

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, September 20, 1961.

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

QUESTIONS.**LONG SERVICE LEAVE.**

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Has the Premier a reply to a question I asked on August 9 about the possibility of introducing legislation to provide that, where a person had been retrenched and later re-employed by the Government, the previous period of service would be included for long service leave purposes?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have received a reply from the Public Service Commissioner, who states:

Mr. Frank Walsh, M.P., has requested that consideration be given to amending the Public Service Act to provide that where an employee was retrenched and later re-employed in the service, so long as he had 20 years' continuous service after re-employment, the previous period of service shall be counted for long service leave purposes. Until recent years long service leave was only granted under the provisions of the Public Service Act to employees with a minimum of 10 years' continuous service. However, in 1954, following on a request from the United Trades and Labor Council, an amendment to the Act permitted employees to aggregate broken periods of service when retrenched and re-employed within two years.

A new subsection was added in 1958 (following on further representations from the United Trades and Labor Council) to cover employees whose break in service was more than two years but who were re-employed as soon as work was available. The Public Service Act now provides in respect of these employees who were retrenched and re-employed after a break of more than two years that the Governor may direct that the whole of their service is continuous if the Public Service Commissioner certifies that in his opinion the officer sought and obtained re-employment in the Public Service as soon as was reasonable after the said termination. Over 140 employees have been granted additional long service leave because of this provision, but in a number of instances the Public Service Commissioner has been unable to give a certificate that the employee sought and obtained employment as soon as was reasonable following his retrenchment. In most of these cases the employee did not seek employment with the Government although work was in fact available for him in the department from which he was retrenched.

Agreement to Mr. Walsh's request will give continuity of service for an employee who after retrenchment decides not to return to employment with his previous employer as soon as work is available but who returns to that employment at a later date. I am unable to agree that such an employee should be granted

continuity of service as the employee himself has elected to delay his return to his previous employment and he, and not the Government, should be held responsible for that decision. The Long Service Leave Act of 1957 (which does not apply to employees of the Crown) provides in Section 4(1) (g) that the continuity of a worker's service is not deemed to have been broken by the standing down of the worker on account of slackness of trade, but only if the worker returned to work within fourteen days after receiving from the employer an offer of re-employment or notice to resume work. The principle of this section is similar to that contained in Section 75(6d) of the Public Service Act. In my opinion no further amendment of the Act is warranted in this regard.

POTATO PRICES.

Mrs. STEELE: There is at present much variation in the retail price of potatoes. As the Potato Board fixes only the wholesale price of potatoes, will the Premier inform the House whether any action could be taken to establish a fair retail price for this commodity?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I think the honourable member's question requires some qualification. I have not recently read the provisions of the Act, but I think the Potato Board has only the power to fix prices paid to growers, and to determine the quotas that can be supplied to the market at any given time. In fact, I believe that the Potato Board has in an advisory capacity fixed prices only for the guidance of retailers, and that in the main the retailers have stuck closely to those prices. However, at a time such as this there is considerable variation in the quality of potatoes being provided, and a retailer who happened to get a bag of potatoes containing waste, or one in which there was a fair amount of other material (for instance, when potatoes are dug in wet weather a certain amount of earth gets into the bag) would probably be out of pocket in handling them at what would normally be a fair and reasonable charge. I will ask the Prices Commissioner to confirm what I have said and to make any report he may deem necessary.

BY-LAWS.

Mr. CLARK: On August 13 in a question to the Minister of Education, I referred to what I considered undue delay, in the Crown Solicitor's office, of a Salisbury District Council by-law and the long time it took for that by-law to be laid on the table of this House. I understand the Minister now has a reply from the Attorney-General.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: My colleague, the Attorney-General, has supplied me with the following report from the Crown Solicitor:

Departmental records show that the by-laws in question reached the Crown Solicitor's Department on January 25, 1960, and left on January 23, 1961. The delay was due in part to insufficiency of professional staff to deal with matters other than in order of urgency and in part to the accidental misplacement of the docket during recurring movement of staff and dockets from place to place while extensive alterations and repairs were carried on throughout the building.

ROAD PERMITS.

Mr. HALL: Recently some sheep at Bala-klava developed footrot, and the owner, a Mr. Schaefer, had to quit them for slaughter in Adelaide. He considered that his flock had been contaminated from contact with an infected rail van and, to prevent the spread of this disease, he thought it would be much better to have them sent to Adelaide by road but, on application to the Transport Control Board by a local agent, a permit was refused. The head office of that firm also applied then and it, too, was refused. The gentleman concerned had then to transport the flock of sheep to the railway yard by road transport. He was forbidden to use the railway yard or ramp to load them and had to load them direct to the rail truck from the motor truck.

The same conditions appertained at the receiving end: neither the ramp nor the yard could be used to unload these sheep. This man is disillusioned because his attempt to keep the trucking system free from this pastoral disease was thwarted by the refusal of the Transport Control Board to co-operate. My question concerns the operations of this board, bearing in mind that a penny saved to the Railways Department in rail freight may mean a pound lost to the general community. This is one of many cases where the board cannot or will not co-operate in special cases. In view of the many times that this co-operation has been refused, will the Premier, when the board's term expires, consider replacing the present members with gentlemen competent to deal with the facts put before them?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The honourable member's question obviously consists of what should be dealt with as a matter of policy by Cabinet. Personally, I do not feel that it would be desirable to have a board operating under threat of dismissal because of some action that it had undertaken. This Royal Commission is set up by Parliament to

do a job, and I have no doubt that its members are highly responsible people who seek to do their job in accordance with the provisions of the Act. I will, however, quite apart from the latter part of the honourable member's question which at this stage should not arise, take up the general question whether it is wise policy to insist that sheep that may be diseased shall use public transport that other sheep or stock would be using. That is the best way to handle this matter. I will give the honourable member a report on that question. Also, in connection with that, I will seek the advice of the Agriculture Department to see what its recommendation is.

SCHOOL HEATING.

Mr. QUIRKE: Many years ago, when schools were built in country areas, they were heated in the winter by wood fires. In most cases a fireplace was built in the corner of the room, and the fire toasted the children adjacent to it while those further away from it froze steadily to death unless they changed around. Electricity was then a dream of the future. Now electricity is being supplied to country areas and many schools can now take electric power. From applications that have been made for a subsidy for electric heaters, it appears that, as yet, the Education Department has not made up its mind whether the cost of such heaters is to be subsidized. Can the Minister of Education say whether it is intended to define the attitude of the Education Department towards the subsidizing of heaters for schools?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: I shall be pleased personally to consider the honourable member's question. I may add that electric heating is supplied in the newer and larger schools.

Mr. Quirke: I mean the older schools.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: Yes, I know. I see no reason why, as and when the opportunity occurs, provision cannot be made to put the older schools on substantially the same basis.

MURRAY BRIDGE SOUTH SCHOOL.

Mr. BYWATERS: Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked yesterday about the Murray Bridge South primary school and whether it was expected to be completed by the end of the year?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: The Superintendent of Primary Schools has reported to me that the new Murray Bridge South school building under construction will contain eight

classrooms. From a recent investigation, it is expected that the school will have an initial enrolment of about 300 children, in all grades from I to VII. Of these, only about one-third will be in grades I and II. They will not be sufficient to enable the establishment of a separate infants school. The school, expected to be established in the first half of 1962, will be a primary school with children from grades I to VII, much like the primary school at Taillem Bend. That is the report from the Superintendent of Primary Schools. However, as Minister, I assure the honourable member that, before the school reaches the minimum enrolment of 350, consideration will be given to the establishment of an infants school and the appointment of an infants school mistress. That is not a promise that one will be established or appointed, but consideration will be given in ample time.

URANIUM INDUSTRY.

Mr. McKEE: Has the Premier a reply to a question I asked earlier this month about the uranium industry?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Since the honourable member raised this question, Mr. Barnes has returned from overseas and, I believe, has given evidence to the committee appointed to investigate this matter. Also, I know that the committee has arranged to go to the field (if it has not already done so) to discuss in the field and with the representatives of the men certain aspects regarding this company. The Government has informed the committee that it would like a report as soon as possible because of the importance of the matter. The report is not yet to hand but I will inform the honourable member as soon as it is available.

HENLEY HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. FRED WALSH: My question refers to the negotiations that have been going on for a considerable time in respect of the transfer of certain land from the Housing Trust to the Education Department for use as a playing area at the Henley high school. Can the Minister of Education say what state the negotiations have reached?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: No. I cannot on the spur of the moment indicate the present state of the negotiations but, from my point of view, they have been unusually protracted. The honourable member has rendered a service not only to himself and his constituents but also to me by asking the question. I will

endeavour to get some up-to-date information on the position and see whether I can expedite the matter.

WILPENA POUND.

Mr. CASEY: About 12 months ago, when South Australian Parliamentarians returned from a visit to the tourist spots in the Flinders Ranges, it was stated that added toilet facilities would be built in Wilpena Pound to cater for tourists, but up to the present they have not been provided. Will the Premier examine the matter and let me know when these much-needed additional toilet facilities will be made available for the public?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I believe the facilities mentioned have already been supplied. This week I approved of a document which provided for an increase in the cost of the water supply I had formally approved for Wilpena Pound. I did not take particular notice because it was not a large increase on the original estimate, but I think it arose from the fact that the job was slightly bigger than had been expected. It may be that the estimate has been revised. I am not sure, but in any event the matter has been approved.

BEACHPORT POLICE STATION.

Mr. CORCORAN: I have received the following letter, headed, "Rumour, closing Police Station, Beachport," from the District Clerk of the District Council of Beachport:

At a meeting of the council held on September 6, 1961, I mentioned that a rumour had circulated that it was proposed to close the Beachport police station. It would be appreciated if you could ascertain if this rumour has any foundation or if it is the usual type of rumour to alarm the town people of Beachport. Would you think that I should write to the Police Commissioner direct and get his views on the matter? Trusting you will be able to advise.

I communicated with Mr. Eldridge and explained that I would bring this matter before the Premier, representing the Chief Secretary. Will the Premier ascertain whether there is any foundation for this rumour? It may be that Beachport is becoming such a peace-loving community that it may not be necessary to maintain the police station, but I shall be pleased if the Premier will obtain for me information that I can forward to the district clerk.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I shall try to have that information for the honourable member not later than tomorrow afternoon.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yesterday the Auditor-General's report was tabled—and not all members have copies yet—but I saw in an edition of yesterday's *News* reports on some parts of the contents of the report. Two matters in particular seemed to be of great importance and to reflect on the Education Department. The first was that there were 51 women teachers over the age of 65 years and that their employment might be irregular. I think the word used in the press report was "illegal". The second was that the standard of accounting in the department was not as satisfactory as it should be. In view of the importance of these matters has the Minister of Education anything to say?

The Hon. B. PATFINSON: Acting on a proclamation issued in Executive Council in 1956 it has been departmental practice to employ some women teachers over 65 and under 70 years of age as temporary relieving teachers. However, I am pleased to inform the honourable member and the House that in view of the gradually improving staffing position there is now less and less need for the employment of these women, and at a recent staff conference it was agreed by superintendents that little staffing inconvenience would be caused if women over 65 were no longer employed after the end of this year. Consequently, instructions have been issued that no further appointments as temporary relieving teachers are to be made for women over 65 years of age, and steps are to be taken to see that those women over 65 employed as temporary relieving teachers are to cease active duty as from the end of the 1961 school year. Men between the ages of 65 and 70 are employed as temporary teachers, but no man over 70 is employed as a teacher, relieving or otherwise.

Dealing with the other matter to which the honourable member referred, the Auditor-General stated that the accounting of the Education Department needed further improvement, a criticism with which I agree with great respect. He is satisfied that some improvement has taken place. This department has experienced grave difficulty in keeping abreast of the very rapid growth, and deficiencies in staffing have contributed in no small measure to the situation. Further improvements are receiving constant attention, in conjunction with investigating staff of the Public Service Commissioner's Department, but as this is a major programme one cannot expect the whole situation to be resolved satisfactorily overnight.

The investigating staff of the Public Service Commissioner's Department is expert and experienced and I am sure will bring good results shortly.

PHYSIOTHERAPISTS ACT.

Mr. TAPPING: Can the Premier say whether the Government intends to amend the Physiotherapists Act this session?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I am not sure, but will get a report for the honourable member tomorrow.

WILD LIFE.

Mr. RALSTON: Recently the cost of a gun licence was increased to £1 per annum. The Minister of Agriculture explained that the increase was designed to provide additional revenue for game protection, game preservation and conservation and to establish, where possible, suitable areas for breeding purposes. This project is of great interest to gun club members. Can the Minister outline what progress has been made and supply other information that would be of interest?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The wild life section of the Fisheries and Game Department was established late in 1960 with four officers who undertook two distinct types of work: firstly, research into wild life and, secondly, inspection work. The research work has been concentrated on water fowl in the main, because there are considerable numbers of water fowl and there is much interest in the water fowl population because of the strong sporting interest. The research work has resulted in the banding of about 2,500 birds—almost entirely wild ducks, although some other water fowl were involved—to coincide with the banding done in Victoria. Consequently, the results obtained will be far more reliable than if the banding were done, as it was a few years ago, in Victoria alone. The results will show more accurately the movement of wild fowl in the different seasons and we will be able to amend our game laws when necessary as a result.

Attention has been given on a much smaller scale to other wild life research work. In addition, the important aspect of inspection has been carried out vigorously and these officers are doing much travelling about the State. They are, naturally, particularly anxious to see that the game laws are being observed and when travelling in country districts they meet local groups and interested people, from whom they receive much assistance. Their inspection work entails not only the policing of

laws but encouraging an interest in the proper observance of the laws and in wild life generally. Other functions, most of them administrative, are carried out. The officers have been in close co-operation with Victoria ever since this section was established and have visited Victoria. The Victorians have sent equipment and officers here at various times to assist our research. The general progress made cannot be measured in terms of data, as it is too early to evaluate it. This is an evolutionary process and will give them a much more accurate idea of the way to manage wild life in this State.

Mr. RALSTON: I express my appreciation to the Minister for his excellent report on the Fisheries and Game Department. It has been reported to me on several occasions by experienced shooters (who in the main are very observant in all things affecting wild life) that the use of grain impregnated with the poison 1080, which I understand is one of the most deadly poisons known and used for the poisoning of rabbits, has resulted in the death of thousands of native birds, mostly seed-eating birds such as parrots, bronze-winged pigeons and quail. These birds were very numerous in the South-East a few years ago, but to see one today is almost a rare occurrence. Will the Minister investigate this matter and obtain a report on the effect of this poison on our native birds?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: There is undoubtedly some substance in the honourable member's comments. The poison 1080 is deadly and the indiscriminate use of impregnated grain for killing rabbits will also cause casualties amongst birds. Frankly, I do not know the complete answer. Obviously, the poison 1080 would help if it were not used indiscriminately. I shall obtain a report on the effect of this poison upon birds, but I should perhaps make a few observations on the disappearance of bird life. Those observations are subject to the qualification that they are my own comments: they do not come from the department nor are they expert comments.

My experience is that wild life in the larger and drier pastoral areas of the State is governed mostly by the season and by nothing else. Man does not affect it very much. In the inside country where farming is carried out, man has a big effect, and other factors are foxes and cats. Probably the population of the bird life in the settled areas is as high as, or higher than, it ever was in native conditions. However, some varieties of birds are numerous while others are having tremendous

difficulty in surviving. The greatest factor in all of this is the cover available for the birds to nest and breed in. If they have no cover they are subject to all the other forces that operate. Foxes and cats, poisoning (as mentioned by the honourable member) and indiscriminate shooting are all important factors. My own opinion is that the greatest factor of all is the loss of cover, and any available cover is often taken over by certain exotic species of birds, such as starlings. That point was made to me not long ago by an ornithologist. If we can encourage landholders to leave a little scrub on their properties and to see that it is properly netted against vermin, I believe we will do much for the bird life in South Australia; we will not only be building up the bird population but I think we will be assisting to build up the populations we want, namely, the smaller native birds that are suffering from all these adverse factors. I think from time to time members will hear more from me about this matter, because I want to make a point of this more frequently when I am in country districts.

BORDERTOWN RAILWAY YARD.

Mr. NANKIVELL: Several months ago I wrote to the Railways Department pointing out that, because of the inconvenient placement of the crane in the Bordertown trucking yard and the difficulty experienced on certain days in getting shunting accommodation, much difficulty was being experienced in both loading and unloading equipment. I was subsequently informed by the General Traffic Manager by telephone that the whole yard lay-out was being replanned with a view to improving the overall position and that any re-siting of the crane would depend upon finalizing this plan. Will the Minister of Works ascertain what progress has been made in replanning the yard and when it is expected that this crane may be re-sited to improve both loading and unloading facilities at Bordertown for machinery and other equipment?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will refer the honourable member's remarks to my colleague and obtain a report from the Railways Commissioner.

FLYING TEACHER SERVICE.

Mr. CLARK: In the September issue of the *South Australian Teachers' Journal*, the official organ of the South Australian Institute of Teachers, an open letter addressed to the Minister of Education and dealing with a flying teacher service was published. The writer

began by mentioning the Minister's genuine concern for the proper spread of education in our State and went on to speak about the work being done by the Correspondence School and the School of the Air. He then said:

In spite of all that is being done by your department for these children there is still lacking that personal touch between teacher and child. Something very vital is gained when teacher and child discuss questions together. It is more than the solution of problems or the giving of knowledge. It is the stimulation of spirit, the forming of a link which can lead a child to noble endeavour. The purpose of this letter is to appeal to you to inaugurate in South Australia a flying teacher service. Can you imagine the joy with which the families would greet their flying teacher, who would spend one day or several days with them? They would grow to know him as a guide and a friend and a link with other families in similar circumstances.

As I believe the Minister of Education has read this letter, is he prepared to comment on the suggestions it contains?

The Hon. B. PATINSON: I have much sympathy for the children to whom the writer of this letter refers. I think the children in the metropolitan area and in the larger country towns of this State are amply provided for in teaching facilities and school amenities. If there is any criticism I think it should be not that we are doing too little but that in many cases we are doing too much. However, I have never felt happy that we are doing sufficient for the children in the more sparsely populated areas and particularly those in the great outback. The Correspondence School and the Schools of the Air at Alice Springs, Port Augusta and Ceduna are doing a magnificent job, and I should like to see more done for them, but I think that having a flying teacher service is a most ambitious project. In view of our rapidly improving staffing position it would be by no means difficult to supply competent teachers ideally suited for that service, but providing an aeroplane is a matter of major concern because it would involve a large capital outlay and a substantial annual expenditure. That would be a matter of policy for the Government to decide. I would not by any means rule it out as impossible, but it could not be done at present; the Budget is already before members and I have no more power than they to add to it. However, I thank the anonymous correspondent for his commendation of myself and, what is immensely more important, for the constructive suggestion which I think is capable of fulfilment in the future.

EGG BOARD.

Mr. LAUCKE: In view of the small margin of profit under which egg producers operate, incidental costs are of major concern to the industry. I have before me a grading certificate covering a consignment of eggs to an agent of the Egg Board in South Australia that shows that pool deduction, grading charge and commission amounted to 20 per cent of the gross value of the whole consignment. This constitutes a major burden on the producer and emphasizes the need for the greatest possible efficiency in grading methods and machinery. Will the Minister of Agriculture say whether endeavours can be made to improve the grading system with a view to reducing these grading charges?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I will get a reply for the honourable member.

SALT INDUSTRY.

Mr. RICHES: As I understand that the Minister of Lands has either been to Japan or is there now, can the Premier say what progress has been made in negotiations for the development of the salt works at Port Augusta?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: A director of the company (Mr. W. J. Smith) has returned from Japan where he has had discussions which I understand (without having details) were generally favourable. The question that now arises concerns the action to be taken here, and I am not sure yet whether the company has decided its policy in that matter. The Government has always made it clear that, subject to a favourable recommendation of the Industries Development Committee, and on being satisfied that there would be use for loading facilities, the Government would be prepared to financially assist that side of the activity which, incidentally, would be an appreciable part of the expense of the development of the field. I am expecting to hear more fully next week as to the company's policy in the light of Mr. Smith's information.

BLUEBIRD SERVICE.

Mr. McKEE: Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked during the Address in Reply debate about the Bluebird service between Adelaide and Port Pirie?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Deputy Commissioner of Railways reports:

With reference to the matter of the 250 class rail car service between Adelaide and Port Pirie and referred to by Mr. McKee, M.P., *vide Hansard*, August 2, 1961, I have

to advise the honourable the Minister that the rail car service as instituted approximately three years ago comprised a "down" movement of an evening and an "up" movement of a morning. The only alteration that has taken place since the inauguration of this service has been the substitution of a head-end train to Port Pirie on Wednesday evenings and its corresponding return on Thursday evenings. This has been brought about by the necessity to provide transit for perishables following the withdrawal of m.v. *Minnipa*, and which are carried over a co-ordinated service which comprises rail transit to Port Pirie and road thereafter. During holiday periods, however, it has been found that patronage is beyond that provided by the normal railcar consist, and this applies not only to the Port Pirie service. On these occasions the best use is made of the rail cars by increased consists on some lines and substituting head-end trains on the others. This, too, has proved necessary on services other than those to Port Pirie. However, it can be maintained that, in general, the railcar service to Port Pirie is operating as originally instituted.

PARKING NEAR INTERSECTIONS.

Mr. TAPPING: In 1959 the Road Traffic Act was amended by the insertion of the following provision:

If a person causes or permits a vehicle or animal to remain at rest near the edge of the carriageway of a road within fifteen feet of an intersection or junction, he shall be guilty of an offence.

From the observations of many people, including me, it would appear that there is some confusion between council inspectors and the Police Department in this matter, because this offence is taking place almost every day, and it is a dangerous practice. Will the Premier take the matter up with the Commissioner of Police to see whether the police are aware of their responsibilities and to point out the dangers that can occur because of this practice?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes.

JABUK WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. NANKIVELL: On August 31 last the Minister of Works expressed doubt about the capacity of Mr. Seaman's bore to provide an adequate water supply for the township of Jabuk. He indicated that he would refer the matter, through the Minister of Mines, to the Director of Mines for a report. Is that report now available and, if so, what recommendation does it contain?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes. I have seen a report from the Director of Mines in which he expresses some doubt about the capacity of that bore to supply the needs of the town, at least for the foreseeable future.

He suggests that a further bore be sunk to a greater depth through the hard limestone into the lower aquifer, where he is confident there are great supplies of good quality water. He has given an estimate of the cost, which has been sent on to the Engineer-in-Chief for his consideration, and that is where the matter rests at present.

I know that in that part of the honourable member's district some of his constituents feel perhaps that the present bore is adequate. The Engineering and Water Supply Department, however, has had much experience in supplying country townships from underground water, and that experience has led it to be cautious about the capacity of bores, adequate though they may seem at the outset, to meet development in the area and the demands of continuous pumping. Frequently, we have run into troublesome problems in that regard. Therefore, I think the honourable member will appreciate (and I hope his constituents will) that it is necessary to exercise caution. That is the present position. As soon as I have had the Engineer-in-Chief's opinion about the proposal, I will let the honourable member know.

INDUSTRIAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Industrial Code, 1920-1958. Read a first time.

KENSINGTON AND NORWOOD

BY-LAW: ZONING.

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr. Millhouse:

That by-law No. 30 of the Corporation of the City of Kensington and Norwood in respect of zoning, made on October 3, 1960, and laid on the table of this House on June 20, 1961, be disallowed.

(Continued from August 30. Page 642.)

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): I wish to report to the House that I personally have had discussions with the corporation concerned, and those discussions will be considered by the corporation at a meeting to be held, I think, next week. In those circumstances, I ask that the matter be placed on the Notice Paper for a fortnight from today.

Debate adjourned.

COUNTRY ELECTRICITY TARIFFS.

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr. Frank Walsh:

That in the opinion of this House, the Government should take steps to assist the decentralization of industry and help retain

population in country areas by insisting that the Electricity Trust of South Australia institute a system whereby all country tariffs are reduced to the same as those now operating in the metropolitan area.

(Continued from September 6. Page 738.)

Mr. JENNINGS (Enfield): I support the motion. I do not think there is any need unduly to delay the House on this matter because it is simple and should commend itself to the House. When the Premier opposed the motion, he said he presumed that it arose from the fact that two or three members of his Party had during the Address in Reply debate said that as soon as possible there should be an equalization of electricity tariffs, and that the Leader of the Opposition desired to give them the opportunity to vote on this matter. The Premier had no right to presume this, but let us be honest about it: I do not think he was far wrong, anyway. He was probably about 90 per cent right. It may be that some members opposite invited this motion but now find themselves in an embarrassing position through having to vote against it. When I say that they have to vote against it, I think I can repeat what I have heard my friend, the member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn), say at least once, perhaps twice or perhaps even three times at the most: "the master has spoken". Anyway, the master has spoken and it is already obvious to us now that those two or three Government members that the Premier referred to who mentioned this in the Address in Reply debate have now changed their tunes and shown clearly what we have always imagined, that they have about as much backbone as a fillet of jelly-fish.

The Premier said that what is proposed in this motion is not equalization and that, if the motion did propose equalization, it would have much more to commend it. If "country tariffs are reduced to the same as those now operating in the metropolitan area" is not equalization, I am afraid I have a wrong understanding of the English language. Of course that is equalization; what else could it be but equalization, if charges in country areas be reduced to those operating in the metropolitan area? We on this side of the House find this motion in complete accord with the view of our Party, that all sorts of artificial barriers between country and city areas should be abolished.

The Premier also said that before industry decides to establish in one State or another it inquires into all sorts of things, including elec-

tricity tariffs. That is obviously understandable, but, of course, on the Premier's own argument if industry makes such inquiries then there is no hope whatever, under our present system, of industry establishing itself in South Australian country districts. This brings us back to the crux of the matter, which is that this Government does not believe in decentralization, is frightened of decentralization, and of its electoral consequences, and is always prepared to resist any move in this House that might have as its aim the encouragement of decentralization in South Australia.

Mr. Millhouse: I suppose you make that claim seriously?

Mr. JENNINGS: Certainly. I know that the member for Mitcham is toying with the idea of speaking in this debate and I shall be interested, as always, to hear him. The whole basis of the Premier's argument was that this move, which I remind members is only an expression of opinion of the House, will have the effect of reducing the amount of capital that might be available to the Electricity Trust for the extension of services in country areas. If that is so, we have reached a peculiar position when such an organization is not able to borrow sufficient money for its expansion. South Australians have always invested in Electricity Trust loans and have always over-subscribed them, not out of any great motives of patriotism but primarily because they know they represent a sound gilt-edged investment. The member for Rocky River said he believed that the reason why people had been prepared in the past to invest their moneys in these loans was that the trust was making a profit.

Mr. Heaslip: Would you put your money into a firm that was going broke?

Mr. JENNINGS: I am afraid that the honourable member has completely missed the point. The Electricity Trust is not a firm, in the sense that one invests money in the hope of getting some dividend.

Mr. Heaslip: You want some return!

Mr. JENNINGS: It is a gilt-edged investment and one knows the interest rate that he will get before he lends his money. It is guaranteed.

Mr. Hall: Does the control of borrowing come under the Loan Council?

Mr. JENNINGS: No. The member for Rocky River claimed that he was greatly concerned about the people in the country.

Mr. Heaslip: I am, too.

Mr. JENNINGS: I am afraid that those the honourable member describes as the people in the country are not ordinary people in the country. He is only concerned about the "squattoocracy".

Mr. Heaslip: That is only your assumption. You don't know much about the country.

Mr. JENNINGS: I have shorn more sheep, killed more pigs, milked more cows, ploughed more land and dug more potatoes than the member for Rocky River.

Mr. Lawn: We are a team of all-rounders!

Mr. JENNINGS: We are versatile. The member for Rocky River is only concerned with maintaining in the country those people who own a lot of land and who keep a few over-worked and under-paid boundary riders on their land to do their work and make their profits while they come to the city and sit in a director's chair at the Grosvenor and become good North Terrace farmers.

Mr. Heaslip: Where do your boundary riders come in?

Mr. JENNINGS: The honourable member can call them what he likes.

Mr. Heaslip: You are describing them, not I.

Mr. JENNINGS: I believe that we cannot have any great confidence that this motion will be carried.

Mr. Millhouse: Never say die!

Mr. Clark: We know that some members opposite support it.

Mr. JENNINGS: I am usually a very sanguine soul, but on this occasion I must confess that I cannot be even reasonably confident that the motion will be carried. I can hope that it will be—and hope springs eternal in the human breast—but I shall certainly support it as will all members on this side; and perhaps some members opposite might have a change of heart even at this late stage.

Mr. Millhouse: Could you possibly tell me why you are going to support it?

Mr. JENNINGS: I did not realize I had been wasting my sweetness on the desert air all this time.

Mr. Millhouse: Let us have your reasons.

Mr. JENNINGS: I have given them. The honourable member can read them in *Hansard* tomorrow if he has not been able to grasp the significance of what I have been saying. I gladly support the motion and commend it to the House.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham): There seems to be some little confusion as to the aim of the Labor Party in bringing forward this resolution.

Mr. Hall: Did you say "little"?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I was being charitable. It has been suggested that it is merely to embarrass some members on this side.

Mr. Clark: They are beyond embarrassment!

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I do not know about that. All those who have spoken on this matter are well able to speak for themselves.

Mr. Clark: They can turn somersaults and sit on the fence at the same time.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: They will be able to look after themselves in this debate. I can assure members that I am not at all embarrassed by this motion. I do not know whether the aim of the Opposition was to embarrass those members, but so far as I am aware, none of the members who have spoken have expressed views similar to those contained in the motion.

Mr. Clark: If the motion had been worded exactly in accordance with their views it would have made no difference.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: The honourable member is trying to find an excuse for the ham-fistedness with which this motion has been worded, but I cannot accept that as a good enough excuse. It may have been mere carelessness that the motion was framed as it is, but the fact remains that it is so worded, and by reference to it we must try to discover the aim the Opposition had in mind. If one looks at this it appears that the aim is to assist the decentralization of industry and help retain the population in country areas. That seems on the face of the motion to be why the Opposition brought it forward—in a pure desire to assist the decentralization of industry and help retain population in country areas, and, for the purpose of this debate, I am prepared to accept that that is the aim. I desire to examine whether the means which the motion goes on to propound will achieve that aim, however. I express some mild surprise that the Opposition at this juncture should bring forward such a motion and also at some of the remarks of the sanguine soul who preceded me in this debate. He and members of the Opposition as a whole seem to have forgotten that at present a special committee on decentralization is carrying out investigations on this very matter and that it was set up as a direct result of a motion introduced by the late Leader of the Opposition during last session, which motion was agreed to by

the Government and was passed; I think un-animously, by members of this House including my good friend, the member for Enfield. That is something the Opposition seems to have forgotten.

Mr. Frank Walsh: I see they don't refer to you on page 10 of the *News* tonight?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: No. I feel abashed that they do not. The Leader is trying to divert me from my stream of oratory.

Mr. Clark: The honourable member can be quite diverting himself.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Thank you; that is a kind remark. This is a serious matter, because the special committee on decentralization was set up as a result of a motion moved by the Opposition last year and accepted unanimously by this House. I have the honour to be a member of that committee, which has a great difficulty. I do not blink for one moment at the difficulties of the task given to the committee. I have found it to be most interesting, and we can only hope that the inquiry and the report we finally bring in will be effective, but it seems incredible to me that during the whole course of this debate the committee and its inquiries have not been mentioned once; the Opposition has apparently ignored it altogether.

Mr. Frank Walsh: In fact, I have a notice of motion that I should have submitted today regarding that committee.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: The Leader flatters me, but I am afraid that I am not clairvoyant and I could not have known what motion he had locked up in his breast unless he gave it to me. All I am saying is that nothing has been said about that inquiry, which surely is the prime means being adopted by this House to try to solve the vexed problem. During the course of the inquiry some literature from overseas and from other States has come to hand. I do not intend to quote at length from it but I think one or two things could well be said, first on the general question of decentralization. I have a booklet compiled by the International Labour Office called *Why Labour Leaves the Land*. I shall quote one paragraph from that book, as it puts the problem of decentralization as a whole in a rather new perspective. In the introduction on page 1 the following appears:

There would also appear to be a need for a new interpretation, or evaluation, of the implication of occupational migration.

This was prepared by a Government or semi-government authority and is jargon, but no doubt members will be able to translate it.

It continues (and this is the significant and interesting point):

Economists have frequently emphasized the general benefits which result from it (that is what we term the drift to the city) and have formulated general principles concerning the relationship between economic growth and decline of the labour force in agriculture in relation to the total labour force. The drift from the land, it has even been said, is "basic to the process of civilization".

That is one view—the economists' view. I do not say that I subscribe to it; I fall in the next class, as all members do. The introduction continues:

Sociologists, politicians (and that includes even you, Mr. Speaker, and all members of this House) and the common man (we are included in that as well) on the other hand, have been more impressed by its deleterious effects. These may arise, not from the change itself, but from the way it takes place. "How" is as important as "why"; and "how"—the short-term change—may be wasteful and harmful, even if "why"—the long-term adjustment—is economic and beneficial.

In other words, we politicians worry about this problem: sociologists and the common man, as the book calls us. Economists, on the other hand, tend to take the opposite view. I have mentioned that because it is an interesting sideline. With deference to you, Sir, I cannot see that it has much to do with this motion, but it is one of the things I came across in my research as a member of the committee.

Mr. Quirke: It still leaves you like Mahomet's coffin.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Between heaven and earth: maybe. I still say that, because it is such a tough nut to crack, we should look everywhere we can for help, advice and guidance, and see what has happened in other places. The province of Saskatchewan, one of the Canadian provinces, had an inquiry similar to that initiated by the Labor Party in the first place in this State.

Mr. Fred Walsh: That is the only province in Canada governed by Labor.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Perhaps that is it. I am going to quote from the report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life there, and it shows that the same sort of problem that we are facing is fairly uniform.

Mr. Jennings: Where is Saskatchewan?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: The honourable member can even pronounce it; I congratulate him! In this report is a sub-heading "Electrification", under which the following appears:

Rural people felt that farm electrification should be extended to encourage people to remain on farms.

We all agree on that. It continues:

At Hodgeville, farm women stated that electrification would influence people to stay on the farm, but it was pointed out that electrification without adequate roads would not be enough.

Apparently roads are a greater problem there than they are here. Continuing:

One farmer summarized the importance of both roads and electrification thus:

If you had roads, power would be a factor. But if roads were poor and the social life was in town, then you'd move to town where you could get power too.

Provincial organizations also recommended the extension of rural electrification. The Newman Club stated:

Rural electrification is so intimately related to the modern methods of education, recreation and family (life) that it is now practically indispensable for the proper cultural development of a family.

The next may give comfort, cold though it is, to members of the Opposition and even some on this side of the House:

The Agricultural Conservation and Improvement Board of Agricultural Representative District No. 17, Kindersley, recommended that "power rates and installation costs should be equalized between rural and urban districts, and installation made easier".

Mr. Fred Walsh: That is predominantly an agricultural State.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yes. I merely give that information as a matter of interest and to show that this same problem is facing other parts of the world.

Mr. Clark: That is no reason why we should not attempt to solve it.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: By no means. I am coming to the solution propounded by the Opposition in this motion. What is the solution if we take the motion at its face value, and with a touch of charity? We find that the aim of decentralization and the retention of population in country areas will be achieved to some extent by reducing all country electricity tariffs to the same as those now operating in the metropolitan area. That is the means that this motion suggests should be adopted to achieve the aim. I have mentioned the Special Committee on Decentralization. The member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) is also a member of that committee and I have the honour to be his colleague. Members of that committee have given some little thought to this question of electricity charges and what can be done by the Electricity Trust to further decentralization in South Australia. It is an obvious avenue of inquiry when one considers decentralization. This is the important point and the point I have been toiling up to. Mr. Riches can

perhaps either confirm or deny what I am about to say. The committee has found in its inquiries that in most cases in industry the cost component of electric power is small in comparison with the cost of other goods and services.

Mr. Jennings: That is not what the Premier said.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I do not mind what he says. I am saying what I think and I intend on this as on other occasions to paddle my own canoe. The committee has found that the power component in industrial costs is very small and on the average—and perhaps members opposite will take note—it accounts for less than 2 per cent of our industries' total costs.

Mr. Hall: It would be far less than transport?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yes, and there are many other components that would be greater, so, in considering the motion, let us bear in mind that this is a very small component in the whole cost structure of industry in the country or the city and that the equalization or reduction (or whatever you like to call it) of electricity charges will not make much difference.

Mr. Ralston: Did not the Premier say that .1 per cent would determine industry?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I do not know what he said. I am now saying what I think about it. I invite Mr. Riches to confirm that this is what the committee has so far discovered about this matter—less than 2 per cent for electricity.

Mr. Hall: Do you think that is why some members of the Opposition are trying to disown that committee?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I do not know and I think it is better that I should not be side-tracked too far. It may not be beneficial to the Opposition to go into that one. I am only concerned now to make that point and I hope I have made it adequately. It is something we should bear in mind in considering the motion. In decentralization the important matter is the availability of electric power throughout the State. Industry wants to know whether it is available or not. I think I am right in saying that more than 90 per cent of homes in South Australia are now connected to the electric power system; and I am confident that I am right in saying that the committee's inquiries have shown that the Electricity Trust is capable of supplying electric power anywhere in the State where it may be required by an industry. The important

point is the availability of the power and not its cost, and I hope that that will not be overlooked during the subsequent debate.

A fortnight ago the Minister of Works laid on the table of the House the annual report of the Electricity Trust of South Australia for 1961. That report contains a little information that is relevant to this motion. I am surprised that members opposite have not already read it and quoted from it; or perhaps I am not surprised, because it does not really help their case. Bearing in mind the point I have already made, I intend to look at some of the things said by the trust in its report. If members care to turn to page 18 this is what they will find:

There is on occasion considerable demand for a uniform tariff throughout the State.

I suppose that members opposite will say that is the aim of their motion. The report further states:

To reduce country tariffs to metropolitan levels would cost about £500,000 per annum. This could not be met without an increase in revenue so that the overall result would be an increase in metropolitan tariffs and in the tariffs of the cheaper country areas. Industrial tariffs are at present comparable with similar tariffs in the eastern States and the trust could not support a policy of increasing industrial tariffs and thus placing South Australian industry at a competitive disadvantage.

Mr. RICHES: So, it does have some bearing.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Of course it has and I have already said that and I think the Premier said it also. I was merely pointing out the extent of the bearing it had. This is what the trust goes on to say:

In order therefore, to obviate loss of revenue the trust would have to increase domestic tariffs and, apart from the question of policy involved, this might well defeat its own object by loss of business to competitive fuels which are readily available in the metropolitan area. Apart from the direct effect it would also have an indirect effect since electricity is one of the basic items in the cost of living. The trust is well aware of the desirability of keeping country tariffs as low as possible and will continue to make adjustments in favour of the consumer as opportunity offers.

It should be realized that the cost of supplying power in country areas is considerably higher than in the metropolitan area. Apart from the cost of transmission lines and inescapable electrical losses, costs per consumer rise rapidly in areas where the consumers are widely separated, and in many areas supplied by the trust this is the case.

I read that extract at length because it is another thing which members opposite in their enthusiasm, feigned or sincere, for this motion should bear in mind. That is what the trust says about this particular matter. What do

we find if we look at this? Firstly, only 2 per cent of industry's costs are referable to power; it is the availability of the power that counts. As I think the Premier said when he spoke, if we simply reduced country tariffs to the level of those in the metropolitan area it would mean a loss of £500,000 annually to the trust, and such losses would seriously curtail country development. I think that is an inescapable inference to draw. So, in fact, the country would be worse off than it now is. If not, what would the other result be? It would mean that tariffs in the metropolitan area would have to increase. The people represented by metropolitan members would pay more for their power than they now do. Perhaps the eight members of the Opposition who represent metropolitan districts could bear that in mind when they support such a motion as this. For the reasons I have given, quite apart from what anyone else may say about it, I find that I am unable on this occasion to support the motion.

Mr. HUGHES (Walleroo): The member for Mitcham said there seemed to be some confusion in the aims in presenting this motion. I assure the honourable member that there is no confusion whatsoever in my mind, because it is entirely designed to retain people in the country areas and to give them privileges that they do not enjoy at this juncture. I hope that after I have spoken there will be no doubt in the member for Mitcham's mind that there is justification for this motion.

In supporting the motion I make it clear right from the outset that I have every confidence in the business acumen of the trust to provide the towns and rural areas of South Australia with electric power. In fact, the trust is to be congratulated on the progress achieved. However, along with many others I believe that merely because a person lives in the country and is willing to do without many amenities he should not be penalized to the extent of having to pay more for something provided on a State-wide basis. My home town of Wallaroo comes under Zone 4—it is not the highest domestic tariff operating in the State—and the consumer pays 10.5d. for the first 40 kilowatt hours per quarter, whereas the consumer in Zone 1 pays 6.6d., a difference of 3.9d. or 37.1 per cent. For the next 90 kw. hours per quarter the Wallaroo consumer pays 3.8d., and compared with Zone 1 there is a difference of 0.5d. or 13.2 per cent. For all additional consumption the Wallaroo consumer pays 2.15d. and compared with Zone 1 there is a difference of 0.25d. or 11.6 per cent.

In Zone 5 the difference is higher again, the respective figures being 5.4d., 0.8d., and 0.35d. higher than Zone 1. The tariffs in that zone are higher by those amounts than those operating in Zone 1.

The 65,000 country residential consumers are being encouraged to install more electrical equipment, and the trust is to be congratulated on that move. It is sending out trained staff into the country to demonstrate and to assist people to live better electrically. Invitations are sent out to country consumers to attend demonstrations in carefree electric cooking, convenient hot water systems, help on the farm with electricity, comfort conditions in the home, and lighting to brighten living. People may be encouraged to install more electrical equipment, but I maintain that those same people need to be encouraged to use more electricity. What a wonderful sales boost it would be if the trained staff, in the course of their demonstrations, could advertise to the country housewives that the family could live better by using electricity and that it was available to them on the same cost basis as it is to the city housewives.

Residential consumers are not to be ignored in the revenue field, and this is borne out by the revenue percentages that have been made available by the trust from time to time. Let us have a look this afternoon at the sources of income for 1959-1960. The revenue obtained from the residential supply was 37 per cent; from the industrial supply, 36 per cent; and from the commercial supply 16 per cent. The trust had sundry income of 7 per cent, bulk handling and traction 2 per cent, and public lighting 2 per cent. That indicates that the residential supply to the consumers in this State is not to be ignored. Electricity generated for the year ended June 30, 1950, was 445,997,408 k.w.h., and the electricity sold during that year was 364,746,844 k.w.h. The amount sold for residential purposes was 146,006,722 k.w.h., and the amount sold for industrial purposes was 157,800,489 k.w.h. During that year there was 11,793,767 k.w.h. more sold for industrial purposes than for residential purposes, but in the subsequent years the residential supply far exceeded the industrial supply.

Electricity generated for the year ended June 30, 1955, amounted to 982,391,510 k.w.h., and the electricity sold during that year was 815,080,427 k.w.h. The amount sold for residential purposes during that year was 331,442,660 k.w.h. and the amount sold for industrial purposes 313,064,532. This year,

instead of there being an increase in sales for industrial purposes, there was an increase of 18,378,128 k.w.h. for residential purposes, or in other words, more was sold for residential purposes.

Four years later the amount of electricity generated in the year ended June 30, 1959, had increased to 1,470,346,203 k.w.h. The electricity sold during that year was 1,189,731,404 k.w.h. and the amount sold in the same period for residential purposes was 513,461,261 k.w.h. The amount sold for industrial purposes was 466,625,544 k.w.h. Again, there was an increase in sales for residential purposes over that sold for industrial purposes and this time it amounted to the staggering figure of 46,835,717 k.w.h. The following year the electricity generated had still further increased to 1,746,648,750 k.w.h..

Mr. Quirke: Why don't you give the differences? Those figures sound like light years.

Mr. HUGHES: Members can work them out for themselves. Sales, too, had increased to 1,451,761,587 k.w.h. The amount sold for residential purposes during that year was 573,452,788 k.w.h. and the amount sold for industrial purposes was 540,643,178 k.w.h. While 32,809,610 k.w.h. more were sold for residential purposes than for industrial purposes during that year it will be noted that electricity sold for industrial purposes had substantially caught up on the previous year's sales for residential requirements, to the figure of 14,026,107 k.w.h. I have not the 1960-61 figures, but the honourable member for Mitcham has them. These figures were apparently tabled, but I was unaware of that.

Mr. Millhouse: We can get them for you if you want them.

Mr. HUGHES: It does not matter now because I have worked them out on the 1959-60 report, and members will appreciate that. The figures presented by me for the previous 10 years to 1960-61 should convey to the House that residential requirements have increased due to the increase of population and the higher living standard of the people which, in my opinion, will continue for some years to come. A contributing factor towards that end would be one tariff for city and country consumers of electricity. I wish to be honest and say that I appreciate that the trust has been able to meet wage and salary increases without an increase in electricity tariffs.

Mr. Fred Walsh: The trust is not the only one that has done that.

Mr. HUGHES: I appreciate that point. At the same time, for the year 1959-60 after

allowing for the cost of generating electricity and maintaining power stations (£5,750,455), the cost of distribution and maintenance of the distribution system (£1,825,701), administration expenses including commercial salaries, rates and taxes, superannuation, insurance, service to consumers, etc. (£1,880,811), fixed charges, including interest and depreciation, etc. (£5,191,831), and provision for equalization of financial charges, expenditure for investigation and preliminary expenses in connection with the trust development, stores and fuel adjustment and for unusual or unforeseen expenditure (£250,000), making a grand total of £14,898,798, the trust still had a credit of £468,840.

Let us now deduct the £375,000 that country consumers are estimated to cost if in Zone 1. That would still leave the trust with £93,000 based on last year's figures. The trend in fuel costs for the last five years prior to 1960 further strengthens the claim for equalization of tariffs throughout the State because the average fuel cost per k.w.h., generated for the years from 1955 to 1960 was as follows:

Year.	Pence per k.w.h.
1955-56	0.72
1956-57	0.70
1957-58	0.63
1958-59	0.58
1959-60	0.56

Those figures further show that, everything added up, there is justification for the claim made by the Leader of the Opposition.

In generalizing upon this, the member for Rocky River, when speaking in the debate, kept tossing up a double-headed penny. In the first place he was afraid that the real country people would be deprived of power altogether. He was not concerned with the people who lived in large industrial towns. Those were his words, and according to him the people living in Wallaroo are not country people. I know that the honourable member will interject because he always interjects when I mention his name, whether I prove him wrong or right. I was surprised to hear those statements coming from one who recently claimed in this House that he knew more about primary production than any other member in the House, including the Minister of Agriculture. I assure the member for Rocky River that people living in large towns and the "real country people" he speaks about—in other words the primary producers—are closely allied to one another. It would do him good to realize that, Wallaroo has always been regarded as an industrial town. It has

been producing superphosphate for primary producers, and for many years has expeditiously handled their products to their satisfaction.

Mr. Heaslip: Do you remember when the producers had to go to Wallaroo and do the work themselves because of a strike?

Mr. HUGHES: Perhaps because of my tender years I do not know about that. I would have liked to see the honourable member trying to produce superphosphate in those days. Today's method of production is vastly different from what it was then. I do not think he could bear the strain of the work entailed in producing superphosphate. But for the people living in country towns using electric power over the years there would be fewer people enjoying electricity in rural areas. If the motion is carried I do not think small towns and primary producers generally will suffer. If there were a country tariff reduction to something comparable with the tariffs operating in Zone 1 many hundreds of part consumers of electricity would turn to all electricity consumers. The additional amount of electricity sold would offset any price reduction. The extension of the single wire earth return scheme in country areas would not be affected, as claimed by the member for Rocky River.

Mr. Hall: Purely supposition, because you have no figures to back it up.

Mr. HUGHES: I thought I had submitted figures. Apparently the honourable member was not listening. I was surprised to hear him interjecting in a way that leads me to think that he is against what I am saying. Sometimes I wonder whom the member for Rocky River represents. That was my reason for saying that in this debate he was tossing a double-headed penny. He does not want a reduction in cost to the people he represents because he is afraid that it might eventually mean an increase in city tariffs. Recently, when speaking about the Grosvenor Hotel, he said:

We cannot afford to increase electricity costs because if we do it will mean a loss of business . . .

I find it difficult to tie up such a statement with his previous outbursts of compassion on behalf of his constituents, the real country people as he calls them. In one debate his heart bled for them because of rising costs, and no-one denies that costs are rising steeply, yet when he has the opportunity to help reduce costs for those same people he opposes that action. I am at a loss to understand how

some members can justify their statements from debate to debate.

Mr. Heaslip: How can you cut costs?

Mr. HUGHES: I will not be sidetracked by the honourable member. He had the opportunity to speak in this debate and now in a brotherly way I am replying to some of his remarks. Every country member knows that he should support the motion. A recent statement by the member for Gouger leaves no doubt in my mind that there is justification for the motion, for he said:

My point is that this State, comprising country and city, is completely interdependent. Our society is completely interdependent.

If the people are so completely dependent upon one another, I, like the member for Gouger, must claim that city and country people should receive the same consideration from Government and semi-governmental instrumentalities. In opposing the motion the Premier tried to make capital by saying that if the Opposition wanted to increase the unemployment position in South Australia, and set back industrial expansion, the surest way to do it would be to agree to the motion. He is not here this afternoon, but a Minister is in the House to represent him. Is he aware that in 1960 the Electricity Trust had 128 fewer employees than in 1955. The Premier will need to put up a better argument than he did to convince us that by lowering country tariffs industrial expansion will be impeded. Country districts should have the same opportunity as the metropolitan area to claim some of this industrial expansion. Under the present zoning method of electricity tariffs country districts are at a disadvantage, and that cannot be denied. My claims are substantiated by the following statement by the Premier in this debate:

As regards industrial expansion in this State, if we are to expand and retain our big industries and encourage new big industries, we can only do that on the basis that the costs of production in South Australia are no higher than those in similar industries in other States. Honourable members do not need to be reminded that one of the chief items in industrial cost is electricity. I know from my own personal knowledge that when an industry is deciding whether or not to come to South Australia, the first comparison it makes is that of industrial tariffs in South Australia with those in other States.

I think that the Premier out of his own mouth undermined his argument because he further stated on the same page:

Even an additional 0.1d. in the charge for industrial electricity becomes extremely important.

We have been told by the Premier that he could not dictate to industry where it should go. I think he has dictated to industry where it should go. Indirectly, he has been saying to industrialists, "You establish your industry in the metropolitan area and we will supply you with cheap electricity." While that sort of thing is allowed to go on, country districts will continue to deteriorate. If South Australia is to expand and encourage new industries, why limit the expansion to the city? Honourable members opposite claim that they have a policy of decentralization. Then why not tell an interested body, "We have a policy of decentralization and, to assist you in the costs of production, we are prepared to sell you one of the chief items in industry"—the Premier used those words, that it was a "chief item"—"namely, electricity, at the prices made available to city consumers."

Mr. Jenkins: That was only one contingency.

Mr. HUGHES: He said it was one of the chief ones. That is why I mention it now. However, since the Premier has spoken in this debate, at least we know now one of the chief reasons for industry not being interested in setting up in the country. Until that barrier has been broken down, South Australia as a State will not make a balanced progress. The suggestion of bringing country tariffs into line with those operating in the city came from a member on the Government side. However, if the honourable member (and I can say this now because of the lame interjection that he made earlier to me) had only foreseen the objections raised by his own colleagues, he would never have introduced the matter into this House in the first place. Only recently, I congratulated the member for Gouger on his courage in introducing this matter. That was why I said that in my opinion he was a man of strong principles and he would rise higher in my estimation if he stuck to them. When I said that, the honourable member was not in his seat; he was sitting alongside the member for Burra (Mr. Quirke). I remember it only too well. The member for Burra remarked that the member for Gouger was unable to reply because he was out of his seat but I understand he assured the honourable member by interjection that he would stick to what he said. So I say again that, if the member for Gouger is prepared to stick to what he said on that occasion, he certainly will go higher in my estimation. I sincerely hope that, when the vote is taken on this matter, the honourable member will vote with us.

Mr. McKEE (Port Pirie): I support the motion. Members on both sides, and particularly the country members, should support it because they know as well as I do that all country people would welcome a reduction in electricity costs. The member for Wallaroo (Mr. Hughes) hoped that the member for Gouger was a man of his word and would stick to what he had said. We all hoped he would but, judging by some of the back somersaults indulged in by some of his colleagues, I would say that this motion will be defeated. However, we can at least say that we have subjected some of those members to severe electric shock treatment.

When the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) and the Premier were opposing this motion, they said that it arose from the fact that two or three honourable members on the Government side stated during the debate on the Address in Reply that they desired an equalization of electricity tariffs between the country and metropolitan areas. Since I have come into this House I can recall the member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) and the member for Murray (Mr. Bywaters) advocating on occasions the reduction of electricity charges in the country. The motion has been moved because my Party believes in equalization and that the economic assets of the State should be used in the interests of its people. That is the whole purpose of this motion. The member for Adelaide was so right when he said that if it was not so tragic it would be amusing to follow the antics of members opposite. They began by advocating cheaper electricity charges for the country areas but, when the Premier told them that they were naughty boys for doing this, particularly with an election due next year, they had to back down.

Mr. Lawn: The naughty boys have to do what their master tells them!

Mr. McKEE: That is so, but the important thing is that they have said it. The country people know they have said it, so I would suggest to those gentlemen that it may be a little too late to back out. The fact is that all the country members opposite know very well that the country people want a reduction in electricity charges.

Mr. Hall: Would you care to tell us where the £500,000 will be replaced?

Mr. McKEE: They have been asking the country members in this House to advocate a reduction in electricity charges; otherwise, they would probably never have thought of it. All members on this side know that the people outside the metropolitan area would welcome a

reduction. It is unfortunate that the Premier did not censor their speeches before they spoke during the Address in Reply. They were naughty, bad boys for speaking up on behalf of their constituents in the way they did without consulting their Premier about what they intended to say. It might be a good idea to keep a check on them in future. It would be most interesting to hear the member for Gouger explaining to his constituents his reasons for about-turning. In fact, I should like to hear him give his reasons to the House.

Mr. Hall: You will hear them.

Mr. McKEE: I felt some concern for the member for Rocky River. Having woken from a short nap, and not having taken much interest in what had already happened, he hurried slowly to his feet to briefly defend his colleague. His first words were, "I want to inform the House where I stand regarding this matter", and the member for Adelaide effectively answered him in four brief words, "Right behind the Premier".

Mr. Hall: How about putting a case for the Bill.

Mr. Jennings: What Bill?

Mr. McKEE: The member for Rocky River said that what Mr. Hall suggested was entirely different "from what this Bill seeks to do". The member for Adelaide kindly interjected and advised Mr. Heaslip that it was not a Bill, and Mr. Heaslip said, "We cannot afford to increase electricity costs because if we do it will mean a loss of business". The motion contains nothing about increasing costs. However, my quotations indicate what Mr. Heaslip had to say. He did not know whether it was a motion or a Bill, but thought it would increase costs. I realize that he rose with the good intention of defending his colleague, the member for Gouger, but in so doing he got himself involved. He should concentrate now on his own defence because he is bound to be asked some questions when he visits his district, whenever that might be.

Mr. Lawn: Does he ever go up there?

Mr. McKEE: Mr. Hughes explained clearly the reasons for advocating an equalization of electricity charges, so I do not intend to delay the House further. Country people should be given a fair go not only in respect of electricity charges but with gas and fuel charges too. I support the motion.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra): The genesis of this motion, I suppose, is a desire to so intimidate country members that they will vote for it. We know that that is the idea behind

the motion but it will not intimidate me because I do not intend to support it. If electricity were provided free of charge, many country towns would still not be able to attract industries. Decentralization of industry is the greatest old worn-out battle-torn stalking-horse that consistently takes up the time of this Parliament. It cannot be achieved by a reduction of electricity charges. The only part of South Australia that lends itself to decentralization at present is that nearest to the River Murray. Everywhere else the problem of taking water to country areas arises.

Mr. RALSTON: Does that apply to the lower South-East?

Mr. QUIRKE: It has sufficient industries now. The pulp industry is going to the South-East because Eight Mile Creek will be diverted as a water supply for use in the industry and then the effluent will be turned back into the sea. It is only because of that and because timber is available locally that the industry can be established there. That industry could not be situated at Jamestown, for instance. Industries that need water cannot be established at Jamestown, Gladstone, or other similar country areas. An entirely different type of industry would be required. Electricity charges would have little influence on industries for such areas.

The motion states that the Government should take steps to assist the decentralization of industries in country areas by insisting that the Electricity Trust does our will. Accountancy has shown that it would cost £500,000 to do our will. Nevertheless, we are asked to insist that the trust does our will. In the last few years a scheme to electrify almost the entire electorate of Burra has been introduced. Much of the area has been electrified with single wire earth return lines and by 1965 probably the entire area, excluding the pastoral areas to the far east, will be supplied with electricity.

Mr. Jenkins: Have you read page 2 of the 1954 Electricity Trust report?

Mr. QUIRKE: No. I am advancing my own arguments. The trust took a 33,000-volt line from Waterloo and by using it as a base for the isolating transformers sent power as far north as Ulooloo. The first phase was east of the railway line and the second phase, nearing completion, to the west of the railway line. At present there is electric power, through the single wire earth return line, from Waterloo to Ulooloo. Hilltown, Andrews, Jamestown, Spalding, Washpool, and all the country in the

hundred of Belalie is to be electrified, and the project is progressing steadily. It is a costly process. In order to get electricity, as the member for Frome knows, it has recently been agreed that a heavy high tension main will be built between Jamestown and Terowie. Probably the Terowie supply will be there by Christmas although that is not certain yet. A terrific cost is involved in that power line, which can then be used to send current north through the hundred of Whyte and south through the hundreds of Anne and Ayers. It will cover the whole of the district of Burra—every single farm house!

I would not be wrong (if so, I am prepared to accept the challenge) in saying that the people of my district were more concerned about getting a certain supply of electricity than in having a reduction in charges. They want electricity and, if this motion is going to slow down the extension of the supply, they oppose it. Country areas want water and power, both of which are extremely costly. The Electricity Trust works in this way: it starts off at, say, Burra with a No. 4 or No. 5 tariff. Then (as inevitably happens when electricity is put into a district) the assumed consumption based upon figures given by prospective consumers is exceeded. There is always a temptation after electricity is installed to buy all sorts of electrical appliances. People buy an extra radiator, an electric jug or some of the one thousand and one small pieces of electrical equipment that are so handy and such natty things for the housewife to use. Consumption inevitably increases and, when sufficient electricity is consumed to warrant it, the town is moved into Zone No. 3, for which the price is lower. The standing charge can also be reduced through increased consumption. That is a continuing process and it is to the complete satisfaction of people in country areas. First and foremost they want power, and they are not at all concerned about decentralization. When the whole State is electrified and all the heavy capital charges of State-wide electrification are met is the time when we can start talking about reducing the price of electricity, and I think that is the time when the trust will do it without any requests on our part.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: The trust has already made progressive reductions.

Mr. QUIRKE: Yes, and two years ago there was a State-wide reduction by moving districts up one zone.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: The trust meets the first £200 of the capital cost also.

Mr. QUIRKE: Yes. It does a remarkable job and I would not be the one to say that we should insist that it do something which it knows is detrimental to its economy and which may be detrimental to the supply of electricity to people in my district, who want to have it. The same applies to the member for Frome. The late Leader of the Opposition and I worked together for months on a plan to get that power line and even made a survey of the whole district. The Electricity Trust, to which a case must be presented, accepted the proposal, and the power line is going through. This will give immeasurable benefit to the people who will be supplied by it. Single wire earth return lines can be taken a long way from a 33,000-volt main.

I am not an enthusiast for something that I know is just reaching for the moon. I should like to have in the country small industries that would keep people there and provide employment for children leaving school. Like everyone else, I do not like the idea of children having to come to the city to finish their education, to be trained in a trade, or to learn a profession. Members have heard me speak on other occasions on why I think there should be advanced forms of secondary education in the country; that is, education for trades and avocations by means of residential schools in the country where children could be trained. If three or four of these were spread over South Australia, they would do much to keep children during the formative years of their lives in close association with their parents instead of their having to come to the city. That is one thing we could do.

The member for Wallaroo said that the Premier had used the argument that cheap electricity obtained industries for the metropolitan area. If he did, that is not a crime. Would the member for Wallaroo say that, if industries were offered opportunities to go into the country and did not want to go there, but preferred to stay in the metropolitan area, he would rather have them out of the State altogether than in the metropolitan area?

Mr. Hughes: No.

Mr. QUIRKE: No, the honourable member is a reasonable man. All the inducements in the world can be offered but people cannot be induced to go to the country towns that are unsewered. That is one obstacle. Great numbers of people cannot be engaged in industry in unsewered areas. Leigh Creek was the first sewerred country town in the State, but that was vitally necessary. In places like Port Pirie and Port Augusta there are examples

of how industry should not be run in relation to sanitation of big areas. Port Pirie would be a far better city if it had a comprehensive drainage and sewerage scheme, and so would every country town in South Australia that has industry but is not sewerred. Sewerage is expensive.

Industries that have gone into the country have all gone where it has suited their purposes. Industries around Port Pirie are associated with the Broken Hill Associated Smelters, which is the main undertaking there. The other major industry, which is in jeopardy at present, is the uranium industry. Port Pirie is the obvious place for that as it is on the sea, and so is Port Augusta, which has the Commonwealth Railways headquarters. At Peterborough there is the railway, but what unique possibilities do towns like Clare, Jamestown, Burra, Gladstone and Riverton have for industries? Why should an industry go to those places, desirable though this may be? Are there any economic advantages in putting them there? If industries were put in those places and if they used water, would the present reticulation system be sufficient for them? It is already overloaded; for Whyalla alone hundreds of thousands of pounds is being spent installing booster pumps to push water in the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline downhill!

Mr. Bywaters: Would you agree to some form of concession where water already exists?

Mr. QUIRKE: I would be prepared to do that and I should favour subsidies in certain circumstances if the industry is suitable to the district, but we cannot use compulsion. If we supplied electricity to certain places for nothing, we should still not get industries there. I can never see any virtue in pounding my head, thick in the skull as that may be, against an immovable object. I want electricity in the country first. I want those people who are crying out for it and envying their neighbour next door a quarter of a mile away who happens to have it, to also enjoy a supply. That inevitably occurs, because an isolating transformer can accommodate only so much power, and inevitably there is the point where the supply finishes. Some people may have to wait two years. The trust does not keep people in any doubt and when it is possible to supply the power, whether it is two, three or four years ahead, they can be reconciled to the fact that it will take that time if the trust says so, before they can get it; and these people do not want anyone to intrude and result in their

not getting it in the time promised. They want it in the scheduled time, and I am in agreement with that.

I should like to see small industries established in the country towns, but the first thing is to take the industries where they can be accommodated and where they will not intrude upon highly valuable agricultural land, as some of them have done in Adelaide. There are immense areas of country along the River Murray where facilities could be supplied comparatively easily for an industrial group. This would apply at Murray Bridge and Taillem Bend and other places adjacent to the river. That is where the industries will go and we should concentrate on those areas if we are to get industries out of Adelaide—have them established where certain inducements can be offered to the people who have to live there. We have a wide waterway there and it could become one of the State's playgrounds. It has invaluable assets. We do not know how valuable the Murray is, because we have not yet tested it to its capacity. For miles and miles along this winding serpentine creek we can travel without seeing any sign of human habitation. Some people pump water from the Murray, their homes being back from the river.

Ideal spots are available for the establishment of additional towns, such towns as are suitable for association with a major waterway. We shall have to attempt to use this water much more, otherwise the eastern States will use it. The Government is proposing to build dams to conserve this water. I understand that South Australia uses only 25 per cent of the water available to it under the River Murray Waters Agreement, and the remainder runs into the sea. Are we to be permitted to continue to run 75 per cent of our water allowance under the agreement into the sea, when it could possibly be used somewhere else? When we do dam this river it will make the position of the Murray irrigation areas safer. This is our only source of water available outside the catchment areas of the Adelaide hills, and are we going to pump that water through mains to scattered industries throughout the State, or take those industries where the water can be supplied cheaply? The latter is the obvious thing to do. I finish on the note on which I started. I think that the words "in the opinion of this House" used in the motion are included to intimidate poor innocents abroad like myself. I know quite well that we cannot get decentralization. I am not concerned about that at all, and those words used in the motion will not intimidate me. I will

not vote for it because I do not believe that members of this House should be arguing that the Government should insist that the Electricity Trust do something which it has said in its annual report should not be done.

Mr. RALSTON secured the adjournment of the debate.

REGISTRATION OF DOGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 30. Page 652.)

Mr. FRED WALSH (West Torrens): I believe that many people, particularly members of this House who oppose the Bill, have placed a wrong construction on the intentions of the Leader of the Opposition in that they attempt to give the impression that it was his desire to insist upon some inhumane way of chaining up dogs, which were to be approached only when being fed. I do not think that anything was further from his mind when he introduced the Bill.

Mr. Quirke: It does not even say so in the Bill.

Mr. FRED WALSH: No. I disagree with many of the remarks expressed on the Bill. No doubt many of these people are well-meaning and have dogs that they keep as pets. I do not believe that any member of the House would have a greater liking for dogs than I, although I do not happen to own one. Nevertheless, I am very fond of animals and would be the last to support any action that would result in cruelty to any animal, irrespective of what kind of animal it is. I consider that the Leader of the Opposition, in presenting this Bill, was motivated by the strong representations made to him by the Postal Workers' Union. I think we should also be concerned about people other than the members of the Postal Workers' Union, although it will be admitted that possibly they are those who are most concerned about the danger of attacks from dogs in the course of delivering letters and telegrams. Naturally the union wishes to see some protection afforded to its members.

Strong cases have been made out for the protection afforded under the present Act, particularly by the member for Mitcham, for whose views (particularly from the legal angle) I usually have much respect. However, I am afraid I cannot agree with him on this occasion. I am only a layman, and, while the honourable member confessed that he was speaking as a layman at the time, he referred to a quotation from Halsbury's *Laws of England*, Third Edition, Volume 1, as follows:

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.

The honourable member went on to say that protection is afforded under the Act as it stands. That quotation refers to cases in which it is known that a dog has some vicious characteristic, but what about the dogs kept on house properties or farms or anywhere else—and we know there are many of them—which normally are most peaceful and friendly to everybody?

Mr. Bywaters: Most farm dogs are.

Mr. FRED WALSH: Yes. The same thing applies with pets in the metropolitan area. There have been occasions when such dogs, for no apparent reason whatsoever, have attacked a person entering the property. According to my interpretation of the quotation I referred to, that upsets the member for Mitcham's argument because that person is exempt if it is shown that the dog normally would not be a vicious type and that it has not been known to do the things that we are complaining about. I therefore say that something is required in the Act to protect people who have lawful reasons for entering property. Much has been said about what constitutes lawful reasons, and the Leader attempted to specify certain reasons. I am not so temerous to attempt anything like that, because I think that would be foolish on my part. However, I think it is more or less accepted by everybody that any person has a right to enter premises provided that he is not trespassing or going there to commit an offence. I believe that originally the Leader's action was prompted as a result of representations made to him by a certain body of people, and that lawful reasons as they applied to members of the general public were not considered. It could well be that a person was looking for some address in a neighbourhood and entered a house for the purpose of finding his way to that particular address, and during the time he was on that property he could be attacked by a dog and injured. I presume that he would have a lawful reason for being on the

premises, and therefore I consider it would be wrong to restrict in any way what would be considered a lawful excuse. I do not think the Leader is so much tied to that, because I think any person has a right to be on premises provided he is not trespassing or there to commit some offence.

It has been pointed out that postmen comprise by far the highest percentage of victims of attacks by dogs. I have a report which states that dogs have attacked and bitten 1,000 postmen and P.M.G. messengers in Australia over the last 12 months. It goes on to say: Dogs also have a taste for P.M.G. technicians installing telephone equipment. Many uniforms, slashed by flashing fangs, have had to be discarded. Scores of postmen have suffered very painful wounds. Attacks occur in Sydney at the rate of nine a week. The department has discovered no abatement of the menace, since it decided on tough counter-measures just a year ago, when it issued warnings that in future mail deliveries would be suspended to the householder's premises until the guilty animal was brought under strict control.

Apparently that had no effect on the incidence of attacks on postal employees. The report goes on:

Claims would be made on the owners to pay costs of damage caused by attacks, the department declared. The warning struck home. Only in a few cases was the department forced to cut deliveries. The Post Office has made hundreds of claims on householders for damage to the postmen's pants.

That report applies only to members of the Postal Department who, as I have said, are the people most concerned in prompting this matter to be brought before Parliament.

Mr. Jenkins: Are there any statistics for South Australia?

Mr. FRED WALSH: I do not have any. This report emanated from Canberra, although the conditions in Sydney were referred to. I consider that the present provision in the Act is inadequate to protect people and other animals from attacks by dogs, and that something of a more definite character should be provided. Section 24 of the Act, which the Leader seeks to amend by adding to it, reads:

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 of or occupied by the owner of the dog, rushes at any vehicle, or rushes at or attacks any person, or any horse, cattle, or other animal, 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.

May I suggest that amendments to Acts be written legibly so that members can read them in the light provided in this Chamber. It is difficult to read the section, as amended, to which I have just referred. The point is that it is an offence under the section if a dog attacks any animal, horse, bullock or cattle, and the owner may be prosecuted and fined an amount not exceeding £5.

I wonder how many members have driven motor cars without having at some time had to swerve violently to avoid running over a dog that has rushed out of a property and charged at the vehicle. Apart from possible injury to the dog there is the possibility that the car, swerving to avoid a collision with the dog, may run into something or somebody. Members should consider that point because that happens daily. I believe that if anyone were to drive around the perimeter of the city without having a dog rush out at his vehicle that would be something of a miracle.

I have referred particularly to dogs rushing out at vehicles, but there is another matter that I have referred to the Minister of Works relating to land through which the Torrens River runs into the sea. This land is leased by the Engineering and Water Supply Department and the lessee charges people for grazing their animals on that property. I have been told by residents in the locality (who have made complaints to me, which I have referred to the Minister, who has taken the matter up with the lessee), that almost nightly dogs attack the horses that graze on the property. The dogs cut the horses' legs, cause general damage, and generally create a noise and cause inconvenience to residents because these happenings occur mostly in the early hours of the morning. The action of those dogs constitutes an absolute breach of the section and something should be done by the proper authorities to see that it does not occur.

Mr. Quirke: Twelve gauge breech loaders would soon fix that.

Mr. FRED WALSH: There are more ways of killing a cat than one. There is no point in this Parliament wasting its time passing legislation if the laws are not properly policed and enforced. The section of the Act is not adequate and sufficient protection is not given by it, either to animals or to humans, and that is the main reason why I have risen to support the proposal of the Leader.

It may be argued that the amendment is not properly phrased, but that could be borne in mind when the Bill gets into the Committee.

I believe amendments could be suggested to delete the word "rushing," because a dog could rush at a person and grab him in a friendly fashion.

Mr. Quirke: There are two sets of amendments on the file.

Mr. FRED WALSH: They may meet the situation and the House would be well advised to accept the Bill and allow it to go into Committee for the purpose of considering the suggested amendments.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): I thank members for their contributions to this debate. I agree with some members, but I do not agree with others. The Premier, in his opposition to the Bill during his second reading speech, gave an opinion of the Crown Solicitor, but I have my own views on that matter.

The Premier gave me the impression that he was talking about vicious dogs, but at no stage have I referred to dogs being vicious or otherwise. I hold the view that if a dog is well trained there would be no need to reflect upon it as being vicious. As an illustration those which are trained to compete in sheep dog trials, especially during show week, provide interesting entertainment for people who avail themselves of the opportunity of attending such trials. I can only assume that during the course of training if a dog savaged the sheep its trainer would have it destroyed immediately. However, that is not my business: I am concerned with offering protection to human life and, consequently, I submitted this amendment, firmly believing that if dogs were trained properly there would be no occasion for a dog to attack people who had lawful reason to enter a property.

If the Premier were endeavouring to distinguish between the various breeds of dogs, probably his attention had been drawn to a certain police action in a suburban court. The *Advertiser* of August 22, 1961, contains this report:

Alsations "worst offenders". Of the defendants prosecuted in the . . . court because their dogs attacked people, nearly all owned Alsations.

That statement was made by the local police sergeant engaged on the case, but I am not concerned about any particular type of dog in my amendment. It would appear that "Little Smuts" is one of a family, I believe, residing at Bridgewater and he has certain favourites so I can only assume from the remarks of the member for Onkaparinga that if I, the Leader

of the Opposition, entered that particular property, "Little Smuts" would take a violent dislike to me.

Mr. Bywaters: Only because of your politics.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: I presume so.

Mr. Shannon: At least he would let us know you were there.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Probably if the member for Mitcham tried to enter the same property "Little Smuts" would adopt a different approach.

Mr. Shannon: He would let me know he was there too, but for a different reason.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: In the general provisions contained in the amendment I have attempted, with the assistance of the Parliamentary Draftsman, to enable people for a lawful reason to enter properties. I will never admit that my intentions were silly, as suggested by the member for Onkaparinga, nor will I accept his view that this was a clumsy attempt, because I believe that the word "clumsy" has many meanings. I have had much advice, verbally and in writing, since this Bill was first mentioned, even to the extent of how dogs should be treated to prevent them from breeding. All kinds of suggestions have been made about how to deal with the unwanted dog, and how to keep dogs from school yards where they snap at children, eat unattended lunches and lick milk bottles, which is extremely unhygienic. To confirm this, I recently received a circular from a suburban school saying:

We are being plagued by stray dogs. If all the owners of dogs kept their pets at home we would not have this nuisance. The school yard is not the place for stray dogs because they pollute the playing area, steal children's lunches and lick milk bottles.

The Bill was introduced for the sole purpose of guaranteeing safe entry to properties by legitimate callers. This could mean the provision of suitable accommodation for dogs so as to prevent their causing harm to those legitimate callers. The member for Whyalla has suggested an amendment which, if accepted, would overcome most of the objections to the Bill. The sole desire is to safeguard human life.

Mr. Quirke: What are you doing about your amendments?

Mr. FRANK WALSH: It is important that the second reading of the Bill should be carried so that all the proposed amendments can be considered. The desire is to abolish the fears

held by some people. I do not want to impose a cruelty on dogs, but the safety of human life is important. Some members have made certain suggestions and I would not oppose an amendment dealing with the period from sunrise to sunset. All I want to do is safeguard human life. This could be done without imposing cruelty on dogs, or causing embarrassment to owners of dogs.

The House divided on the second reading:

Ayes (14).—Messrs. Bywaters, Casey, Clark, Dunstan, Hughes, Jennings, Lawn, McKee, Quirke, Ralston, Riches, Tapping, Frank Walsh (teller) and Fred Walsh.

Noes (15).—Messrs. Bockelberg, Coumbe, Dunnage, Hall, Harding, Heaslip, Jenkins, King, Nankivell, Nicholson, Pattinson, Pearson, Sir Thomas Playford (teller), Mr. Shannon and Mrs. Steele.

Pairs.—Ayes—Messrs. Hutchens, Corcoran, Ryan and Loveday. Noes—Sir Cecil Hincks, Messrs. Brookman, Millhouse and Laucke.

Majority of 1 for the Noes.

Second reading thus negatived.

ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

In Committee.

(Continued from August 30. Page 660.)

Clause 3—"Amendment of principal Act, section 73."

Mr. SHANNON: I move:

To strike out clause 3.

Section 73, which clause 3 amends, has a State-wide application in elections. A postal vote application can be made at any time up to 6 p.m. on the day immediately prior to election day. As I claimed on the second reading, it is not unusual for an elector to be laid aside at the last minute and not be able to attend the polling booth to cast his vote; but he is not denied the opportunity of doing so under the present law provided he has a friend to take along his application for a postal vote. He can then fill in the form, put it in the appropriate envelope, have it properly witnessed and post it on the polling day itself. The present law gives an elector the opportunity to secure a postal ballot paper even at the last possible moment. This provision was made purposely to facilitate the position for an elector who, by virtue of conditions over which he had no control, could not attend the polling booth in person. The Leader wants to restrict this by a day and an hour, to bring it back to 5 p.m. on the Thursday prior to the holding of the ballot.

When the Leader spoke on the second reading, he said that the electoral officers were

inundated with work, and this was an additional task imposed on them at the last minute. The electoral office is there to provide a service for the elector. We, as members of Parliament, should be cautious before we restrict the rights and privileges of an elector in casting his vote. This amendment would restrict the time for securing a postal vote. I wish to leave the law as it stands. I have had no objections from any source about section 73 (2). I cannot imagine that we should not have had some complaint from those in charge if the present position had been creating a great hardship to the office. If there is a hardship, the electoral officer should be given more staff to deal with this problem. The expense of providing the necessary opportunities for an elector to cast his vote should not be a bar to our preserving our democratic rights in this field.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): I am trying to make reasonable provision for the returning officers because of the large numbers of electors they have to cope with in some districts. Some electorates have between 29,000 and 32,000 electors. These part-time officers may have 15 or more polling centres to control. The Act lays it down that they are obliged, when they receive an application for a postal ballot-paper, to examine the signature, record it and strike the name off the roll before they send out the ballot-paper on election day. Each presiding officer should have a list to show that a person is not obtaining a second vote.

I have received many representations about the impracticability of trying to satisfy the elector who sends in an application that is not received until 6 p.m. although, usually, mail deliveries are 5 p.m. or even earlier. The officers are expected to perform all the work and to post the ballot-papers back to the applicants, but frequently the electors do not have time in which to return the ballots for them to be counted. I do not think this clause imposes a hardship on people. It will give the returning officers more time and it will afford the electors time in which to return their ballot for counting.

The Committee divided on the amendment:

Ayes (16).—Messrs. Bockelberg, Coumbe, Hall, Harding, Heaslip, Jenkins, King, Millhouse, Nankivell, Nicholson, Pattinson, and Pearson, Sir Thomas Playford, Messrs. Quirke and Shannon (teller) and Mrs. Steele.

Noes (14).—Messrs. Bywaters, Casey, Clark, Dunstan, Hughes, Jennings, Lawn, McKee, Ralston, Riches, Ryan, Tapping, Frank Walsh (teller) and Fred Walsh.

Pairs.—Ayes—Sir Cecil Hincks, Messrs. Brookman and Laucke. Noes—Messrs. Hutchens, Corcoran, and Loveday.

Majority of 2 for the Ayes.

Amendment thus carried; clause negatived.

Clause 4—"Consequential amendment of principal Act, section 75."

Mr. FRANK WALSH: This clause was consequential to clause 3 and I do not propose to pursue it.

Mr. SHANNON: I formally move:

To strike out clause 4.

Amendment carried; clause negatived.

Clause 5—"Amendment of principal Act, section 86."

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

After "by" to delete all words.

I have discussed this matter previously and I understand that the Opposition does not oppose the amendment as it brings the South Australian provisions into line with Commonwealth provisions on this matter. It overcomes the difficulty which was previously associated with our legislation, and which the Leader of the Opposition desired to meet with his amendments. It is not so prohibitive as demanding that the time and date appearing on the postmark on the envelope shall be conclusive evidence of the time the envelope was posted which, in outback areas, would not be desirable.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: I accept the Premier's explanation. If Commonwealth legislation can work effectively, there is no reason why we should not adopt it. There may be some minor differences but, in view of what I said when the matter was last before the House, I support the amendment.

Amendment carried.

Mr. SHANNON: I move:

After "by" to insert:

(a) striking out the word "seven" therein and inserting in lieu thereof the word "ten"; and

(b)

This will in effect provide an opportunity for the more distant postal voter to get his ballot back to the returning officer and have it counted as valid despite his irregular postal services. This provision will not have State-wide application, which I do not think will be necessary in closer settled areas where mails are

more frequent. Mails in the districts of Eyre, Stuart, Whyalla and Frome are neither regular nor frequent. This is a variation of the Commonwealth Act and, as conditions relating to Commonwealth elections are often worse than in this State, the Commonwealth Parliament should consider what happens, for instance, at Kalgoorlie with regard to postal ballots. If it did, something would be done about it. Probably a fortnight would not be too long for the return of postal votes from the most distant points of some electorates.

A voter has to cast his ballot before the poll closes, and must sign on the outside of the envelope and have his name witnessed and the date inserted. These are the safeguard provisions in our existing law which the Leader is allowing to stand—and I am glad he is, as anyone who votes before the close of the poll by postal ballot, by declaration or by any other method has done all the Act demands of him. However, if he depends on a private mailbag (which is the rule in the districts I mentioned) his mail is collected by a contractor who has nothing to cancel the stamp, and it is not franked until it reaches the mail office. I think both parties incurred unnecessary expense to secure affidavits in the Frome by-election, as some of the votes in question were obviously in order. Many arrived before the week was up, they carried the signature of the elector (which was a like signature to that on the application) and they were dated and witnessed. Many of those ballots were excluded because in the opinion of the electoral officer they should have been there a day or two sooner, on his estimation that there was no interruption to the mail service. That is straining the rights of democracy to the point where people who want to comply with the law are denied the right of having their votes counted. If these people knew what happened to their ballots there would be an outcry. I do not think my amendment will meet every contingency, as I know the problems of outback people in getting their mail away.

Mr. Casey: Some people do not even know an election is on.

Mr. SHANNON: The honourable member has raised a matter of some moment. A by-election was held recently to fill a vacancy in another place and I do not know how many people in the electorate concerned took any interest in it. I could not agree with the honourable member more! I should imagine his own Party got little satisfaction from knowing that so few of their supporters knew

there was a by-election. The member for Frome mentioned people in his electorate—

Mr. Casey: Get your facts right. I did not say it was in my electorate.

Mr. SHANNON: I am not suggesting that it was. I said there were four electorates involved in this difficulty of postal services. I should like to hear from the honourable member whether these people were distant from an electoral office and did not know that an election was being held. I do not want there to be any sculduddery and I do not think that my amendment will provide an opportunity for it. An elector seeking a postal ballot has to sign an application form and his signature on the form is checked with his signature on the outside of the envelope, and if his signatures are not the same the returning officer may discard the ballot. I actually saw one ballot-paper that was admitted in Frome where the initials of the person making the application for a postal ballot were different from those appearing on the envelope when the ballot was returned. It may have been an honest mistake, but it got through, although it should not have.

This is one of the safeguards, a safeguard which I do not think the House would be wise to dispense with. We are now to depend on the Premier's amendment, which brings our law into line with the Commonwealth law; and we are virtually to accept as *prima facie* evidence that the elector did what he says on the outside of the envelope. If we give a voter a day or two longer than is necessary to get his ballot-paper returned, we do no harm. I think that 10 days will be much too long for practically every inside country seat—certainly too long for the metropolitan area. I should not think that my electorate would require even seven days.

Mr. Ryan: A couple of votes could decide the issue.

Mr. SHANNON: It could so happen that an elector might not worry about sending his postal ballot-paper back straightaway, but on the following Tuesday he could say, "I want to be on a winner, so I shall not cast my vote until I see what the bulk of the voters have done." First, he must commit an offence by putting an improper date on the envelope, and secondly he must get another elector to witness his signature and the date. If it is thought that large numbers would commit this kind of sculduddery, I am surprised. Heavy penalties are provided for such offences. It could happen in the north that an elector put his ballot-paper in his private bag, but it might be three or four days before

it was picked up by the mail contractor. We must accept the honesty of the elector as to what he puts on the outside of the envelope. If we are to reject the propriety of what the elector fills in on the outside of the envelope, we had better cut out postal voting. I should not be a party to that. In order that we may be certain that people comply with the Act and have the opportunity to have their votes counted, I have moved my amendment. In effect, the voter would have two week-ends in which to get his vote back.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: I hope that the amendment will not be carried. The present law provides for a ballot-paper to be returned within seven days. When this provision was being considered my late colleague (Mr. O'Halloran) was mindful that the Commonwealth Act provided for seven days in the case of Commonwealth elections, and I think all members will concede that those elections are wider in their scope than State elections. Electors will have to vote in both the Commonwealth and State elections, and I see no reason why the period should not be the same in each case. I believe that when this matter was last before the House the Premier agreed that uniformity was desirable, and if we desire a uniform approach the sensible thing to do is to knock this amendment right out and to retain what is provided in both the Commonwealth and the State Acts, namely, the return of these ballot-papers within seven days, which I think is reasonable. I hope the amendment will not be carried.

The Committee divided on the amendment:

Ayes (15).—Messrs. Bockelberg, Hall, Harding, Heaslip, Jenkins, King, Laucke, Millhouse, Nankivell, Nicholson, Pattinson and Pearson, Sir Thomas Playford, Mr. Shannon (teller) and Mrs. Steele.

Noes (15).—Messrs. Bywaters, Casey, Clark, Dunstan, Hughes, Jennings, Lawn, McKee, Quirke, Ralston, Riches, Ryan, Tapping, Frank Walsh (teller) and Fred Walsh.

Pairs.—Ayes—Sir Cecil Hincks, Messrs. Brookman and Coumbe. Noes—Messrs. Hutchens, Coreoran and Loveday.

The CHAIRMAN: There are 15 Ayes and 15 Noes. It therefore becomes necessary for me to give a casting vote, and it is my intention to give my casting vote in favour of the Ayes.

Amendment thus carried.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Could I ask a question? Am I entitled to suggest on this occasion that so far as your ruling is concerned—

The CHAIRMAN: Are you questioning my casting vote?

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Yes, I am.

The CHAIRMAN: What point of order are you raising?

Mr. FRANK WALSH: I am raising a point of order because I understand that in the event of an even vote the *status quo* should be maintained. The question is: do we want uniformity?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! We are not debating it any more. As Chairman of the Committee I have given my casting vote, which I am supposed to do.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Yes, you have given it on a Party decision, and you have not maintained the *status quo*, which is the normal procedure when voting is even.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have given my casting vote.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Under the normal procedure you should maintain the *status quo*.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have given my casting vote.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD moved:

After “(b)” to insert “striking out the words ‘the envelope bearing the certificate was posted or delivered’ in paragraph (b) thereof and inserting in lieu thereof the words ‘the vote contained in the envelope bearing the certificate was recorded’.”

Amendment carried; clause, as amended, passed.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Would I be in order in asking that Standing Orders be suspended to permit this Bill to pass through its remaining stages without delay?

At 6 o'clock, the bells having been rung:

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I move:

That the sittings of the House be continued for another five minutes to enable this matter to be completed.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has no power to authorize an extension of the sitting. Only the House can authorize sittings beyond 6 o'clock. The bells have rung, so the Committee is adjourned.

(Sitting suspended from 6.01 to 7.30 p.m.)

New clause 4a.—“Amendment of principal Act, section 81.”

Mr. SHANNON: I move to insert the following new clause:

4a. Subsection (2) of section 81 of the principal Act is amended by striking out the word “seven” therein and inserting in lieu thereof the word “ten”.

This is a consequential amendment, the Committee having decided a similar amendment earlier.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: I doubt whether the vote taken before the tea adjournment related to the matters contained in this new clause, which the honourable member claims is consequential. Section 81 (2) provides for a period of seven days immediately succeeding the close of the poll for the envelope containing the ballot-paper to be posted or delivered to a returning officer. This new clause alters the period to 10 days. The Act adequately provides for the return of ballot-papers by post. This afternoon it was contended that this legislation should conform with the Commonwealth Electoral Act, which provides for seven days. I emphasize that our Act made a similar provision before all this stupidity was introduced. I doubt whether the member for Onkaparinga was sincere in his motive, as the Opposition has tried to clear up something fostered and festered by the Government. He tried to introduce something of no value and spoke about mail bags hanging on mulga trees for two or three days.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr FRANK WALSH: I heard an interjection about the Frome by-election. I hope the member for Onkaparinga goes into that district before the next election, as his presence will assist the member for Frome. This amendment is neither necessary nor desirable.

Mr. SHANNON: When this Bill was introduced I considered it with interest in relation to a certain by-election. I helped my Party to try to secure a just ballot in the Frome by-election. When I saw the principle involved in this Bill I came to a conclusion which I just heard verified by the Leader in his explanation of why the Bill was introduced. I have no doubt that he looked at what happened in an election when postal votes were counted. He was acute enough to realize that the votes were not favourable to his Party, and he asked himself how he could overcome the problem of the Liberal Party's getting support from the postal vote system and how the honest elector who happened to live in a part of an electorate where he had to exercise a postal ballot could be prevented from having his ballot counted. The Leader produced a Bill that would nail the unfortunate returning officer down to accepting, willy-nilly, the cancellation date of the post office on the stamped envelope containing the postal ballot as proof positive that the ballot was cast on that date.

This was so blatant that anyone with half an eye could see it. Obviously he realized that that stratagem could not be successful, so of necessity he accepted the amendment of the Premier.

When I looked at the rejected ballots in the Frome by-election I noted that many of them had obviously been cast before the close of the poll and had been witnessed and dated. On their receipt the returning officer said, "Irrespective of what is on the front of the envelope I refuse to count these votes because in my opinion they were not cast in time to reach me before the close of the poll." In fact, he cast a doubt on the electors' honesty. I do not accept that we have dishonest electors.

Mr. Clark: Who were they—Liberals?

Mr. SHANNON: I do not know, but if the honourable member tells me I shall know where to go when I next visit Frome. Irrespective of Party, they were honest voters, as witnessed by the signatures on the envelopes. To deny a vote to an elector because he lives some distance from a polling booth is the last thing we should try to do in a democratic society. I successfully moved for an extension of time in another part of the Act, and this amendment really only puts the rest of the legislation in order. No reasonable person wants to have seven days in one part of the Act and 10 days in another.

The point which the Leader avoided and which has some merit is that some people live far from postal facilities. Although this provision is different from the Commonwealth law, that law is doing a grave injustice to electors who are much worse off than those with whom I am dealing. Electors in parts of Queensland and in the hinterland of Western Australia must find it difficult to have the ballots counted legally under the existing law, and if the Commonwealth authorities do not follow our lead I shall be surprised. We are not doing anything about legitimizing irregular votes; we do not want to give people an opportunity to vote illegally.

There are people who have established their right to vote, because the Electoral Office has returned a ballot-paper to them to fill in. So, in my opinion, the time factor is negligible and has no bearing on whether or not the elector does what his instructions under the law say he should do and what he on his envelope discloses he did do. I regret that the Leader of the Opposition raised the matter in his anxiety to swing the Committee back on another line, because I was prepared to be generous about it.

Mr. RICHES: I do not think that this question of seven or 10 days is worth the time the Committee is devoting to it. The Bill would have been better had we decided on uniformity with the Commonwealth law so that electors generally, and particularly new people coming to the country and voting for the first time, might have a reasonable opportunity at some stage to understand the electoral laws with the minimum confusion. I have risen only because Mr. Shannon does not know the situation as well as he thinks he does. He mentioned my electorate as one in which it might be assumed that it would take more than seven days for postal votes from some parts of it to reach the returning officer. At some time or another in the last 20 years I suppose I have represented all the north, and I do not know any part of it that was removed from the point of the returning officer by more than seven days.

Mr. Shannon: Will the honourable member accept evidence I have in my desk regarding ballots I inspected?

Mr. RICHES: I am always willing to learn. I should like to think that everyone would exercise his franchise and have a full opportunity to do so. I have never heard of any complaint of votes at a Commonwealth election being rejected because they did not reach the returning officer in time. I certainly have not been mixed up in practices which took place after the Frome election and other by-elections. I have never been mixed up in any intrigue, or anything like that. I am not interested in Party politics in this matter.

Mr. Shannon: Are you interested in people having a vote?

Mr. RICHES: Yes, and we are interested in people understanding the electoral laws under which they exercise that vote, whether they vote Liberal or Labor. As the Committee has already decided on a period of 10 days in a previous vote (I think mistakenly), I do not think we can do anything other than agree to a period of 10 days on this vote. I am sure that that will make the member for Onkaparinga very happy.

New clause inserted.

Title passed.

Bill reported with amendments.

LAND TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

In Committee.

(Continued from September 19. Page 796.)

New clause 3a—"Amendment of principal Act, section 10."

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): When the Committee last considered this matter it was agreed that I should prepare an amendment to deal with the question of a person who may find some hardship with regard to the payment of land tax. I agreed that I would consider it on the basis that anyone who experienced hardship could defer the payment of land tax if he satisfied the Commissioner that that course should be adopted. It would not be a remittance of the tax, but the payment of the tax would be taken into account at some future time on the disposal of the property. I have prepared an amendment and have submitted copies to honourable members, but I will read it because it is not on all members' files.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has not yet disposed of the amendment at present before it. That should be withdrawn before we consider the further amendment. Does the Leader of the Opposition intend to withdraw his amendment before we proceed with this further amendment?

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): No. I did not agree at any stage that I would withdraw my amendment and I have no intention of doing so.

The Committee divided on the amendment:

Ayes (14).—Messrs. Bywaters, Casey, Clark, Dunstan, Hughes, Jennings, Lawn, McKee, Ralston, Riches, Ryan, Tapping, Frank Walsh (teller), and Fred Walsh.

Noes (16).—Messrs. Bockelberg, Coumbe, Hall, Harding, Heaslip, Jenkins, King, Laucke, Nankivell, Nicholson, Pattinson, and Pearson, Sir Thomas Playford (teller), Messrs. Quirke, Shannon, and Mrs. Steele.

Pairs.—Ayes—Messrs. Hutchens, Corcoran, and Loveday. Noes—Sir Cecil Hincks and Messrs. Brookman and Millhouse.

Majority of 2 for the Noes.

New clause thus negatived.

New clause 11a—"Postponement of payment of tax in cases of hardship."

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I move to insert the following new clause:

11a. The following section is enacted and inserted in the principal Act after section 58 thereof.

58a. Where the Commissioner is satisfied upon application by a taxpayer that payment of the land tax in respect of any financial year by that taxpayer would cause hardship, the Commissioner may postpone payment of the said land tax or any portion thereof for such period or periods as the Commissioner thinks fit. The Commissioner may, if he is of the opinion that the circumstances

of the taxpayer have changed and that payment of any land tax so postponed would not in the changed circumstances result in hardship to the taxpayer, require the taxpayer forthwith to pay such land tax or portion thereof. Notwithstanding anything contained in this section, any land tax or portion of land tax, payment of which has been postponed by the Commissioner, shall be and remain a first charge upon the land taxed and shall be recoverable forthwith by the Commissioner upon any change of ownership of land taxed or in the event of the death of the taxpayer from his personal representatives. No penalty for late payment shall be added to any land tax payment of which has been postponed in pursuance of this section in respect of any period of postponement.

I think that clearly sets out that the taxpayer may, if circumstances of hardship prevail, apply to the Commissioner to have the payment of tax postponed. This clause is similar to that in another Act.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: There would probably be no need for this amendment if the Government had even been prepared to recognize certain arrangements by signature that were mentioned this afternoon. I regret that when a member desires to leave the House and arranges for a pair it is not recognized, because probably we would have been a little closer to agreement on this matter and there would be no need for this amendment. The amendment is only an afterthought and will not mean a real benefit for the pensioners and people most affected. It says:

. . . the Commissioner upon any change of ownership of land taxed or in the event of the death of the taxpayer from his personal representatives.

I do not intend to fathom what that means. The amendment does not solve the problem that I see. I make no apology for acting as I did, but in future when members desire to leave pairs we will supervise it, too.

Mr. RICHES: We have already agreed to grant a concession where the declaration of land for rural purposes no longer applies. In that case the Commissioner can recoup the taxation due, but only for a period of five years. Now the Treasurer proposes that the tax will always remain a debt on the land. Last night I asked whether he would give the same concession to pensioners as to owners of rural land. He said that the Government was being generous to the rural section of the community in not requiring it to pay retrospectively for more than five years when the land ceased to be rural land. That concession should be granted to pensioners also. If the Government will not agree to my request this

will be the end of the matter as far as I am concerned. If the Treasurer does not accede to it, the responsibility will be his.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The amendment has not been framed to cover pensioners only. It deals with taxpayers who may have difficulty in meeting the tax. If they experience hardship they can apply to have the payment of the tax deferred. There is no analogous position between the pensioner and the owner of rural land, as suggested by Mr. Riches. Last night it was pointed out that when rural land was sold a new tax rate might apply and that it would be charged retrospectively for five years. It would be a rate that would not be paid ordinarily. The amendment was introduced tonight as the result of the discussion last night, and I thought the Opposition would welcome it. The Commissioner does not want it and he strongly recommended against it. Last night members said that what was suggested would give relief where there was hardship. I told the Leader of the Opposition that I could not accept his amendment and that I would bring down another that I thought would meet the position. I am happy to leave the matter to the Committee. The Commissioner does not want this amendment because it will give him a greater amount of administrative work in dealing with applications for the postponement of the payment of the tax on the grounds of hardship.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: I do not retract one word of what I said last night. I wanted all pensioners to also have the privilege of having the payment of the tax deferred. They are entitled to such consideration. That is why I divided the Committee on new clause 3a.

New clause inserted.

Title passed.

Bill reported with amendments.

THE BUDGET.

The Estimates—Grand Total, £91,544,000.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from September 5. Page 717.)

THE LEGISLATURE.

Legislative Council, £12,417.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): I should like the Government to pay particular attention to the first few words of what I have to say. I wholeheartedly endorse the opening remarks of the Treasurer in his presentation of the Budget when he said:

This Budget is presented to the House at a time when the affairs of the State and indeed of the whole of Australian Commonwealth have suffered some severe shocks . . .

I agree entirely with that. However, I cannot agree with the concluding remarks in the same sentence, which were:

. . . but from which I believe recovery is now under way.

I say that it is a long way from being under way; we have a long way to go. My immediate question to the Treasurer is: who is responsible for those severe shocks, and has his Government done anything to alleviate the hardships caused? As regards the second part of the quotation, it is with sincere regret that I say that by this statement the Treasurer has allied himself with the Prime Minister and the Commonwealth Treasurer, who have been making the same type of hopeful statements for the past three to four months and probably longer but, because they have destroyed the business confidence of the community, it will take more than words to get the wheels of industry operating at full capacity and thus increase productivity and the real standard of living in our community.

I desire to refer to two or three points because they have a bearing on the Budget as a whole and upon what may occur in the financial structure of this State and in future Budgets. To me, it is significant that the Treasurer, when he introduced the 1959 Budget, made glowing references to this State's no longer being a claimant State when he said:

From the point of view of South Australia, the most revolutionary proposal of course was that this State should be given a grant outright sufficient to cover any recommendation which might otherwise have been made by the Commonwealth Grants Commission and should become a "non-claimant State". In future the State would be expected to manage its financial affairs with the grants as determined by the new formula, agreeing to go to the Commonwealth Grants Commission with an application for special assistance only in exceptional circumstances. Western Australia and Tasmania, it was proposed, should remain "claimant" States for, whilst their new grants would considerably reduce their dependence upon the Commonwealth Grants Commission, they would not become entirely independent of the commission . . . We have agreed not to go to the commission for special assistance except in exceptional circumstances.

The significance of these remarks is that, since South Australia has become a non-claimant State, most of our taxes and charges have been considerably increased (for example, railways, water rates and hospital charges), and now it

is proposed to increase the land tax in total by approximately 40 per cent. The House has just dealt with land tax amendments. I consider it is not a "glowing concern" from the Government's point of view. I will have something further to say on this later but, first, I wish to refer to the latter part of the Treasurer's statement:

We have agreed not to go to the commission for special assistance except in exceptional circumstances.

Because of the actions of the Commonwealth Government last November and the imposition of its credit squeeze, I should have thought that the resultant unemployment would provide exceptional circumstances for an approach to be made to the Commonwealth Government for special assistance under section 96 of the Commonwealth Constitution. However, no action has been taken by this Government and, because no mention has been made of the fact in the presentation of the Budget this year, I can only assume that this Government does not propose to take any action to relieve the position in South Australia.

In January of this year, I suggested to the Prime Minister of this country that a conference of State Premiers and Leaders of the State Oppositions should be held in order to review the economic and financial conditions; but he ignored the request. Because of this, I suggested to our Treasurer in February that a conference of representatives from Government, business leaders and unions be held in order to try to solve the problem of unemployment and lack of business confidence, but he, too, avoided the issue. A couple of months ago, he started making suggestions in accord with those I had been making six months earlier, but nothing has come of it and, in any case, I consider that the time has now passed when business confidence can be restored without some combined and direct action by all State Governments as well as the Commonwealth Government. For example, immediate grants should be made available to councils for urgent works, and finance should be made available for the repair of railway tracks.

Over the past few months, the Commonwealth Government has been removing its various economic restrictions but, because it has destroyed business confidence by its earlier actions, no immediate results are forthcoming and unemployment continues to mount. It appears to me that the only way to restore confidence is for the Commonwealth and State Governments to make a united effort by immediate expenditure rather than by trying to

entire private enterprise to undertake expenditure by merely saying that conditions are likely to improve some time in the future. This is the reason why I suggest that the Treasurer should approach the Commonwealth for an immediate grant under section 96 of the Commonwealth Constitution to relieve the unemployment position which has been created by the actions of the Commonwealth Government, and which, to this stage, has not been corrected by any actions of this State Government.

This Government has worked in concert with the Commonwealth Government over the last 12 months because, in passing Expenditure Estimates last year, we voted for a small surplus of £312,000, but up to March this year the Government was embarrassed by its increased earnings and reduced expenditure and commenced seeking ways and means of spending the additional finance. Excluding the £1,000,000 granted to the Electricity Trust, the Government had a surplus of £2,188,000, or approximately seven times its original estimate, and, in a period of mounting unemployment, this money should have been used for immediate public works which would have provided the financial stimulus necessary to industry and would have restored business confidence and activity. However, in accord with Commonwealth policy, the Treasurer decided to run a deflationary Budget and by so doing laid his Government open to the same criticism that can be directed towards the Commonwealth Government of adding to, rather than rectifying, the unemployment position.

To lessen this criticism, his officers worked out a shrewd move of making a grant of £1,000,000 to the Electricity Trust under the provisions of an earlier Statute; but other than being a shrewd move, this grant (some time between March and June of this year) did nothing to relieve our unemployment position, because it was nothing more than a book entry. In other words, the Treasurer worked out a way of showing an additional £1,000,000 Government expenditure, but to my knowledge this sum is still held by the Treasury under the name of the Electricity Trust, and even when the power line is constructed in the South-East the payment will be going to other States and will not provide any fillip, immediate or otherwise, to industry and employment in South Australia.

Naturally, we are all pleased that at some time in the future the South-East is to be provided with a power line, but surely the aim of any Government should be the maintenance of

full employment! The problem today, which was apparent when the book grant of £1,000,000 was made to the Electricity Trust and which has worsened since then, is that of unemployment. If the Government had £1,000,000 available after March of this year, it should have used it to relieve the unemployment position rather than earmarking it for investment in the future and for expenditure in other States opposed to industry in our own State.

This is a typical example of the Treasurer using dictatorial powers over his own fellow members by the utilization of Statutes to achieve his own ends of being able to announce continued heavy public investment purely for propaganda purposes rather than agreeing to a stable, steady and balanced development of a community which exudes business confidence and is able to attain the desirable end of full employment. The next statement of the Treasurer which I will discuss was:

Accordingly as unemployment developed the Government was in a position to devote that prospective surplus, and such other reserves and balances as it had in hand, to useful works designed to take up employment and encourage increased industrial activity. Particular attention was devoted to housing, other building work including schools, and to constructional work for water and sewer purposes. As a result of this work and expenditure, the extent of unemployment in this State was kept generally lower than in most other parts of Australia, although the initial impact upon our main industries was probably the most severe.

Let us see how this statement stands up to some scrutiny because, in my view, it has only been made for effect and will not stand scrutiny. This matter was discussed in the Loan Estimates but, as the Treasurer has brought it forward, I intend to answer it again. These are not items which give a biased view but are purely an answer to the Treasurer's attempting to protect himself from just criticism by statements that are without foundation. Regarding housing, I submit the following table showing an index of completions by the Housing Trust during the last five years converted to a per capita basis and based on figures released by the Housing Trust:

	Index to Housing Trust completions per capita.
1956-57	100
1957-58	94
1958-59	95
1959-60	93
1960-61	95

This table demonstrates that on a per capita basis, the Government completed 5 per cent fewer houses through the Housing Trust last

year than it did five years ago. Surely even the Treasurer would not say that this is an example of his Government's devoting particular attention to housing in order to relieve unemployment!

We provided £3,529,000 on the Loan Estimates last year for the construction of new school buildings, but the Government spent only £2,584,000. In other words, Parliament provided £945,000 more last year than was utilized by the Government on school building construction, and the Government achieved only 50 per cent of its planned programme last year for new school buildings. Is this another example of this Government's devoting particular attention to building work including schools in order to relieve the unemployment position? My answer is "No", and I am prepared to tell the Treasurer that it is not possible during this financial year to spend, in conformity with the Estimates, the £6,000,000 for school buildings and associated works. He probably knows better than you or I, Mr. Chairman, that he has not the plans provided nor the specifications drawn up, let alone contracts signed to use this amount. In other words, it is deliberate "kite-flying"—inflating the building potential and creating false impressions amongst the building fraternity—and is purely face-saving for him and his Government in preparation for the State elections early next year. Statements such as this by the Treasurer eventually have a damaging effect upon the morale of those who are unemployed and who hold out in the hope of being engaged in industry. If some of the money from this item had been transferred to the repair of railway tracks, it would have assisted to relieve the unemployment position. In fact, if contracts had been signed at the end of June this year to commence work, there is a grave doubt in my mind that the resources of this State could be used effectively and efficiently to spend this large sum of money in the building of schools and associated works. It is about time that this Government got down to the real basis of offering some assistance to relieve unemployment instead of doing so much kite-flying as indicated in this debate, and in other places where the Treasurer seems to get publicity on the amount he is going to spend on the building of schools this year.

I shall deal now with waterworks and sewers. I examined some large projects in the Adelaide water district and found that, although we provided £2,155,000 last year, the Government spent only £1,526,000. In other words, there was an under-spending of £629,000, or 30 per

cent. In this a further example of the Government's devoting particular attention to waterworks and sewers in order to relieve unemployment? I could give further illustrations, but I am sure the Treasurer is convinced that his statement is based on a shaky foundation and, rather than alleviating the unemployment position in South Australia, he has followed the dictates of the Commonwealth Government with its application of the credit squeeze.

One of the main criticisms I have of the Treasurer in his presentation of this Budget is his condemnation of his own outlook on South Australia when he said:

As I have firmly put it to members in the past, and will equally firmly put it to you in connection with the 1961-62 Budget, I believe it should be a primary objective of a State Treasurer to balance the current operating Budget and to preserve all available Loan resources for development works and housing. Members on this side have put a statement just as firmly as the Treasurer in the past, and I put it forward just as firmly today; that the Treasurer is blinded by his grandiose schemes of development, and will crush anything or anybody in order to bring these schemes to fruition. I reply just as firmly as the Treasurer that the primary object of any Government should be full employment, together with balanced and continued advancement; and this does not necessarily mean a balanced Budget. The Treasurer would not make a statement such as he has if he were not losing his grip on the Treasury purse strings of this State.

It is interesting to note that an expenditure of £4,000 is proposed for the home help section of *Meals on Wheels* (an increase of £1,000), but this has been achieved only by reducing by £1,242 the assistance to this organization in another direction. In other words, the total allocation for this organization is £242 less than the amount spent last year. It is not my intention to detract in any way from the outstanding effort of both Miss Taylor and *Meals on Wheels* towards the domiciliary care of the sick and the aged, because this is a most important and beneficial activity. Any attempt to explain this work could be lengthy but, to give a brief explanation, it is possible to keep the aged and infirm in their own homes by the efforts of this section of the *Meals on Wheels* programme, and every attempt should be made to provide a service that would assist in this direction.

I visualize a mobile unit with all the necessary equipment together with disinfecting materials for cleaning homes. All houses would

not require this type of service but, because of long drawn-out sickness combined with hardship, there is often a need to have this type of equipment. I have reason to believe that, where home helps are engaged to do casual home duties for people who are in need, in some instances the house has become very untidy before the home help is called in; consequently, their task of endeavouring to care for the person is almost lost sight of because of the amount of work involved in some cases in cleaning up the homes. Therefore, the mobile type of equipment I have suggested is essential. It would certainly eliminate some of the difficult work that is now involved and permit more time for the care and attention of the aged or sick. If members really examine my proposal, I think they will agree that this organization is doing a noble work and that the Government should do everything possible to help in its difficult task.

We have been told that the proposed expenditure on hospitals for this year is £6,255,000, being £500,000 or 9 per cent greater than last year. I also notice that patients' fees for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital were £54,000 greater than the estimate and that there was expected to be a further increase of £38,000 during the current year. This is the result of the Government's increasing its hospital charges, and is an example of the bitter pill that goes with any heavy expenditure; that is, that somebody eventually has to pay for it.

From the figures supplied by the Treasurer in the Budget regarding the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, there was a bed availability of 465 beds and a bed occupancy of 86 per cent during the last financial year. The costs of running this hospital are excessive. On the information supplied and, after making allowances for Mareeba Hospital expenses, the ordinary running cost for each patient was about £53 a week, whilst the estimated reimbursements including patients' fees and Commonwealth contributions were only about £22 a week. No doubt this is a beautiful hospital but, during the construction period, we repeatedly drew attention to the excessive construction cost. After excluding any expense on account of capital charges, which would be in the vicinity of £15 a week for every patient occupying a bed, the ordinary running costs still amount to approximately £53 a week for each patient. I consider that our hospital policy is all wrong but, unfortunately, the Government did not heed our earlier criticism and we are committed to

a programme for which we shall have to pay very heavily for many years to come.

Many years ago we suggested that the Royal Adelaide Hospital should be reconstructed, modernized, and made the prime teaching and research hospital in South Australia with provision to treat difficult cases from the metropolitan area and the country, and that, ultimately, we should provide hospitals in the north, south, east and west of the metropolitan area to treat ordinary cases. Had the Government done that, I believe we would have solved our hospital problem to the satisfaction of most suburban people and at much less cost. Undoubtedly, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is a wonderful building, but can we afford many more like it? Because the running costs for each patient are not reducing appreciably, even though the hospital is working to capacity, I believe that some investigation is required. If economies are impossible, then the present Government made a gross error of judgment in embarking upon a hospital of this type in the first place. I am sure the Government will not admit this, but I believe this is an instance where a public accounts committee could give us a reliable lead as to where the Government is falling down on this project. We would then be able to make savings in the annual running costs of the present scheme, and if that is not possible, we could at least learn for any further projects of this type.

I notice that the Government is to spend £12,739,000 on education this year, which is an increase of 10½ per cent over actual expenditure in 1960-61. The Government can certainly boast that it is spending huge sums on education, but as we pointed out before, and we point out again, the improvements in our education system do not appear to be commensurate with the increased expenditure being undertaken. I have recently examined the report of the Minister of Education, and my conclusion is that over a period of four years from 1956-1960, and after excluding capital expenditure such as the building of new schools, the average cost a pupil instructed increased by approximately 33 per cent. Over the same period, the consumer price index increased by only 15 per cent. We still have overcrowded classrooms and lack of teachers, and, with the unsatisfactory conditions still continuing, I believe we are not receiving value commensurate with the increased expenditure being incurred.

We hear all sorts of excuses, such as greatly increased population and a greater proportion

of this increased population being of school-going age. Both these factors would legitimately increase the total amount spent annually on education, but, when the cost is converted to a cost for each pupil instructed, the figure should remain fairly constant except for general price increases. In view of the increase in the average cost a pupil instructed being more than double the increase in the general level of prices in the four-year period 1956-1960, I still say that the present Government has not the answer to the education problem in this State. Whilst on this topic of education, I should like to bring to the Government's notice the fact that the independent schools have been equally as prominent in the provision of education requirements as the Government, and have removed a considerable burden from the Government in this State in meeting its education commitments. I do not need to mention any particular independent school or college, but whereas councils do reduce rates when school buildings are erected, what about the period prior to independent schools and colleges erecting buildings for school purposes on land they own? In this latter case, no relief is granted. This land is not held as an investment, but is in preparation for religious and educational purposes. One of these schools in my district was paying £1,000 in council rates.

In dealing generally with educational requirements, all must realize that there is a limit to the burden which we can expect these bodies to carry and therefore what does the future hold on this educational problem? In this sphere of education, I believe that there is scope for a public accounts committee to inquire why the ordinary annual running costs a student are increasing at a far greater rate than is the cost of living with the object of the Government's receiving full value for the colossal sum expended in this field, with the added possibility of greater economies being made so that funds would be available towards meeting some of the heavy burdens of the independent schools.

The funds employed in the Railways Department undertaking have been increasing over

the years, but in view of the expanding economy, this is to be expected, but what is not to be expected is that the earnings did not keep pace with the capital expansion, and, in some cases declined. Once again, I have examined the "deadweight" charges of the public debt, and have here two tables presented in the Auditor-General's annual report for 1959-60. I did not have a copy of the Auditor-General's report for 1960-61 when I prepared my speech and I do not want to be held to ransom if any of my figures are out-of-date. The Notice Paper yesterday indicated that the Budget debate would be continued on that day, but that did not eventuate, and because copies were not available my colleagues and I did not have an opportunity to study the Auditor-General's report. I should like to know when the Government Printer is to be supplied with the new premises that have been promised for so long. When members ask why the Auditor-General's report is not available, as they have little or no opportunity to prepare their speeches for the Budget debate, the Treasurer generally offers the excuse that it is delayed because of the shortage of staff. Members should always have the opportunity to study this report before the Budget debate is proceeded with. I am perturbed that I have to rely on out-of-date figures, but evidently it is the intention of the Government that the Opposition is not to have a current Auditor-General's report in sufficient time to peruse it prior to our reply on the Budget. The first table relates to the "deadweight" charges of the public debt over the period 1955-56 to 1959-60, and the other to the earnings and expenditure of the Railways Department during the same period. The "deadweight" charge of the public debt on Consolidated Revenue is the extent to which public undertakings fail to recoup to the Budget full interest and sinking fund charges attributable to them. I quote the remarks of the Auditor-General on the following table, which I request permission to have incorporated in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

The Burden on Consolidated Revenue of Undertakings Financed from the Loan Fund.

	"Dead-weight." £	Percentage Increase Since 1955-56. %	Excess Payments Excluding Debt Charges. £	Total Burden. £	Percentage Increase Since 1955-56. %
1955-56	5,080,000	—	2,550,000	7,630,000	—
1956-57	5,410,000	6.5	2,420,000	7,830,000	2.6
1957-58	5,890,000	15.9	2,210,000	8,100,000	6.2
1958-59	6,330,000	24.6	1,970,000	8,300,000	8.8
1959-60	7,400,000	45.8	2,420,000	9,820,000	28.8

Mr. FRANK WALSH: The Auditor-General said:

The "dead weight" (£7,400,000) represented 41 per cent of the total debt charges for the year, and was £1,070,000 more than for 1958-59. In addition, the cash deficits on working operations (£2,420,000) were up £450,000, making a total burden on Consolidated Revenue of undertakings financed from Loan funds £9,820,000, an increase of £1,520,000 for the year. Factors in the increase in the burden are the higher interest charges on the public debt, further investment in non-productive works, and charges for services not being raised to an extent commensurate with the increase in costs.

This same table also shows that the increase in the total burden over this five-year period was 28.8 per cent and that the increase on the "dead weight" portion of the increase was 45.8 per cent.

The table prepared by the Auditor-General in relation to the Railways Department appears on page 141 of his report for 1959-60, and I ask permission to have it incorporated in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Summary of Funds Employed, Working Expenses, and Earnings for the past five years.

	1955-56.	1956-57.	1957-58.	1958-59.	1959-60.
	£	£	£	£	£
Funds employed	48,186,011	50,491,798	51,650,749	52,826,104	54,540,066
Working expenses	15,818,605	16,036,215	16,012,187	15,162,819	15,390,888
Earnings	13,159,349	13,835,535	13,222,425	12,920,890	12,826,114
Deficit on Working	2,659,256	2,200,680	2,789,762	2,241,929	2,564,774
Interest	1,589,250	1,689,753	1,886,152	1,971,427	2,107,217
Actual deficit for year . .	4,248,506	3,890,433	4,675,914	4,213,356	4,671,991
Less—Contributions from					
Consolidated Revenue	4,050,000	4,200,000	4,300,000	4,650,000	4,200,000
Adjusted result for year	198,506	309,567	375,914	436,644	471,991
	Deficit	Surplus	Deficit	Surplus	Deficit

Mr. FRANK WALSH: From the table it will be seen that between 1955-56 and 1959-60 the funds employed increased by about £6,400,000, but the earnings during 1959-60 declined by £333,000 when compared with the four years earlier, in spite of substantial increases in passenger and freight rates. There was an improvement during 1960-61 as revealed by the Treasurer in his Budget, namely, earnings of £13,386,000, but this was still only about the same as in 1955-56. For this year, a further increase to £13,838,000 is expected, but if members examine the table I have submitted, they will note that this does not compare very favourably with the year 1956-57 when the Railways revenue was £13,836,000. Therefore, in spite of substantial increases in passenger and freight rates by the Government over the past few years, there is not expected to be any substantial improvement in the financial position of the Railways Department.

No commercial business could hope to survive if the owners continued to pour capital into it without increasing the earnings from the business. The same applies to the business of the Government. If the Government continues to pour Loan funds into a public utility that does not make any improvement in its return, then, eventually, the Government will be in trouble. In this same period the interest commitment had increased by approximately

£600,000, and I noticed that at no time in this period did the Railways Department earn sufficient to cover working expenses, let alone have any surplus earnings available to make any contribution towards the interest cost of the funds employed in the undertaking. In fact, I consider the position of the Railways Department to be very grave, for the Government has seen fit to pour more than £20,000,000 from its Consolidated Revenue in the last five years into the coffers of the department in an attempt to keep the deficits to manageable figures. The railway officers are attempting to stop the rot by greater efficiency, but any improvements they have made towards the reduction of working expenses have been far outweighed by the rapidly mounting interest commitment. We have repeatedly warned the Government of the rapidly mounting public debt with its consequential mounting interest commitment that has to be met irrespective of whether the grand schemes make any contribution or not. From the information I have given, members will agree that here is another phase of the Government's activity which should be investigated by a public accounts committee to advise ways and means of reducing the heavy burden on the Consolidated Revenue of our State.

I have two other matters which I wish to raise concerning the Railways Department. The first is in relation to excursion travel. Although

it may be only a minor matter, when is this Government going to wake up to the potential of excursion trains on week-ends and public holidays? I have in mind such excursions to places like Wallaroo and other country towns, using the best type of rollingstock, and, where possible, attaching a dining car. I am positive the railwaymen would like to see such an attempt made. I think there is an obligation upon the Government to provide for excursion rail fares on special trains to give the people in the metropolitan area an opportunity to visit some of these country towns during the holiday periods, but I emphasize that this type of travel must centre around the utilization of the best type of rollingstock. I am positive that many children have never travelled on the railway system in any part of the State, and, undoubtedly, it would be a novelty compared with travelling in motor cars. As well as people being able to have a day's outing, this service would certainly assist in the tourist trade of country towns.

The other matter I wish to raise concerns facilities at the Islington workshops. A car park should be provided on the south-eastern corner bounded by Irish Harp and Churchill Roads, and an extension should be made of the car park near the existing bicycle park in the northern section of the area. The member for Torrens (Mr. Coumbe) had something to say on this matter only yesterday, and he can be assured that I will support him in his requests for these facilities. My information discloses that this matter was taken up between the men and the Chief Mechanical Engineer. As a matter of fact, it has been on the list for a number of years. The stage was reached where certain plans were drawn up, but the Railways Commissioner did not approve. A census was taken which proved that the employees had no railway service on which they could travel and, consequently, it was necessary to use motor vehicles. The figures disclosed that in a place where 170 cars were parked, the employees concerned were unable to obtain reasonable rail transport. I believe that the local councils are much concerned with traffic congestion, particularly when it is time for these men to travel home and when the safety of those who leave the works on foot is at stake. The road is a busy thoroughfare and in view of the desirability of obtaining the best from the works employees, it is essential that car parking facilities be made available. Whilst realizing that the obligation is upon the Commissioner to provide rail services this is a case

where, in the interests of safety generally, the provision of two car parks is necessary for the employees of the Railways Commissioner. I hope that the Minister in charge of this department will take this matter up with the Commissioner in order to solve this very important problem, and at the same time assist the honourable member who raised it yesterday.

I now come to the question of land tax. Members dealt with this point yesterday and I do not feel disposed to go much further than to say that land tax collected in the metropolitan area has been increased, on an average, by 189 per cent, representing an increase of approximately 38 per cent each year over the last five years. I know that the Treasurer would not ask us to agree that this increase was anything but outrageous. Only one thing counts in this place: if you have the numbers you can do anything.

In conclusion I refer to some of the indices for June, 1961, as compared with June, 1960. In other years the Treasurer has paraded them, but for some reason he has not seen fit to do that this year. First, I will give the "ups" because they are so few:—

	UPS	
	June, 1960	June, 1961
Consumer price index	120.6	124.3
Registered Unemployment	4,547	9,035
Value of principal commodities imported (11 months to May) .	£54,300,000	£66,900,000

It can be seen that the consumer price index has increased by approximately 3 per cent whilst unemployment is approximately double what it was in June, 1960. Of course, subsequent events have shown that unemployment has increased still further in the last couple of months. If there is any dispute about that I have certain other figures that will indicate clearly that in July, 1960, we had a total of 4,523 unemployed, but in July, 1961, we had 10,053, and so the picture goes on and on. It is not a rosy picture from the point of view of our general economy and prospects of full employment in this State.

The value of our imports increased by more than £12,000,000 in the 11 months to May, 1961, as compared with the same period last year. I admit that over the same period South Australian exports increased, but on the information available to me for the 12 months from June, 1960, to June, 1961, trade trends moved against South Australia to the extent of £2,000,000. Therefore, I would say that the Commonwealth credit squeeze has not been

effective so far as South Australian overseas trade is concerned.

I examined numerous other statistics which showed substantial falls during the period June, 1960, to June, 1961, of which the following are examples:

Motor vehicle registrations.

Radio licences issued.

Savings Bank deposits per capita.

Property transfers.

Retail sales.

Undoubtedly, the fall in these indices reflects some of the undesirable results of the Commonwealth Government's credit squeeze since last November.

As can be gathered from the tenor of my remarks today the Budget presented by the Treasurer is very similar to budgets presented in recent years, and it does not offer any direct or immediate stimulus towards the recovery of industry and trade in this State. It continues the Government's trend of steadily increasing its expenditure over the years, and the Government has put forward no effective plans for relieving the present unemployment position in South Australia, but prefers to follow the line of the Commonwealth Government that an upturn in business activity will soon occur. In other words it is leaving industry and trade to recover from the shocks and dislocation caused by the actions of the Commonwealth Government last November instead of giving the necessary financial stimulus to South Australian industries.

Mr. HALL (Gouger): The speech of the Leader of the Opposition reflects very little credit on him: I would say it reflects no credit on him at all for the criticisms he has made of the Treasurer's Budget for the coming year.

Mr. Frank Walsh: But look at the authority speaking!

Mr. HALL: The honourable member tried to couple this Government's policy with one of restriction and of creating unemployment in this State, but all members in this House know that the Treasurer fully explained the position earlier when he laid before the House correspondence and copies of letters he had sent in an application relating to the measures that caused the troubles we are now experiencing. He did everything in his power to avert the restrictions that have affected South Australian industry. Because of that it is futile for the Leader of the Opposition to criticize the Government as he has done. He referred to land taxation, and the only inference we can make is that he does not support the legislation recently introduced by

the Government. He is not in line with his Federal leader (Mr. Calwell) who said publicly that something would have to be done to alleviate the difficult position of the Australian primary producer. In this Parliament we have tried to bring about some alleviation, but the Leader of the Opposition does not approve of it and is well out of line with his Federal leader.

Mr. Clark: I thought we all voted for it.

Mr. HALL: The Leader's remarks have been recorded in *Hansard* and they can be read tomorrow. He criticized the allocation of money for the construction of a power line to the South-East. He said that the money should not have been allowed to accumulate and should have been spent last year. He criticized the Treasurer's careful efforts in accumulating funds to be used to good effect in the attempt to solve our unemployment problem. He decries the fact that these funds are available to assist the people whom he says he wants to help. It is good that we have these resources because it enables the Government to employ more men on public works. The power line will provide more work, not only in its construction but in the industries that will be established when the power is available. It will mean that much more work will be available on a decentralized basis. When the Leader of the Opposition criticizes what has been done in this instance it is not in accord with his many suggestions on other matters.

His speech tonight was a mass of confusion and contradiction. He wants more people employed on public works, yet he decries the fact that about £6,000,000 is to be spent on new buildings. He says that the department is not geared for the programme, but if that is so it is only because there are not enough workers. We all want everybody employed. The Leader of the Opposition said that the Treasurer would crush anyone who stood in the way of his achievements. That was a childish statement. During his term of office we have had many achievements by the Treasurer from one end of the State to the other. What he has crushed has been adversity. Because of his policy he has subdued natural hazards in many ways. By planning ahead in many directions we have achieved coal production and better water distribution. His achievements are endless and they stand as a record that will never be destroyed by statements like those made by the Leader of the Opposition tonight.

Because of the display by the Leader tonight I hope the State will never have to suffer such statements by him from the Treasury benches, because it would be disastrous. There would be a great collapse and much confusion. I very much doubt the sincerity of a man who calls for full employment yet is closely associated with people who prevent men from working. Projects are standing idle because of illegal black bans. We have seen press reports that pickets have been standing at the gates of the oil refinery works at Port Stanvac. That sort of thing is illegal and a contravention of the Industrial Code. We have heard statements in this place and reports from elsewhere that these actions have been endorsed by the Opposition. We have good South Australians waiting to get on with the work but they are prevented from doing so.

Mr. Lawn: Prevented by whom?

Mr. HALL: By people outside.

Mr. Lawn: By your Government and the Menzies Government.

Mr. HALL: These people are preventing decent South Australians from earning a living. The Budget has been criticized. What has been done by these people outside will stand for a long time as a black mark against them. It will be remembered. Over the years our Treasurer has created a great record of development. We shall get nowhere if we have people in charge of the State who prevent men from working, and working according to arbitration awards.

I want now to deal with the Transport Control Board, which was established to regulate transport throughout the State and to preserve railway revenue. Following on the difficulty I had yesterday, today I was successful in asking the Premier a question about the board's operations. I contend that it is operating in a manner unforeseen at the time of its establishment. That is not altogether unusual, having in mind some of the boards that have been set up. I referred to a case where the board dealt with the application for a permit to transport diseased sheep on South Australian roads. I should like to explain what I know of this case for, by doing so, I may be able to voice my complaints more fully than I could in a question. There is living at Balaklava a man whose sheep contracted footrot. It is an unusual part of the State for sheep to get this disease.

Mr. McKee: Where were they accommodated?

Mr. HALL: He had a flock and added a few sheep to it. The new sheep came on to his property, but they introduced footrot to his

whole flock. The agents traced back the sources of infection along the way the sheep had come in, to find out where the disease had originated and the way in which they were brought to the property. The Government inspectors of stock also co-operated in this, and the only place that these responsible people could think of where contamination could have occurred was in a rail truck. There was no footrot at the place of origin of these sheep, nor was there any footrot at any place other than in a rail truck. There may have been some obscure reason, but that was the only practical explanation. In any case, this gentleman had to sell his sheep for slaughter—there was no other way out—at a financial loss.

He is a responsible citizen who does much good work around the town in many ways. He contended, first, that it was cruel to shift the sheep by rail truck; and, secondly, that doing so would infect the truck. The railway authorities take the view that the disease is infective and they will not have these sheep in the rail yards or going up the rail ramp for loading and unloading. I understand also, from what I know of the legislation, that these sheep may not be driven on a public road. Therefore, loading these sheep on to a rail truck at one end and unloading them at the receiving end where the same conditions applied presented much difficulty.

With these matters in mind, the local agent applied to the Transport Control Board for a permit for the sheep to travel and be delivered by road transport direct to the place of slaughter. This was refused, and the head office of the stock and station agents took this matter up with the Transport Control Board, to the best of its ability; but again the application was refused. The gentleman concerned did not think of anything else at the time apart from the usual channels. The matter had been considered by the board.

Mr. Bywaters: Did you go to see Mr. Holden yourself? I have always found him reasonable.

Mr. HALL: No, I did not. Dozens of these special cases occur throughout the State. It seems unreasonable to me that the person concerned should have to run to his member of Parliament about it. Many have their requests refused by the Transport Control Board.

Mr. Bywaters: I have always found Mr. Holden most co-operative.

Mr. HALL: We have always found him most unco-operative. These sheep had to be transported by rail, which meant backing up

to the rail truck, not being able to use the yard and the ramp. At the receiving end the sheep had to be carried out, so much work was involved. The main point is that that truck was infected. The stock inspectors of the Agriculture Department are worried about that aspect. They have told this gentleman that they receive little, if any, co-operation from the Transport Control Board in the eradication of stock disease when it comes to transporting stock. So the position is that one department is actively working for the eradication of this great pastoral disease of footrot while another department (whether by inaction or by a negative attitude I do not know) is working for the contamination and spread of footrot.

Mr. Jennings: Not consciously.

Mr. HALL: These facts are known to the board. I am explaining this so that, if I complain further, honourable members will at least know what I am talking about or trying to explain. The fact is that the board was conversant with this case, yet would not grant this permit. So one department is working for the eradication of this disease while another is propagating it. This is one of many special cases.

Mr. Bywaters: I do not think that is fair.

Mr. HALL: It is a disruptive influence on the economic life of this State. Perhaps honourable members would like another instance. This does not concern stock disease but, if any member can deny that it is a disruptive influence, I should like him to hear what I have to say. A new building was being erected at Balaklava for a stock agent. Roofing tiles had been stipulated and had to be carted from Adelaide. Being fragile, they needed careful handling and correct packing and stacking. To transport them by rail meant that they had to be handled four times, whereas by road they would be handled only twice. The road freight rate was half of the rail freight rate (about £50 as against £100) yet the board again turned a deaf ear to this proposition. If the member for Murray (Mr. Bywaters) says that putting up the freight charge on those tiles by 100 per cent is not a disruptive influence on the life of this community, he has a peculiar idea of our finances.

Mr. Bywaters: It is unfair to say that the board was propagating the footrot.

Mr. HALL: Its policies were propagating footrot. All it had to do to avert this was to grant a permit for the one special case that might arise in 20 or 30 years in the district. This is the result of that application. I shall not cite any more cases this evening,

but there are many of them. They serve only to illustrate the fact that the board is not keeping up with the times. No doubt, in many respects it has preserved railway revenue. No-one can deny that or that we have a good railway system in this State—as good as, if not better than, that in any other State. Our rollingstock is far superior to that found in other States, but we shall never get public opinion to support our railways if we have a board that cannot see the special case. The loss of revenue to this State would be negligible if the type of case I have cited could be dealt with sympathetically. I am sure that if, in this particular case, another flock were infected through this rail truck, the pound or two gained by the Railways Department would be negligible compared with the loss to the owner of the sheep. The responsibility rests with the Transport Control Board.

Another aspect is that the more these sheep were handled the greater their suffering, and they were in the rail truck for many more hours than they would have been in a road truck. I do not know how the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals would have regarded this. The owner of the sheep applied for a permit to prevent the possibility of some other owner experiencing the trouble he had. He is a disillusioned man now. His intentions were the best, and had the support of inspectors of the Agriculture Department, but they were brushed aside by an authority that does not know what it is doing and which is not competent to assess the facts placed before it. There have been so many complaints for so long that it is obvious we must agitate for the removal of the members of the board and for their replacement by men who know something about agriculture. Section 5 (2) of the Road and Railway Transport Act states:

The members of the board shall be persons who in the Governor's opinion are capable of assessing the financial and economic effect on the State as a whole of any transport policy.

It is obvious that the board is not able to assess these factors and its members should be replaced with competent persons. Its actions represent a breach of the delegated authority of this Parliament. The board is a hindrance and a disruptive influence to our society, and something should be done about its membership. I support the Estimates.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.36 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, September 21, at 2 p.m.