might be. It could be said that they could have a very serious effect on the present ability of the co-operative wineries to pay better than proprietary prices. This aspect should be fully inquired into by the co-operative growers. Between 50 and 60 per cent of the crop on the river is handled by the co-operative wineries. The result of the petition could cost the growers many thousands of pounds in delays whilst the Commission was making its inquiries. Any legislation as a result of the inquiry would apply only to South Australia, which is competing with other States in growing grapes and selling the produce. If the legislation attempted to fix minimum prices, it could not force the wineries to buy, and it might encourage additional plantings in other States, and then the last state would be worse than the first.

I do not think that growers have anything to fear from group plantings by the wineries, which, it has been said, would plant 5,000 acres, but after several years I understand that only 400 acres has been planted. They are finding that the land is more suitable for citrus trees, and possibly these would be more profitable than wine grapes. Therefore, I think that the supposed threat in this regard is largely imaginary and the arguments being used are to

cause panic in the industry. The Prices Commissioner should be given a fair chance to complete his inquiry, and the question of the appointment of a Royal Commission deferred until we find what the Prices Commissioner has been able to do.

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray)—I support the motion. It has been said that I have no interest in this matter. A member once said it would be well for some people to keep their noses out of something they knew nothing about but I have five wine grapegrowers in my electorate and because of that I have an interest in this matter. Mr. King said this subject was something of a political football. That is not the first time this has been said in the House. Earlier this year the honourable member made a similar remark and went on to say that action in this House was for political purposes. I cannot understand why last year several members presented petitions on this issue but, because not one of them was prepared to move, as has been done on this occasion, the petitions lapsed.

Mr. King—It was not necessary.

Mr. BYWATERS—That is a matter of opinion, because there are many people in the district of Chaffey who did think it was necessary and told me they thought it was necessary. There are other people outside the honourable member's district and people in my district who thought it was necessary because, some three or four weeks prior to prorogation, I was approached by two of my constituents who were interested in this matter. On that occasion they asked me whether I would move that the prayer of the petitioners be granted. I asked them why they did not present their petition to me at the same time as they did to other members. They said, "Because there were only a few of us, we felt it was sufficient to cover us and we did expect your support in this matter anyway." I said, "As I have not presented this petition, I suggest you go back to the members and ask them to do so." They said, "We have recently asked them to do so but, as yet, nothing has been done." I said, "Give them another chance and, if they do not do so by the end of the session, I will endeavour to do something about it."

Apparently, they went back to their members and, having done so, because there were various questions asked in relation to it, they came to me only two days before prorogation—and they probably would not have come to me then only it appeared in the paper that the session would end that week—again

requesting me to do so. I did on that occasion, but then the Premier was not willing to let the debate take place. He refused point-blank to allow me even the right to the resumption of the motion standing in my name. The air became somewhat electric in this House on prorogation night because of this. There was much hard feeling in the House then, and the independent members were most vociferous in opposing the action of the Premier. So, despite the interjection of the member for Chaffey (Mr. King) that it was unnecessary on that occasion, many other people thought that it was necessary, and perhaps the member for Chaffey was the only one in step on that occasion.

I could read some letters that I have here but, in deference to members at this late hour, I shall not proceed as far as I intended to, although there is much I should like to have said on this matter. I shall not cite letters that have appeared in the *Murray Pioneer* from grapegrowers in that area protesting against the action taken, the high-handed action referred to by their member on that occasion. I have no quarrel with the Prices Commissioner. In the circumstances he did a good job. Every speaker tonight has stated that the Prices Commissioner did a good job in such a short time. He brought down a comprehensive report. For some time it was available only to certain people but, after I asked a question in this House, it was agreed that the report be made available to all concerned. Honourable members interested in this issue have had it and perused it. We have been told here tonight the findings of the Prices Commissioner, where he said that for the irrigated areas the prices should be increased by £2 10s. and for the non-irrigated areas by £4. That was a round figure, however, because in his report, after going into all the prices (I do not intend to read them all) he said that the overall increase to the growers should be £2 13s. 1d. in the river areas and £4 15s. 11d. in the dry areas. He went on to say that for the sake of round figures the prices should be £2 10s. in the river areas and £4 in the non-irrigated areas. So the Prices Commissioner went into it fully and investigated several aspects of the industry. No-one criticized him but some people criticized the winemakers for not honouring the recommendations in the Prices Commissioner's report.

Because of this, the ill-feeling has continued and, in spite of all that has been said tonight about the Prices Commissioner (I agree with much that has been said and what he has done), there is still concern in the industry.

Only recently a further petition, as we have seen here tonight, has been prepared in its correct form and presented to this House. The 650 signatories to that petition, having attended a meeting, decided to do this and that is why this motion is now before us. It is something we cannot ignore. Their request is logical in view of the disquiet that exists in the industry. We have been told by the Premier tonight that, if we elect for a Royal Commission in preference to the Prices Commissioner, the Prices Commissioner will drop out and the Royal Commission will take over. He said:—

If that is the way it is wanted, that is all right for me, but there is plenty of other work for the Prices Commissioner.

I do not see that that is necessary. The Prices Commissioner could continue his inquiries this year.

Mr. Shannon—It would be embarrassing.

Mr. BYWATERS—I do not believe that it would be. It would be possible for a Royal Commission to investigate other aspects of the industry—for instance, whether the right types of grapes are being grown, whether the people should have taken out their old stock and replanted it, and the economic reason why they have not been able to do so. The member for Ridley (Mr. Stott) tonight referred to an interesting report on the dairying industry. The man who presented the report (Mr. McCarthy) and his helpers have done much research. They have proved what can be done in an industry like this which allies itself closely to the one on which they reported. They brought down some startling revelations. I suggest some startling revelations might be produced by a Royal Commission.

I do not want to see this industry jeopardized in any way. The assurance of the Premier is that, if the winemakers fail to measure up to the report again this year as they failed to measure up last year, he will consider this very action. That is all right and could be easily put into practice, as it is apparent that this motion will not be carried because of the weight of Government numbers. Here is a warning to the winemakers that, if they do not measure up to it, the Premier has stated here tonight that it might still be necessary for a Royal Commission to be appointed in the future. On August 9 I asked the Premier whether it would be possible for the Prices Commissioner's report on the wine industry to be tabled and said:—

I know some people are interested in it from a public point of view, but so far it has not been disclosed. Has this aspect been considered and

can the Premier give an assurance that he will have this report tabled? Also, in view of the Prices Commissioner's findings and the results that have accrued from them, can the Premier say what power the Prices Commissioner has in implementing the suggestions contained in his report?

In his reply the Premier said:—

Dealing with the latter question first, the Prices Commissioner investigated the wine industry at the request of the Government and of certain organizations and interested parties. There were two phases of his report. The first dealt with the selling price of wine. Members will recall that there was a suggestion that there would be a price war in the selling of wine, which could have been detrimental to the growers and the winemakers. The second phase dealt with the price to be paid for grapes purchased from the growers. The Prices Commissioner has no power to enforce his report, except that he has power to make a maximum price at which anything can be sold. He has no power to compel a sale or to provide a minimum price. His services were in an entirely advisory capacity in an attempt to assist the industry.

The Prices Commissioner went to much trouble, but if he has no power to implement his report and the Government has no power, what is the use of his continuing?

Mr. King—A Royal Commission would be just the same.

Mr. BYWATERS—But it would investigate all aspects of the industry and not merely prices. I hope that as a result of this debate winemakers will realize that people are interested in the industry and in ensuring that primary producers remain on the land. Men who have invested thousands of pounds in blocks must be protected. If the Prices Commissioner makes a similar report to the one he made last year and winemakers do not comply with his recommendations, the Government should agree with the Premier's statement that stern action should be taken. If a debate had been permitted last year on prorogation night I think the winemakers would have taken more notice of the Prices Commissioner's report. I support the motion and hope that people will realize that the Opposition is interested in assisting primary producers.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—This is an issue on which every member of the Opposition must speak for himself. The Labor Party has no policy on this subject and, consequently, although I have no knowledge of the wine industry, I feel it incumbent upon me, having listened to the representatives of districts that are vitally interested in the wine industry, to explain the vote I propose to cast. At the same time, I intend to comment upon procedure that

has been followed last session and this, because I hope that we shall not see a repetition of what we have witnessed in the dying hours of the two sessions. We should not let go unnoticed the fact that the Government today agreed to a procedure for the member for Ridley that it was not prepared to accord 12 months ago to the member for Murray. Exactly the same resolution was then submitted for consideration in exactly the same way, and I do not take kindly the difference in treatment meted out to the two members. I do not want to belabour this point, and I do not know whether I have any support from members of my own Party for the view I have expressed. Another point I take notice of is that petitions were presented last year asking for an inquiry, as does the petition we are now considering.

Mr. King interjecting.

Mr. RICHES—I am making this speech! You have had plenty to say in the press and outside criticizing the member for Murray, so don't try to say it here. No action was taken by members who presented those petitions last year, obviously because they were completely out of sympathy with the petitions they presented. The debate on this matter last year was blocked, but those members have had ample opportunity this session to move that the prayers of the petitioners be granted. However, no action was taken. The member for Ridley stands in exactly the same position as those members. They have claimed that they have no sympathy with the petitions they presented, but the member for Ridley claims that he has. I ask him (and he will have an opportunity to reply) why he did not take any action last session or during the complete period of this session to move the motion he has now submitted in the dying hours of this session? Did he expect to be saved by the guillotine? Did he expect the Government to adopt the same procedure as it did last year? The member for Ridley owes us an explanation.

I believe in Royal Commissions. Earlier this session I referred to a Royal Commission which was set up before I entered Parliament to inquire into the pastoral industry. I believe that South Australia's pastoral development has been guided along sound lines to the benefit of the State. The value of that Royal Commission can be seen in the legislation that has followed and in the development that has taken place since it made its report. The petitioners, in this particular instance, are asking for a Royal Commission to inquire

into all the ramifications of the wine industry. It is not merely a question of prices. They seek a Royal Commission as a means of placing the industry on a sound economic basis. I agree with the Premier that such an inquiry will take time. We want it to be a thorough inquiry, as it must be if it is to be of any value. I do not agree, however, that the Premier is adopting the right attitude when he holds a gun at our heads and says, in effect, "If you vote for a Royal Commission I will withdraw the inquiry by the Prices Commissioner." This is not the first time he has done that. Last year we wanted a Royal Commission to inquire into the differential price for petrol and the Premier adopted exactly the same attitude as now and said that if we had the inquiry he would withdraw the investigation by the Prices Commissioner. He pointed out that if we had an inquiry by a Royal Commission it would indicate a vote of no-confidence in the Commissioner.

I will vote in support of the appointment of a Royal Commission in this matter, but I do not want it to be construed in any way as a vote of no-confidence in the Commissioner because I do not know of anyone in South Australia more competent to inquire into this matter than he is. I see no reason why a report from him could not be available in time for the next vintage, and I hope that any decision by him will be accepted. I think the petitioners have put forward a reasonable request. I know nothing of the wine industry, but I think that attention should be paid to the matter when it is raised by members. Things are not as they ought to be in the wine industry and that justifies the appointment of a Royal Commission. Perhaps I ought to be more grateful than any other member for the appointment of Royal Commissions because I have been reminded that it was through a Royal Commission that the Electricity Trust was established and that support was available for the establishment of regional power stations. This State has been well served by Royal Commissions. It is perfectly clear from the information given by members that things are not as they ought to be in the wine industry and that justifies the appointment of a Royal Commission, but the Premier should not adopt a schoolboy attitude and say, "If you have a Royal Commission I will withdraw the inquiry by the Prices Commissioner."

Mr. HARDING (Victoria)—I cannot support the motion. Following on the first world war I was associated with closer settlement in

the Eden Valley area, which was in the centre of a grapegrowing district. My sympathies are with the grower, but I have not heard one word expressed tonight that would result in more power being given to a Royal Commission than has been given to the Prices Commissioner. That is why I cannot support the motion. I represent a small number of growers, but I have not been instructed or informed in any way by them as to how I should vote on this matter. I will cast my vote on my own initiative, and it will be against the motion. It was said that a meeting of 650 grapegrowers agreed to the petition being presented, but I think that that must have been a misstatement.

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—Some members of the Opposition have indicated their support of the motion, but I must explain my position. All members will agree that I have always shown a great concern for the position of our primary industries. I think that the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the wine industry would prejudice the grower rather than help him. In any case it would take a long time to hold an inquiry. I agree with the member for Stuart that this matter was brought before Parliament about 12 months ago and that all members have had an opportunity to do something about it since then, but nothing has been done. It seems that this matter has become a political football, but I will not play politics at any time if I think it will be to the detriment of the country's economy. If a Royal Commission is desired by a substantial section of the community I suggest that it should have realized that there are two types of political thought in this Parliament. We have the Government and the Opposition, and representations have not been made to the Opposition for its support in this matter. In any case I have not heard of any representations being made officially by the Opposition. I have some doubts as to whether the Royal Commission is desired by a sufficient number of growers. It could be said that there is a doubt about the economy of the wool industry, but has there been a suggestion for a Royal Commission to investigate conditions in that industry? I cannot support the motion because I do not think it would be in the best interests of the grower.

Mr. STOTT (Ridley)—I want to reply to statements that have been made in this debate. It seems that the meaning of the petition is not clear to some members. It was signed by 650 growers.

Mr. Jenkins—Principally grapegrowers?

Mr. STOTT—I cannot say whether they were all grapegrowers, but the 650 growers want a Royal Commission appointed. Surely the member for Hindmarsh does not think that the growers do not know what they want. I appreciate the remarks of the member for Stuart. They were typical of statements he makes in all his speeches. He is always sincere in the way in which he approaches matters. He challenged me to state what happened last year. If he were to read the *Hansard* report of the debate last session he would learn the facts. When the member for Murray sought the right to speak on his motion I supported the move for him to be heard. Having supported that motion, I would have spoken in favour if the honourable member had been able to proceed. I hope I have cleared up this point for the member for Stuart.

Mr. Riches—Why didn't you take action early this session?

Mr. STOTT—Because the growers in the district wanted time to think about the matter, to decide what action to take and to study the Prices Commissioner's report. I was not present at the meeting when they resolved to present another petition to Parliament. It would have been futile for me to take any action without having the support of the growers, and I think the honourable member would agree that it was wise to wait until I had a petition to give overwhelming support to the motion. If I had moved without this additional support the matter would have gone off half-cocked. The member for Chaffey and the member for Barossa said that, notwithstanding that 650 growers wanted a Royal Commission, they would not agree to it.

Mr. Laucke—Give this a fair trial first.

Mr. Quirke—It is interesting that you are blaming the member for Ridley. He is presenting a petition.

Mr. Laucke—I am not blaming him.

Mr. Quirke—You are speaking against the growers, aren't you?

Mr. Laucke—No.

Mr. Quirke—Both of you have spoken against the growers.

Mr. Laucke—Rubbish!

The SPEAKER—Order!

Mr. STOTT—The growers want a Royal Commission but the member for Chaffey and the member for Barossa are not prepared to listen to a second petition presented by them. The growers knew that the winemakers would not pay the extra £2 10s., and they also knew

that an inquiry would take some time. I have contacted them and I know they are considerably worried about the position for the coming vintage. The Premier's statement must be fully considered and, with the wine industry practically at stake, I am in rather a responsible position. As I understand it, the Premier said—perfectly correctly—that if a Royal Commission were appointed we would not have a finding for some time. I do not agree that it will take two years, but the Premier is right in saying that a Commission could not reach a decision that could be implemented for the coming vintage. As the member for Stuart pointed out, if the House decides in favour of a Royal Commission the Prices Commissioner will stop his investigation. That is serious, as it will mean that, if the Prices Commissioner is able to go on with his inquiry and make a recommendation regarding prices that the winemakers will have to pay, that decision will be effective for the coming vintage. Although I have not checked the figures, I believe that because of the decision the amount involved will be about £100,000. If the Government says, "The Royal Commission goes on from now and the Prices Commissioner stops," the growers may lose some price increases they would otherwise get.

Mr. Frank Walsh—You are not going to have it both ways.

Mr. STOTT—We can in this respect. The Premier has said that if the Royal Commission goes on the Prices Commissioner will stop. He also said that if some of the winemakers were not prepared to act on what the Prices Commissioner decided the Government would consider appointing a Royal Commission. The matter is rather delicate, and I am prepared, on behalf of the growers who signed the petition and put the responsibility on me, to accept what the Government has put forward and to allow the Prices Commissioner to carry on for this vintage to enable the industry to get a fair price. If some recalcitrant winemakers will not pay the price, the Premier has assured the House that the Government will go on with a Royal Commission, which is what the industry wants.

Mr. Frank Walsh—That is different from what you said. You do not have an each way bet with me.

Mr. STOTT—If we find that the Government has not acted—although I do not doubt that it will—any motion from the member for Stuart, the member for Murray, the member for Burra or myself that a Royal Commission be appointed forthwith will have to stand.

Mr. Clark—Do you mean that you do not want to implement the prayer in the petition?

Mr. STOTT—No, but I am prepared to accept the Government's assurance.

Mr. Clark—Are you dropping the motion?

Mr. STOTT—No. I want the industry to get a fair price for the coming vintage. It is true that a Royal Commission may not give it for the coming vintage but it is clear that if winemakers do not pay the price a Royal Commission will be appointed. Next session, if the position is not as we believe it will be, we can take it into our own hands.

Mr. Clark—What assurance have you got on that?

Mr. STOTT—I have got the Government's assurance. What else can I accept? The Premier said that if we go ahead with the move for a Royal Commission the Prices Commissioner will pull out. He went on to say that if the winemakers were not prepared to act on the Prices Commissioner's decision the Government would consider appointing a Royal Commission. It cannot be said that that is not an assurance, and I am prepared to accept the position.

Mr. Frank Walsh—In addition, you are prepared to repudiate what you requested be done.

Mr. STOTT—I am not repudiating anything. The petitioners said they wanted a Royal Commission, but since they said that I have been in touch with some growers from time to time. I have several telegrams from growers.

Mr. Frank Walsh—They would not be worth anything now.

Mr. STOTT—I will read them just the same. The first says, "Congratulations on presenting petition. Complete confidence in your ability to meet the situation of behalf of the growers." Another says, "Congratulations on presentation of petition. Fully support you in your efforts." Another from Loxton, "Congratulations on the presentation of the petition. We fully support your efforts." A further telegram from Loxton states, "We congratulate you on the way you have presented the petition. Wholehearted support in all your efforts." These are the growers speaking.

Mr. King—Who organized them?

Mr. STOTT—They were not organized at all. The next states, "Strongly support your move on wine grape prices. Moorook grape growers." I find this a rather serious and responsible position and I believe that the onus is back on the Government following its intimation that the Prices Commissioner will go on. He will give a price for the coming vintage. If the Prices Commissioner goes out

we will not have a price for the coming vintage. That does not destroy the fact that, if winemakers do not act on what the industry wants, we have the assurance of the Government that it will consider appointing a Royal Commission. I have to accept the assurance of the Government and I do accept it. In view of the late hour I ask leave to continue my remarks.

Mr. Frank Walsh—No.

The SPEAKER—There being a dissenting voice, the honourable member must continue his remarks and he may make a further application after a quarter of an hour has elapsed.

Mr. STOTT—That is the position and I am now in the hands of the House. If the House is not prepared to grant me leave to continue my remarks it must take the consequences. The House now takes over.

The House divided on the motion:—

Ayes (12).—Messrs. Bywaters, Clark, Dunstan, Hughes, Jennings, Loveday, Quirke, Ralston, Riches, Ryan, Stott (teller), and Frank Walsh.

Noes (18).—Messrs. Bockelberg, Brookman, Coumbe, Dunnage, Hall, Nicholson, Harding, and Heaslip, Sir Cecil Hincks, Messrs. Jenkins, King, Laucke, Millhouse, Nankivell, Pattinson, and Pearson, Sir Thomas Playford (teller), and Mr. Shannon.

Majority of 6 for the Noes.

Motion thus negatived.

SUPREME COURT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2).

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

CROWN LANDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

LIFTS BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council with an amendment.

POLICE OFFENCES ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2).

Returned from the Legislative Council with amendments.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 11.49 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, November 17, at 2 p.m.