

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, August 23, 1961.

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

DEATH OF HON. F. J. CONDON.

The SPEAKER: I have to inform the House that I conveyed the resolution of the House of Assembly of July 25, 1961, to Mrs. M. Condon, widow of the late Hon. F. J. Condon, and in reply thereto received this afternoon a letter from Mrs. Condon asking me to express her deep appreciation to the House of Assembly for its kind and comforting expression of sympathy.

QUESTIONS.

SOUTH-WESTERN SUBURBS DRAINAGE.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Will the Minister of Works say whether it would be possible to arrange with either the Highways Department or the South-Western Suburbs Drainage Committee to give immediate attention to the storm-water drain in Sweetman Road, Ascot Park? This is only a small section from the railway line to Marion Road, and I have been told that the drain on Adelaide Road from Marion Road to Sturt Creek is inadequate to take the water now coming down. Residents near Sweetman Road are greatly concerned as some have not been able to get into and out of their properties because of the condition of the drain, and if there is any rain there is a grave risk of flooding.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will refer the Leader's question to my colleague, the Minister of Roads, and I do not doubt that he will discuss it with the chairman of the South-Western Suburbs Drainage Committee.

MINISTER'S OVERSEAS TRIP.

Mr. CUMBE: Is the Premier able to report to the House yet on any of the projects into which the Minister of Lands (Sir Cecil Hineks) is inquiring during his overseas visit?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Sir Cecil is inquiring into three principal matters, the first of which is the bulk handling of barley. In that connection he has reported to me that he has made extensive investigations and has obtained much information which, I believe, could be used effectively in South Australia. The second matter he is investigating at my request is the establishment of a tyre

industry in South Australia. One of the principals of the firm he contacted is coming to see me about this matter. The third matter is the sale of a considerable quantity of salt to Japan. The principals of the firms concerned have made some contact with Sir Cecil. A principal of the firm involved in South Australia has gone to Japan, and Sir Cecil intends to meet him in Japan and discuss the matter with him, I think towards the end of this month.

"STOP" SIGNS.

Mr. HEASLIP: On returning to Adelaide over the week-end I noticed that a "stop" sign at a railway crossing on the main north road at Gladstone was painted with a red background. It is the first time I have seen a "stop" sign painted with that colour. All the other "stop" signs I noticed on the way to Adelaide were painted yellow. It appeared that the "stop" sign at Gladstone had been painted only recently. Will the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Roads, ascertain whether the Highways Department intends to paint all "stop" signs with a red background? There are these different colours, yet only last Session we considered, and even now we are considering, a Road Traffic Bill which aims at uniformity of signs.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will ascertain the position and obtain a reply for the honourable member.

MEAT PRICES.

Mr. BYWATERS: Last night I received a telephone call from a man who has a large piggery and he informed me that he and other producers were concerned at the low prices they were receiving compared with the high prices of bacon and ham. Whereas the producer at the moment is receiving about 1s. 10d. to 2s. 1d. a pound estimated dressed weight at the auctions, bacon is still selling at over 7s. a pound and ham at over 10s. a pound. This person heard over the air last night that the member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke) had asked a question on this matter and he requested that I do likewise. Will the Premier obtain a report for me on this matter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes.

PENOLA WATER SCHEME.

Mr. HARDING: Over 12 months ago the Minister of Works promised to obtain for me a report by the Engineering and Water Supply Department on the estimated cost of a water

scheme for Penola and the expected revenue therefrom. If the Minister has not received a report, will he obtain one?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes.

CLERICAL ASSISTANCE IN SCHOOLS.

Mr. RYAN: At present there is an acute shortage of staff in schools, particularly in technical and other secondary schools. I believe that the more highly paid staff in secondary schools spend much of their time performing the duties of telephonists and even carrying messages for head masters. In view of the present economic position and the many children who will be available for employment soon, will the Minister of Education consider employing clerical assistants in schools that do not at present qualify under the system whereby that assistance is provided only to schools with an attendance of more than 600?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: Yes. I have considered this matter and will consider it again. The question of clerical assistance to technical high schools or to schools generally is made on the decision not of the Education Department but of the Public Service Board, because clerical assistants are public servants and not members of the teaching profession.

The policy of the Public Service Board, and through the board of the Public Service Commissioner, is to provide clerical assistance in high schools with an enrolment of 1,000 or more pupils, and in technical high schools with an enrolment of 600 or more. That was established by the board in 1953 as a result of representations made in this House by certain members.

Certain appointments had been made prior to that year in technical high schools with enrolments of under 600, and these were allowed to continue. Therefore, although no technical high school at present has an enrolment of 600 or more, there are five with clerical assistance, namely, Unley girls, Thebarton girls, Thebarton boys, Nailsworth girls and Nailsworth boys. The reason for allowing clerical assistance for lower enrolment in technical high schools than in high schools was that the former were required to conduct night classes but, following the taking over of night classes from the Institute of Technology at the beginning of last year and the additional clerical work caused thereby, the whole position of clerical assistance in both technical high and high schools, and in fact in schools generally, has been reviewed by an investigating committee

during the year. A report on the matter has been submitted and is now awaiting the consideration of the Public Service Board. As soon as the board comes to any decision on the matter, I shall be pleased to communicate it to the honourable member and to members generally, as I know there is a widespread interest in this.

MURRAY BRIDGE ROAD BRIDGE.

Mr. BYWATERS: On August 8 the Minister of Works told me that tenders for the painting of the road bridge over the River Murray at Murray Bridge would close on August 14. Will the Minister take up the matter with his department to see whether a tender has been let, and to whom?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes.

METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. DUNNAGE: Can the Minister of Works say whether during the last rains there has been any noticeable intake into the metropolitan reservoirs?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I am pleased to say that in the last day we have had the best intake into the metropolitan system for the winter. For the last 24 hours we have received some 300,000,000 gallons. The reservoirs are now holding 6,500,000,000 gallons, which is not quite half their total capacity.

TOWN PLANNING ACT.

Mr. LAWN: I have received a letter from a lady on behalf of herself and her husband. They are buying a house, have paid a deposit of £1,975 and, until they receive money from the bank, they have to pay the builder rent at the rate of £204 a year. The letter says that the Savings Bank sent them a notice saying that the bank would hold the loan (apparently it was approved) until Parliament had sat in June and the Town Planning Act had been amended. In other words, the bank has advised them that, because the house was built over an easement, the loan is being held up until the Town Planning Act is amended. Can the Premier say when that legislation is coming forward or can he give information that may bear on this matter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have no knowledge of this matter but will inquire and advise the honourable member.

SCHOOL BUILDING.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Can the Minister of Works say whether his department intends, in constructing new schools, to get competitive

prices for burnt bricks as against the prices of the exposed aggregate concrete mixtures now being used?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Now that bricks are again available (the honourable Leader's question would imply that in fact for a long time bricks were in short supply) a specification for at least one school has been varied to permit the use of bricks. I would think that that policy might be widened. I will take up this matter with the Director of Public Buildings and see to what extent it is intended to use brick construction. It is advantageous at times to do so although it requires some alteration of specifications and plans that have become, to a large extent, standardized, the standardization being to reduce the time required in producing specifications and in going to tender. Some builders, however, prefer to use bricks, and naturally their use may tend to widen the scope of tendering; but I will check up with the Director and see to what extent it is intended to change over from the precast concrete that has become largely standard to the use of burnt bricks.

ABATTOIRS MARKETING.

Mr. STOTT: Can the Minister of Agriculture tell me whether he has been notified of any alterations to the market days at the abattoirs? Has any alteration been agreed to by the abattoirs as regards abandoning the ring selling of cattle in favour of the pen selling method? If the method has been changed, will the Minister explain the alterations to me and say, if they have been agreed to, when the abattoirs proposes to put the new method into operation?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The chairman of the Abattoirs Board informed me some time ago that the board intended to alter the market days for calves and pigs so that they would be sold on a Monday, and also to introduce the pen selling of cattle. On the other hand, he also informed me that the board would like to give me more detailed information about this. That has not yet been given, but he is hoping to be able to give it early next week. The honourable member has asked me a number of times about this and I hope that next week I shall have for him the detailed report that I have been expecting so that I can give him a full statement on it. However, in general, I can say that the board intends to make it known that it intends to change the market days and the system of selling cattle.

TEROWIE POWER SUPPLY.

Mr. CASEY: Several months ago I understand that the Railways Commissioner and the Electricity Trust came to an agreement whereby the trust undertook the project of supplying power to the township of Terowie. A three-phase power line was intended to come from Jamestown to Terowie. Because of the inefficiency of the Terowie power plant I understand the line is scheduled for completion by the new year. Can the Premier say when the project is likely to commence from Jamestown to Terowie?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will see whether I can get the information for the honourable member.

OIL EXPLORATION.

Mr. COUMBE: On August 10 I asked the Premier whether he could obtain a report on oil exploration work in South Australia. Is such a report available?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Mines Department has prepared a report, as requested by the honourable member, and I have a number of copies which I will lay on the table for the information of members generally.

Mr. RICHES: The Premier also promised to obtain a report on why operations had ceased at various places. Santos undertook drilling operations at Mundallio, near Port Augusta, but ceased operations there to go to a field that was more attractive to the investing public. Nothing was proved in relation to the operations at Mundallio. Has the Premier obtained a report on why operations have ceased at various centres?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Mines Department has plants operating in various parts of the State and a report on the information the honourable member seeks would be long, tedious and unrewarding. Many holes are sunk to obtain information and frequently there is little possibility of obtaining oil in commercial quantities from those holes. The reason why operations ceased in centres was that either the exploration was not successful or that the information was obtained. If anything of note is discovered it is frequently published. The Mines Department does not hide the information. Periodically, comprehensive reports from the Mines Department are tabled and are available for members. I do not think much good purpose would be served by rendering a report on every area

that may have been tested. However, I will get a specific report on the area the honourable member has mentioned.

Mr. HARDING: At Penola an oil drill stuck at 4,985ft.—15ft. from the maximum depth to be bored. The general opinion is that bores in the South-East are sealed down, as was the case with a bore on Conmurra Station near Reedy Creek. The Penola drill had to be blown off when it stuck. Will the Premier get a report on the Penola bore which has recently been abandoned?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: That bore was sunk not by the Mines Department but privately by an oil syndicate under licence granted by the Mines Department. The total capacity of the rig that was used was only 5,000ft. so that when the drill stuck it was almost down to its maximum depth. The private company, having evaluated the information available, decided it would not be worth the expense of re-sinking a bore for another 15ft. in the area where, I should think, the Mines Department would recommend holes of not less than 9,000ft.

SOUTH-EAST SLEEPER ACCOMMODATION.

Mr. RALSTON: Within the last few weeks I have received complaints that insufficient sleeper accommodation has been available on the South-East train. Apparently only one sleeper has been provided and when this has been booked out no more bookings are accepted, although I understand a second sleeper is held in reserve and could be made available. Will the Minister of Works obtain a report from the Minister of Railways on this matter?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes.

COTTAGE HOMES.

Mr. DUNNAGE: Can the Premier say whether the Government subsidizes councils or other authorities on the purchase of land for the building of cottages for aged people?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: For many years the Government subsidized non-profit making authorities on the erection of old folks' homes. I draw a distinction between "cottages" and "homes." Old folks' homes were considered by the Government to be those places where people who were unable to look after themselves entirely would receive some help and care. Latterly the Commonwealth Government entered the same field and subsidized initially on the same basis as the State, but subsequently on a two-for-one basis. As that field is now covered by the Commonwealth

Government the State Government has almost retired from it. We do, however, provide some assistance for the purchasing of furnishings, for example. The Government has made grants to the Housing Trust to enable it to build cottages in the country and to make them available for one-sixth of a family's income or £1 a week. Many of these houses have been built by the trust. Also, we build much accommodation in the metropolitan area for pensioners and people who would not have large incomes, but we do not subsidize outside bodies in building cottages; we have never undertaken that function.

MALLALA BY-LAW: BUILDINGS.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham): I move:

That by-law No. 26 of the District Council of Mallala in respect of buildings made on October 11, 1960, and laid on the table of this House on July 25, 1961, be disallowed.

This by-law is one from the Mallala District Council to control the minimum size of buildings. Subsequent to its being laid on the table, certain informal representations to the Subordinate Legislation Committee were followed by a letter from the Mallala District Council, addressed to me, which read as follows:

I wish to advise that at a meeting held on July 10, 1961, it was decided that the council no longer desired the proposed by-law relating to buildings to be approved by your committee. I would be pleased, therefore, if your committee could take this into consideration when dealing with the proposal.

Mr. Lawn: The kiss of death!

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Maybe, but it was obvious from that letter that the council no longer desired the by-law to be made. As members are aware, there is no way in which a by-law such as this can be withdrawn. The only possible course is to move for its disallowance in the House, which, in view of the letter from the council, I now do.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart): This is a rare occasion, and one of which I must take advantage, when I indicate that I completely agree with everything the member for Mitcham has said.

Motion carried.

KENSINGTON AND NORWOOD BY-LAW: CARAVANS.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham): I move:

That By-law No. 41 of the Corporation of the City of Kensington and Norwood in respect of control of caravans, made on October 3,

1960, and laid on the table of this House on June 20, 1961, be disallowed.

I was mightily encouraged by the speech made by the member for Stuart on another by-law, and I hope I shall also have his support on this occasion. As the motion indicates, this by-law deals with the control by the Corporation of the City of Kensington and Norwood of caravans in the area. It is divided into four parts, and the second part, which caused the Subordinate Legislation Committee some anxiety, provides for the licensing of caravans to be used as places of habitation on private property. If you have a caravan in your back garden and want to occupy it or have it occupied for either a short or a long time, the second part of the by-law provides that you must get a licence from the council. The licence fee (and this is what drew our attention to the matter) is £50 for 12 months and £25 for six months. That meant that if you had a relative coming by caravan from the country and he wanted to stay with you a couple of days, or even overnight, and to put the caravan in the backyard and sleep in it, it would cost £25 to obtain a permit from the council. That seemed to the committee to be entirely too severe. The object of this part of the by-law—to stop unconscionable people letting out caravans as permanent places of habitation—may be a good one. However, it seemed to the committee that it was far too wide and that the licence fee was far too heavy, especially as the penalty for a breach of this part of the by-law (in other words, for not getting a licence at all) was only £10.

Mr. Stott: What does the committee think the licence fee should be?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: We do not lay down what the fee should be; all I say is that it seems an anomaly that the penalty for not getting a licence should be only one-fifth of the cost of a licence. Obviously, the fee ought to be less than the penalty for not obtaining it. For those reasons, shortly put, I move for the disallowance of the by-law.

Motion carried.

REGISTRATION OF DOGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 16. Page 438.)

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): I oppose this legislation. I have had the Bill examined by the Crown Law authorities and have obtained a report about it which I think will show the

difficulties associated with this matter. This Bill alters the common law as to the liability of owners of domestic animals for injuries caused by those animals. The owner of a domestic animal which by its nature is harmless is not, in the absence of negligence, liable for an act of a vicious kind which it is not the animal's nature usually to commit, unless the owner knows that the animal has that particular vicious propensity—and proof of this knowledge is essential. As members will see, this matter has been governed previously by common law, and I have learned from much experience that where judges over a long period of years have drawn up a code of common law, it is usually sound, and the principles of the law established in it are sound.

Under the amendments contained in this measure, the Leader goes further than he probably intended (as I shall show), for he creates an offence for a person who may be entirely innocent in connection with an incident where no harm is done to anyone. I think members will realize that if the Bill became law it would undoubtedly impose the gravest hardship, and in many instances that hardship would amount to cruelty to animals. The Leader, in considering this matter, has obviously considered it in relation to a dog kept in the metropolitan area, but it is necessary in the conduct of our pastoral industry to have dogs that cannot always be on the leash. To create an offence punishable by a fine merely because a dog rushes out upsets, as I think members will realize, what has previously been common law, and it takes the matter much too far.

Clause 3 renders the owner of a dog that is not securely leashed or confined within a kennel or other suitable enclosure guilty of an offence and liable to pay compensation to a person on the premises of the owner of the dog if the dog rushes out or attacks the person and that person has a lawful excuse for being on those premises.

Mr. Riches: It is not an offence unless the dog attacks.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: It is an offence if the dog "rushes at or attacks". Incidentally, it may be the first time the dog has ever rushed at a person.

Mr. Shannon: How would the dog know whether the person had a lawful excuse?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I do not know. The Leader sought to explain what a legal excuse or a lawful purpose would be. If the Leader's explanation is correct, a lawful person would only be a person who was there

on direct business, but I do not know whether that is the interpretation a court would put upon the matter.

Mr. Lawn: A postman would be on legitimate business.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes, or a person delivering bread. The Leader seemed to doubt whether a person selling other commodities would be there on a lawful purpose or not. I do not pretend to know whether he would be. What person would be covered by the expression "lawful purpose", and when would a purpose be unlawful? All I can say is that the provision itself is so far-reaching that I do not believe it would be an improvement upon the law: in fact, I believe it would compel owners of dogs to maintain their dogs upon leashes, thus inflicting great cruelty on those animals.

Clause 3 is directed at giving some added protection to tradesmen, postal workers and the like who have a lawful excuse for being on the premises of the owner of a dog, but it is also directed at persons who legitimately keep dogs as pets or for their own protection, and the Government would be anxious to ensure that in protecting the rights of one section of the community the rights of another section of the community were not unduly denied. It is considered that the provision rendering the owner of a dog guilty of an offence merely because that dog rushes at or attacks a person on his own premises is harsh on the owner of a dog that is not in the habit of rushing at or attacking persons or where no injury or damage was caused to that person or his property. There is no justification for punishing the owner of the dog where the intruder suffers the injury or damage as a result of his own wilful act in provoking the dog. Under those circumstances, I will not support the Bill and I hope it will not become effective as a law of this Parliament.

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray): I support the Bill because I do not accept the Premier's interpretation. He said a dog might never before have rushed at a person, yet section 24 of the Act contains a similar provision to that of the Bill, for it also uses the words "or rushes at", and under the original Act it could be the first time that dog had rushed at a person. The penalty provided is much the same.

Mr. Lawn: It is a little higher, isn't it?

Mr. BYWATERS: Yes. Section 24 reads:

If any dog, in or upon any street, thoroughfare, highway, or public place in any part of the State, or on any premises—

and this is where the difference between the Bill and the original Act lies—

other than the premises of or occupied by the owner of the dog, rushes at any vehicle—

The only difference is that in one instance it is out in the street or on some other property and in the other it is on the property occupied by the owner of the dog. The wording is the same in each instance, and I assume that the Leader, with the advice of the Parliamentary Draftsman, took the words from the original Act. Therefore, the words "rushes at", in the instance where it is the first occasion it happens, apply equally in each case. Section 24 continues:

so that the life or limbs of any person are endangered or so that any horse, bullock, cattle, or other animal or other property is or may be injured or endangered, then, in any such case—(a) the owner of the dog shall be liable to a penalty of not less than £2— and that amount is mentioned in the Bill— nor more than £5.

The Act provides a maximum penalty of £5 and the Bill provides for a similar penalty. The Bill also provides that a person may claim in a civil court. The only difference between the Bill and the Act is that the Bill deals with the premises occupied by the owner of a dog.

I make it clear that I am a dog lover. I have a dog, and I do not think there have been many years in my life when I have not had one. In fact, my dog is treated possibly equally as well as the rest of the family, for it enjoys the television and the comfort of the home fire. Indeed, it is very much a part of our household. I have at all times had a great love for dogs. I consider that this Bill will not affect me in any way, because people have often commented that our dog would find it rather difficult to rush at any one: it is almost as fat as it is long. The Bill will not affect a person such as myself, and it will not create a hardship to anyone who has a well-trained or well-behaved dog. The Leader has genuinely attempted to protect people in the course of their entering property for legitimate purposes. The Premier asked what would be a legitimate excuse. Before coming to this House I was a salesman and I called on many houses both in the metropolitan area and in the country, and I never experienced a dog rushing at or attempting to bite me or savage me in any way. I have much respect for dogs. I think the way a dog acts depends on how one approaches it. Sometimes a dog, because of the owner's lack of knowledge of training, menaces people. I think the definition of

whether or not one has a legitimate excuse is fairly well clarified; people who go on to the premises without creating a nuisance have a legitimate reason for entering those premises. Recently I had the opportunity to attend a dog obedience trial at Murray Bridge, to which dogs from all over South Australia were brought. In the main, they were large dogs—German shepherd dogs. They had some other type of German dog whose name I have forgotten; but there were collie dogs as well and two or three other breeds. They gave a demonstration of what can be done by teaching a dog the right way to act in a community.

I remember one big Alsatian dog was given a rubber dumb bell protruding out of its mouth some three to four inches each side. Then they called on the children of the people gathered there to go out and try to take this dumb bell from this Alsatian; and they did just that. That dog was subjected to tossing and turning and struggling to take this dumb bell out of its mouth. The dog put the dumb bell on the ground as the children came near him; then he would pick it up and dance away again. That showed a really well dispositioned dog. Any child or person would be safe entering premises on which there was such a dog. The answer to the problem is largely in these obedient dog clubs where the dogs are trained. An interesting point was that a friend of mine went along to join such a club. He took his dog along and the man in charge said to him, "Tie your dog up over there and I will train you first." I think that is what is needed.

Very often people are more to blame than the dog, because of their lack of knowledge in the handling of dogs. In such cases, dogs tend to become a nuisance not only to people entering their premises but to people out in the street as well. We have seen some of that recently. Sometimes, if a dog were better fed it would react more kindly. Dogs are often allowed to starve and roam the streets at night, upsetting the rubbish containers in search for food. I know it happens. We must not blame the dog. It is the fault of the owner through his lack of knowledge in the handling of dogs. The answer to many of these problems would be for some of the people concerned who had large dogs to join obedient dog clubs to get the advantage of those experienced in the handling of dogs. I saw to my own satisfaction that day how dogs react to correct training and kindness by their owners.

The handling of a dog is important. I see no restrictions in this Bill. It is apparent

that the only time there can be any penalty is when a dog does commit this act of rushing at or attacking a person on the premises, if it is not securely leashed or confined within a kennel or other suitable enclosure. In that case, people know that a dog is apt to be savage so, at the same time, we make this provision that, if the person then entered the property and went too close to the dog, the risk would be his and there would be no comeback at all in the taking of any action. The dog that is well behaved, the dog that is well trained, the dog that normally a person keeps at home and has no bias or anything of that nature, is at liberty to run at large as it has in the past. In fact, as far as my dog is concerned, I feel that this will not affect me in any way; my dog will not be leashed, tied up or confined in a kennel of any sort. Having given those as my reasons, believing that this Bill will not affect people who have a dog that is even-tempered and well trained and because I see no harm in the Bill, I support it.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham): I suppose every member of Parliament and every would-be politician who goes knocking from door to door would feel some sympathy with the honourable Leader in his introducing this Bill, because we are all subject to the attacks of animals when we go round in our own electorates knocking on doors.

Mr. Harding: It depends which Party you belong to!

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I do not think dogs are influenced by Party politics! The only time I have been bitten by a dog was when I went to a door and a dog came towards me. I do not know what happened to the dog but all that happened to me was that, just as the woman came to the door and the dog started to attack me, she said, "Don't worry, he never bites." With that, he went right through my trousers! So I feel that in one way I have some sympathy with the object of this Bill. However, I am afraid I cannot support it. As the Premier said, I am afraid that the Bill does not really do what the honourable Leader hoped it would. I imagine that all honourable members have read the Leader's second reading speech in explanation of this Bill. He said there that this would not impose hardship upon the owners of dogs. That may be so, but I do not agree with it. I say that it will certainly impose a hardship on the dogs themselves because, looking at this proposed section 24a, it seems to me that, if the owner is to be protected, then the dog must either be maintained always on a leash or confined in

a kennel or other suitable enclosure—whatever that may be. It is a matter of interpretation and I should not like to interpret that.

Mr. Lawn: Your interpretation could not be any worse than the Premier's!

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I am encouraged by that remark but it seems to me that the dog must be either on a leash or cooped up in a kennel, or something like a kennel, all the time. I think that is what it means. I cannot see any other meaning for it. In other words, it would be a most inhumanitarian provision to introduce into our law because, if the owner were to be protected, then either you would have to keep your dog chained up all day or it would have to be confined in some enclosure, which I think would have to be something like a kennel. That is the way in which this particular part of the honourable Leader's Bill would be interpreted. That would be a real hardship and something not justifiable.

Mr. Shannon: Would it be lawful under this Bill and avoid the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals officers if you used a kennel with a door on it and you actually shut the dog in the kennel?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I think you would probably have to do that in some way because you have to confine it.

Mr. Shannon: Would that exclude you then from any interference on the part of the R.S.P.C.A.?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: It would probably give you a very good defence if the R.S.P.C.A. tried to do anything about it, because you have to confine the beast in a kennel in some way.

Mr. Shannon: You could put a few breathing holes in it for the animal.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I suppose you could do that. The Leader of the Opposition went on to say:

The amendment will not affect the position where a person keeps a dog on the property for his protection, because unlawful visitors will not be afforded any protection under the amendment.

As the Premier has already said and as I myself have indicated, dogs are no respecters of person in that regard, and it is impossible for a dog to tell when a person has a lawful excuse and when he has not. They usually seem to be entirely impartial when it comes to rushing at people. Let us look anyway at what section 24a (b) means. It reads:

at the time the dog so rushes at or attacks a person, the person had a lawful excuse for being on those premises.

It seems to me—and again I do not presume to speak as other than a layman—that everybody who is not a trespasser and has not come on to one's premises to commit an offence has a lawful excuse. The Leader was asked to introduce this Bill by members of the Amalgamated Postal Workers' Union and naturally he had them in mind when he made this speech.

Mr. Clark: And others too.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: And other people who come on to the premises: bakers, butchers and so on.

Mr. Coumbe: Politicians?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: If a person were lost and entered premises to ask the way he would have a lawful excuse. A person can go on to premises for any reason so long as he is not trespassing and does not intend to commit an offence.

Mr. Frank Walsh: Do you want me to nominate all lawful reasons?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: That would be impossible. In view of the cruelty the Leader imposes on animals, it is impossible to legislate as he wants to do. The Leader said, "Under the provisions of the existing legislation no person entering private property has protection from the dog." That is not correct, however, because under the common law there is a measure of protection and I refer members to Halsbury's *Laws of England*, Third Edition, Volume I, wherein it states:

The law assumes that animals which from their nature are harmless, or are rendered so by being domesticated for generations, are not of a dangerous disposition; and the owner of such an animal is not, in the absence of negligence, liable for an act of a vicious or mischievous kind which it is not the animal's nature usually to commit, unless he knows that the animal has that particular vicious or mischievous propensity; proof of this knowledge, or *scienter*, is essential. But where this knowledge exists, the owner keeps such an animal at his peril, and is answerable in damages for any harm done by the animal, even though the immediate cause of the injury is the intervening voluntary act of a third person.

A person does have protection if he goes on to private property and the owner of the dog is negligent and he can show that the owner of the dog knew of the propensity of the animal. It is not correct to say, as did the Leader, that at present there is no protection. Members should bear this in mind when considering the Bill. The Leader seems to think that if a dog-owner put up a "Beware of the Dog" notice on the door or a "No Canvassers" or "Enter at own Risk" notice on the

gate, that would protect him, but I cannot agree that that would be so. So far as I am aware it has no legal effect at all.

Mr. Coumbe: A dog cannot read.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: That is so. It will not help the owner to escape liability.

Mr. Clark: But it might make a person hesitant about entering the premises.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: It may, but I am discussing the legal liability of the owner, not the person going on to the premises.

Mr. Clark: If a person did not go on to the property and the dog did not bite him there would not be any trouble.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: The honourable member's logic is impeccable.

Mr. Clark: It always is.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: But it does not get us anywhere, because I am discussing the liability of the owner who puts up such a notice. The honourable member is looking at it from the other side. A notice on the door or on the gate will not help the dog-owner escape the liability he has under common law. As the Leader said, the present law is contained in sections 24 and 25 of the Registration of Dogs Act. Section 24 lays it down that if a dog rushes at or attacks a person in any street, thoroughfare or highway, the owner is liable. However, section 24 also states that for the owner to be liable in an incident in a public place the life or limbs of a person must be endangered or horse, bullock, cattle or other animal or other property injured or endangered. In other words, it is not merely the rushing at or the attack itself, it is the fact that the animal does some damage before the owner is liable under section 24. The Leader has entirely omitted that from his Bill so that it goes much further on private property than it does in a public street. In other words, under this Bill one does not have to prove any damage at all: all he has to prove is that the dog either rushed at or attacked. One does not have to prove that life or limb has been endangered or that any animal has been injured. I do not know why the Leader left that out. It would have been more logical to have retained it.

Mr. Bywaters: You can add it by way of amendment.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: That would be more than my conscience would allow. I cannot believe that even with those words the Bill would be acceptable to me. All I say is that the omission of those words is another ingredient of my opposition to the Bill.

Mr. Shannon: It is a clumsy attempt to deal with a problem that has not been dealt with before.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yes. The Leader might explain why he did not retain the words "concerning danger to life and limb". I am a dog-owner and I am prepared to admit that "Susie", or "Susan" as she should be called—

Mr. Lawn: Susie Wong?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: No, my dog is high class. She is named after the wife of a former Assistant Parliamentary Draftsman.

Mr. Clark: A very legal dog?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yes. She is a corgi and is undoubtedly the most intelligent member of our family. I admit that, and I am sure all members will be only too pleased to agree. She has been brought up with our children (or perhaps I should say that she has brought them up), but she rushes at everybody who comes to our place. I cannot believe that I should be damnified because she does that. If this Bill becomes law I would have to keep her chained up all day or cooped in, and that would be absolutely ludicrous. With those few remarks, as much as I like to support the Leader on occasions I am unable to do so now.

Mr. CASEY (Frome): I support the second reading. From the remarks of the two previous speakers, particularly the member for Mitcham, it seemed to me that their main objection was purely and simply that its provisions would constitute cruelty to dogs. I have never heard anything so ridiculous as the remarks we often hear about dogs being cooped up in kennels. I am a country member and have three sheep dogs; previously I had kangaroo dogs. I do not kennel my dogs but keep them in an enclosure in which they can move around freely but from which they are not allowed to go. The enclosure in which they are kept can be erected simply, and it gives them freedom of movement. It is not necessary for them to be chained and there is no cruelty.

Mr. Bywaters: A sheep dog is trained not to bite, isn't it?

Mr. CASEY: I shall come to that in a moment. Animals are cooped up in cages at the zoo, but nobody says this is cruel. We should not talk about chaining or locking dogs in kennels and that sort of rubbish; there are other ways to do this.

Mr. Jenkins: That is what is contained in the Bill.

Mr. CASEY: In the suburbs are places where sheep dogs are trained, and they are obedient in every way. It is not necessary to tie them up or place them in kennels. I have been to a place at North Adelaide where these dogs are under control at all times. I think the member for Mitcham missed this point when he spoke about cruelty to animals caused by their being cooped up. I know from experience that some sheep dogs rush out at people, but it is possible to sum up quickly what these dogs intend to do. The attitude of the dog indicates that.

Mr. Ryan: Before or after it bites?

Mr. CASEY: If a dog rushes out wagging its tail, it wants to be friendly, whereas another dog that rushes out may knock someone over. I believe prevention is better than cure. I have seen some dogs over which the owner has absolute control, but another person cannot do anything with them. This applies to many sheep dogs, but I do not think many of these are vicious. Sometimes crossbred sheep dogs are vicious, but black and red kelpies are not; rather, they are of a timid nature. In this measure the Leader is trying to prevent dogs from doing damage instead of their being able to do damage for which the person injured can be compensated. I support the measure.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga): The member for Frome, with his new enthusiasm for Labor policy, seems to be on a wrong leg. He has drawn attention to one of the weakest features of this clumsy attempt to deal with what is really a problem. We have had enough of these attacks by vicious dogs in recent months to realize that they constitute a problem, but I have never seen a clumsier attempt to deal with that problem than the Bill before us. The member for Frome is a country man and has had dogs all his life; he has had to use them by virtue of his occupation. He said that all dogs tend to rush out at any stranger, and that is perfectly true. It is instinct on the part of a dog to rush out, but, as he said, this is not always done viciously. I am never certain whether a dog that rushes out from the back of a house when I enter the front gate will attack me or not. However, as I am a stranger, I expect it to rush out because that is what a dog normally does. Under this Bill that would be sufficient for someone to take action against the owner, as the measure does not mention what the dog must do when it rushes out. If a person wanted to be vindictive towards the owner of a dog he could not miss having him fined just

because the dog was not tied or cooped up in some way.

I have a little dachshund—only a handful. I do not think anyone could find a friendlier dog anywhere, but not a person enters my property without my little Smuts' rushing out at him. However, he has never bitten anyone. Like all dogs, he has favourites among the tradesmen who call; he follows one in particular to the gate and says goodbye to him. Another man who calls, who has given no offence to the dog, seems to be disliked for no apparent reason. As this man leaves, the dog barks as though he is going to eat him, but, of course, he will not touch him. That is the nature of the dog.

I have had many dogs, and they have varied like human beings. Some are naturally docile and some are inclined to be snappy and snarly. Irrespective of how they are treated, their inherent nature is hard to curb. I challenge any trainer to be able to curb an inherently vicious dog. If he is inherently vicious, he will always be vicious. I suggest that the Leader's efforts are aimed at dealing with what is really a large dog menace; we have not had really serious incidents with the smaller type of dog, although we have with the larger type of animals. The Alsatian, which is in bad odour with everybody at the moment, is hardly a suitable animal. One of my friends has a very nice Alsatian, but I suggest it is hardly a suitable animal for a backyard. Some dogs are very useful on a property. If an owner knew that his dog, by rushing at somebody, could get him into trouble, he would probably decide to tie it up or keep it in a small yard. Under the Bill, he could keep the dog in a kennel.

Mr. Casey: That would not be humane.

Mr. SHANNON: I do not know whether the member for Frome is such a new chum that he would not know that this Bill could override the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. After we have passed an Act here a person who complies with the Act cannot be charged with an offence, and to "confine within a kennel" is a compliance with the law in this instance. Those are the actual words. I say that would be the height of cruelty.

Mr. Casey: So do I.

Mr. SHANNON: Then why support legislation that will make that legal? Why does the honourable member support something that he admits causes cruelty? I do not think the member for Frome would wish to ill-treat a

dog. There is no suggestion that this Act applies only to the metropolitan area or other built-up areas: it applies State-wide. Some men use dogs in the course of their avocation, and many farmers of all types are in that category. Those people keep dogs for a purpose, often to keep foxes and rabbits and other vermin off their properties. Sometimes a farmer has to keep a pretty lively sort of dog to keep two-legged thieves off his property, and I am sure members will realize that there is often more loss from the two-legged variety than from the four-legged variety. If a dog were tied up or put in a small yard it could not protect its owner's property, and in those circumstances it would be just as well for that person not to have a dog on the property at all.

Mr. Clark: The two-legged fellow would not have a lawful excuse, would he?

Mr. SHANNON: In my opinion, a property-owner would have a lawful excuse to keep a dog at least to bark when some person comes on to his property without his knowledge.

Mr. Clark: This Bill does not attempt to stop a dog barking.

Mr. SHANNON: I point out to the member for Gawler that in this Bill the owner of a dog commits an offence if the dog merely rushes at a person: it does not have to bite. A vindictive type of person could report the owner of a dog that made no attempt to bite or savage that person. I cannot help it if the member for Gawler does not understand the Queen's English. A court would not say, "They surely did not mean that." A court, when it is dealing with legislation, does not read what we say here in debate: it looks at what we have put in the Act. In this case what the Leader wishes to put in the Act is silly, and is the clumsiest thing I have ever seen. This matter obviously needs a great deal more thought than has been given to it. I would support any attempt to protect people, especially children, from the attacks of vicious animals, and I think a police officer should have the authority to go to a place and shoot a dog—

Mr. Riches: That is, provided the idea came from the other side of the House. Have you ever in all your life supported a measure that came from this side of the House?

Mr. SHANNON: The member for Stuart now admits that there has never been anything from his side of the House worth supporting. As soon as he proposes something

worthwhile I will support it, but if this is a fair sample of what I am likely to get—

Mr. Riches: It is a fair sample of your reasoning.

Mr. SHANNON: Dogs differ in temperament, and so do men. I am made a little differently from the member for Stuart, but I am not complaining about that: it is not my duty to complain about what the Lord did to me. This Bill, I admit, is aimed at curing a problem that exists, but it would create a worse condition. If a dog owner lives on an ordinary building allotment his dog may get a little on the fresh side as it grows up. This person, knowing that this Bill, if passed, is the law, would probably say, "I am not going to take any risks; I will tie my dog up." I am sure the member for Frome would agree that the best way to make a dog savage is to put it on a chain and keep it there. We are dealing with many people who own dogs and do not understand them; they are not good trainers of animals, and under this legislation they would tie their dogs up. If that happens, and a dog gets off the leash and out into the street, the first thing we will have is another serious incident, because this dog will have become savage as a result of the treatment meted out to him under this legislation. I do not think Opposition members have had a good look at this matter. If they had done so, I do not think we would have the Bill in its present form. I think the Leader should withdraw the Bill and draft another measure.

Mr. CLARK (Gawler): I support the Bill. The debate has developed into an interesting one, even if we on this side of the House are accused of being rather clumsy in our efforts. The first thing that ran through my mind is that the Premier has obviously been reading the letters in the *Advertiser* and the *News*, because much of his argument seems to be based on the wild statements made in some of those letters. At times we read some excellent letters in the press but, unfortunately, some people tend to fly to the press with letters and not all of them are lucky enough to have them printed in full. The Premier went on to speak about how this matter had been previously governed not very well by common law. We can be sure that the common law does not stop the dog biting and does not stop that bite from hurting when it is given. We are told also that dogs cannot always be on a leash in the country. We certainly would not advocate that. After all,

we like to think that the same laws apply in the city as apply in the country. Do honourable members remember what happens if a dog happens to kill a sheep or a calf? What do you do—pat the dog on the head and say, "That's a naughty boy; don't do that again"? No, we have something in the Registration of Dogs Act applying to that situation. We find it in section 21 of the existing Act, which says:

The owner or occupier of any enclosed field, paddock, yard . . . may without incurring any liability in respect thereof, and without any public or other notice, shoot or otherwise destroy any dog—

- (a) found worrying any cattle, sheep, horse, or poultry in the enclosed field, paddock, yard, or other place; or
- (b) found in any such field, paddock, yard or other place,

and so on. Yet we are, and have been, accused by some writers to the press of passing diabolical legislation simply because we make it wise in this legislation—wise, not obligatory—for an owner to tie his dog up. Again, we find in section 23 of the Act some other legislation that I am sure some of those who have written letters to the press might be inclined to call "diabolical". This reads:

The occupier of any land, after giving public notice, in three successive issues of any two newspapers circulating in the district where the land is situate, of his intention to destroy dogs trespassing on the land, may destroy the same, and, if the land is not within the limits of any town or suburban lands, may lay poison on the land for the purpose of destruction of the dogs: Provided that—

- (a) notice of the poison being laid is conspicuously exhibited on the land; and
- (b) no poison is laid within two hundred yards of any public road or way.

That is in our present legislation. Yet this little piece of legislation that we have here, brought forward by the Leader of the Opposition with a sincere and definite purpose in mind, has been labelled "diabolical", "inhumanly cruel" and, I think by the honourable member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse), as "inhumanitarian". I am not complaining for a moment about the legislation already on the Statute Book, but I say that, if we go to the trouble of comparing this little amendment with that, which of the two can be classed as "diabolical" or "cruel"?

Mr. Quirke: Will the honourable member explain this: how does anybody protect himself under this clause unless he chains his dog or confines it in some way?

Mr. CLARK: In a few minutes I will come back to the wording and, if I do not, perhaps the honourable member will remind me.

Mr. Quirke: I cannot see it myself.

Mr. CLARK: The honourable member for Mitcham made an interesting and amusing speech—and I think that is the best I can say for it. The honourable member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) says that this matter is a problem; and so it is. He says this is a clumsy attempt to do something about it. I may be wrong, but I consider that a clumsy attempt is better than no attempt at all. If the honourable member, as he apparently does, thinks that something should be done about this problem, then it is within the bounds of his immense wisdom and experience to amend our legislation so that in his opinion it is not so clumsy. In fact, he said it was the clumsiest thing he had ever seen. Yet, speaking about dogs rushing out and with his peculiar method of trying to cloud the issue in that respect, he forgot to look at section 24 of the Registration of Dogs Act, which says:

If any dog, in or upon any street, thoroughfare, highway, or public place in any part of the State, or on any premises other than the premises on or occupied by the owner of the dog, rushes at any vehicle, or rushes at or attacks any person, or any horse, bullock, cattle, or other animal, so that the life or limbs of any person are endangered,

then in any such case—

the owner of the dog shall be liable to a penalty,

and it goes on to give the penalty. Section 24 deals exclusively with any street, thoroughfare, highway or public place, but apparently the dog is at complete liberty to rush out as much as it likes within the boundaries of the yard of its owner. The rushing out is there and is plainly evident. It has been in the Act for a long time. Then suddenly the honourable member for Onkaparinga and others have discovered that there is something wrong with the wording "rushing out". It has taken them a while to find that out.

The facts are plainly to be seen in the second reading speech of the honourable the Leader last week where he plainly says:

Where—(a) the dog that is not securely leashed or confined within a kennel or other suitable enclosure rushes at or attacks any person on premises occupied by the owner of the dog and (b) at the time the dog so rushes at or attacks a person, the person had a lawful excuse for being on those premises, the owner of the dog shall be guilty of an offence,

and it goes on to stipulate the penalties. Although we have been told in letters by well-meaning people, dog-lovers, people who hate dogs to be ill-treated (as I think do all members of this House), I submit that this does not place an obligation on the owner of the

dog. It does, however, place an onus on the owner of the dog to protect people who have a lawful right to enter the premises.

The honourable member for Mitcham said that he remembered that Parliamentarians sometimes in the course of performing their best brand of democracy for the country have to do much entering of back yards and so on, and he reminded us that the dog is no respecter of persons. There is not much politics about a dog—he would not know a Labor from a Liberal member; he would not know an honourable gentleman from the other place from a member from this place. When I was canvassing in a by-election to assist a gentleman who later became a most worthy member of this place (and who is my immediate neighbour in the Chamber), I went to one town (a very nice town), and I do not think I have ever seen so many and so many varieties of dogs in my life as I did in that town. I am sure that some were an unnamed breed. If you go into a house for a perfectly legitimate reason, such as trying to make the country safe for democracy, you should have some protection if you have a nice, big dog sink his teeth into your quivering flesh. I should like this Bill to have included some means of preventing the indiscriminate breeding of dogs, and I do not refer only to the breeding of mongrels. I sometimes visit close friends who live at Semaphore. Their next-door neighbour breeds Alsatians as a hobby. I do not condemn Alsatians, but if one wants a horrible noise that will wake him with a shudder in the middle of the night he should live next door to a place that has four Alsatians which howl, scratch against an iron fence, and yelp.

Mr. Millhouse: How bad do you think it would be if they were tied up all day?

Mr. CLARK: If the honourable member can show me anything in this Bill that says that a dog must be tied up all day I shall be happy to eat my copy of *Hansard*, and I have indigestion at present.

Mr. Quirke: If you do eat it, you will get lead poisoning.

Mr. CLARK: Legislation like this should have been introduced long ago, and by the Government. After all, this is a genuine attempt to try to protect people from a danger that, unfortunately, over the last few years has become increasingly prevalent. I support the Bill.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla): One of the most remarkable features of this debate is

that we are merely trying to extend the Act to afford protection to human beings when they are rushed at or attacked by a dog on the property of its owner. This protection was given in 1948 to stock and poultry. All the arguments that have been raised this afternoon could have been raised, with as much validity, in 1948 when section 24 of the Act was amended. The 1948 amendments were introduced on precisely the same lines as this Bill has been introduced, with the exception of words relating to property or animals being injured or endangered. The 1948 Bill, introduced by the Honourable M. McIntosh, was supported by members on both sides, and there was no attempt to ridicule it, as has been done this afternoon with this Bill. It has been suggested that this legislation would entail the tying up or leashing of all dogs. The same could have been said in 1948 for the simple reason that dogs could then, as today, escape from their owners' property and attack stock. All the arguments advanced against this Bill could have been advanced in 1948, but they were not, and, I suggest, simply because that Bill was introduced by the Government. The objections to this Bill arise largely because it has been introduced by the Opposition and not by the Government.

Mr. Jenkins: The Government would not get much support for a Bill like this.

Mr. LOVEDAY: The House agreed to the amendments to section 24 in 1948 without bringing forward any of the objections raised today, and it was supported by members on both sides.

Mr. Jenkins: In 1948 there was no mention of chaining or shutting up dogs.

Mr. LOVEDAY: It has been argued that if this Bill is passed dogs will have to be leashed.

Mr. Millhouse: I think that is obvious.

Mr. LOVEDAY: It could have been argued in 1948 that dogs would have to be leashed, because there was nothing to stop dogs from leaving private premises to do the very things mentioned in section 24.

Mr. Millhouse: We cannot be held responsible for what was done in 1948.

Mr. LOVEDAY: But a Minister of your Party introduced the amendments then, and that was the big difference. The honourable member said that a dog could not recognize who had a lawful excuse for being on the premises. If that is so it must logically follow that if one is to keep a dog for protection purposes it would have to be a savage dog, because otherwise how could it be effective?

None of these arguments were advanced in 1948 and it is most interesting to ascertain why. The member for Onkaparinga admitted that the problem should be dealt with and he said that the emphasis was on the words "rushing at". He said that the amendments needed a lot more care and thought, yet in 1948 he supported similar amendments in order to protect stock and poultry.

Mr. Ralston: Because they have some commercial value.

Mr. LOVEDAY: If our Bill is as bad as the member for Onkaparinga alleges, why did he support section 24 in 1948? If our legislation needs improving, members opposite should be trying to rectify those parts they claim need rectification. Instead of that we have been having a barrage of ridicule and exaggeration in an attempt to defeat the Bill.

Mr. Millhouse: Only ridicule; never exaggeration.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Certainly exaggeration on the part of the honourable member, who tries to make out that a dog must be chained up, if the amendment is to become effective. I ask him to look at section 24 of the original Act and he will see that the word used is "may". A dog could rush out at one, and one could say, "He 'may' bite me."

Mr. Millhouse: I do not think that the court would interpret it that way.

Mr. LOVEDAY: It is quite clear in the Act, which says "may". Who is to determine that a dog may or may not bite? In 1948 honourable members opposite supported that provision without objection and did not raise any arguments against it, such as those now being raised. The amendment was introduced by your own Minister.

Mr. Millhouse: The honourable member is becoming very conservative if he appeals to the past.

Mr. LOVEDAY: When a Bill is introduced by a member on this side it is treated with ridicule by those opposite, even though it may be for a very good cause, but when a Bill comes from the Government side, it includes all the virtues.

Mr. Millhouse: Not necessarily.

Mr. LOVEDAY: On that occasion it was supported by members on both sides for the good reason that it was necessary and was a good Bill. Members opposite adopted a far more constructive approach to the question. Mr. Shannon admitted that there was good reason for a measure of this kind. It was suggested here that it would be desirable to

have included in our amendment the words appearing at the end of section 24 "is or may be injured or endangered". I am sure that our Leader would have no objection to those words being included. If the wording could be improved regarding a dog being confined within a kennel because the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals found fault with it, that could be easily overcome. They are the only two valid objections I have heard this afternoon. If it is admitted, and it is admitted, that there is need to rectify what is a danger to human beings who are attacked by fairly savage dogs, we could take the necessary steps to improve the amendment for this purpose. That is the crux of the whole matter. The existing legislation has worked properly and successfully for more than 12 years—and it included the very things that people have been objecting to. Therefore, I have much pleasure in supporting the amendments and I hope that if a slight alteration is needed that alteration will be forthcoming and the measure passed.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra): I do not rise to support the Bill, because I think it should be rubbed out and drawn again. I am in sympathy with the intention of the measure that people should not keep dogs that attack such officials as postmen and policemen and others who have to go on private premises. My view is that if a dog bites anyone who in the ordinary course of his business is legitimately on a property that dog should be destroyed. If that were the law, people would see that their dogs were not loose. If a dog were in the backyard of a house so that it could not get to the front of the property, it would be suitably enclosed. It would not have to be in a kennel or tied up. One does not have to do anything to cause any cruelty under this measure. I do not see any necessity for it. The proposed amendment in clause 3 includes the words:

- (a) the dog that is not securely leashed or confined within a kennel or other suitable enclosure rushes at or attacks any person on premises occupied by the owner of the dog;

That is simple enough. If an improvement is needed, we can excise the words "rushes at or". There is a vast difference between the Act quoted by Mr. Loveday and the proposal under this Bill. This would apply to a dog even if in play it ran at the head of a horse or in front of a motor car with no intention to bite anyone or to cause danger. In playing, it may be dangerous in that it could divert a car driver's attention. A dog could rush at

a person and jump all over him with no intention of biting, but just showing how pleased he was. Some dogs are intimidating because of their size, but they may have no evil intent. If people are negligent and their dog bites a person who is legitimately on their property, the dog should be destroyed and the owner fined. That is simple enough.

If people love their dogs, as those who write to the press say they do, they will see that their dog is not in a position to get out and attack people. I have all the sympathy in the world for those people who, because of their occupation, have to enter premises, and they should be protected from savage dogs. A dog need not be savage in order to be a good watchdog. A good watchdog could be a docile dog in every respect in that he gave an alarm when there was danger. There are hundreds of thousands of dogs in the country that do just that. I have been to places where there are dozens of dogs loose and they swarm all over you. They are only being friendly. The owners have no thought of shutting them up. I would not allow any dog to roam the streets unless on a leash or attended by its owner if it were likely to savage children. The owner would be directly responsible for it. We hear a lot of sanctimonious rot about a dog that has never bitten anyone, except that on one occasion it only bit off the face of a child! Such a kindly and well disposed dog should be shot, and no nonsense about it! If I were in favour of that sort of punishment I would say the same treatment should be handed out to some owners. I have been bitten by only one dog—a wretched renegade of an Irish terrier—and I have considered the breed pestilential ever since. That dog attacked without any provocation at all other than that he was a renegade and bit one of his own breed.

If dogs are out on footpaths or running around the roads they will attack without apparent reason and cause great injury, particularly to young children. I would not permit dogs to roam the streets in any part of the metropolitan area. A dog on the street should be on a leash and under the control of the owner; a big dog should be under control by being held on the end of a leash. I do not think this Bill will do much good, however. To use the words of the member for Whyalla, I suggest that we make a genuine attempt in this Parliament to give genuine protection to these people. In this House, if a member moves an amendment it is his amendment, and, if it is no good, Parliament does not necessarily

have to do the job of improving it for him: he must do it himself. However, we can make a few suggestions as to how things should be done. The point that I am making is that we are trying to protect people from being bitten and children from being mauled. The Leader has introduced this Bill, which seeks to bring about the same conditions in a person's backyard as the principal section of the Act applies to dogs running around in the streets or in open spaces. I do not think that can be done, as the conditions are fundamentally different. We want to protect people from being bitten, but let us go about it in another way. I have not considered this Bill from the point of view of amending it, but I think it may be more simple to say that if a dog bites anybody it should be destroyed without any appeal. The dog lovers would then have it thrust back on them, as they would not have to protect postmen and others who call at their homes; they would have to protect their dogs, which would be shot if they offended. Not only should the dog be shot, but the person owning it should be fined. Make this a part of the Act and I will favour it.

Mr. TAPPING secured the adjournment of the debate.

MOUNT GAMBIER BY-LAW: PARKING METERS.

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr Hall:

That by-law No. 47 of the Corporation of the City of Mount Gambier in respect of metered zones and metered spaces for vehicles, made on June 23, 1960, and laid on the table of this house on June 20, 1961, be disallowed.

(Continued from August 16. Page 449.)

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): I rise to say a few things about this matter that I feel are of some consequence to the House—probably of more consequence in the overall position than to the disallowance or allowance of this by-law. I support the motion to disallow this by-law and will give my reasons later, but before doing so I shall deal with one or two fundamental matters that appear to be involved in the arguments advanced. Arguments have been put forward that Parliament, having given regulation-making powers to councils, should automatically accept their decisions regarding the by-laws they make. That argument was advanced on two or three occasions on the basis that, unless it accepts them, this House is not supporting local government. I entirely disagree with that view. Parliament

gives to governmental and many semi-governmental bodies, and to local government, powers to make regulations and by-laws on incidental matters which it is not convenient to fix by legislation outright, but it specifically leaves to itself the right to review these regulations and by-laws before they become effective law. Parliament has never given to councils or any other authority powers to make regulations and by-laws which are sacrosanct. In other words, regulations and by-laws are on exactly the same basis as any measure introduced by a member of this House for consideration as a law. They must run the gamut of examination and be subject to any objection that may be raised. Incidentally, they can be subject to the general objection that they are premature, that they are not wanted, that they are against the public interest, or any other matter.

There seems to be some confusion in members' minds about the function of the Subordinate Legislation Committee, which was set up to consider by-laws and regulations. That committee was set up as a result of an amendment that I moved many years ago, when I was a back-bench member, to meet a position that arose at that time and of which members were only too conscious: that when Parliament met, a whole mass of subordinate legislation was dumped upon the table and, in my opinion, no regard was given to whether it was properly scrutinized or not. I moved an amendment that was ultimately adopted in, I think, a slightly altered form, and as a result the Subordinate Legislation Committee was constituted. The objection to the setting up of the committee was one that was widespread in Parliament, but it was afterwards met by some alteration of the original suggestion. It was never suggested that the committee should have power to approve a regulation or by-law or to investigate the desirability of a regulation. What was suggested was that the committee should examine a regulation to see if it conformed with certain requirements to which all legislation should conform—whether it was technically correct, whether it stated the position clearly and whether it was understood; the member for Mitcham gave the four matters that the committee was specifically designed to consider.

Local government legislation has been the source of much trouble for a long time. For many years subordinate legislation was dealt with in the ordinary way; regulations came before Parliament in the normal way. It was not satisfactory and led to many problems.

Firstly, the legal advisers of councils frequently advised incorrectly about the councils' powers. Perpetually before the courts there were moves to have regulations disallowed because they did not conform with the regulation-making powers given by Parliament. To avoid this a new method was adopted. Council regulations are made in the normal way, but are not scrutinized by Cabinet as are ordinary regulations. They go to the Crown Solicitor for scrutiny and he must issue a certificate that they are within the council's regulation-making powers. Then they are considered by the Joint Committee on Subordinate Legislation, as indicated by the member for Mitcham. At no stage is there a consideration on the question of desirability, or even policy. Other regulations are considered by Cabinet in this way. Consequently, many regulations come before Parliament without being reviewed on general policy. Parliament wisely said that no council regulation should operate until approved by Parliament.

In moving for the disallowance of this regulation on the ground of general policy the member for Gouger was correct. There is not the slightest need for parking meters in our country towns. Because councils have the attraction of purchasing parking meters on hire-purchase conditions it is in order for any member of Parliament to say that it should not be done. In the metropolitan area, where there are communities larger than those at Mount Gambier and other country towns, some councils have not installed parking meters. It must be remembered that immediately parking restrictions are imposed and fees fixed in country towns people will not want to go to those towns. I do not think the member for Gouger has any particular interest in Mount Gambier but, forgetting Mount Gambier altogether, I think he has moved on sound grounds for the disallowance of the regulation.

The legislation dealing with parking meters was a drastic alteration. It was approved by the Government, so the Government must take the responsibility. The Adelaide City Council said that it was proper to install parking meters because traffic congestions prevented drivers of motor vehicles from getting anywhere near the places where they wanted to park. Also, many people avoided the half-hour parking limit without being detected. It was said that the revenue from the meters would enable council officers to police the matter, and at the same time provide a movement of traffic in the public interest. The Government accepted this. Then the

council said that it could not say definitely where it wanted to install the meters. When a parking meter regulation is promulgated it does not say in which streets the meters are to be installed, and it covers the whole area. The Mount Gambier by-law is of that type. If the by-law is accepted the council will be able to put meters anywhere and everywhere, whether necessary or not.

Mr. Riches: Any council can go mad if it wants to.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes, and any council can bring in a regulation that is opposed by most of its citizens. A council may be able to get away with that for some time, but eventually the citizens catch up with it. Is it desirable to have a general power to make a parking meter regulation apply to the whole area or only to a part of that area where there is traffic congestion? I propose to take the matter to Cabinet. In the Adelaide City Council area parking meters have been installed in many places where there is not the slightest justification for them.

Mr. Quirke: You have half of King William Street empty because of the presence of parking meters.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes. To put a parking meter in a spot where people go in and come out of a business house is justified to some extent but there is not the slightest justification for putting meters everywhere merely to raise revenue. Two points need examination in this matter but the second one is important. Some years ago the Legislative Council for two sessions hotly debated the question of the relative merits of making regulations or proclamations applicable to a Food and Drugs Act and it held strongly, that the power to make a proclamation should be granted sparingly to Parliament. Yet here we have a power that appears to be a regulation whereas it is a complete power to make proclamations for a whole municipality and it is reasonable to expect that the citizens of Mount Gambier would rise up and oppose it. It is also reasonable that the primary producers' organizations out of Mount Gambier should object.

Mr. Riches: Did you take any notice of the primary producers when you allowed parking meters in Adelaide?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Parking meters in Adelaide have gone far beyond where they should have gone and in some instances members may see streets almost vacant except for a row of parking meters

waiting for some unsuspecting motorist to come along and put in his coin.

Mr. Jennings: Why don't you fight with the Adelaide City Council, not Mount Gambier?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: If the honourable member makes a speech we will do our best to listen to him. If the Government gives councils the power to install parking meters, the regulations should specify where the meters are to go. The views of the Mount Gambier people were expressed strongly against parking meters and an election was held as a result. If my reading of the newspaper reports is correct, the three councillors who supported parking meters and came up for re-election were defeated and the three contenders for the vacancies, who did not support parking meters, were elected in their place.

Following on that election and because there was a change in council membership I have been told, unofficially, that the Subordinate Legislation Committee had some difficulty with this by-law and that it waited to see what the result of the election would be. However, I do not know whether that is correct.

Mr. Millhouse: It is correct.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The committee was told that the election would determine the public's attitude to parking meters. The fact remains that the three new councillors were opposed to parking meters and they took action to have the by-law rescinded. The local newspaper reported the move and a full report is contained in the *Border Watch* of August 19, 1961. The report is given front page prominence and I have been unable to see that any of the statements made in the report have been contradicted in any subsequent edition of the *Border Watch*, nor have I heard of any contradiction of them.

Mr. Lawn: There has not been an issue of that paper since August 19.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I accept the honourable member's statement. The report reads:

A move by three of the four new members of the City Council to have the parking meter by-law rescinded and withdrawn from Parliament was defeated when they failed to gain a simple majority at Thursday night's fortnightly meeting. Voting was five for and five against the motion. Members of the former council, Councillors E. E. S. Lewis and L. A. Bishop, voted with the mover, Councillor R. W. Kaye, the seconder, Councillor J. G. Cleary, and Councillor A. R. Burdon, in favour of the rescission. Alderman M. C. Duffield, Alderman M. R. Hirth, Alderman R. L. Badenoch, Councillors C. J. Fraser and D. I. Phillis, voted against the motion to rescind.

I was curious about a vote of five all in a council matter and I followed the report to a subsequent page in the newspaper to see how all this happened. The ultimate result, shown on page 4 at the end of the report of the meeting, reads:

When voting was equal, the mayor said, "It is not a majority, and the motion is lost".

This matter is governed by the provisions of the Local Government Act which lay down the rules on voting and the position to be followed when voting is equal. Section 147v. of the Act states:

The mayor shall vote only in case of an equality of votes, when he shall have a casting vote only—

The mayor does not normally have a vote but he does have a casting vote in the event of an equality of votes. Section 147v continues: and any other member presiding at a meeting of a municipal council shall have a deliberative vote, and, in case of equality of votes, a casting vote also.

I am informed by Mr. Cartledge that any person present at a council meeting is obliged to vote, and that a vote is not declared lost on an equality of votes. I have no doubt that the mayor (Mr. Elliott), who I believe was strongly in favour of this matter, would have voted for the resolution, for he has spoken strongly in favour of it on many occasions. The fact remains that this matter was not properly dealt with by the council.

Mr. Ralston: Have you read the model by-law No. 5, paragraph 64—proceedings of council?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I want the opportunity to state my views. A considerable amount of evidence is available to show that the by-law is not desired in the area concerned. A good deal of division has eventuated, and the mayor himself on two or three occasions has said that it is tearing the community apart as no other matter has torn it apart for some time. That in itself suggests that it was unwise to proceed with the matter. Leaving that aside, the fact still remains that the member for Gouger, in moving to disallow this by-law, has done something that I believe is of service to this House. He has pointed out that if we accept this by-law for Mount Gambier in its present form we shall have no grounds for disallowing a similar by-law for any other part of the State. I consider that parking meters represent a form of taxing the public that should be discouraged as much as possible. I believe the evidence we have already had of its use in South Australia

indicates that it is too attractive from a revenue point of view to be left without some policing.

Mr. Lawn: Without meters you cannot park in the City of Adelaide.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: My experience in the United States of America was that this form of malicious metering had extended to almost every avenue of country towns, and that people were vending these instruments on a hire-purchase basis, under which the local government body received a percentage of the rake-off and the people who installed the machine also received a percentage. We have some evidence that something along those lines has taken place at Mount Gambier, for it was proposed that the meters should be purchased on a hire-purchase basis. I believe that is something we should watch very closely indeed.

The general question of the power to make a proclamation in respect of parking meters is something which I believe we shall have to submit to Parliament again for a determination. If the Mount Gambier Corporation believed that parking meters were necessary in a part of Commercial Street, I feel sure there might have been some reason for it. However, it desires the power to make a proclamation and not to have a regulation that could be disallowed. It desires the power to proclaim any part of Mount Gambier, and I say that is too wide, because on the present features of traffic and under the present system of traffic control in country municipalities I do not believe it is necessary. I support the motion for disallowance.

Mr. BYWATERS secured the adjournment of the debate.

ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 16. Page 450.)

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga): The member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) has accused me of always opposing anything the Labor Party brings forward, but I assure him that I only oppose things when I have good grounds for my opposition. This Bill deals with a very knotty problem. I suggest to the member for Stuart that he should do a little less wishful thinking before bringing his ideas to the House, for I feel we would then have a more considered view. The Bill deals with what is really a vital matter, namely, postal votes. I hope all those members who have the pleasure

and honour of representing our outlying districts in the Far North oppose this Bill otherwise I shall hammer them on it at election time. All the Labor Party is endeavouring to do is to make it difficult for a resident in the far northern areas of this State between the Western Australian border and the New South Wales border to cast a vote; it is going to make it awfully difficult for those people to comply with the electoral requirements. In fact, I think our existing laws should be looked at with a view to giving these people in the far northern areas better opportunity of exercising the democratic rights of voting. They have a certain exclusion from penalty under the existing law by virtue of their remoteness: they are not penalized if they cannot validly vote in time. We go that far, but we make it physically impossible, in view of the postal arrangements which apply in those areas, for them to have a valid vote counted at an election. I do not know whether or not the member for Stuart is aware of that fact, or whether he is happy to exclude certain people from having a valid vote. I do not know whether or not the purpose of this Bill is to make it even harder for people in those outlying parts to enjoy the benefit of the ballot, but I believe it will make it even more difficult for those people.

Mr. Riches: I think the real purpose is to prevent what happened at a certain by-election.

Mr. SHANNON: I had some experience of that myself, and I intend to deal with that matter presently.

Mr. Riches: That is the practice we want to stop.

Mr. SHANNON: That is rather an interesting topic. On the occasion the member for Stuart now reminds me of—not that I need any reminding—a number of votes were disallowed by the returning officer on the assumption that they were not cast prior to the closing of the poll. That was the basis upon which they were excluded from the count. Some 30 odd ballot-papers were involved. We inquired about the electors who were excluded from having their votes counted, and we soon discovered that some of those people had, to the best of their ability, complied with everything the law laid down that they should do. They had actually posted their ballot-papers in accordance with the Act. The member for Stuart will not need to be reminded that some of those people post their ballot-papers in a private bag, because that is the only way they can do it. The private bag might even be hung upon a

mulga on the roadside to be picked up by the mailman passing that way. That is not unheard of in these outlying areas. The envelope cannot be franked by a post office until the bag is delivered to a post office that has something with which to frank it.

Mr. Quirke: It may be delivered at night and not franked until the next morning.

Mr. SHANNON: That is quite true; that actually happened. In one case, an envelope was posted before eight o'clock, as laid down by the Act, but it was not franked because the post office was not operating and could not put the funny little stamp on it. It was not, in fact, cancelled until the Monday morning. But those are not the ones that I am so worried about; the ones I am really concerned with are those electors who, of necessity, after the writs are issued, the candidates' names are known and the ballot-papers are printed, have to apply to the returning officer in their electorate for a postal vote.

Mr. Riches: And the Government always sees to it that there is not more than a fortnight in which to do it.

Mr. SHANNON: The honourable member for Stuart is now coming round to my way of thinking. With his help I am prepared to extend it. I want everybody to be able to cast a vote at an election. That is our goal—not to deny people but rather to facilitate their opportunities of voting. The honourable member for Stuart said that we gave them about a fortnight to do what I would describe as the *modus operandi* of the elector.

Mr. Riches: It is entirely in the hands of the Government.

Mr. SHANNON: In such a case, in view of the honourable member's vociferous interjections and since it is apparent that he is talking my way all the time, I am sure that, if I happen to move some amendments to this short Bill, I shall have his support and it will achieve my goal of giving constituents in the outlying parts of Stuart and other places the opportunity to vote validly. If that is the honourable member's answer, then we see eye to eye for once. I intend to give constituents that facility.

Mr. Riches: Would you provide for a four weeks' campaign?

Mr. SHANNON: I do not think that is necessary. I think that the honourable member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday) will have to do some homework on this as well. He is involved in this outlying area.

Mr. Loveday: I have had great difficulty in getting polling booths in these places.

Mr. SHANNON: All you would have in such polling booths would be the station manager, the boundary riders and perhaps the cook. I doubt very much whether the State could afford a polling booth for each station throughout our north. I do not think even the honourable member for Whyalla would be quite so extravagant with the funds of the State as to suggest that, especially when we know that there is a cheaper and more simple method of achieving our goal, which is to permit these people to vote validly.

After the application for a postal ballot has been posted by the person concerned, who has to go through the usual routine of getting his signature and all the rest of it witnessed before he is legally entitled to a postal ballot, the returning officer on receiving this application sends back the ballot-paper. The elector then has to fill in his ballot-paper in private, put it in an envelope provided by the electoral officer, seal it, then sign it in front of a witness (who can, of course, be any other elector, one of his fellow electors); then he has to date it. That is the present procedure. That would be a pretty fair method of ensuring, first of all, that the elector was in fact entitled to a vote and, secondly, that he did perform his function of voting on a certain date because he had a witness to the fact that he signed his ballot envelope on that date. Reasonable people would accept that as evidence of a valid vote.

The next move that this unfortunate elector has to make, having received his ballot-paper and cast his vote, is that he posts it back to the electoral officer in his electorate. The mailman in his particular case can be up the Birdsville line in the Frome area, or in the north in the Whyalla, Stuart or Eyre areas. The members for those areas have the honour and glory of representing pastoral areas. Each one of them knows better than I can tell him the infrequency, first of all, of the regular mail services granted to those people, and still further the difficulty of keeping to the schedule laid down by the Postal Department for the gathering and delivery of that mail. The vagaries of the weather alone are sufficient, in some cases, to hold up for a day or even a week or more the mail contractor's arrival at his destination with the mail gathered en route. These are not unusual occurrences; they happen, and happen frequently. A slight mechanical breakdown in the mailman's vehicle (it need not be a serious one) can hold him up for hours on the road, and it does.

Mr. Riches: A fortnight's campaign is too short.

Mr. SHANNON: I am talking not of campaigns but of getting these people's votes legitimately counted.

Mr. Riches: How long do you suggest it would take?

Mr. SHANNON: I do not know. I think that the members representing these areas should give some thought to this matter.

Mr. Riches: They have, and what should be done is a longer campaign.

Mr. SHANNON: I want to tell you what happens to the man who has voted legitimately.

Mr. Riches: You always say that they do not get a vote.

Mr. SHANNON: Perhaps I had better clear that point up. The member for Stuart knows that in the last Frome by-election I personally had a considerable amount to do with seeing that people who had validly voted had their votes counted. The member for Norwood did exactly the same thing with a number of people who had validly voted, to see their votes were counted. We secured statutory declarations from the elector concerned as to what action he had taken with regard to the ballot. They were presented to and accepted by the returning officer, and accepted as evidence that the elector did vote validly. The member for Stuart is aware of that.

Mr. Riches: I am aware of a good many other things about it that I do not like very much.

Mr. Lawn: Those postal votes in Frome were not all valid votes.

Mr. SHANNON: Some were rejected which, had there been a Court of Disputed Returns, might have had the reverse effect.

Mr. Frank Walsh: There may have been some counted that had an adverse effect.

Mr. SHANNON: If you want the inside history of it, I can give you a little and name the persons concerned. I do not know how they voted. A declaration was made by one person but that was not tendered by the person who took the declaration.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member to come back to the Bill to which he is speaking.

Mr. SHANNON: I thought they wanted a little dissertation on the evils of the existing system. I can give them plenty of information if it is required.

Mr. Riches: We know what the evils are!

Mr. SHANNON: The honourable member sees niggers in every woodpile. The people

who complied with the Act had to declare that they had so complied before the returning officer admitted their votes to the count. That is what actually happened in the Frome by-election. If an elector has signed his name on a postal ballot envelope, dated that envelope and had his signature witnessed by another elector, that should be *prima facie* evidence of the time of his voting. There is no need for me to point out that the time in which postal votes can be received should be more elastic. If there is a thunderstorm and the Cooper runs a banker and the Birdsville Track is closed for a fortnight, the postal voter who has complied with all requirements should not have his vote discarded because the postal ballot envelope is not received at a postal agency and the stamp thereon cancelled out until after the poll has closed. The cancellation date on the stamp determines for the returning officer whether the ballot-paper was posted too late. I understand there is a school of thought that that should be the only means by which a returning officer should decide whether a postal vote is valid. If that is rigidly adhered to the best plan is to disfranchise those people living in the Far North.

Mr. RICHES: You do, every time you have a fortnight's campaign.

Mr. SHANNON: The campaign should not decide it. I am prepared to regard as honest a man who signs his name and has it witnessed and dates the postal vote envelope. If it were appropriate, I would allow such votes to be received for a month after the election. We cannot be tied to the date the stamp on an envelope is cancelled. It may be necessary to insert special provisions to apply to outlying centres.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Send them ballot-papers without the applications, and see whether they will be returned.

Mr. SHANNON: I am not worried about the application, but about the vote of the man who has voted. If the Leader thinks that these people are not interested in voting, that is his approach and he can disfranchise them, or try to. He suggests that they are not interested in elections and hence it does not matter whether they are given a vote. I would encourage these people to vote and assure them that having cast their votes legally they would be counted when received by the Electoral Office. The Bill does not ensure that. It ignores that aspect. It merely tightens the time factor for applying for a postal ballot.

Mr. RICHES: The position could be met by a three-weeks campaign.

Mr. SHANNON: A three-months campaign will not cure the ill I am worried about, but which the honourable member is too obtuse to notice, and that is that a man who votes and posts his ballot paper prior to the close of the poll has complied with the law. The law requires that a postal vote must be cast and posted before the close of the poll at 8 p.m.

Mr. RICHES: It requires more than that.

Mr. SHANNON: That is one factor it lays down. I know that it requires other things, and I have mentioned them. If a man complies with all requirements of the Act and casts his vote and posts his ballot-paper, do members opposite want his vote ignored? I hope the Opposition will not compel these out-back people to vote a week before election day. I hope the people will be allowed the same privilege as every other elector of listening to the campaign to its close and then deciding which candidate they will support. If a person is intelligent he will want to do that.

Mr. RICHES: He still has to get his application form in to the Electoral Office.

Mr. SHANNON: The honourable member cannot conscientiously support this Bill if he believes that a man should be given time to get his application in for a postal vote and to have it returned to him so that he can cast his vote and post it back to the Electoral Office. The longer time he is given, the better. If that is the honourable member's argument, I agree with it.

Mr. RICHES: Not after the election, before.

Mr. SHANNON: A man should be given the maximum time to have his ballot-paper returned to him after he has applied for it. We are dealing with an application for a ballot-paper and the return of the ballot-paper and considering giving the maximum time in which to comply with the Act. The Bill you support—

The SPEAKER: The honourable member might now address the Chair.

Mr. SHANNON: I have such an intelligent audience opposite that I was remiss in that regard, Mr. Speaker. I think some of them are beginning to learn that they must examine their own legislation because obviously they have the same viewpoint as I. This is really a problem for the distant elector and the more latitude we can give him, within the prescribed limits of proper secret ballots so that there shall be no skulduggery, the fairer we shall be. I cannot support the Leader's intention of closing the gap by a couple of days. I should have preferred some other approach rather than restricting the application date

for a postal ballot. I point out that this amendment will affect every electorate. It limits the day for the application for a postal ballot to the Thursday. I do not know whether any member has had the experience of having an accident on a Friday. I remember when the old folk used to say, "Don't start anything on Friday: it is an unlucky day." If one has an accident on a Friday and cannot get to the booth to vote on the Saturday, he loses his vote. One would not have got a postal vote, either, because the door would already have been closed in one's face. That would apply in every electorate. It is quite obvious that again the Opposition has not done its homework.

Mr. LAWN secured the adjournment of the debate.

LOAN ESTIMATES.

In Committee.

(Continued from August 22. Page 507.)

Grand total, £30,748,000.

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens): When speaking previously on the Loan Estimates I mentioned briefly the position of our railway system and expressed the hope that some consideration would be given to the disposal of our still large, but obsolete, steam engine fleet. I should welcome some information, either now or later, about the Government's policy on their disposal, because they represent a considerable investment. The cost of many of these engines, constructed in recent years, has certainly not yet been amortized, and their working life is now finished.

I am pleased to notice that a line has been placed on the Loan Estimates for a new School of Arts building to be erected in my district at North Adelaide. For some years a large amount has been placed on the Estimates for work on primary, high and technical high schools, all of which have my fullest support, so it is now refreshing to see that the fine arts are to receive their just attention. I am sure that all honourable members who have had the opportunity to review the conditions under which the South Australian School of Arts has operated for some years will agree that it is high time that this school was provided with far better accommodation. The Exhibition Building in which it has been housed is to be razed shortly to make way for university extensions. Land had been bought in a desirable part of North Adelaide, in Melbourne Street, some 40 or 50 years ago and it has remained vacant ever since. It was to be

used for a new primary school. I am pleased that much imagination has been brought to bear in designing the new building to provide for special purposes and teaching exhibitions. It will be a three-storey structure of futuristic design with modern appointments. I trust that as a result the School of Arts will have a new lease of life and so be able to take its place in our cultural community.

The Leader of the Opposition had some comments to make when dealing with the Education Department vote. If I may have the temerity, I will join issue with him on a couple of points, because some of his statements should not go unchallenged. He said that the department tended to over-estimate its Loan requirements each year and that certain moneys that were allocated were not spent or, if spent, were spent in a way different from that intended. He implied that money allocated for solid construction buildings was frittered away on minor works. I checked up on the figures and for the year ended June 30, 1961, the allocation on the Estimates for school buildings was £4,700,000—a lot of money—and actually the department over-spent by £136,000 in that year, the total being £4,836,000. The claim that the department tended to over-estimate in order to boost its budget is so much eyewash. The fact is that the department actually spent £136,000 more than it was entitled to under the Loan Estimates. If we look for a moment at the amounts spent on various contracts for such things as classrooms, we shall see that they very closely follow the actual estimate except that they are increased in some cases to make up the total of £136,000.

Mr. Millhouse: Has the Minister spent wisely?

Mr. COUMBE: I think that as far as possible the department has spent the money wisely. Sometimes circumstances arise and the department's hands are forced, but in the main I contend that it does spend wisely. Its policy is to spend wisely and frugally. I know from figures I have seen of the department's requirements that it is forced year after year to cut down its building programme. Whereas it may wish to build 60 schools a year, sometimes, because of restrictions in funds, it has had to whittle down the number to 55 or even 50. I consider that the department does a wonderful job in erecting these buildings, and it appears to get its money's worth for the type of buildings now being constructed. I completely agree with the department's policy that where possible solid construction buildings

should be erected. The Leader of the Opposition contended that minor works had received a greater allocation of the actual money spent than had solid construction buildings. I point out that members on both sides of the House have the habit of plaguing the Minister or his department asking that certain works be done (and I am as guilty as the rest) such as the asphaltting of school yards and attention to toilet blocks and minor repairs generally. Many of these items come under minor works. The complete rebuilding of some toilet blocks must surely cost as much as £9,000 or £10,000. These all come under the heading of minor works, and I understand that is why the minor works programme has had to be increased.

Mr. Bywaters: I think they are major works at the time.

Mr. COUMBE: They are most necessary works. I take exception to the Leader's statement that in last year's programme for school buildings not one penny was spent on at least 30 of the approved schools. He should know that plans for any of these schools have to be prepared three or four years ahead and, although no site work is actually done, land must be purchased and plans prepared. To say that not one penny was spent on 30 projects was misleading members and unworthy of the Leader. Plan preparation and quantity surveying for these schools takes much time; in some cases it takes nine months, 12 months, or even longer. These things take up five or six per cent of the total cost; these costs are available to members, as they are to members of the Public Works Committee. Money is allocated to schools and preparatory plans are drawn one year for buildings to be constructed in the next year; that is the way this department and the Public Buildings Department operate. Once a school is decided upon, it takes about three years before it can be opened.

The Leader also said that the prime function of Loan expenditure was to provide solid construction buildings before any other requirements, and that is another matter on which I cross swords with him. A school cannot be built before the land is purchased, and land has to be provided for in these Estimates. Land is a principal component in the total cost of a school. Some land costs, particularly in the metropolitan area, where the time is rapidly approaching when no blocks for school purposes will be available, are frightening. The few blocks available in a closely built-up or a market gardening area, such as Campbelltown or Underdale, command a fantastic price.

The department does not want to pay so much money, but it has no option. The member for Enfield knows the fantastic price that had to be paid for land for the projected girls' technical high school at Gepps Cross. I think the price was £86,000, the highest price an acre ever paid for any school in South Australia. Although that was a scandalous price, it was the only land available, and prices had been forced up because of recent sales in the area.

Mr. Jennings: There was nowhere else to go.

Mr. COUMBE: Exactly; there was no alternative.

Mr. Bywaters: Do you imply that the owner forced up the price because of circumstances?

Mr. COUMBE: No. When the Public Works Committee took evidence on that project adjacent land was selling at a comparable price.

Mr. Millhouse: What was scandalous about it?

Mr. COUMBE: When I said the price was scandalous I meant that it was undesirably high: perhaps I used the wrong word. In the Loan Estimates the purchase of land for school buildings, ovals and other facilities plays a major part. Many new schools require fencing, grading and earthworks, all of which must be provided for in the Loan Estimates. It is pleasing to note that the department's policy is to build solid construction buildings. This policy has my whole-hearted support, and I believe that it has the support of all members. I admit that there are circumstances when this is not possible, either because of urgency or the nature of the site. Usually it is because of urgency, but it is departmental policy to build solid construction schools where possible, or, if it is necessary to have a school constructed in such a short time that this would not be possible, to erect a spine of solid construction with wooden wings, the latter to be replaced as soon as possible with solid construction. The member for Mount Gambier has that in mind for the technical school at Mount Gambier, and I hope that in years to come the wings will be converted to solid construction.

I am pleased to see that additions and alterations are to be made to the aboriginal women's home at North Adelaide at a cost of £22,000. This home does a wonderful job in caring for aboriginal women, and provides a hostel for them when they come to Adelaide for medical attention or for some other reason.

I am sure it will be appreciated by all concerned with the welfare of this type of person, and I welcome this provision.

Last year a small amount was placed on the Loan Estimates for commencing the Bolivar sewage treatment plant. This year nearly £1,750,000 is to be spent on Adelaide sewers for new plant and facilities to push the scheme along so that in a few years this plant will be partially operating, and in six or seven years it will be wholly operating. I know that the member for Enfield will agree with what I shall say, as the Islington sewage farm is adjacent to his electorate and the Port Adelaide electorate as well as mine.

Mr. Jennings: It is getting a "bit on the nose."

Mr. CUMBE: It is, particularly in warm weather, and the sooner it goes the better. As reported in the Public Works Committee's report laid on the table of this House last year or the year before, it is estimated that the Islington farm will remain for eight or 10 years before being replaced. I make a plea to the Government to plan now what it will do with this valuable land when it is no longer required for sewage disposal purposes. This site is bounded on at least three sides by fairly large residential areas. In the warm weather, especially when a north wind is blowing, conditions are not desirable, particularly at night when people are trying to sleep. Conditions are not as bad as they were some years ago. When I was a lad they were very much on the nose. This land will be disposed of in years to come, but the Government should commence making plans for it now. It is too valuable to be hastily written off, or to have a hair-brained scheme thought up overnight to take the place of the sewage farm.

In all town planning areas have to be provided for recreation purposes, industry, ovals and housing. Many of the cities of the size of Adelaide, or perhaps larger, would give their last dollar to have such a wonderful asset almost in the middle of their area and within a couple of miles of the General Post Office available for town planning purposes. A wonderful opportunity is open to the Government. This is a large green belt area, and, when disposed of, ovals and recreation areas will be provided, but part of it should be used for high class industrial purposes. It has access to Port Adelaide by road on two sides. It is bounded on one side by the northern railway line, and another line runs from

Dry Creek to Port Adelaide. Part of the area should be put aside for industrial development.

We already have the British Tube Mills established nearby. Apart from that and the recreation areas and ovals, we could have a select housing area. If that were done it would prove a mighty asset to the city and the State, and the Government would receive a handsome return. Certain rights of easement are held over some of the land by the Enfield and Prospect councils and I hope they will be preserved for street drainage purposes. A wonderful opportunity is available to the Government to plan now and it is a matter that should not be overlooked.

Mr. Hall: How big is the area?

Mr. CUMBE: About three square miles. Part of it is subjected to inundation but the water could be drained to the North Arm of the Port River, which is only about half a mile from the end of the area. This wonderful opportunity should not be missed.

I would have preferred a larger vote of money to building societies for housing purposes. The Treasurer said that the money for housing would be divided amongst the Housing Trust, the State Bank, the Savings Bank and the building societies. I am a great believer in these societies, particularly the co-operative type. They should receive a higher allocation of money. They provide an opportunity for young people to save for a future home. Young men and women can invest in them long before they think of getting married. This opportunity is not available to them from other lending institutions. While they were contributing to building societies they would be getting an interest return on their money.

Yesterday I said that all the works included in the Loan programme were essential. One cannot cavil on that score at the programme submitted by the Treasurer. The only criticism is that more money should be made available, but within the limits of the money available the Treasurer has done a pretty good job with his allocations. He has provided money in two ways. The first is that Government departments will increase their work forces in their productive programmes, and secondly the money made available to contractors will encourage them to employ more tradesmen and unskilled workers in carrying out useful, necessary and productive public works. With these Estimates the Government has undertaken a deliberate policy of creating employment to ease the position in which we are placed. Therefore, all

members should support and pass them as quickly as possible. I support the first line.

Mr. RALSTON (Mount Gambier): I welcome this opportunity to discuss the many matters included in the Loan Estimates. The subject of housing is at present pertinent and I suggest a policy under which the tenant of a single unit rental home will be able by good tenancy to acquire the right to purchase that home after a reasonable period. All members know that when the Housing Trust builds a rental home the rent includes all outgoings, such as rates and taxes and maintenance costs, plus a repayment that will amortize the capital cost over a specific period. I firmly believe in home ownership because it generates a feeling of responsibility, which is the basis of good citizenship. All members of the South Australian Parliament wish to work for the creation of a better State even if they do not agree on policy or the method of achieving this desirable end. Sincerity of purpose, in the final analysis, will prove the *alpha* and *omega* of all political endeavour and it is with this thought in mind that I advance my reasons why home ownership should be made possible to people, especially young married couples, under the easiest possible conditions.

Honourable members know it is almost impossible to pay a deposit on a house and furnish it, even in the most frugal manner, for under £1,000 and that is beyond the financial ability of most young people. I suggest that they should be allowed to spend all their slender resources on necessary furniture and household appliances because it is cheaper to buy for cash. After all, why should these young folk, who are doing the right thing and conforming to our Christian beliefs, be forced into hire-purchase agreements if they can avoid them. Therefore, we should let them spend their savings on furniture and, at the same time, permit them to obtain an interest in a rented house. Let us give them this opportunity to save a deposit instead of forcing them to pay money away in exorbitant hire-purchase interest because in most cases that is what is happening now.

I suggest that at the end of a five-year period, small as the interest on the house would be from the payment of rent, there would be something to build on. They have made a start. I have confidence in our young folk and all members will agree that, unless we are convinced of their worth, we are wasting

our time here trying to do something for them. I am convinced that they are worth everything we can do for them, and while I am here I will follow that policy. They will not fail us because they are decent young people.

Victoria implemented a plan similar to the one I am advocating and it works satisfactorily. If Victoria can do that, we in South Australia can do it if we have the courage to try. All social services in Australia are built around house ownership. We are encouraged to own a house and a home means security to every wife and mother. A home is the foundation of our family life and our greatest bulwark against Communism. If we are to maintain democracy, and every member in this House wishes to do that, we must have house ownership. My statements represent a practical approach to a problem that is not difficult if we recognize the problem facing every young married couple. We must do our utmost to give them a decent start in life.

Sufficient double-unit houses have been built in this State to serve the needs of people who prefer to rent rather than to purchase and it is time we turned to help our young folk who wish to obtain a house as soon as possible to establish themselves as citizens of Australia. They must soon accept the responsibility we are now carrying. Another aspect of housing relates to pensioner homes in country areas and this also includes people of limited income. In February, 1958, the Government announced that a special Commonwealth grant of £368,019 would be spent on rental homes in country towns and this was followed by a further grant of £100,000 from State resources. Country members were extremely pleased that some attempt was to be made to extend to country towns the amenities enjoyed for years by the metropolitan area.

The people who have been able to obtain rental grant houses in country areas are fortunate because only 155 of these houses have been built in South Australian country areas. Just imagine that! A total of 155 houses to meet the requirements of the whole State outside the metropolitan area! Altogether, 37 country towns have been included in the programme. I do not know how other centres are getting on but only 11 rental grant houses have been built in Mount Gambier to serve the needs of a city and district with a population of more than 20,000 people. This programme has operated for three years and surely better progress could

have been made. A total of 11 houses to serve the needs of the aged and those of limited incomes in a population of 20,000 people would not scratch the surface. Insufficient as the number may be, no provision is made for the needs of elderly single women or widows living alone outside the metropolitan area. Those deserving people who live in the country districts have some rights and should not be overlooked. The claims of such people in the metropolitan area have not been forgotten. The Housing Trust's *Quarterly Notes* for July 1, 1961, state:

Pensioners, or "cottage" flats for elderly persons with very limited means. These are in relatively small groups, all at ground floor level. Although expressly for elderly persons they cannot be made available for those who on account of infirmity or illness cannot fend for themselves.

Well, I think we can all agree with that. The report continues:

Each flat is self-contained and the majority have a livingroom, kitchenette, bedroom, bathroom with toilet, and small storage room. There are a few flats in some of the earlier-built groups with a bed-sitting-room, kitchen and bathroom, etc. These latter, and many of the larger size, are let to single women and widows living alone. Among the future-built flats of this type will be interspersed flats with bed-sitting-room and kitchenette, every two of which will share a toilet and shower-bath. These will enable more accommodation to be provided at minimum rents for women. Each flat has a gas bath, gas cooker, hot water service and electric washing machine. There are verandahs front and back. The land is laid out with concrete paths, small lawns and shrubs which will be looked after by the trust. Small back gardens are available in some groups to tenants who can work them. To June 30, 1961, 690 cottage flats have been completed in the metropolitan area, including 125 flats built for benevolent institutions.

It goes on to say that further cottage flats are being constructed at Angle Park, Beaumaris and Campbelltown. These 565 flats have been constructed in the metropolitan area by the Housing Trust—no doubt at the direction of the Government—for mainly elderly single women or widows, but nothing like that is provided outside the metropolitan area. Why have these flats all been centred in the metropolitan area, and why has the rest of the State been forgotten? Facilities for these persons must be extended to country areas, for such people in the country have every right to expect the same sort of treatment as those in the metropolitan area. This privileged treatment to those who live within the sound of the Adelaide Post Office clock cannot be justified. Most, if not all, of the members of this House will agree that

discrimination—and this is certainly discrimination—against country people is or should be a thing of the past.

I hope that the policy of the Housing Trust—and by that I mean the policy of this Government—is not as immutable as the laws of the Medes and the Persians. Perhaps the appointment of a Minister of Housing in this Chamber would help to make the trust's policy a little less rigid. Members of the Opposition have previously mentioned the need for a Minister of Housing to whom members could direct their questions and ask why these things were happening. At present there is no-one in Parliament to whom members can direct questions on housing and obtain suitable replies. Members know that when they ask questions on these things they merely get a reply from the Treasurer that he will obtain a report from the Housing Trust. I admit that the trust has done a good job, but I remind members that Housing Commissions in other States also do a good job and those States have Ministers of Housing to whom members of Parliament can appeal or direct questions. Perhaps my remarks will be all that is necessary to achieve results; at least, I hope so. The country people are justified in expecting the things that I am advocating, not as a privilege but as a right, for they are entitled to the same rights as anyone else in the State.

The Mount Gambier Corporation is concerned about the city's water storage tank, the capacity of which is 1,500,000 gallons. A 300,000 gallons storage tank is situated at Moorak, some few miles away, to serve the needs of the farming community of that area. During the summer the water consumption on some particularly hot days is about 5,000,000 gallons, and that means that within six to eight hours, unless very heavy restrictions were imposed, Mount Gambier would be out of water if a major breakdown occurred at the pumping plant. The margin of safety is far too small. Surely a city of the size of Mount Gambier is justified in expecting a greater margin of security than only a few hours. Last year £50,000 was placed on the Estimates to provide a further 2,000,000 gallon storage tank, the installation of which would more than double the present storage capacity. I believe there is more than ample pumping capacity to ensure that this additional storage tank would be kept full at all times. With a tank of that size, certain tests were necessary to determine the suitability of the proposed site. Fortunately, those tests proved successful, and I

now have the assurance of the Minister of Works that there are no problems at the selected site that cannot be overcome. I am pleased that a further sum has been placed on the Estimates this year for the construction of that storage tank. That was proposed and provided for last year, but I am a little intrigued by the respective amounts shown on the Estimates. Last year it was £50,000, this year it is £35,000, but no doubt the Minister will at the appropriate time explain the reason for this reduction.

Recently, the Minister of Works advised me of the future planning of the Engineering and Water Supply Department regarding proposed extensions and additions in the electorate of Mount Gambier during the next decade, and I feel it would be germane at this juncture to express my appreciation of his thoughtful action. Gestures such as this, where the Minister takes a member into his confidence, create harmonious relations that will operate to the advantage of the departments concerned and ultimately to the greater prosperity of this State.

I should like now to comment on our forests and refer to the large sums granted for the radiata pine forest ventures. Without question, the future of the South-East is bound up with the success of our pine forests, and I am more than pleased that the Government is at the moment a party to negotiations which, if brought to fruition, could prove (and, I feel, will prove) of immense value to the economy of this State. But it is the immediate problem of marketing radiata timber that exercises my mind. At the moment hundreds of thousands of super feet of first class radiata pine is being stockpiled in the South-East. Men are being dismissed practically every week. I heard only last week that a substantial number were sacked at Nangwarry, but I have not had the opportunity of checking that statement, so it may not be correct. I hope the Minister of Forests realizes that, while this stockpiling is taking place in the very mills for which he is responsible to Parliament, thousands (and probably millions) of super feet of imported timber is being used in South Australia. I hope the Minister of Forests will take a firm stand at Cabinet level and see that in all Government and semi-government departments or trusts where tenders are called and contracts entered into radiata pine is specified on every possible occasion.

Recently, I expressed my view about standard classroom specifications. I make it clear at the outset that standard classrooms like those provided for domestic science and woodwork are desirable, and I pay full tribute to the Public Works Committee for its part in introducing this streamlined procedure for educational buildings. Therefore, it is not on the principle of standard design that I differ; it is on the standard constructional specifications: There is no real reason why standard designs using various types of building material should not be planned and I suggest that, instead of using pre-cast concrete as the standard building material (plus imported timber), one standard design be produced using bricks, and another one, using limestone and radiata pine, be specified for timber requirements instead of oregon and Baltic deal, or jarrah and Tasmanian oak, or meranti and hoop pine and parana. I am at a loss to understand why standard designs using alternative building materials were not introduced at the very beginning, but it is not too late to correct this oversight. I hope the Government will see the wisdom of my suggestions. Planning such as this would permit the on-site use of locally produced materials. The State would benefit to the extent of saving hundreds of thousands of pounds through lower tenders, and there would be the added benefit of creating local employment.

I have noticed with interest the broader views on education brought back from his visit to America by Mr. Bone (Assistant Superintendent of Technical Schools). Mr. Bone spoke strongly in favour of residential junior colleges. In selected country areas of South Australia, this would appear to be a far more practical approach to the problem of tertiary education than the Treasurer's suggestion of a country university. I feel that we should have this matter of residential junior colleges fully investigated and a report brought down to Parliament on the possibility and practicability of this scheme. Further, other forms of technical education in country areas (I have in mind Whyalla, Mount Gambier and possibly Port Pirie) should be brought as quickly as possible to diploma standard. At the moment at the adult education centre at Mount Gambier a course in wood technology has been established. There is nowhere in South Australia, although we are great producers of radiata pine, where a course in wood technology is available. We have had to go to New South Wales to get such a course.

(Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.)

Mr. RALSTON: I regard the establishment of a wood technology class at the Mount Gambier adult education centre as one of the most important educational schemes implemented in South Australia for many years. The South Australian Government is the largest producer of softwoods in Australia and anything that will improve the technological standards of growing and processing radiata pine is of great importance to the State. The aim of the wood technology course is to provide for the systematic instruction of persons employed in the timber and allied industries. The course will consist of two stages, each of one year. The students who successfully complete both stages and pass the final examination will be eligible for the certificate in forestry and wood technology issued by the Sydney technical college, which ranks high in Australian technical education.

This course was established primarily at the instigation of private milling interests in the South-East who regard the course as being as important to their industry as the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Ltd. regards fitting and turning and electrical courses to its industry at Whyalla. For this course to be established in South Australia, 10 students were required. The response was so overwhelming that 57 students enrolled for the course at the Mount Gambier adult education centre and two classes have been established, with a panel of five lecturers. Various timber interests—and I shall name Softwoods Products Pty. Ltd. and Kauri Timber Ltd. (which has interests extending as far as New Zealand)—have decided to refund in full the fees paid by students in their employ who complete the course. I hope that the Woods and Forests Department will view this course as of great advantage to the State. I realize it will not have to refund the fees of any students from the department, because as public servants their fees are paid. We hope at the end of the first year, when these students enter the second year, that the course will be revised and applied specifically to the softwoods industry.

Stage 1 of the 1961 course deals with wood structure and identification, destructive agencies of wood, seasoning and utilization of wood. Stage 2, for 1962, deals with elements of forest management, economics and marketing of forest products, conversion of timber, mechanical properties of wood, grading of timber, preservation, wood technology and engineering, the chemistry of wood, minor forest products, and the Timber Marketing Act and regulations. That covers a wide field

and I compliment the principal of the Mount Gambier adult education centre and its council for their foresight in going to other States for facilities that were not available here. I hope it will be a successful course and that it will bring great benefit to the State. I am proud to be associated with the adult education centre that initiated this move. I have pleasure in supporting the first line.

Mr. HEASLIP (Rocky River): I support the first line. Despite what many members have said, I believe that the Government has done well in providing so much money to overcome, as far as is possible, the unemployment position in South Australia. No-one can say that the Government is not leaning backwards to overcome the position. It has been inferred that I am a so-called primary producer who has not spoken sufficiently in support of primary producers. That suggestion came from a member who has never, as far as I know, been on the land and who knows nothing about it.

Mr. Lawn: Do you want free parking in Adelaide for primary producers?

Mr. HEASLIP: I am referring to the remarks made by the member for Wallaroo. In reply to an interjection concerning the abattoirs in which I asked whether a country abattoirs could be established without money, he said, "I should have expected a better question than that from a man who calls himself a primary producer."

Mr. Ryan: The truth doesn't hurt!

Mr. HEASLIP: I may tell the honourable member that I claim to have more knowledge of primary production than any other member in this House.

Mr. Lawn: Give yourself a pat on the back, no-one else will.

Mr. HEASLIP: They may not, but that is a fact. I started at 15.

Mr. Hughes: I started before that.

Mr. HEASLIP: Not in primary production. I am still engaged in primary production and claim that I have made a success of it, and yet I am told I am a so-called primary producer. The Government has again been told that it does not do enough for the man on the land. I am a primary producer and not a so-called one and I say that the present Government has done a remarkable job for the man on the land. I am not opposed to the Government's spending money on secondary industries. If the primary producer is to be successful we must have secondary industries. I know, as a primary producer, that our best

markets are the home markets, and without secondary industries we cannot have those home markets. So, when the Playford Government spends money to encourage secondary industries to come to South Australia, it is not helping only the men in secondary industry, but also those engaged in primary production, and to that extent I say the Government has done a wonderful job for the man on the land. It does not stop at that. It has also provided amenities to the man on the land, to which they are justly entitled. Someone mentioned, when I got up, the Booleroo water supply. Recently, through the efforts of the Government Booleroo and Appila got a water supply.

Mr. Lawn: What about the present member?

Mr. HEASLIP: I have it.

Mr. Lawn: On the brain!

Mr. HEASLIP: Even if it is on the brain, I have been able to carry on all right and it is not sufficient to put me off beam. These small country towns are getting water from the Murray and they appreciate it to the extent that many primary producers between Caltowie and Booleroo are spending £1,000 and more to take the water from the main to their properties, some a distance of a mile and others two miles. That shows how primary producers appreciate the importance of water. Only last week I was present when the Minister of Works turned on a water supply for Melrose and the people there are surely entitled to water; and they have it, thanks to the Playford Government.

Mr. Hughes: No-one denies that.

Mr. HEASLIP: Members opposite say that too much money is being spent in the metropolitan area and that the man in the country is being forgotten.

Mr. Ryan: Who said that?

Mr. HEASLIP: It was said tonight by a member opposite.

Mr. Jennings: By whom?

Mr. HEASLIP: By the member for Mount Gambier; not in those words, but he implied it. As well as supplying water, the present Government is also extending electricity throughout the country with the single wire earth return system. As a result many people are now being served.

Mr. Hughes: Do you think that they should have it at the same tariff as people in the city?

Mr. HEASLIP: That is a different matter, and when it comes up, I will make my decision. Many people today have the use of electricity,

whereas a few years ago it was not available to them. They are not complaining about the cost, but are prepared to pay the tariff. They are not quibbling. Probably the member for Wallaroo knows nothing about the working of a 32-volt private lighting plant, but as a primary producer I do. I have worked them and paid for them, and know the real cost.

Mr. Hughes: It has been left to private enterprise to put your plant in.

Mr. HEASLIP: We put it in. What are you complaining about?

Mr. Hughes: I am not complaining, it is you.

Mr. HEASLIP: The present Government is enabling many people in the country to get power by the reticulation of electricity.

Mr. Jennings: And that is what you call private enterprise.

Mr. HEASLIP: It may be different in the honourable member's district, but in my electorate they cannot get the power soon enough. Only last week-end I had a request from people to be put on the first circuit installed. They are prepared to pay for the poles to take the power to their properties and also to have them removed when the other service is provided. They are prepared to guarantee the surcharge and to use sufficient electricity to pay the rates that will be charged.

Mr. Quirke: The Electricity Trust won't do that.

Mr. HEASLIP: It refused to take it. People in my electorate want water and electricity and I am thankful to say they are getting it. The Electricity Trust has guaranteed this little community's power and does not ask for money to remove the poles. It said that they would become part of the circuit. I am pleased that they are getting power and water far more readily in the last three or four years than ever before.

Mr. Hughes: Are you saying that they are not entitled to it?

Mr. HEASLIP: Whoever suggested that? I am surprised that the honourable member does not know better than that. The primary producers are entitled to it. I was charged with making stupid interjections, but I cannot think of anything more stupid than for someone to suggest that the primary producers are not entitled to it.

Mr. Jennings: How long have you been told to talk before the Treasurer comes back?

Mr. HEASLIP: I intend to talk irrespective of whether or not he is here, and I certainly have had no instruction from him. The primary producers today want all the

assistance that can possibly be given to them. Do not ever forget that secondary industries are dependent on primary industries. Primary industries can exist without secondary industries, but secondary industries cannot do without primary industries. The very name "primary" indicates that.

Mr. Lawn: They are inter-dependent one on the other.

Mr. HEASLIP: To be successful, they are.

Mr. Lawn: Then why discriminate in the electoral laws between country and city and between primary producers and workmen?

Mr. HEASLIP: Who is doing that? We should give primary producers all the assistance we can give them. The so-called wool barons—I can remember their being mentioned here—are non-existent today because wool prices are really low. An article appeared in today's *News* about the low price received for lambs at Port Lincoln. The member for Wallaroo had much to say about country abattoirs but, when I asked him where he would get the money to establish them, he did not tell me. I still ask him where we are going to get the money for country abattoirs, because abattoirs cannot be built without money. It is easy to talk about doing things, but what is the use of talking unless it is practicable to do something?

Mr. Hughes: Your colleagues do a lot of talking about things.

Mr. HEASLIP: It is useless talking about something that cannot be done, and this Government has fallen over backwards in trying to establish abattoirs in the country. What happened at Naracoorte and Wallaroo?

Mr. Hughes: I know only too well.

Mr. HEASLIP: All that was necessary was for someone to put up the money, but nobody was prepared to do that.

Mr. Hughes: What about the Kadina meatworks.

Mr. HEASLIP: Every opportunity was given to establish meatworks there, but the people who have the money to do these things are not fools and do not put their money down the drain, as the member for Wallaroo suggests they should.

Mr. Hughes: Do you suggest this Government is foolish because it established an abattoirs at Port Lincoln?

Mr. HEASLIP: These people are not prepared to put up the money, and I do not suggest that any Government should do it. After all, we are all ratepayers and taxpayers and it is our money that is being spent. If any

Government were foolish enough to throw it down the drain, the people would get rid of it straight away.

Mr. Hughes: I thought you said this was a good Government, yet you now imply that it is a foolish Government.

Mr. HEASLIP: We have not got a country abattoirs today because the Government is not prepared to throw money down the drain. The Government knows from hard experience with the one country abattoirs established at Port Lincoln that these establishments cannot pay. The Port Lincoln abattoirs is now losing more money than ever. According to today's *News*, of the 2,455 lambs yarded 1,570 were bought by exporters at record low prices to be killed at the works.

Mr. Ryan: What about the retail prices?

Mr. HEASLIP: I am talking about abattoirs. At the Port Lincoln lamb market about 200 lambs were purchased by local butchers, 270 by graziers to be taken away, and 249 by one exporter to be taken by road to the Gepps Cross abattoirs to be killed for Adelaide butchers. I hope the member for Wallaroo is listening to this. Although there is an abattoirs there, some of the stock is being taken by road to Gepps Cross for slaughter instead of being killed locally. How can a country abattoirs be a success when that is going on?

Mr. Ryan: What type of vehicle?

Mr. HEASLIP: I do not know, but that is what is happening, according to the press. They were not brought here illegally; there is nothing to stop people carting their own stock in their own vehicles, and probably that is how it was done. When stock is sent from a country town, where there is an abattoirs, to Adelaide, how can that abattoirs pay? This is the reason why we cannot get country abattoirs, and it is no use for the member for Wallaroo to suggest that they should be established.

Mr. Hughes: A lot more will be said, too.

Mr. HEASLIP: Let it be said. There is an abattoirs at Glenroy in Western Australia, but do we want an abattoirs like that in this State? It costs taxpayers thousands of pounds a year. Is that the type of thing members opposite want? The member for Wallaroo said there were 27 abattoirs in New South Wales, but I can correct him: there are 30 country abattoirs there, but what a difference there is between the two States! In New South Wales the Homebush abattoirs just cannot deal with all the stock whereas, in South Australia,

Gepps Cross can handle all the stock, and more. What a difference! I shall quote what happens in New South Wales.

Mr. Hughes: I already know.

Mr. HEASLIP: Then it is a pity you did not tell the House. There are country abattoirs at Mullumbimby (population 32,720), Casino (64,270), and South Grafton (29,390).

Mr. Hall: Do they kill for export?

Mr. HEASLIP: Very few do; they mainly supply the Sydney market. The position there is so different from that in this State.

Mr. Hall: Didn't the member for Wallaroo mention that?

Mr. HEASLIP: He did not, and that is why I am mentioning it. There are also abattoirs at Macksville (population 48,900), Wingham (47,090), and Maitland (91,690).

Mr. Lawn: The Government of New South Wales believes in decentralization.

Mr. HEASLIP: Also, there are abattoirs at Newcastle (population 232,930), Gosford (30,120), and Wollongong (151,660). I could go right through the list, but I think I have quoted enough. I ask the member for Wallaroo to tell me what is the biggest town in South Australia. The two States cannot be compared. The member for Adelaide, by interjection, mentioned decentralization, but what are we prepared to pay for decentralization? Anything? When decentralization has been achieved, what have you got?

Mr. Lawn: We know that you don't want decentralization. You don't want people to go to the country because they might not return the Playford Government.

Mr. HEASLIP: Decentralization is a good idea, but I will not pay anything for it. Today it means nothing, although it may have meant something at one time. It is just a catch-ry and does not mean anything.

Mr. Hughes: Do you think that money should be spent on the Eyre Peninsula abattoirs if it is run at a loss?

Mr. HEASLIP: It is a matter of getting enough stock to keep it going. The abattoirs there will shut down in a few days because it has not enough stock to handle. What is the use of spending money when there is no stock to handle?

Mr. Hughes: Why are they spending money?

Mr. HEASLIP: Don't you believe in keeping an asset? The honourable member wants conditions to get worse, but I don't. I know a little about economics and I know that an asset is worth keeping. When an asset is allowed to run down it is soon worth nothing.

When members speak they should know something about the subject they are discussing. I know something about abattoirs and economics. When a member says that, irrespective of cost, there should be decentralization and country abattoirs none of his electors will stick to him. It is silly and stupid to talk that way. I support the first line.

The CHAIRMAN: I propose to take the items seriatim.

State Bank, £1,300,000.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): I move:

That consideration of the item "State Bank" be postponed until after consideration of "Miscellaneous".

If the first line is debated and passed before other items are considered it will not give me the opportunity to fully discuss the important matter of unemployment.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford: I do not follow the purpose of the request.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Without going into details, the amounts included in the item "State Bank" apply particularly to housing, but the total provided this year is not even equal to what it was last year. I understand, too, that following on the rejection of the request by councils there is little hope of their being able to provide work to relieve unemployment. In order to get some relief in this direction consideration should be given to providing work on the Eyre Peninsula rail system. If the Treasurer agrees to my proposal about the postponement he could say later whether there is likely to be an increased amount under the item "State Bank".

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): I cannot accept the motion. To my knowledge, what the Leader suggests has never been done in 23 years.

Mr. Ryan: There is always a first time.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: We have had a long general debate on the Loan Estimates and it has always been the practice that when the debate has ended the lines have been dealt with individually. I can see no virtue in accepting the request and I ask members to oppose the motion.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Mr. Chairman, I seek your direction because if I agree to the line "State Bank—Advances for Homes" and cannot give an explanation of my ideas, I cannot proceed. The motion I moved, if carried, postpones the discussion on the first line.

The CHAIRMAN: That is if it is carried.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: As the Treasurer will not agree to that procedure (because nothing like that has happened in 23 years) I will not proceed with the other motion I had in mind, namely, that this amount be reduced by £100. The amount in the current Estimates for this line is less than that provided last year. The expenditure for 1960-61 was Housing Agreement £1,445,000, Loan funds £3,349,994, a total of £4,794,994. The proposed expenditure for 1961-62 is Housing Agreement £3,450,000, Loan funds £800,000, a total of £4,250,000. In other words, excluding repayments, which should be about the same for those years, £544,994 less is to be spent this year on housing under this line than was spent last year.

In 1960-61, £430,000 was provided for building societies but the amount has this year been reduced by £30,000 to £400,000. I do not know the reason for the reduction, but the real estate business is experiencing a recession and if those people build homes and expect to sell them they will probably be unsuccessful. However, some incentive may be offered to certain people building to the north of the city because I heard certain statements about interest charges.

Last year the Housing Trust received £4,089,000 under the Housing Agreement and £290,000 from Loan funds, but this year the amounts proposed are £4,250,000 and £40,000 respectively, or £89,000 less. It is necessary to combine Housing Agreement funds and ordinary Loan funds to get an overall picture of the money to be provided from Government funds for housing and in the three groups mentioned the provision is £663,994 less than last year. I am concerned about the unemployment. Is the Treasurer aware that certain Housing Trust contractors have had to dispense with bricklaying gangs? Last week at least three gangs were dismissed from the Orlit Company, E. M. Dollard and M. C. Wood, and probably others could be mentioned. That is because less money is being made available for house building.

Mr. Jenkins: It is getting worse while you are talking.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: You are not helping it. The only way the honourable member can help is to get some of his granite down here. That may relieve the unemployment position. The Government is providing less: the unemployment position is getting worse. The secretary of the Bricklayers Society told me that 100 to 120 men formerly engaged on Housing Trust work are unemployed. I doubt

whether some Public Buildings Department's projects will be commenced for 10 years. We stop the bricklayers and, in consequence, the follow-on carpenters do not have the jobs. The plasterers, plumbers, and electricians, those people who provide services such as water, sewers, gas, and electricity, and even the merchants who supply builders' hardware and such things will all be affected. I venture to say that even the managers of some of those concerns will soon be on short time, because the business will not be there.

My request to the Treasurer was the first of its kind in over 20 years, but there is always a first time. When we get to the lines I shall have plenty to say about railways. Can the Treasurer say why the Housing Trust has had to tell some of its contractors that it has spent its allocation and that its funds are likely to be further reduced? This will mean further unemployment in the building industry and if we have further unemployment fewer houses will be constructed for the people. The Opposition can claim that it fully supported the Government's plan for the demolition of emergency houses to enable it to go ahead with its building programme. The Government has provided £664,000 less in these Loan Estimates than it provided last year, whereas I maintain that more could have been provided for housing and for other projects to provide employment.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: There is no mystery about this matter at all, and I can explain the position precisely. I explained earlier that, desiring to lower the rent and interest charges on houses, the Government, through the Loan Council, took a larger percentage of its money under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement and slightly less under the ordinary programme. When the Loan Council draws up its programme for the year the first thing it has to decide is the total amount of Loan moneys to be made available to the Commonwealth and the States for Loan works. This year the unanimous decision was that the amount would be £240,000,000.

The second decision concerns the allocation of that amount between the States. Speaking from memory, South Australia's share was £33,000,000, and that is the total amount which will come to this State for its official programme of works. Having been allocated that amount, this State can then nominate how much it will take under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement and how much it will take under the ordinary Loan works programme. The difference between the two is that the

interest rate chargeable under the Agreement is one per cent less than the present bond rate. The interest rate is about 5½ per cent on long term loans for ordinary housing, so the amount available under the Housing Agreement is about 4½ per cent. Obviously, it is advantageous to people purchasing or renting houses if we take a substantial amount under the Housing Agreement. We have been deterred from doing that previously because we had not reached agreement with the Commonwealth Government on how much we should give to the various building societies. We have now agreed on that matter, and the sum available to building societies this year is £400,000—£30,000 less than last year. For the sacrifice of £400,000 of our principal, which will be used for housing in South Australia anyhow, we have nominated £8,000,000 under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. The amount nominated under the agreement was last year, speaking from memory, about £5,300,000, so there is a much larger amount nominated at the lower interest rate than last year. The second amount of money made available for housing—

Mr. Riches: They are not voted on by Parliament at all?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: It does not come to Parliament at all. It is ratified by agreement and it goes to the purposes which this Parliament has approved and which the Commonwealth Parliament has approved. The second amount available to the State for housing is the amount nominated under the semi-governmental programmes. In addition to nominating official programmes, the Loan Council gives to each State a semi-governmental programme and a local government programme. We have for a number of years used our semi-governmental programme loans for the Housing Trust particularly, and also the Electricity Trust. They have been the two large semi-governmental borrowers in this State. Speaking from memory, I think the amount this year for the Electricity Trust is £1,750,000 and for the Housing Trust £1,550,000.

The third amount for housing is made available under the Homes Act. Under that Act we have arranged for certain institutions (notably, the Superannuation Fund and the State Bank) to lend money for the purchase of new houses under the guarantee of the Treasurer, who guarantees the balance between the normal advance and 95 per cent of a loan required. That is an additional amount made available

for housing. What the Leader of the Opposition is trying to do—

Mr. Stott: Does that come under the 5½ per cent interest rate?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: That comes under the Homes Act; it does not come under the Parliamentary vote. There is a standing approval for the Treasurer to give guarantees. They have to be approved in Executive Council by His Excellency the Governor, and they are given every week. Since the Act has been passed, I think some £13,000,000 has been provided under this legislation. The terms of the provision of this money are precisely the same as the terms of the provision of the money under the State Bank Act—notably that they have a £3,000 advance on a 5 per cent deposit and I think the periods for repayment are about 30 to 40 years. So, when considering the amounts available for housing and the amounts available for any particular institution, you have to look at the total amounts available from all sources.

This year we ran into some difficulty in respect of some of the moneys to be available because the Savings Bank has not had the increases in deposits that it has normally had, and for a time there was some doubt whether the Savings Bank, which is making enormous contributions to housing both under the Homes Act and in loans to semi-governmental authorities, would be able to provide as much as it provided last year; but I am pleased to say that the Savings Bank Board, after some special arrangements had been made through the Commonwealth Treasury, was able to give to the State Government and its various instrumentalities at least as much as it made available last year.

Mr. Jennings: They were not coerced into it?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: There was no suggestion of coercion. It was purely a matter of negotiation, and the Savings Bank generously made available for housing the same amount as last year. In fact, it may be slightly larger. In addition, we have been able to get one or two semi-governmental loans from instrumentalities that have not previously supported us. I was able to arrange one only last week from the Commonwealth Bank, which previously had not supported us at all in regard to our semi-governmental programme. If you want a true comparison of the amounts available under the various headings for housing, you have to take all those amounts into consideration and consider also an amount that the Leader did not

mention in his statement just now—any carry-over that any of these instrumentalities may have had at June 30, because that came into the appropriation of last year. If honourable members will remember, just prior to June 30 there were a number of councils that obviously would not fulfil their semi-governmental programmes.

Mr. Frank Walsh: The less you say about those, the better!

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I listened to the Leader with the courtesy that I always accord him and, if he will let me explain the position, I shall be pleased and we shall get along very well. Prior to June 30 there were a number of semi-governmental authorities that had not been able to raise their money or proceed with the work for which Loan Council approval had been given. I was able to collect those up, make them into a parcel and get Loan Council approval to let the Government raise a semi-governmental loan of some £350,000, which came into not this year's money but last year's.

So the real question is: how much is the total money available this year compared with the total money available last year? The amount provided under the various sources for house building is indeed staggering. I do not know whether honourable members realize just what the total is. The total money, including, incidentally, repayment of previous loans that the Housing Trust has been able to use (we never take it back; when it gets some repayment we allow it to circulate it), this year is approximately £24,600,000. If an honourable member asks me a question tomorrow at question time, I will let him have details of how that sum is made up. So that, overall, there is no diminution—

Mr. Riches: You have stated that the Housing Trust has more money for houses this year than last?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: No. When the Loan Council figures were drawn up, the Loan Council gave us a small increase over last year, and we were confronted with a basic wage increase equal to the total amount of the Loan Council increase. Nevertheless, although the Loan Council increase was £1,200,000, we have been able to provide for a programme of more houses this year than last year, and we shall build more houses this year than last year. We are building more houses now than have ever been built in our history.

Mr. Riches: By the Housing Trust?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Houses built by the Housing Trust, State Bank and under the Homes Act are all interchangeable from the point of view of volume. Each of those authorities will build as many houses as last year. The Leader mentioned that a number of people have been delayed by building contractors. That is true, and the reason is that contractors have not had sufficient volume of other work and have concentrated upon work for the Government. The Housing Trust has told those builders to keep within their programmes. However, when other work is scarce there is a tendency to utilize additional labour on the contract and, consequently, builders have increased their rate of construction within their Housing Trust contracts.

If we spend more in any one month than a fair appropriation for that month we shall ultimately have to dispense with the services of a number of people. We cannot spend more than we have. We are using our cash resources to the fullest extent and we have not the resources to expand the housing programme further. On the other hand, this year we have a much bigger programme of housing percentage-wise, or any other way, than any other State. More money will be made available this year than has ever been made available, and the programme will be bigger. As a matter of fact I was informed this morning that there is no waiting time at present for advances for homes from the Commonwealth Savings Bank, and the State Bank has a shorter waiting time than it has had for two years.

Mr. Ryan: What is the waiting time with the State Savings Bank?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I do not know, but will find out. There is no waiting time with the Commonwealth Savings Bank.

Mr. Riches: Does it only lend to its own clients?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Commonwealth Savings Bank does not now require a person to have a banking account. Some time ago a person had to have a banking account with a credit balance of at least £300 for one year before he could apply for a housing advance, but that condition does not apply now. That bank does not lend as much as we lend through our various housing instrumentalities. I think that for war service housing it lends £2,750 and for ordinary housing £2,500, whereas we lend £3,000 on a five per cent deposit. I propose to take up with the Commonwealth Treasurer whether it would not

be proper, in view of the altered circumstances that have taken place since the £2,500 was fixed, to raise his limit to £3,000.

Coming back to the Leader's questions, the facts are that there is a bigger programme this year. Much money is provided under special agreements with the Commonwealth or under special legislation, which enables the superannuation funds, building societies, savings banks and other institutions to make loans entirely outside of the figures shown in these Estimates. The present rate of house completions is greater than at any time in our history. In the last three months house sales have been significantly slow.

Mr. Ryan: That is a sign of the times.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: There was a distinct lag in house sales for three months, but the Chairman of the Housing Trust this week informed me that house sales were now almost back to normal. Every possible penny is being devoted to housing; I may say, to the detriment of other public services. The Minister of Education could well do with an additional £500,000. A further £500,000 could well be used in extending water reticulation services, and electricity extensions will be limited because more money is needed for them. We can only increase the housing allocation by taking money away from other necessary services. I can bring down precise figures concerning the total housing programme this year as compared with last year. Members will see therefrom that housing has been looked after better than ever before.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the Leader continuing with his motion for the postponement of this line?

Mr. FRANK WALSH: I can see no value in doing so at this time.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you ask leave to withdraw the motion?

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Yes.

Leave granted; motion withdrawn.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: I seek further information. The Treasurer has indicated that he agrees with certain of my suggestions.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford: Frankly, I do not think I did.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: All right then, I agree to be at cross purposes. I repeat that the Housing Trust has told certain builders that they have exceeded their allocations. Some people engaged in building houses were dismissed and now the Treasurer is trying to tell us that, despite this, more houses will be built in South Australia than ever before and

that he will get funds from elsewhere. I believe he has told us that money will be obtained from the Superannuation Fund and from the Commonwealth Bank. He has admitted that the amount is less than is normally provided. I do not know whether he will get the difference from the Commonwealth Bank. At the moment £2,500 per house is available from the Commonwealth Savings Bank. He said that certain moneys were not used last financial year which it has been agreed to utilize this year—I assume under the Advances for Homes Act; and yet he will not agree with my contention that certain builders have been told by the Housing Trust that they have been over-spending their allocation. He must agree with me that some builders have dispensed with labour. How can we expect to build more houses this year if contractors who are building houses for the Housing Trust are dispensing with labour? In his usual style, the Treasurer has glossed over these matters. Money was to be obtained from the State Bank, the Savings Bank—

Mr. Shannon: And the Superannuation Fund.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: If the honourable member can show me one line in the Loan Estimates dealing with the Superannuation Fund, I shall be pleased to hear from him. He should not try to introduce something that is not there. An amount of £664,000 less than last year is provided on this year's Loan Estimates for housing and yet the Treasurer tells me that more houses will be built this year than ever before, despite the fact that builders are dispensing with labour, and he knows it. I believe that we have a reasonable case for obtaining information from the Treasurer regarding this £664,000. He mentioned that councils were entitled to raise loans amounting to £248,000. If a gallup poll were held and John Citizen was asked whether the £248,000 was available, he would answer, "yes." A certain council applied for £50,000 of that money this year. It went to the Savings Bank and was able to borrow only £30,000 at 5½ per cent interest, so it was £20,000 short of its requirements. It was told that it could be accommodated by another organization, not a bank, at an interest rate of 5½ per cent, plus 5s. a £100 accommodation charges. People were led to believe that this money was available, and the Treasurer went further; he told the Commonwealth authorities that councils did not use the available money last year.

Mr. Hall: Do you mean local government or semi-governmental bodies?

Mr. FRANK WALSH: I am speaking about local government, and I am not referring to Mount Gambier or condemning the Adelaide City Council. I do not reflect on the Treasurer in any way, but the Electricity Trust (a semi-government authority) advertised a loan, the advertisements containing photographs of the Treasurer. The trust can do this, but councils have to get the money approved in Canberra. Could the Adelaide City Council get the public to subscribe to a loan by using a photograph of a member of the council? This is all linked with the unemployment position. Because of the system that operates, councils have no opportunity to absorb some of the unemployed. If some council wanted to increase its staff to absorb unemployed men, possibly these men would not know how to spread gravel or build concrete kerbs but, even if they did, the rate-payers could not keep up with the interest payments on the borrowed money used. I cannot see how the Treasurer is going to maintain employment in housing when, as he knows, contractors building Housing Trust houses are dismissing employees. I would like the Treasurer to explain why these Estimates provide £664,000 less for housing than last year, and why they do not refer to the Superannuation Fund.

Mr. STOTT: It is clear that the Housing Trust (a semi-governmental authority) is able to use money collected from repayments on purchase houses to build other houses, but the State Bank cannot do so. Like the Housing Trust, it builds houses and is allocated Loan funds, but cannot use money repaid for future building. Can the Treasurer explain why?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Leader, of course, has been debating Housing Trust matters under the State Bank line; the line we are discussing deals with the State Bank. The answer to the member for Ridley is simple. The Housing Trust is a corporate body and has authority to borrow money from the Treasurer and the public. It is then empowered to build houses for sale or rental and is responsible for payment of interest on the money borrowed, but, by arrangement with the Treasury, it is not required to pay back the amount that would come under sinking fund or amortization. The trust is allowed to use that money again, so it is always advantageous for it to sell rather than let a house because, immediately a deposit is paid, that money can be used for additional build-

ing. The trust, therefore, builds as many houses for sale as it can, but it can also build for letting. The State Bank acts as an agent for the Treasurer only. It gets a fee for administering the Advances for Homes Act. Under an arrangement money received by the State Bank in repayments under the credit foncier scheme is recirculated. Therefore, in both instances the money is recirculated, and that is why there will be a greater housing programme this year. One or two other matters are administered by the Housing Trust and moneys received in connection with them are recirculated. Some years ago the Government made a grant to the trust to provide housing for people in the lower income group, such as pensioners, and that money was recirculated. The Leader of the Opposition asked for the reason why the amount provided under "State Bank" this year is different from what it was last year. I gave it to members earlier. First, there is a carry-over amount. It is the practice at the end of a financial year to make substantial payments to the authorities, provided for under the Public Purposes Loan Act, for the housing programme to continue. We are now in the middle of August and no money has yet been voted for housing. The housing authorities are living on money made available to them by the State Treasurer towards the end of last financial year.

The amounts available to the Housing Trust and the State Bank this year will be equal to the amounts made available last year, and that takes into account the fact that in some instances it will cost more to build houses this year than it did last year. The Leader of the Opposition overlooks the fact that we are commencing heavy building programmes outside the metropolitan area. About 400 houses are being built to house employees at the new oil refinery at Port Stanvac. A substantial housing programme is being undertaken at Whyalla. The member for Whyalla knows that it has been gradually stepped up and I hope that 530 houses will be built this year. I hope also that a programme will soon be commenced at Mount Gambier. Therefore, in all circumstances the volume of housing this year will be about 300 houses more than it was last year.

Mr. LAWN: Mr. Chairman, I regret that you had such persuasive powers as to cause my Leader to withdraw his motion. I may be too optimistic, but I hoped that the Treasurer would accept the request. South Australia now has many unemployed people. The

Leader believed that some of the money provided for items listed under "Public Buildings" will not be spent this year and he hoped that those items could be discussed before discussing the item "State Bank". His desire was that this unexpended money be used for housing in order to provide work for some of our unemployed people. I wholeheartedly supported him in the move. Unfortunately the Treasurer opposed the motion and said that, to his knowledge, what was suggested had not been done for 23 years.

The CHAIRMAN: The motion has been withdrawn and we are now dealing with the item "State Bank".

Mr. RICHES: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, is there a limit to the number of times a member may speak on the Loan Estimates? I take it that the member for Adelaide is in order in discussing the Loan Estimates as a whole.

The CHAIRMAN: We have discussed them as a whole and are now dealing with the lines, and the debate must be relevant to them. We are now discussing the line "State Bank".

Mr. RICHES: Are we dealing with the individual lines? I want to know because I wish to exercise any right I have to discuss the Loan Estimates as a whole. Is the member for Adelaide in order in speaking to them as a whole? You have allowed other speakers to deal with more than one line. I take the point that we are not confined in our discussion to the first line.

The CHAIRMAN: Earlier I said that I would take the items seriatim, and I called "State Bank, £1,300,000". That meant that the discussion had to be on the first line, and we are now dealing with it. I allowed the Treasurer and the Leader to discuss the motion, which was withdrawn. We are now dealing with "State Bank".

Mr. RICHES: Which Standing Order would prevent me from speaking again on the Loan Estimates as a whole?

The CHAIRMAN: The Loan Estimates as a whole have been discussed and after that each member has the right to speak to the lines as they come before us, but he must confine his remarks to those lines. That is my interpretation of the matter.

Mr. LAWN: I have not spoken previously in this debate and would not have spoken except for what has happened here tonight. I think I am entitled to refer to any matter mentioned in the Estimates.

The CHAIRMAN: That would be completely out of order. The remarks must be confined to the item "State Bank".

Mr. LAWN: I am referring to the first line.

The CHAIRMAN: I will tell you when you are out of order.

Mr. LAWN: I suggest that what the Treasurer said about more money being provided for the building of houses was in connection with the first line.

The CHAIRMAN: All that discussion took place on the Leader's motion.

Mr. LAWN: It was part of the general discussion.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member would be out of order. We are dealing with the item "State Bank".

Mr. LAWN: Under that item there is a line dealing with housing. The first line in the Estimates is "State Bank—Advances for Homes".

The CHAIRMAN: That is in order.

Mr. LAWN: The Leader of the Opposition raised the point about this money being provided for homes. The Housing Trust reports disclose that year after year since 1952-53 fewer houses have been built. The report states that, in 1952-53, 4,126 houses were built, but in 1959-60 only 3,174 were constructed. The fact that the Committee has adopted a certain procedure for 23 years does not mean that we should always discuss the State Bank before discussing other items. This Government was inflicted on the people of South Australia 23 years ago on Guy Fawkes Day—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member is out of order. The honourable member will resume his seat.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: The Estimates provide for loans for new houses, but what is the Government's intention on applications from persons who desire to add to existing houses? Is money readily available for existing homes?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have not received applications for a long time for alterations or additions to houses. A person may apply under the Advances for Homes Act, but the applications that come to me are mainly on questions of exemptions in accordance with the Act and they are all for advances for new houses. The Housing Trust figures quoted by the member for Adelaide included the 2,000 temporary houses. It is

probably bad luck that we ever went into that programme and we are now disposing of those structures. The present figures represent permanent houses.

Mr. RICHES: The Committee has not wasted its time, but has gained something from the explanation given to us and the Leader of the Opposition rendered a service in seeking information. Members on this side cannot move to increase the amount of a line on the Estimates and any representations made must be in the form of a reduction. The Treasurer assured us that he received from the Loan Council the maximum sum that could be secured for the purposes of these Loan Estimates so, unless the Opposition is prepared to accept the Estimates in their entirety without any alteration (that always happens because any motion for a reduction is accepted by the Government as a vote of no-confidence in the Government) I shall not at this stage be a party to any motion that cannot be discussed on its merits.

Labor members are dissatisfied with the Estimates in their relation to housing and employment. We thought it would be good for members if the order of discussion were altered so that an item that we thought merited prior discussion could be disposed of before other items were dealt with. It was alleged during the general debate that some items under the Public Buildings Department are for works that cannot be carried out this financial year. One statement was that they would not be carried out in the next 10 years and I should have liked to examine that position to see whether some readjustment could be suggested to provide more housing and employment. The Treasurer was asked to agree to that alteration in procedure, but he would not agree because, he said, it had never been done before. Then the Leader had to move. It is senseless for the Opposition to force a vote when it knows that if the Treasurer says "No" his followers will, willy-nilly, say "No". The decision of the Committee is known before the bells are rung and we cross the Chamber. The Estimates provide £2,000,000 less for housing than did last year's Estimates and it was competent for members to seek an explanation. The Treasurer explained that position by saying that, although the State Bank will receive £800,000 for advances for homes as against £2,850,000 last year, the difference will be made up from other sources. The Treasurer explained that reasonably satisfactorily and we must accept his explanation. The same position applies to the Housing Trust, which received

£290,000 last year, whereas we are asked to vote only £40,000 for it this year. Without the Treasurer's explanation, I think every honourable member would have had to examine the situation before voting for these Estimates. The Treasurer has explained that money can be made available to the State Bank and to other sources under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. He has promised that he will let us know tomorrow how much the State Bank will receive and how much the Housing Trust will receive, and in view of that I support the first line.

First line—State Bank, £1,300,000—passed.

Highways and Local Government, £250,000.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: The bridge over the Sturt River on Marion Road was completed about 12 months ago. Can the Treasurer say whether any of this money will be used to complete the approaches to this bridge soon?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Most of the money provided under the Highways Fund comes from sources other than Loan: about half of the money provided each year comes from petrol tax and the other half comes from the registration of motor vehicles. These two amounts this year will total about £10,200,000. I think that about 46 bridges are provided for, but the amount of £250,000 is only nominal. Apart from the slight assistance it will give the department, the reason it is on the Estimates is that it gives the Government, under the Public Purposes Loan Act, the authority to help the Highways Department in its activities should it become more heavily involved later in the year. The £250,000 will probably be spent on the Blanchetown bridge.

Mr. STOTT: The sum of £130,000 is provided for the Blanchetown bridge, but I understand that the bridge is to cost more than £500,000, spread over two or three years. I intended querying whether the amount voted for this year was sufficient, but I think the Treasurer has answered that question.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I explained that the £250,000 merely augments the amount available under the Highways Fund. All the money is available for all the purposes of the Highways Fund. The Government has made some advances to the Highways Department over the years in respect of bridges, which are capital assets and therefore somewhat out of the ordinary. I think the total amount required to pay for the Blanchetown bridge is about £560,000, but I

doubt whether more than half of that will be necessary for the contract payments as the bridge proceeds.

Line passed.

Lands, £56,000.

Mr. BYWATERS: Earlier I stated that I would seek information about the stock and domestic water supply for Mypolonga. I pointed out that the settlers were concerned that last year £20,000 was placed on the Estimates for the commencement of this scheme but it was not proceeded with. Moreover, it is not included in this year's Estimates. I should like some information on this matter. Last session the Treasurer informed me that this matter had been referred back for a further estimate because the original one was considered too high. When Mr. Steed and Mr. Gordon of the Lands Department came to Mypolonga two or three years ago, a scheme and a price were put to the settlers. It was necessary that at least 70 per cent of the people indicate in writing that they agreed to the scheme. This provision was accepted and the scheme was expected to proceed, but it was sent back for a further survey. That was nearly 12 months ago. I have asked several questions about this matter. As Metropolitan Milk Supply Board licences are now involved, the dairies there have to be kept scrupulously clean and these people must have an adequate and permanent water supply. Has the Treasurer any information on this matter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The cost of this supply would be very high. Every person on this settlement, which is a long one, receives a water supply from the River Murray. The advantage of the proposed scheme from the settlers' point of view is that their water would be provided under pressure. Obviously, the hardship involved in this matter is not as great as it is for people who have no water supply at all. Cabinet naturally desires a scheme that will not involve heavy losses upon the community. It is not just a question of whether the scheme would pay its way, for under the best of circumstances there would be an enormous loss on the scheme, which is purely one to supply water under pressure. Many districts have no Government water supply. Under the circumstances, Cabinet naturally hesitates to undertake what would be a large capital expenditure at a heavy financial loss. We have not abandoned the idea of giving a water supply under pressure to Mypolonga but we are trying to get one that will keep losses to a reasonable minimum.

Mr. BYWATERS: I should like to correct one or two statements made by the Treasurer. He said that all these people had a supply of water, but that is not so. Some are dairymen at the bottom of orchard blocks. Mypolonga was at one time a combined dairying and orchard settlement and tanks were then erected at the top end of the orchard blocks; but recently they have been divided as the combined dairymen's and orchardists' activities were not satisfactory. It is not a regular supply because they have to rely upon water from the channel, which comes round only once a month, for tank fillings in the winter. The settlers at a large meeting were told the cost of the scheme and also the expected rate revenue. They did not ask for it—it was told to them. These points should be considered.

Mr. HARDING: I notice under the heading "Settlement of Discharged Soldiers on the Land, 1914-18 War" this year the sum is £80,000; last year it was nil. Can the Treasurer give any information on that?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: No. It is only some trifling amount, probably some adjustment on two soldier settlements. Honourable members know that the War Service Land Settlement Agreement with the Commonwealth Government terminated a long time ago.

Line passed.

Irrigation and Drainage, £845,000.

Mr. KING: While thanking the Treasurer for putting an amount on the Estimates for the commencement of the drainage scheme at the Chaffey irrigation area, I remind him that the settlers are in a serious plight and would appreciate the work being proceeded with as soon as possible.

Mr. STOTT: I note there is a line for a pumping plant at Waikerie, £10,000. The present pumping plant there has reached the stage where it has what the engineers call "fatigue". Because of the urgency of the matter and the inability at Waikerie to keep a maximum water load, representations were made to have a new pumping plant installed. The Public Works Committee inquired into and reported on the project and recommended the construction of a pumping station and plant at Waikerie at an estimated cost of £133,900; but now we find only £10,000 for pumping plant at Waikerie. This matter is becoming urgent. The department has recommended that another 500 acres be available in Waikerie, with extensions to existing holders. Can the

Treasurer explain that and say what is proposed to relieve this urgent situation?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I am not sure whether the Public Works Committee report has come to hand.

Mr. Stott: It is on the file.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: It has come to hand only recently. After that report comes in, all the plans and specifications have to be drawn up and a contract provided for. Mainly, the plant has to be secured from overseas, so the amount provided is the amount that will enable the anticipated payments this year to be made, and I assume that the job will be completed early next year; but I will check that for the honourable member.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: With reference to the item "South-Eastern Drainage, Western Division, £194,000", I used these words when speaking on this matter:

In view of the fact that the Government was scrambling for additional revenue last year, and increased taxes and charges, such as water, sewerage and rail fares, it should have taken the opportunity to obtain a reasonable return from the £4,000,000 it has spent on drains in the western division of the South-East.

I continued:

The longer the Government leaves this problem the harder it will be to solve, because the settlers in this area will be justifiably angry if the additional interest charges of this scheme, brought about by the postponement of rating, are capitalized and made an additional burden on them.

Has Cabinet considered this all-important matter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes, Cabinet has considered this matter on two or three occasions. The honourable Leader's suppositions are not correct. This matter is governed by an Act passed many years ago and the cost of draining is not automatically charged to the land. What is charged to the land ultimately is that portion of the cost of drainage that is warranted by the improvement effected. The South-Eastern Drainage Board has pointed out to the Government on two or three occasions that, if we assess it at present before we can establish betterment, we shall be detrimentally affected financially but, if we wait until the job is finished, we shall have a betterment that can be clearly established. The fact that this has not been rated is because the legislation under which the work is done prescribes that the charges shall be based upon betterment, which can be ascertained only when the work is completed.

Mr. BYWATERS: Settlers at Mypolonga are anxious to establish additional plantings adjacent to the existing channel and to water from private pumping plants by spray irrigation. This proposal was discussed with the board and it suggested that the new settlers should pay £13 10s. an acre. The normal rate is £9 10s. and, as an alternative, it was suggested that the existing settlers pay an additional £1 an acre. The local board wrote to the Lands Department asking that the rate be fixed at £9 10s. and reviewed after 12 months. Can the Treasurer report on this?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The rate of £9 10s. an acre represents a poor return on the capital invested in our irrigation areas, which are losing heavily at present. Last year's loss for all irrigation areas was about £250,000. The Government would be ill-advised to agree to additional irrigation areas. Power is being extended along the Murray and much land is being planted by private enterprise without Government assistance and without the need for huge pumping plants with heavy upkeep and costly drains. I will examine the Mypolonga proposition to see what is involved. The Government is justified in becoming associated with an irrigation scheme extension only when the area is inadequate as a living area. I will get a report for the honourable member.

Mr. BYWATERS: This scheme has been approved. The Department of Agriculture made a soil survey of the area, which proved satisfactory. Channels are already there. The electric pumping plant has been installed, although additional power may be needed for more frequent pumpings. The settlers, in the main, require the additional plantings for sons who are approaching manhood and who wish to remain in the area as orchardists. Additional plantings have been made in other river areas with no extra rating applied, and I believe all people should be treated alike.

Mr. HARDING: I appreciate what the South-Eastern Drainage Board is doing, but some people have suggested that it is a waste of money to spend £390,000 on drain M to drain part of the eastern division. Duck shooters who visit Bool Lagoon are concerned that if the water table is lowered the number of ducks will decrease, but the board has assured me that a regulator will be attached to drain M and at the Bool Lagoon outlet.

Line passed.

Woods and Forests, £1,200,000.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: An amount of £170,000 is provided for the preparation of

land and the planting of forests. The year before last the Government planted about 6,000 acres. What area is to be planted this year? The sum of £136,000 is provided for the sewerage of Nangwarry. This area has contributed to the State's revenue. Does the Government intend to extract that amount from the people working in the Nangwarry forests or mill, as it has done in connection with the new power station that was opened recently at Nangwarry? Nangwarry residents have had their electricity charges so greatly increased that it is almost a hardship for them to meet the cost.

In fairness to these people, a sewerage system should be provided. I am told that the Government erected a tank there for the reticulation of water, but the people on the fringe area are getting only a meagre supply. Why should these people have to pay extra for the water because the Government saw fit to erect this tank? These people are producing revenue for the State and the first consideration should be to provide them with amenities, the most important of which are water, sewerage and electricity. Does the Government intend to charge these people for the sewerage system, or will this cost be met from the production in the area?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Government has been providing these people with houses at a minimum rent. If amenities are provided, obviously the rent must be increased. The sewerage scheme for this area will cost the Government £136,000. The Woods and Forests Department will subsidize this scheme by nearly £8,000 a year to meet the loss. Therefore, the scheme is not being pro-

vided at the expense of employees. The department will stand practically the whole of the interest charges, and all that the employees will have to meet are the maintenance charges.

Mr. Shannon: The charge for the amenity is about £8 a year for each tenant.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The charges are much less than other people are expected to pay.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: In the construction of brick veneer houses the Housing Trust specifications provide for the use of either oregon or karri from Western Australia. I have been told on high authority that the trust is prepared to use as much timber as possible from the South-East in the erection of its houses. It should be suitable for framework on brick veneer houses, but I am told that it does not measure up to the requirements for scantlings. It has been suggested that as soon as this timber can be guaranteed as suitable for the purpose, the trust is prepared to use it. Does the Government intend to see that the standard of this timber is brought up to the standard required for Housing Trust houses? In that case, it should be entitled to some preference. If this were done, it would dismiss from the minds of the local employees the fear of unemployment.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have much information on this subject and will let the honourable member know about it tomorrow.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 10.10 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, August 24, at 2 p.m.