

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, October 17, 1961.

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

QUESTIONS.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Press reports last night and this morning contain figures which indicate that unemployment has worsened to a greater extent in this State than in any other State, and the retrenchment policy of General Motors-Holden's has been mentioned as being a major cause of this deterioration. I previously said that more attention should be paid to a public works programme and more money made available for the repair of railway tracks and other projects. Has the Premier further considered my suggestions, and will the Government make more money available for expenditure on such projects to provide more employment?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I think the figures the Leader has referred to have been influenced to a certain extent by the fact that there was, as honourable members know, a lay-off at the G.M.H. plant and that those figures came into the review. I agree with the Leader that the number of unemployed is far too high, and that this state of affairs should not be looked upon as being normal. I think every effort should be made to improve the position, particularly as we are approaching the period of the year when many children will be leaving schools and looking for jobs. On that point there is no difference between the Leader's views and my own. However, on the question of making additional money available, I pointed out to the Leader when I introduced the Loan Estimates that those Estimates provided for the greatest possible sum available for works in this State this year. We may get some relief if the assistance promised by the Commonwealth Government for the purchase of rolling stock comes to hand, because that would enable us to spend additional amounts on some fabrication in our workshops. However, regarding our cash position we will be hard-pressed this year without additional expenditure.

ELLISTON WATER SCHEME.

Mr. BOCKELBERG: Can the Minister of Works give me any information about the water scheme for Elliston on Eyre Peninsula?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Following representations by the honourable member and

a deputation that came to me, at his instigation, from the District Council of Elliston, we prepared a proposal for a water supply for that town. We found, however, in costing the scheme that it would be costly both in terms of the number of people to be served in the town and, what is more to the point, from the point of view of its annual operating costs which, in turn, would place a considerable load on the scheme itself. Having looked at that, I then discussed the matter further with the district council representatives who came to see me (I think, during the early part of show week or thereabouts) and I proposed to them that we would again examine the scheme to see whether we could modify it in its total cost, and also that the council should take over and run the scheme as a council undertaking, on lease. That proposal appealed somewhat to the district council representatives, who agreed in principle with it.

I then undertook to re-examine it with a view to reducing the capital cost, and that matter is now in hand. As soon as I have the revised proposals from the department, I intend to seek Cabinet approval for the scheme to be offered to the Elliston council on the terms agreed upon in principle at our earlier interview. I hope that a favourable result will flow from those negotiations and that we shall be able thereby to give the Elliston people a firm hope of getting a water supply.

FACTORY WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. RICHES: Has the Minister of Works a reply to a question I asked a fortnight ago about the provision of an adequate supply of water to a cordial factory at Port Augusta?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: When this matter was last discussed in the House, I suggested there was some mistake in the submission made by the cordial factory; and my statement has proved to be correct. The Engineer-in-Chief, therefore, advises me that the Crystal Cordial Company made a typographical error in its original application for an improved water supply. The company has now estimated that its water supply consumption would be approximately 70,000 gallons a week and, to meet its need, it has been decided to replace the old 3in. water main in Marryatt Street, Port Augusta, with a 4in. asbestos cement main.

I would add that, because the cordial factory obviously has some high peaks in its consumption rate, it would be advisable for the

factory to retain such storages as it already has to enable it to provide, and to assist the department in providing, for those acute peaks when they occur. But it has been agreed to replace the old main with a larger one.

Mr. Riches: When will the work start?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The Engineer-in-Chief has not given me an undertaking about that matter but I know he regards the work as urgent. I think it would be put in hand just as soon as Mr. Steele (District Engineer) can organize a gang of men to do the work.

FLORA DESTRUCTION.

Mr. HARDING: A prominent article in today's *Advertiser* refers to the visit by His Excellency the Governor to the Marble Hill property, which formerly was the summer residence of previous Governors. Frequent comments have been made about the need for clearing timber in the Mount Lofty Ranges and pasturing down the country, and whilst we are fortunate to have the Minister of Agriculture and Mr. F. L. Kerr (Director of Emergency Fire Services) in charge of bush fire prevention, when the Minister is considering this question at a high level will he also consider the preservation of our eucalypts and other flora in the ranges, particularly as their removal would cause a danger from erosion?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The Bush Fires Research Committee controls the Marble Hill property, which involves about 100 acres at the most. There are certainly no plans for the wholesale destruction of scrub in the Adelaide Hills, which would be expensive and undesirable, so the honourable member need have no fears in that respect. The committee is undertaking work at Marble Hill to establish whether it is feasible and economic to make such areas reasonably safe from bush fires. Marble Hill was selected because it is Government property and is in a bad bush fire area. Furthermore, it was burnt out some years ago.

TELEVISION EXTENSIONS.

Mr. LOVEDAY: In the *News* of October 11 under the heading "P.M.G. attacked in T.V. Scandal" an article pointed out the concern of the Numurkah Shire Council, which is 133 miles from Melbourne. In a letter to the council Mr. Davidson (Postmaster-General) said that because of technical problems in reception, elaborate and expensive aerials, some costing more than £200, which could now pick

up Melbourne's three channels, would be useless when the Bendigo and Shepparton television stations began transmission. Mr. Davidson explained that Melbourne television stations operated on horizontal polarization, and receiving aerials with horizontal elements were required for reception. The Goulburn Valley station and the Bendigo station would employ vertical polarization, and aerials would have to be designed to receive vertical elements. In this area television sets have been selling as fringe sets, and there has been much concern that they will not be suitable when television facilities are extended. Will the Premier take up with the Postmaster-General the question of whether, when television is extended in this State to the northern areas and elsewhere, nothing of this sort will arise, and will he ascertain when television is likely to be extended in South Australia, particularly to the northern areas?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes.

UNIFORM COMPANIES BILL.

Mr. CUMBE: Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked earlier this session about whether a uniform Companies Bill would be introduced this session?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: The Attorney-General has informed me that because the printing of the Bill is a major task and the checking of the drafting of all the clauses of the Bill has not yet been completed, it is not intended to introduce a uniform Companies Bill this session.

FISHING.

Mr. TAPPING: In the October *Fisheries Newsletter* reference is made to a conference of State Ministers in Canberra which decided to set up the Australian Fisheries Council, the policy of which will be to promote the welfare and development of the Australian fishing industry. However, later in the paper it is stated that recently the Victorian Government established a four-man council of fishing experts to advise the Minister on Victorian fishing. In view of this, can the Minister of Agriculture say whether it is intended to form such a council in South Australia, and, if so, will he consider adopting the Victorian system so that Parliament will have some say in proposals that may be submitted to the Minister from the council?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The Fisheries Council comprises State Ministers and the Commonwealth Minister, and its establishment was approved following a meeting of the Ministers

some months ago. The council will meet within a few months. The Victorian four-man commission is a separate proposal. An inquiry committee visited South Australia and other States examining the fishing industry and ascertaining facts relating to it and it made certain recommendations. Apparently the Victorian Government has legislated giving effect to that committee's recommendations. I know of no proposal to establish a similar control in South Australia. As it is a matter of Government policy it will have to be discussed before a firm opinion can be given. I think it is desirable that the department should retain fairly wide powers and not hand them over to such a commission. However, from the press cuttings that I have seen, the Victorian Minister will apparently have some control over the commission.

VICTOR HARBOUR RAILWAY SHED.

Mr. JENKINS: Has the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Railways, a reply to my recent question about the railway shed at Victor Harhour?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: My colleague, the Minister of Railways, states that the demolition of the engine shed referred to has been approved, and tenders will soon be called to carry out the work.

COMPREHENSIVE INSURANCE.

Mr. DUNSTAN: In cases where motorists take out comprehensive insurance policies on motor vehicles it is normally the case that that policy includes a clause, of which the motorist is not aware at the time he applies for the policy, that any dispute on the policy shall be a matter of arbitration and not subject to court action. There have been a number of cases recently—one particularly glaring—where a dispute had to be referred to an arbitrator and, consequently, the costs were much more severe than would have been incurred had it been the subject of court action in the normal way, and the delays involved were much greater than would have been involved in a court action. In the case to which I refer the insurance company disputed liability because the motorist said he had struck a telegraph pole on the north side whereas he had struck it on the south side. He was covered by insurance wherever he struck it, but the insurance company said that, in saying he had struck it on the side opposite that on which he struck it, he made a false statement, and the company disputed liability. The matter went to arbitration, and the arbitrator found that the motorist

had made a false statement and that the insurance company was not liable. Had this been in a court the decision could have been appealed against; I have read the arbitrator's decision, which was certainly strange. However, under the Arbitration Act there was no appeal and the motorist lost a £500 insurance claim and had to pay £109 9s. costs to his own solicitor and about £150 costs to the insurance company's solicitor. Further, arbitration costs (as against £5 court costs that would have been involved otherwise) were £115 5s. Will the Minister of Education take up with the Attorney-General the possibility of amending the Arbitration Act to exclude comprehensive motor vehicle policies from that Act, or alternatively, of doing something to bring the Arbitration Act up to date and provide some means of appeal from arbitration? It appears that this ancient Act, passed in 1893, is not consistent with the modern requirements of the people subject to this provision.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: I shall be pleased to do so. I have received similar complaints from time to time, and it appears to me that the word "arbitration" has some attraction to some laymen as an alternative to court proceedings, but at the same time it appears to me to be in the nature of a snare and a delusion, and I think the average layman would be far better off to adopt the normal procedure of having disputes dealt with by a proper legal tribunal.

BLACKWOOD ROAD.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Has the Minister of Works obtained a reply to a question I asked on September 27 regarding the main road at Blackwood?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The Minister of Roads informs me that the main road at Blackwood referred to is portion of the Adelaide-Goolwa main road No. 11. It is not proposed to widen the main road pavement at this stage so far as through traffic is concerned. Consideration would be given to widening to improve parking facilities only if so requested by the Mitcham council, and with some assistance in both the actual construction and the financing of the work. No request has been received from the Mitcham council for any widening to be carried out. The kerbing and watertable would be entirely the council's responsibility. It is suggested that the Blackwood and Districts Chamber of Commerce be referred to the Mitcham council regarding this matter.

URANIUM TREATMENT PLANT.

Mr. McKEE: I have received the following letter from the secretary of the Port Pirie Trades and Labor Council:

At tonight's meeting great concern was expressed at the imminent closure of the uranium treatment plant at Port Pirie. A motion was moved and carried along the following lines: "That we protest through Mr. McKee, M.P., to the State Government against the closure of the uranium plant at Port Pirie, especially prior to the Christmas season. We request that the Government take immediate steps to place an industry of some description in the plant that will be vacated."

Mass meetings have been suggested as one means of publicizing the position, and with your consent we ask you to act with the above committee to achieve a measure of justice for the employees concerned.

Can the Premier say what may take the place of the treatment plant?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: No decision has yet been made about the disposal of the uranium treatment plant at Port Pirie; indeed, it would appear that for some reason or other the writer of the letter believes that it will close before Christmas. However, that was not recommended by the committee, as the ore that is "in the pipe" from Radium Hill has still to be brought down to Port Pirie for treatment, and an agreement was reached to enable the mine's production up to a certain date to be subsequently processed. For some reason or other the Trades and Labor Council obtained incorrect information about this matter. However, for the benefit of the honourable member and the member for Frome, I point out that Cabinet has now appointed a committee to consider re-employment. This committee consists of Messrs. Huddleston, Pounsett, Barnes, Dridan, Dwyer and O'Connor (a representative of the Australian Workers' Union). Today, two officers are at Radium Hill checking the qualifications of the employees on the field, although much information on that has already been obtained from the Mines Department, which has already made inquiries. A preliminary meeting was, I believe, held yesterday, and a committee meeting will be held, I think, next Tuesday.

EYRE PENINSULA WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. SHANNON: I had the pleasure to be the guest of the Minister of Works at Cockalechie over the week-end, and he was kind enough to show me around the lower end of Eyre Peninsula where I observed with interest the great strides being made in pasture improvement. The carrying capacity of the

area will obviously be much greater than it is now, provided that sufficient water is available to assist natural fodder. The Public Works Standing Committee has before it a project for duplicating the Morgan-Whyalla main and there is agitation for the Government to bring River Murray water all the way down the peninsula, the cost of which service would be high. Has the Minister of Works had any reports from the officers sent overseas to investigate the possibility of improving the quality of low grade waters? This matter is of interest to people in most parts of the State. The Port Lincoln Basin, which supplies Port Lincoln, would have poor grade waters if we had a heavy drought. Both these sources would add materially to the useful area of Eyre Peninsula in supplying it with much more stock water if it could economically be brought into the system. Obviously, even what would appear to be a fairly expensive treatment method would still be much cheaper than the very long piping of water all the way from the River Murray to this area. Can the Minister give any information on the matter?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: As the honourable member has outlined, several projects are under immediate consideration for increasing the total amount of water available to serve Eyre Peninsula's needs. I agree with him that the area brought into production on Eyre Peninsula is probably greater than any other area of the State when we consider the area being developed on Lower Eyre Peninsula in conjunction with the very large areas being developed on Upper Eyre Peninsula. The carrying capacity of these two areas differs widely, but the fact must be faced that the total number of stock to be watered will in any event increase—in fact, it has already increased—substantially. Several years ago figures which I obtained from the Department of Agriculture showed that in the 10-year period from 1948 to 1958—and I speak from memory on this—600,000 acres had been rolled and development on that had begun. I think those figures would be somewhere near the mark. Several matters are being considered. The first, as the honourable member knows, is the enlargement of the Tod River trunk main which is essential to any further branch main activity, particularly along the upper reaches of that main.

Mr. Shannon: Unfortunately, there is no more water there.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: We are actively setting about getting more water into that by two means, the first being the use of the

Lincoln Basin to serve the township of Port Lincoln in particular. It is hoped that we can get 300,000,000 gallons a year from that basin when the scheme is fully developed, and that would be without over-pumping the basin to the point where saline water would be introduced. I know that the honourable member did not wish to create any misapprehension about it. There is a large supply of good water there without the risk of over-pumping, but there is saline water underlying the central basin which could be introduced into the system if it were over-drawn.

The other project is the development of the Wangary Basin which is being actively drilled at present, and the results are not discouraging; the prospects are that substantial quantities will be available from that basin also. In addition to the requirements of stock, the township of Port Lincoln has grown so rapidly that its consumption of water has risen since 1948 from about 70,000,000 gallons to 300,000,000 gallons a year, and that has been a substantial draw upon the total resources. In addition to these proposals, as the honourable member has outlined, other proposals are still in the embryo stage of consideration, and the Engineer-in-Chief and I have discussed several possibilities on which I think it would be premature to comment in detail at this stage. However, they depend a good deal on what overseas sources can advise us regarding the improvement of saline waters, and also desalination. These are two entirely different aspects of beneficitation.

Mr. Shannon: I had more in mind the beneficitation of the underground supplies.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes, that offers better prospects, because its cost depends on the quality of the parent water, and where the parent water is just too saline for stock purposes in its present form it could be beneficitated, probably at reasonable cost. I believe that the prospects I have outlined offer a far better solution of the problem than attempting to bring the large requirements of water from places as remote as the River Murray.

STUDENTS' HOSTELS.

Mr. BYWATERS: An article appeared in last Friday's *Advertiser* following the Premier's telecast and broadcast on Thursday evening in which he referred to the aid the Government intended giving to hostels for country students. The article states:

"In these circumstances a Bill is being prepared, in collaboration with the Education Department, to enable the State Bank, as

agent of the Government, to make advances—in the same way as it makes advances for homes—to school councils or committees to enable them to provide hostels for these children," the Premier said. He hoped it would be possible to have this legislation ready for this session.

I have been actively associated with school committees and school councils for some years and have always been interested in hostels for country students, particularly those of a nature where the children would be well looked after and also well guided and guarded. What we have had in mind over the years is that perhaps some existing organization could be used. We have the Adelaide Miethke House and Padre Strange's hostel, and now a new hostel is being purchased at Medindie by the Churches of Christ for the same purpose. The school councils and school committees would not be able to avail themselves of this opportunity. Will the Premier, in introducing the legislation, make it wide enough to allow these organizations to take advantage of the State Bank loans?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Several religious institutions are interested, and I think the Churches of Christ have already approached me on this matter. I have asked for the legislation to be prepared, and I have instructed it to be prepared on fairly wide lines so that much discretion would be available to the bank. As far as I know, this legislation is experimental in Australia. It follows somewhat similar legislation which we originally introduced into South Australia concerning old folks' homes and which has now been made into a Commonwealth plan with great benefit to everyone. The principle was also introduced in connection with a similar scheme for non-profitmaking hospitals, and that also has been successful. I hope that the legislation will be drafted in time for it to be introduced and passed this session. I have already had some applications on the matter.

GILLES PLAINS BUS SERVICE.

Mr. LAUCKE: Has the Premier a reply to my recent questions concerning the retention by Bowman's Bus Service of certain of its routes proposed to be taken over by the Municipal Tramways Trust at the end of this year?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The General Manager of the Municipal Tramways Trust states:

With reference to the matter raised by Mr. Laucke, M.P., on September 19, 1961, I would advise that the position is as follows: A bus service between Paracombe and City via Tea

Tree Gully and Gilles Plains has been operated by Bowman's Bus Service under licence from the Transport Control Board for the past 20 years. At this stage I should perhaps explain that the trust, under its Act, has exclusive rights (under certain conditions) to operate public service passenger vehicles within the metropolitan area or license private bus operators to do so. The Transport Control Board licenses country operators who have no rights in respect to the carriage of passengers whose journey begins and ends in the metropolitan area. However, where a country operator runs over territory within the metropolitan area which is not already served by public transport, the trust grants a short-term permit to enable him to serve such area. In the case of Bowman, the trust issued a permit in 1953 (re-issued each year since then) to cater for housing development along the North-Eastern Road, east of certain points. Over a period of years, trust officers have discussed the position with Bowman Bros. and have stressed the fact that the trust intended to follow development out along the North-Eastern Road, finally to the limit of the metropolitan area. The trust's extensions have been done in stages and the one under review is the last of these.

At the time of the rehabilitation of the tramways system, the trust gave operators a clear indication that, in the changeover from trams to buses, it would extend certain routes which would absorb some of their services. This has been duly carried out and it would be inconsistent to make an exception of Bowman Bros., particularly as they were advised long in advance of the trust's intentions. It was suggested to these particular operators that they should carefully take this fact into consideration before they invested in new buses. The trust has received many requests for this extension, including the Enfield Council and other public authorities. One such request was received from the Secretary of the Gilles Plains Progress Association who, on January 19, 1960, wrote:

"The members of this association have instructed me to communicate with you regarding the bus service which terminates at Cooks Road, Windsor Gardens, with the request that the service be extended to Lyons Road shopping centre. Hoping you will give this matter your favourable consideration."

The trust has kept in touch with the Enfield Council on this matter over a period. In order to establish a turning loop at the new terminal, the trust has, in the absence of other suitable arrangements, purchased a piece of land and has suggested to the council that it make the unused portion into an off-street parking area for use of patrons. On the matter of time tables and fares, the trust proposes to operate a frequent service, which will be every few minutes at the height of the morning and evening week day peaks. The fares per single journey from the city to the outer terminal will be 1s. 6d. for adults and 9d. for children. On both these counts the populace will, generally speaking, be better off than now, despite the fact that Bowman's have within recent weeks improved their frequency. It is

considered that the trust has been quite fair to Bowman Bros. who appear to have disregarded the trust's warnings and advice and made commitments which were imprudent in the circumstances.

The trust has already put forward the date of the commencement of the operation of the extension to December 31, 1961, to assist Bowman Bros. and is now committed to this date. With regard to compensation, the trust has over many years made it abundantly clear to operators that the trust will not be liable to make any payment to licensees on the termination of the licence (whether by effluxion of time or otherwise) by way of compensation or be obliged to purchase their vehicles or other property. In all the circumstances, the trust feels that it has acted in good faith, and has followed a consistent policy which was well-known in advance.

Mr. LAUCKE: The Tramways Trust's report is most disappointing to me. It contains a reference to the Enfield council as the authority in favour of the proposed alteration, but this is at variance with the information supplied to me. The report of the trust states:

The trust has received many requests for this extension, including the Enfield council and other public authorities. The trust has kept in touch with the Enfield council on this matter over a period.

In this morning's mail I received from the Acting Town Clerk of the Corporation of the City of Enfield (Mr. L. J. Lewis) the following letter:

At the direction of the council I enclose copy of communication forwarded to the Municipal Tramways Trust in respect of the proposed extension of the trust's service to Lyons Road, Windsor Gardens, and consequent variation of that provided by Messrs. Bowman's Bus Services Ltd.

The letter sent by the council to the trust, dated October 13, states:

I am directed by the council to refer to your letter 61/185, of September 7, 1961, and to advise that the question of the extension of the trust's service to Lyons Road has been the subject of investigation by a subcommittee appointed by the council. The committee has inquired into the services at present operated by Bowman's Bus Services Ltd., with particular regard to the effects which the proposed change will have on residents in the Windsor Gardens and adjacent areas. The committee has reported to the council that it is of the opinion that the service conducted by Bowman's are comparable with what will be undertaken by the trust in the event of the extension becoming operative, and that no complaints can be raised as far as efficiency and general service to the public are concerned. It is also considered that the fact that the Bowman's service is express to the city of Adelaide from Windsor Gardens is of considerable importance and a factor in favour of retaining such service.

The council has adopted the report of this committee and I am directed to inquire whether your trust will favourably consider delaying the proposed extension to the Gilles Plains service for a period of at least two (2) years. The council is of the opinion that such action is warranted in all the circumstances and should enable Messrs. Bowman to obtain reasonable recompense in respect of their investment in this service. The council will appreciate your consideration of this suggestion, and awaits your favourable reply in due course.

In view of the obvious effect of the Enfield council's interest in this matter, as referred to in the trust's report, I consider that the decision has definitely hinged to a large degree on the Enfield council's attitude in this matter. In the light of this letter now before me, will the Premier again seek of the Municipal Tramways Trust an extension for a period of two years of Bowman's present service?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: There is no conflict in the two reports mentioned today. The report the honourable member has just read has been written since the trust's report was prepared and probably there has been a change of mind on the part of the Enfield Corporation. The Tramways Trust, at the request of the Enfield Corporation, has already made two extensions into the area and provided buses for that purpose, so it is not just a simple matter of a part of a service being involved: it is a matter of a routine extension. I cannot say what the rights and the wrongs of this matter are, but, from the Tramways Trust's report, Bowman's was obviously advised long ago that the trust intended to take over the franchise to which, by law, it was entitled. However, I will refer the matter back to the trust for its consideration.

BURBRIDGE ROAD EXTENSION.

Mr. FRED WALSH: For some time I have been approached by residents in the West Beach and Henley South area about the extension of Burbridge Road from Tapley Hill Road to Military Road. Early in the year I approached the Commissioner of Highways about it, and he told me that the department was drawing up plans for the construction of the new road. I believe (with no authority, of course) that the Department of Civil Aviation may at some time in the not too distant future take over that part of Tapley Hill Road that runs across the airport, which would mean that that road would be diverted. I am concerned at the moment for the residents there. I believe it would at the same time considerably relieve the

congestion on the Henley Beach Road because much traffic uses that road now between the Marion Road and Tapley Hill Road. Will the Minister of Works request his colleague the Minister of Roads to obtain a report on the plans to extend Burbridge Road from Tapley Hill Road to Military Road, and to say when a start is likely to be made on that work?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes, I will obtain a report.

BORDERTOWN RAILWAY YARD.

Mr. NANKIVELL: Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked on September 20 about the replanning of the Bordertown railway yard?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes. My colleague, the Minister of Railways, informs me that the matter referred to is still under consideration, and no recommendation has yet been submitted by the Railways Commissioner. It is anticipated that the investigations will take some time.

EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION.

Mr. JENNINGS: Some time ago I asked the Minister of Education whether he would consider the advisability of reserving a television channel in South Australia exclusively for education purposes. He said it was a matter of Government policy and would have to be considered by Cabinet. I notice that since then the Public Schools Committees Association of South Australia at a recent conference in Adelaide suggested a similar move. Also, as I think was mentioned in a question today by the member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday), I understand that the Broadcasting Control Board is considering the allocation of channels in South Australia. Can the Minister say whether Cabinet has further considered this request?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: No; it has not reached Cabinet level yet, but it has been investigated by officers of the Education Department and also the councils of various other educational institutions. Soon, when I can get a little leisure (perhaps after Parliament has finished its labours), I shall be able to confer further with those interested bodies and make some submission to Cabinet later in the year.

ELIZABETH TRANSPORT.

Mr. QUIRKE: Has the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Roads in this House, a reply to a question I asked on September 28 about transport facilities from Elizabeth

to Adelaide, in the light of the apparent position there that the railway system is a little awkward for those people to use?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I have received a reply from the Chairman of the Transport Control Board through the Minister. Summarizing the report, I may say that the information he gives is to the effect that there has been some reluctance shown about the proposal to provide an all-sufficient passenger service by road because it is considered that the railway time table and the co-ordination therewith is satisfactory, in the main, to the residents of Elizabeth. The Chairman points out that there is already in operation, and has been for some time, a direct road service for schoolchildren travelling from Elizabeth to the metropolitan area. The department apparently considers that adequate. The Chairman points out that some children would probably like to travel by other means and consequently assemble at places and hail passing motorists to get a ride to town. In actual fact the transport facilities for children are considered adequate and the board sees no point in changing its previous decision regarding those arrangements.

PETERBOROUGH PUMPING STATION.

Mr. CASEY: The pumping station situated at the corner of Chinner and Kitchener Streets, Peterborough, is at present pumping 24 hours a day and is likely to continue doing so seven days a week throughout the summer. The old 10 h.p. motor was recently replaced by a 15 h.p. motor. Last Sunday I examined that station, and the vibration created by the new motor was particularly excessive and caused the whole building to vibrate. Nearby householders complain of a high-pitched noise which continues throughout the night preventing them from obtaining their rest. I entered several of the houses and can vouch that a high-pitched noise penetrates the houses and would be particularly annoying to railway shiftworkers who are trying to get a good night's sleep. The noise is not so noticeable outside. Will the Minister of Works ask the engineer at Crystal Brook whether something can be done to rectify the situation? Perhaps the motor could be covered with cane-ite or some other absorbent material to deaden the sound.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I shall be happy to have a report furnished on this matter to see whether the problem can be alleviated.

GUIDE DOGS.

Mr. LAWN: Recently a person complained to me that he was riding on either a tram or bus when a lady attempted to board it with a dog and the driver ordered her off. The passenger drew the driver's attention to the fact that this was a guide dog. In last night's *News* or this morning's *Advertiser* is a letter referring to a similar happening in a taxi. A blind lady was refused a ride in the taxi by the driver because she had a guide dog with her. I believe that in both instances the drivers were acting under instructions, and I agree that it is not good policy to permit people to take dogs, cats and other animals on public transport. However, will the Premier refer this matter to Cabinet to see whether guide dogs could be regarded in a different category because blind people find it difficult to get around without these dogs? If they want to travel by taxi or on a bus, could not the regulations be eased?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will make inquiries.

CHOWILLA DAM.

Mr. STOTT: Can the Minister of Works say when the conference between the Victorian, New South Wales, South Australian and Commonwealth Governments on the construction of the Chowilla dam north of Paringa will be held? Is South Australia's water allocation under the River Murray Waters Agreement three one-thirteenthths, and Victoria's and New South Wales' allocation five one-thirteenthths each? Is New South Wales likely to use its quota? Is it true that the Commonwealth Government will provide one-quarter of the capital for the construction of the dam and that the balance will be obtained equally from the States? Is South Australia adequately served by having only three one-thirteenthths, yet being obliged to find the same capital as Victoria and New South Wales?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: So far as I know, no date has been arranged for the conference proposed between the States and the Commonwealth. Incidentally, it will be a conference of Premiers and therefore our Premier will attend as spokesman for South Australia. The matters raised by the honourable member will all be considered by the conference and I cannot indicate what agreements may be reached or what viewpoints will be put forward by the various States, so I regret that at present I am unable to speculate upon what the attitudes of the various States may be.

SCHOOL COOLING SYSTEMS.

Mr. McKEE: My question refers to the installation of cooling systems in the Port Pirie primary schools. In view of the extreme heat experienced in Port Pirie during the summer, the Risdon Park primary school committee desires to install ceiling circulating fans. Can the Minister of Education say whether Port Pirie is in the selected area for subsidies on such systems? If it is not, will he consider including it?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: I shall be pleased to consider the request favourably, and to inform the honourable member when a decision has been made.

SALES TAX ON CHAINS.

Mr. BOCKELBERG: Some years ago after land was cleared stumps were picked by hand and burned in a heap. Nowadays they are dragged into rows by a chain, which is not used on farms except for this purpose, and on which £18 sales tax is charged. Will the Premier ascertain whether these chains can be exempted from sales tax?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes.

PORT AUGUSTA HOSPITAL.

Mr. RICHES: The Port Augusta hospital has been the subject of protracted negotiations. Plans have been submitted and discussed at length, and the hospital board is anxious to know the Government's intention on rebuilding the hospital, as the project is considered in the district to be urgent. Has the Premier obtained a report from the Minister of Health on this matter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Director-General of Medical Services reports:

For some time it has been realized that alterations and extensions were needed at the hospital, and plans were prepared on certain data collected and estimates made some time ago. However, certain factors have now given cause for re-estimation of the hospital requirements of Port Augusta and district, and these factors are being considered at the present time. It is expected that a decision will soon be reached.

ADELAIDE OVAL.

Mr. COUMBE: Has the Premier obtained a reply to a question I asked on September 27 on whether the leasing of the Adelaide oval was a matter between sporting bodies and the Adelaide City Council or whether it would have to be ratified by this Parliament?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Crown Solicitor reports:

The answer to the questions is contained in subsection (4) of section 855 of the Local

Government Act, 1934-1960. This subsection provides that every lease proposed to be granted in respect of the Adelaide oval must either be approved by His Excellency the Governor in Council, or laid before Parliament, before being executed. If laid before Parliament, and either House by resolution disapproves of any term or condition of the lease, the lease cannot lawfully be executed.

RAILWAY EXCURSION FARES.

Mr. TAPPING: Has the Minister of Works obtained a reply to my recent question relating to excursion fares requested for the Semaphore carnival and other functions?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The Minister of Railways has received a report from the Railways Commissioner stating that the experience of his department with reduced fares has not been encouraging and that he is therefore not in favour of providing excursion fares for suburban travel on special occasions.

MINISTER'S OVERSEAS TRIP.

Mr. HARDING: I understand that Sir Cecil Hincks will be returning to Adelaide soon and that during his overseas trip he has investigated matters of importance to this State. Will the Premier say whether Sir Cecil will be resuming his duties as Minister of Lands and occupying a seat in this House shortly?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I believe that the Minister of Lands will return to this State tomorrow. He has made a provisional report, but his main report has not yet been received.

GEPPTS CROSS HOSTEL.

Mr. JENNINGS: Some time ago I asked the Premier a question about conditions at the Gepps Cross hostel and said that I had been speaking to the Chairman of the Housing Trust, who had promised that as soon as possible he would make an inspection. As the Premier undertook to take up the matter with the Chairman, has he obtained a report from him?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Mr. Cartledge (Chairman of the Housing Trust) reports:

A short time after the publication of the article in the *Truth* mentioned in the question of Mr. Jennings, I inspected the Gepps Cross hostel and found the allegations in the article were not in accordance with fact. Among other things, I inspected a cross section of the communal toilets, bathing and laundry facilities and found that the standard of cleanliness and of the facilities provided was good. This was also the conclusion of the health inspector of the Enfield council, who inspected the hostel and made a report dated September 7, 1961, on its condition. His conclusion was that "although a number of points

were noticed which required attention, it is considered that the sanitary aspect of the camp at the time of inspection was of a reasonable standard. Cleanliness, which is the responsibility of the tenants, varies from very good to fair. Very few instances were noted which I considered to be dirty and offensive.’

The hostel has the disadvantage of its manner of construction; namely, that certain facilities must be shared and that families must live in close proximity one with another. The hostel is serving a useful purpose in providing housing for a limited period to migrants, almost entirely from the United Kingdom. Many families have been nominated by other migrants from the United Kingdom who have previously lived at Gepps Cross hostel and are able to give to the prospective migrants a true picture of conditions at the hostel. There are 360 flats at the hostel in which about 2,150 families have been housed since 1953. During the 12 months ended June 30, 1961, 246 flats were vacated and re-let. The average length of stay is about 18 months.

I think it can be said that most of the families at the hostel have no real complaint about the conditions there, bearing in mind that they are hostel conditions and intended for short periods of residence only. The hostel affords them reasonable accommodation at reasonable rents, thus enabling them to live far more cheaply than would be the case if they were housed in other migrant hostels. A proportion of migrant families have very little capital when they arrive in South Australia. Floor coverings and certain hard furniture is provided in the flats at the hostel and this is appreciated by these families. Commonwealth hostel authorities regard Gepps Cross hostel as the main housing outlet for migrant families living in Commonwealth hostels. There is a number of communal activities at the hostel ranging from a very good child minding centre, a library, a boys' and girls' club, to a grass running track reputed to be the best in South Australia.

INTEREST IN PARLIAMENT.

Mr. CLARK: During the last few months I have been pleased to notice that there seems to have been an increased interest in Parliament, in elections and in Parliamentary institutions in general. I have been led to believe that because of the increased requests I, like other members, have had for visits to Parliament House. Over the last few months I have had many requests from schools, scholars, and teachers for South Australian electoral maps of both State and Commonwealth electorates. As the maps cost money, either to the member (if he is kind enough to give them to the schools) or to the schools themselves, will the Minister of Education consider the department's supplying to all schools maps showing the Commonwealth and State

electorates in South Australia or, if that cannot be done, supplying them to schools that request them?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: Yes, I shall be pleased to consider the request. I do not know what is involved in the way of cost or work, but I shall be pleased to take the matter up with my colleague the Attorney-General, who is the Minister in charge of the Electoral Department, to confer with him to see whether the request can be complied with easily, and if it can be, I will let the honourable member know as soon as possible.

KAROONDA-WAIKERIE TRAIN.

Mr. STOTT: Recently the time table for the Karoonda to Waikerie train was altered. A number of representations have been made to me concerning this alteration, which it is claimed has not been in the best interests of producers because it has taken stock a day longer to reach the abattoirs and lower down the line the change has affected the mail services to such a degree that letters are taking four and five days to come from Adelaide. Will the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Railways, see whether the old schedule can be adhered to instead of the new one which is not proving satisfactory in the area?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes.

HOUSING FINANCE.

Mr. RICHES: Earlier in the session the Premier stated that he understood the Commonwealth Bank was able to make immediate advances for house building and that the restrictions which formerly applied to loans, namely, that they would be made available only to clients of the bank, had been lifted. The Premier said that that was an impression he could not confirm, and that he would obtain a report on the availability of finance for house-building through the Commonwealth Bank. Has he been able to secure that report and, if he has, can he say what is the present position?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Under Treasurer has inquired of the Commonwealth Bank and reports that except for a short period during June and July of this year when it removed restrictions, the Commonwealth Savings Bank lends only to persons who have deposits of at least £300 for 12 months, on average. The Commonwealth Savings Bank has a limit of £2,500 advance compared with £3,000 at the State Bank and the Savings Bank of South Australia.

POTATO PRICES.

Mr. TAPPING: I have several times raised the question of the high cost of potatoes to consumers in this State. Last week we learned from a press announcement that the price of potatoes would again increase by £4 10s. a ton, which was approved by the Potato Board of South Australia. In the press a few days ago, an expert in the retail business said that the rise was unjustified and out of all proportion to the cost of potatoes in Victoria. Will the Minister of Agriculture confer with the Potato Board to find out whether the rise last week was justified and the reason for it?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: Yes.

NEW POWER-STATION.

Mr. RICHES: Last week the Premier undertook to refer to the Electricity Trust a suggestion from this side of the House that sites other than Torrens Island should be examined for the erection of the new power-station proposed to serve South Australia. I raised the question of the possibility of erecting such a station on Spencer Gulf and said that, apart from the cost of transmission (for the lines were already there), all the other requirements for such a station seemed to be equally available on Spencer Gulf as on St. Vincent Gulf. Has the Premier had an opportunity of conferring with the trust and, if he has, can he give the House any information?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes. Two questions on this matter have been raised, one by the honourable member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) and the other by the honourable member for Murray (Mr. Bywaters). I have a report from the Chairman of the Electricity Trust, which states (first, in answer to Mr. Riches) that the trust is investigating all possible sites for a major power-station. It is pointed out that sites distant from the main load suffer from the disadvantage that transmission costs rise by about £50,000 for each mile the station is away from the centre of power requirements.

In answer to the question by the member for Murray, the Chairman states that the proposed power-station will eventually use the equivalent of 2,000,000 tons of coal each year, either as oil or as coal. The quantity of coal available in the Moorlands field cannot approach this requirement and the fuel must necessarily be obtained from outside the State. The additional cost of transporting fuel from a suitable port to the River Murray could not in the best of circumstances be less than 10s. a ton, or £1,000,000 per annum. Additional

expenditure would then be required to construct transmission lines back to the main load centre in the metropolitan area and electrical losses would be incurred over these lines.

BORDERTOWN HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. NANKIVELL: On Thursday, in reply to a question I asked the Minister of Works about additional buildings required for the Bordertown high school, I was informed that the additions to that school as shown on the Loan Estimates were listed very low on the appropriate list drawn up by the Director of Education. Will the Minister of Education ascertain what additional buildings will be required by the start of 1963 and whether, if those buildings are not provided as a permanent structure, temporary accommodation will have to be provided to meet the emergency?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: I shall be pleased to investigate the matter and, as soon as possible, to report to the honourable member.

SUNDAY LAND SALES.

Mr. BYWATERS: Has the Premier received a deputation from the Real Estate Institute requesting an amendment to the appropriate Act prohibiting sales of land and houses on Sunday; also, have representations been made by church bodies for the same purpose, and is it intended to bring in legislation to give effect to these requests?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Some representations have been made to the Government on this matter in one way or another. The Government intends to bring in legislation that will prohibit auction sales on Sunday. That Bill is, I think, on the files of honourable members. But, when we go beyond that, great difficulty is encountered because frequently a private sale may be arranged under any conditions whatsoever; so that the Government was not prepared to take it beyond organized auction sales, which was the matter raised in the first place.

REMISSION OF CARRIERS' FEES.

Mr. RICHES: During former debates in the House, I referred to the action of the Transport Control Board in demanding fees from carriers assisting charitable organizations in the country conveying temporary houses that the Government had made available to them. The Government most generously made available to charitable organizations emergency houses at a cost of £50 each, and in many places this offer is being greatly availed of.

In order to match the attitude of the Government, a carrier in my electorate offered to convey seven buildings for £70 each from Adelaide to Port Augusta. That charge is well below the normal transport charges but he thought that, the Government having made a gesture, it was good enough for him to make a gesture too. He was then surprised to learn, however, from the Transport Control Board that he had to pay a £10 fee for each building transported. As these buildings could not possibly be taken on the railway and nobody would benefit from the imposition of these fees, I asked the Transport Control Board if that fee could not be remitted. It has replied speaking about precedents and other things. I considered it a most unrealistic and unsatisfactory reply. Will the Premier be good enough to have the situation examined in order to bring sweet reason to bear on this matter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes, I shall be pleased to do that. The honourable member is correct. The Government has been prepared to sell emergency houses for community purposes to non-profitmaking organizations at what is, after all, a nominal figure, so that the community can benefit from these facilities. The amount charged is probably only a tenth of the value of the building. The Government has been pleased to do this for sporting bodies, boys' clubs and other community services. I shall certainly take this up to see what can be done.

MURRAY BRIDGE TO TAILEM BEND ROAD.

Mr. BYWATERS: I understand that the Minister of Works has a report from the Minister of Roads on my recent question about the Murray Bridge to Tailem Bend highway.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: My colleague, the Minister of Roads, advises that it is anticipated that the reconstruction of the Murray Bridge to Tailem Bend section of the main South-Eastern road No. 1 will be commenced during February, 1962, and that tenders will be called for the construction of a bridge over the railway line towards the end of this financial year.

WHYALLA BRIDGE.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Has the Premier a reply to my recent question about the Whyalla bridge?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: My colleague, the Minister of Roads, informs me that requests have been received for the construction of two additional bridges over the

Broken Hill Proprietary Company's tramline at Whyalla, one adjoining the existing bridge opposite Playford Avenue, and another one opposite Norrie Avenue. Investigations have indicated that the greatest need is for the duplication of the existing bridge opposite Playford Avenue. A survey has been completed and the design of the bridge is in hand. Funds have not been allocated for the construction of this bridge during the current financial year, but it is expected that it will be constructed during 1962-63. A survey for the bridge at Norrie Avenue has not yet been made, but it is anticipated the design will be completed before the Playford Avenue bridge is finished.

WEST BEACH LEASE.

Mr. Jennings for Mr. FRED WALSH (on notice):

1. What amount is received per annum by the Engineering and Water Supply Department for the lease of the area of land surrounding the Torrens outlet at West Beach?

2. When does the present lease expire?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The replies are:

1. £235.

2. September 30, 1965.

RADIUM HILL PROJECT.

Mr. Lawn for Mr. CASEY (on notice):

1. Will the Minister indicate what action the Government intends to take concerning the closing of the Radium Hill project, as recommended in the report tabled in Parliament on October 5, 1961?

2. Will all employees be given reasonable notice of retrenchment if the Government intends closing the project?

3. Will their services be required after the end of 1961?

4. Is it the intention of the Government to pay reasonable compensation to all employees and private business owners to assist them with their removal costs from Radium Hill to their new places of employment?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Government has accepted the recommendation that the mines close on December 15, 1961. The Government has appointed a committee to examine the question of re-employment and proposes to examine the qualifications of all persons employed on the field with the object of assisting re-employment, housing, etc. No decision has been made on other matters mentioned.

MOUNT GAMBIER WATER SUPPLY.

The SPEAKER laid on the table the report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence, on Augmentation of Mount Gambier Water Supply.

Ordered that report be printed.

PULP AND PAPER MILL (HUNDRED OF GAMBIER) INDENTURE BILL.

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

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution: That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to approve and ratify an indenture made between the State of South Australia and Harmac (Australia) Limited relating to the establishment of a pulp and paper mill in the State of South Australia and to provide for carrying that indenture into effect and for other purposes.

Motion carried.

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

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to ratify arrangements that have been made by the Government with a recently-formed company known as Harmac (Australia) Limited for the establishment of a pulp and paper mill in the South-East of the State. The Bill consists of seven clauses and a schedule which sets out in full the text of the indenture which has been made between the State and the company. The Bill is in terms similar to those which have been before the House on several recent occasions, the last two being the Bills concerning the oil refinery near Hallett Cove and the Broken Hill Proprietary Company's steelworks.

Clause 3 ratifies the indenture and gives it statutory force. Clause 4 deals with council rates, providing fixed amounts for the first five years; rates for the first two being £2,500 and for the next three £3,500. For 1968 the amount will be £5,000, which may be termed a "base rate" for that amount can be increased by the council in accordance with changes in the basic wage (or if there is no basic wage in force, other cost of living, price, or wage index). I may say that the question of rates was discussed with the district council of Mount Gambier and I believe that the arrangements concluded on this matter are very satisfactory to all concerned.

Clause 5 is in a sense supplementary to clause 4 in providing that rights to lay pipelines or electrical transmission lines shall not be ratable and, further, that no water or sewerage rates are to be payable on the mill and mill site unless the company takes the benefit of any Government facilities in this regard. Clause 6 absolves the company from liability for the discharge of effluent, smoke, dust, gas, noise or odours with the proviso that such discharge is reasonably necessary for the efficient operation of the works and that there is no negligence. Clause 7 is a procedural provision in the usual form enabling the State to sue, arbitrate, etc., in its own name.

The indenture consists of 9 clauses. Clause 1 deals with interpretation and clause 2 provides that the indenture does not come into operation unless and until ratified by the Parliament, with the proviso that the company may at any time up to June 30, 1963 (that is, within 18 months of the commencement of next year) give notice that it finds it impracticable or inexpedient to continue in which case the agreement is at an end. It is not envisaged that any insuperable difficulties will arise—indeed, the interests concerned with this matter have already expended money and made extensive preparatory arrangements—but at the same time much capital will be required for the undertaking and matters such as the obtaining of capital, and foreign exchange regulations, could conceivably affect operations.

Clause 3 provides that the company will construct and operate a pulp mill in the hundred of Gambier in accordance with accepted modern standards and practices. Clause 4 requires the State, on the request of the company, to sell up to five acres of Crown lands in the vicinity of Ewens Ponds or Deep Creek for pumping station sites, to construct and maintain a heavy duty road connecting with the main road and a railway connecting the mill with the railway system. The Government is not obligated to construct the pipeline; the company has undertaken the obligation of installing it, and the Government has agreed to sell land adjacent to the water supply to enable it to provide its own services.

Clause 5 obliges the State to build or cause to be built in reasonable proximity to the mill up to 500 houses for staff and employees to be offered on reasonable terms and conditions. Clause 6 empowers the company, without payment of any rent or royalty or any other charge, to construct, erect, or lay down any

pipelines and electrical transmission lines on Crown lands, roads and (pipelines) on foreshores and the seabed. However, where roads are concerned, plans and specifications must be approved in writing by the Minister of Roads after consultation with the local council; in the case of Crown lands, plans are to be approved in writing by the Minister of Lands; and in the case of the foreshore or seabed they are to be approved in writing by the Minister of Marine after such consultation as he considers necessary with the Harbors Board and any council concerned. Subclause (7) of this clause provides that damage shall be kept at a minimum and roads and surfaces affected reinstated without delay.

Clause 7 entitles the company to draw from Ewens Ponds and Deep Creek and use any quantities of water without payment. It provides that the State will not grant water rights to anybody else without the company's consent. Clause 8 empowers the company to discharge effluent into the sea from its own pipe at any point below the low water line. Clause 9 is in the usual form providing that approval shall not be unreasonably refused.

Such, in brief, are the terms and provisions of the Bill including the indenture. As the Bill will be referred to a Select Committee for consideration, I do not intend at this stage to go into the course of the negotiations between the interests concerned in this venture and the Government or into the many matters involved or into detailed figures. It is enough to say that the undertaking proposed is a very large one involving probably a capital expenditure of over £13,000,000 spread over about three years, which is about the time that it will take to build the mill. The company, which is backed by one of the largest pulp and paper concerns in Canada—MacMillan Bloedel and Powell River Ltd.—proposes a mill with an initial capacity of 62,500 tons of Kraft paper and paper board, ultimately producing 100,000 tons a year. The mill will produce its own electrical power from residuary products and other fuel. The company is making suitable arrangements for the supply of necessary wood supplies from private and Governmental sources in this State and south-western Victoria. Apart from the direct benefit to the State and private enterprise, the company expects to employ over 300 people at the mill itself as well as a similar number in the forests, and transportation. Indirectly, the company's operations might lead to the employment of many more—a total

of up to 4,500 has been mentioned. Having regard to the obvious direct and indirect benefits which would accrue to the State and its people and to the need to continue its policy of development, the Government decided that it should do all in its power to facilitate the interests concerned in this project, and that is the object of the Bill now before you. I commend it to your serious consideration and approval. This Bill has to go before a Select Committee, on which I hope both sides of the House will be represented. To enable the Select Committee to have ample time to consider the provisions of the Bill, I hope the House will be able to deal with it promptly.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): There is no reason why I should delay the passage of this Bill, which is not unusual. I was associated with the Select Committee that dealt with the oil refinery and, from the second reading explanation, I cannot see any difference in this Bill. It may be Government policy to develop the State, but the Opposition should get some credit as well. Some months ago I was in the South-East and made a statement about this. At that time there were good indications that this company would be formed. I trust that the target of 4,500 employees will be achieved. I see no reason why it should not be if we have reasonably sensible administration by the Commonwealth Government on imports. I do not wish to follow up this line, however; I just remind the Government that the Labor Party knows what happens in other places. Broadly speaking, there is a need for a greater use of timbers of the South-East. My information is that a greater return is to be obtained from the South-East forests as a result of this type of industry than from the milling of timber for case manufacture and such things. In view of the fact that the Opposition will be represented on the Select Committee by the members for Mount Gambier and Millicent, both of whom understand the problems associated with the South-East, a very good committee of inquiry should result. If the House is not satisfied with its reports, members will have an opportunity to discuss the matter further. I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time and referred to a Select Committee consisting of Messrs. Corcoran, Harding, Nankivell, Ralston, and the Hon. D. N. Brookman; the committee to have power to send for persons, papers and records, to adjourn from place to place, and to report on October 31.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CITY OF ENFIELD LOAN) ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

BOTANIC GARDEN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

DOG FENCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

HOUSING AGREEMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

HOUSING IMPROVEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

LAND TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Consideration in Committee of the Legislative Council's suggested amendments:

No. 1. Page 4, line 42 (clause 7).—After "person" insert "and the transfer or conveyance is not in pursuance of a gift or devise to the spouse, a parent, grandparent or descendant of the taxpayer".

No. 2. Page 6, lines 13 to 17 (clause 13).—Leave out subclause (2).

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): The first suggested amendment is in clause 7. The amendment will make it clear that a person will not be required to pay the difference between the normal land tax and the lower rural rate for the five-year period where the declared land is transferred or conveyed by way of a gift or pursuant to a devise or bequest to a spouse, parent, grandparent or descendant. As honourable members know, the Bill provides that if a taxpayer conveys or sells his declared rural land to anyone else he immediately becomes liable to pay the back tax for a period of up to five years. As I informed honourable members of this House when the Bill was before it, it was not intended that such a provision should apply where the conveyance or transfer is to a beneficiary under a will or where a person gives the land to such as a spouse, parent or descendant. Members will recall that I undertook, when this matter was raised by the member for Ridley (Mr. Stott), to arrange for an appropriate suggestion to be made in the other House.

The second suggested amendment is to the last clause of the Bill. It is the deletion of the second subclause which would have required

taxpayers for the current year to make their applications for their land to become declared before the 31st of this month. In view of the date which has now been reached, it is proposed to delete this requirement altogether as obviously taxpayers affected could not be expected to make their applications within such a short period.

Honourable members will see that the time that has elapsed since the Bill was introduced into the House makes it inappropriate for, before the Bill barely received the Royal Assent, October 31 would have passed; so the last subclause has been struck out and applicants will make their applications without respect to that provision. It would have nullified the whole purpose of the Bill had it been persevered with. Both amendments are acceptable. One is a direct request to the committee, and the other is only consequential upon the fact that the Bill took longer for consideration than was anticipated. I ask, therefore, that the suggested amendments of the Legislative Council be agreed to.

Mr. STOTT: I am glad that the Premier has inserted the first amendment with the consent of the other House. It provides for the point I raised during this debate and I think it covers the position entirely. I accept it.

Amendments agreed to.

PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 10. Page 1133.)

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla): In supporting this Bill, I draw attention to a significant feature of last year's debate on the re-enactment of the prices legislation. It was then dealt with at much greater length by the Premier. His remarks were occasioned by the fact that stronger attacks on the Act were anticipated and he went out of his way to make a much longer speech than usual. This year again, the Premier has given greater attention to detail in introducing the measure than in earlier years and we can expect another attack from the same quarters on the Act. Because of these attacks, I venture to put forward some arguments for continuing price control in South Australia.

One argument advanced against the re-enactment of the Prices Act was that price control was ineffective, but no detailed explanation was given at the time. It was just a bald general statement, with nothing to back it up: control was ineffective. True, price control is not effective in controlling the rapid and consistent

inflation throughout South Australia that we have suffered since Commonwealth price control was abandoned and the Menzies Government came into office, but no-one supporting this measure has ever claimed that in recent debates. But it is true that the Liberal and Country League misled the people of this State into believing that State control would be as effective as Commonwealth control, when Commonwealth control was abandoned in 1948. When the Prices Act was first introduced in 1948, the then Leader of the Opposition (Hon. R. S. Richards), referring to the campaign of misrepresentation to lead the people to vote against the Commonwealth's having the power of price control, quoted an L.C.L. advertisement, which reads:

Before the war when your State Government had power to control prices, South Australian prices were among the lowest in the Commonwealth. Let your State Government control prices as it now controls your rents. We have no hesitation in going on with the control forthwith.

I submit that the L.C.L. there not only promised to continue price control but pretended that it would be just as effective as Commonwealth control. Contrary to what has been said in previous debates in this House, Commonwealth control was effective in controlling inflation to a high degree—certainly not altogether but, when compared with what was happening overseas and what happened in the First World War, it is clear that it was a comparatively effective control. If we compare the cost of living figures during the First World War and after, when, without price control from 1914 to 1920, the average cost of living rose 70 per cent with those of the Second World War, we find that in the second case, from 1939 to 1945, the same period of time, the increase was 24 per cent, showing clearly that as between those two wars there was a tremendous improvement in the control of prices due to Commonwealth price control and the allied measures that went with it.

Mr. Millhouse: Was it not the Commonwealth Labor Government that abandoned Commonwealth price control?

Mr. LOVEDAY: A referendum caused it to be abandoned, as the honourable member knows. Referring to the effectiveness of Commonwealth price control, in 1952 our late Leader, Mr. O'Halloran, pointed out that from September, 1939, to June, 1948 (when Commonwealth control ceased) the living wage increased from £3 17s. to £5 11s. It was subject to quarterly adjustments but showed

only an average annual increase of five per cent, despite the inflationary aspects of a war economy. But, from June, 1948, to August, 1952 (with Commonwealth price control removed), the living wage rose from £5 11s. to £11 4s.—an average annual increase of 26 per cent. That shows clearly again from a different angle the effect of removing Commonwealth control.

It is worthwhile, in making these comparisons, looking at another angle: the angle of comparison with other countries during the period 1939 to 1947. During that period Australian price increases were far below those of New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, Great Britain, the United States of America, the Argentine and France. In fact, our price control and stabilization arrangements were outstandingly successful in the best interests of the community. We had, of course, apart from price control an interlocking system of capital issue control, import control and subsidies on staple items of consumption. The wholesale price increases from 1938-39 to 1947 in terms of percentages were: Australia 47 per cent, New Zealand 55 per cent, South Africa 70 per cent, Canada 76 per cent, Great Britain 93 per cent, United States 100 per cent, Argentine 144 per cent, and France 884 per cent. Those comparisons prove conclusively that price control, as exercised in Australia, was particularly effective.

In supporting the continuance of State price control, the Opposition claims that it is sufficiently effective, even in its present form, to be of considerable benefit to consumers. We do not claim that it is fully effective in controlling inflation, because that would be an absurd claim. Its effectiveness can be measured from the details given in the Premier's second reading speech. Briefly, they are savings to consumers through lower building costs, £6,000,000 (and the Premier pointed out that arising from this 600 additional houses could be erected by semi-governmental bodies); savings on major petroleum products, £8,000,000 over four years, or £2,000,000 a year; savings to primary producers, £1,000,000 on superphosphate in five years, an average of £200,000 a year; savings to users of timber, £600,000 over three years, an average of £200,000 a year; or a total savings of about £8,500,000 a year. Surely no-one can claim that that is not a substantial benefit to the consumers!

Last year the administration costs of the Prices Department were £66,204, slightly lower than in previous years, although slightly above

1960. In past years the costs were greater, probably because the department may have then employed more people and controlled more goods. This cost works out at about 1s. 4d. per capita, which is not an excessive cost to the consumer who has benefited by £8,500,000. Obviously this does not by any means represent the total savings to consumers, since the existence of an efficient Prices Department acts as a powerful deterrent to many would-be profiteers. I am sure the member for Mitcham will agree with that.

Mr. Millhouse: I am sure he won't.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Apart from the actual fixation of prices, the special investigations into certain industries regarding restrictive practices and cases of exploitation have been of great benefit to the public. During debates over the past few years the Premier has given chapter and verse of many instances, so there is no need for me to expatiate further on them. From the consumers' viewpoint price control has been effective to a worthwhile degree. It has been argued that price control has exercised only a delaying effect on prices. That is true and is not denied, because under the Commonwealth Government's regime there has been a consistent and steady inflation since it took office. As a State we are not in a position to prevent that, but nevertheless the delaying effect has been worth £8,500,000—and surely no-one will claim that that delaying effect has not been worthwhile.

What we should ask ourselves when we are told that this legislation is so ineffective is why there is so much opposition to it. Surely if it is so ineffective it must be worth a lot to some people. It is certainly worth a lot to the consumer. We can only conclude that if this legislation were repealed it would be of great benefit to a few people, and certainly not to the consumers as a body.

In the *Advertiser* of October 12 is a leading article headed "More cramping controls". A "cramp" is an effective instrument for keeping things in their proper place, and after all that is the intention of this Bill, so we can feel complimented by the heading to this article which refers to the grounds for retention of controls as being rather mixed. It said that lower prices have been paid for such things as homes and petrol and higher prices have been received by grapegrowers and winemakers. However, the writer carefully omitted to give details of the actual value of the savings to consumers—a remarkable

omission. The article said that the business community was being denied even a cheering assurance of a light at the tunnel's end. I could almost see the business community—poor struggling businessmen—held captive in the stygian darkness of a long tunnel. It was a pitiful picture and I sympathized with them entirely. I felt like rushing out with a lantern to light them on their way. The article said that many existing businesses found the controls depressing. Those who found the controls depressing were probably referring to the depressing effect the Prices Commissioner had exercised on their prices.

Despite these gloomy references by the *Advertiser*, the President of the South Australian Retail Traders' Association was reported, in the *Advertiser* the following day, as saying that Adelaide retailers expected to have another record Christmas. In an article headed "Support for Boom" he said that business had been well maintained—despite the price controls. An examination of the financial columns in the daily press reveals that there is no reason for pessimism, despite the fact that there has been great unemployment. Most leading business organizations seem to be maintaining good profits, although they have fallen off slightly. They do not seem to be badly affected by the price control.

In the same issue of the *Advertiser* I was interested to see the report of a reply by the Commonwealth Treasurer (Mr. Holt) to Mr. Peters in the House of Representatives to the effect that an American company had reported that the average return on American capital invested in Australia was 30 per cent. Surely there are no grounds for complaint there? We have some American companies with heavy investments in this State, but they do not seem to be suffering.

Mr. Millhouse: Are they under control?

Mr. LOVEDAY: Controls always have a deterrent effect.

Mr. Quirke: I do not think they are under control.

Mr. Hall: They ought to be!

Mr. LOVEDAY: Of course. If we had price control on a Commonwealth basis we could do something about it, but the member for Mitcham would oppose that most strenuously.

Mr. Millhouse: The Labor Government abandoned it.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Another reason advanced in the past was that price control was not fair. It was said that some commodities were controlled but others were not, and that some

organizations were controlled whereas others were not. If a business were marking up its goods at prices that were unnecessarily high or unfair, it would be generally conceded that that would be an anti-social act. Some such businesses might attract the attention of the Prices Commissioner and some, for various reasons, might not. If it is unfair to attend to one and, perhaps for various reasons, to be unable to attend to the others, we might as well say it is unfair for the police to arrest one offender if they are unable to arrest all the others. However, I do not think even the member for Mitcham would pursue this line of argument as far as that.

The old chestnut about healthy competition automatically taking care of prices has been produced again by the chairman of the joint prices control investigation committee of the Adelaide Chamber of Commerce and the South Australian Chamber of Manufactures who, in the *Advertiser* of October 12, is reported as saying:

The Premier, for purely political reasons, has seen fit to deviate from an old-established tradition of free enterprise that healthy competition should automatically take care of prices.

I seem to have heard something along those lines before in this House, but it really does not bear much inspection. Notice that this gentleman says that healthy competition should take care of prices. I suppose we all agree that it should, but somehow it gets a chance only in a few cases here and there. No trader likes competition, and the more powerful traders are becoming increasingly effective in destroying it or nullifying it in various ways. There is plenty of competition in advertising and salesmanship but not in prices, which is the vital point.

I now turn to what the Governor of the Reserve Bank said about this matter early this year. According to a report in the *News* of February 17, 1960, Dr. Coombs, when addressing the Fifth Summer School of Business Administration at the Adelaide University, said:

The tendency for prices to rise is widespread. We have seen it in this country in the past 10 years; indeed, ever since the inflationary period of the Second World War. The blame for this deterioration is frequently placed on wage earners and their representatives. I do not believe that this is by any means a fair description of the source of the difficulty.

In another newspaper that also reported this speech (although not in quite the same way) he was reported as saying:

It was clear that, for a wide range of goods throughout the economy prices were determined by management rather than by market forces. This had developed with the emergence of strong monopolistic elements in our economy. These were characterized among other things by "Gentlemen's agreements" on price policies and successful takeover bids.

He had much more to say in a similar vein, but I do not think I need go any further than that statement, which seems to be the relevant section of his speech and deals, I think, adequately with the situation.

So much for this healthy competition which should automatically take care of prices but which so often does not. Another reference by the chairman of the joint prices investigation committee was:

According to the Mercantile Trade Protection Association, we have the highest rate of bankruptcy in any State. The Bankruptcy Court is reputed to be unable to cope with the number of petitions it has on its hands at the moment.

He just implies that this is due to price control and wants us to believe it. It is rather significant that he does not actually say straight out that it is due to price control. I think this gentleman would know perfectly well that he could not back it up by evidence. I think it is highly probable that he does not believe it himself because, in his important position, he surely knows that through the unemployment we have been suffering there has been a tremendous loss of purchasing power that is probably responsible—in fact, certainly responsible—for the excess of bankruptcies over the normal figure. There is not the slightest doubt that increased bankruptcies are directly the result of the policy of the Commonwealth Government. I doubt if the member for Mitcham would agree with this.

Mr. Clark: I think he would.

Mr. LOVEDAY: I do not think he would agree that price control had caused bankruptcies, because he said (I think in his 1957 speech) that the inefficient producer or retailer was subsidized as the Prices Commissioner, in trying to do the fair thing by him, must inevitably allow a margin of profit.

Mr. Millhouse: That is absolutely accurate.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Whether it is or not, that could not lead to bankruptcies: it would prevent them. The member for Mitcham must be at loggerheads with the viewpoint expressed by this leader of the business world, but no doubt he will be able to align himself with it later. In the same year he told us that price control decreased the supply of goods. Surely if that

were so we would have had some evidence of it, as we are now, according to reports, the only State practising price control on any scale. The others still have it on their Statute books and I have no doubt that our exercising it is helping them considerably. However, the chairman of this investigation committee does not agree with that. He admits that too few goods were sold years ago but says that the position is now reversed. Here again is another discrepancy, but no doubt that will be attended to later.

We have been told that it is not fair that the cost of living should be kept down in this State at the expense of merchants and manufacturers. If it is not, who will stand this burden? It was made plain a short time ago when the State Government allied itself with the Chamber of Commerce in attempting to have the living wage in South Australia reduced to 90 per cent of that in Sydney. I therefore presume that the people opposed to the re-enactment of the legislation will tell us that it is not fair that the onus of keeping the cost of living down should be placed on the shoulders of the merchants and manufacturers, and that it should be placed on the shoulders of the wage-earners. There is no doubt that that has been the attempt during the past year. In other words, the burden of £8,500,000 should be placed on the consumers' shoulders rather than on the shoulders of the merchants and manufacturers. Surely the member for Mitcham would not suggest that the Premier was misleading the House when he mentioned that sum. I am sure the Premier would not do that.

Mr. Millhouse: It is the first time I have ever known you to take his figures without question.

Mr. LOVEDAY: When the Prices Act was introduced in 1948 there was a shortage of goods and, if prices had not been controlled, the people who had the most money would have got the most goods and prices would have rocketed. By 1951 there was a strong inflationary trend and it was found necessary to reintroduce control over many commodities and services, which had previously been decontrolled, although there were more goods. Throughout the years, when the Act has been carried on from one year to another the Premier has stressed the existence of trade associations and restrictive practices, besides saying it was necessary for South Australia to keep costs of production as low as possible. Although some circumstances in the first few

years of State price control in South Australia were somewhat different from those existing now, throughout the whole of the period since 1948 the consumers and the State have derived substantial benefit from the re-enactment of the legislation from year to year. In other words, it has been necessary to afford this protection to consumers, and despite changing circumstances the consumers and the State have benefited.

I submit that this shows that there is a constant factor in the situation, irrespective of other elements, which makes the legislation necessary in the best interests of the community. That factor is the ever-present desire and action on the part of many business organizations to raise prices beyond what is necessary or fair by monopolistic or restrictive practices. Over a period of years the late Leader of the Opposition and other members on this side of the House have emphasized the desirability of having this legislation made permanent, for over 12 years the legislation has proved to be of considerable and worthwhile benefit to the community at very little cost indeed. I said earlier that this year the cost was about 1s. 4d. per capita for a dividend of about £8,500,000. If there were a tax rebate equivalent to this amount of £8 10s. per capita it would be hailed as a major political achievement. We therefore say that this benefit should be retained and that there should not be the need for re-enacting the legislation from year to year.

The general prosperity of business organizations in the State since 1948 shows that business activity has not been detrimentally affected by the legislation. Our present troubles have obviously been caused by the credit squeeze and other related actions of the Commonwealth Government. Primary producers have been receiving less for their products, but nevertheless they have received both direct and indirect benefit from this legislation. These benefits will be of even greater importance to them in view of the future confronting them, a future which will be affected by the entry of Great Britain to the European Common Market, so there is every reason indeed for primary producers to be keen to not only retain this legislation but to make it a permanent feature of the State. In the light of experience over past years, there is every reason why the Government should make this legislation permanent and save itself the trouble of year to year re-enactment. I have noticed, although the amendment is not yet on the file, that an amendment is

coming up with a view to taking out the provisions relating to land sales. The member for Mitcham introduced this matter last session and members on this side spoke strongly against it.

Mr. Riches: There is no undue profit in land sales, anyway!

Mr. LOVEDAY: No, none at all! Undoubtedly we shall be told that in view of the action of the Commonwealth Government there is no longer any competition, that land sales have fallen off, and that there is no need for this part of the legislation to be contained in the Act any longer. I have no doubt that is what the argument will be. Although there has been some dropping off in the rush for land, prices do not seem to have dropped very much. If I pursue this aspect much further I have no doubt I shall be pulled up for infringing Standing Orders, so I will say no more at this stage because further remarks on this aspect can be left until we reach the Committee stage. I think I have shown quite clearly that the arguments that have been advanced against the continuance of the Act are based entirely on fallacies. The Act itself has conferred widespread benefit on consumers, and there is no reason why we should go on debating this matter every year: there is every reason why we should make it a permanent feature. I hope that when we reach the Committee stage that will be done. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am afraid that the member for Whyalla has pricked me into speaking again this year on this legislation. I must say that I have been intensely flattered by the attention I have received from him and the very deep study he has obviously given to my speeches on this legislation in previous years. My only regret is that in spite of the exposition I have put before the House on this matter I have not yet convinced him of the futility of price control. I must say that in the last 12 months nothing has occurred to make me change my views on this subject. I very much regret that the Government has seen fit to introduce a Bill on this topic again in 1961. A very small portion of the sting is drawn from my feelings of regret by the amendment which has been drafted by the Premier and circulated to members. If my eloquence is insufficient to persuade most members to vote against the second reading, then, although I propose not to support the

second reading, I shall support the Premier's amendment, although I regret to tell the member for Whyalla that I have no intention whatever other than of opposing strongly the amendment which he has on the file.

I have said that nothing that has occurred this year has led me to change my mind on price control. I have had some recent experience of price control, and some individual cases which I have followed up to the best of my ability have been instances of anomalies and injustices under this legislation. One case culminated in my visiting the Prices Commissioner at his office. Mr. Murphy was kind enough to give me one hour and 20 minutes of his valuable time to discuss these detailed questions of price control with me. Even that did not change my outlook on this matter, although I much appreciated his giving up his time to discuss it with me. Within a few minutes of my arrival there, he had established effectively what could only be termed a pupil-teacher relationship between us.

Mr. Riches: Who was the pupil?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Definitely I. As I was leaving, he told me to telephone him if I was ever going off at a tangent again.

Mr. Quirke: To put you back on the track?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yes. I appreciated that offer, but it is one that I have not as yet felt it necessary to take up. The only conclusion I came to from that visit was something I had said here on many occasions, but Mr. Murphy himself confirmed it. In what I say about him I am not reflecting on the man personally. He is an officer administering a department.

Mr. Loveday: He is not a bureaucrat.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Of course he is, but I am not reflecting on him personally. He is merely a civil servant doing his job. It is a job I do not like, of course. He is a bureaucrat. However, I will not be sidetracked by this. I have been trying to say that I was confirmed in the views I had held in this House for many years by what Mr. Murphy said, that what we call "price control" is only "profit control"; it can be nothing else. I was confirmed in that by what he told me. Last year—I do not intend to go over the ground I covered then—we had incorporated in *Hansard* a list of the items under price control, because members may remember that the then Leader of the Opposition said frankly, in supporting this legislation again in 1960, that he had no idea what items were being controlled

at that time. Therefore, we had a list incorporated in *Hansard*. It is there for all to see. So far as I can discover with the aid of the Assistant Parliamentary Librarian, the only items that have been decontrolled in the last 12 months are chemists' lines, the making up of prescriptions, and linseed oil. They are the only items to be released from control. Chemists and linseed oil seem to share the favours of the Government in this regard. Yet, to our surprise and to my chagrin, we find that, although those items have been removed (and, so far as I am aware, no other items have been recontrolled), the Prices Department will cost nearly £6,000 more to administer in the coming year than in the past year. The member for Whyalla said much about the effectiveness of the Prices Department in keeping prices down. It is regrettable that the department itself cannot keep its own costs down in this matter. Fewer items are under control yet the branch will cost more money this year.

I now desire to comment on the Premier's remarks this year. First, there is the question of the lists of fair prices for meat being put out by the Prices Commissioner. I see nothing wrong with this. I said so when the first list was issued, because it seemed to me that there was no compulsion about it—and compulsion is what I object to most strongly. If the list is of value, then it will be of value to the housewife. If, as I more than half suspected, it was valueless, then it would show what a waste of time lists or price control itself might be. That was my view at the time the first list was put out. My wife cut it out of the newspaper and said she would check up with our local butcher to see what prices he was charging, in the light of that list. She was most enthusiastic about it, being a most careful housewife, but her enthusiasm did not last long and she did not bother to cut out the second list. That is the general reaction throughout the community.

Mr. Lawn: You have said before that your household is not very intelligent! You said your dog Susie was the most intelligent member of it!

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I acknowledge that, but Susie is very intelligent, but that does not mean that my wife is not intelligent, too.

Mr. Hall: Why isn't the list any good?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I will tell the honourable member: I will also lend him this digest of the meat industry which has a little article on it. Price control is no good because of the question of quality, which cannot be taken into account in compiling lists of prices. The dear

old late Leader of the Opposition (Mr. O'Halloran) some years ago advocated for that very reason the decontrol of meat prices, and it was subsequently acted on by the Government.

Mr. Shannon: He was a grower and he knew.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yes; he had first-hand experience.

Mr. Loveday: But he firmly supported the re-enactment.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: We know that members opposite are bound by their caucus decisions; I will not take the matter further than that. But he advocated in this House the decontrol of meat prices for reasons I have mentioned in relation to these lists. I personally have no objection to the lists but think that the more they are published the more they show the futility of the whole set-up.

Let me come now (very respectfully, as I always do) to the speech of the Premier on this matter. I make it clear, as I have made it clear on previous occasions, that nobody opposes the Government with more hesitation or regret than I do. It is something I intensely dislike doing but on this occasion I must do so. The Premier made a number of points. The first one (I shall not read his speech) related to the investigations carried out by the Prices Department from time to time into grape prices, wine prices, and so on. I do not object to that, but all those investigations could be carried out without price control. It is purely coincidental that it is the Prices Commissioner who is given the task of doing this. He could simply be divorced from it. Therefore, it is not an argument in favour of price control to point to the effective investigation carried out by the Prices Department in this particular industry.

Mr. Loveday: He could not investigate without authority.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Absolute nonsense! The Prices Commissioner could easily be given authority to make these investigations, by Statute if necessary. I think that that point is clear, even to the obtuse members for Gawler and Whyalla. I will not say more about it, except to express surprise that the Premier had to use such an argument to boost his claim for the continuance of price control for a further 12 months.

His second argument was to point to price increases which follow rises in the living or basic wage. That seemed a most extraordinary argument. I do not know whether or not the Premier meant to say that in this State

prices rose less after a general rise in the basic wage, but if he did I suggest that that is not accurate and that, in fact, prices have risen in South Australia to about the same extent as in other States that do not have price control. I referred last year to the new consumer price index, and do not propose to do so in detail now. Members are familiar with this index, which is produced by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, and which is used by our arbitration bodies in this country.

Mr. Fred Walsh: It has not been used yet.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: The honourable member is good at splitting hairs. He knows as well as I that it is intended to use this index in the future. By courtesy of the Parliamentary Library I have a release dated July 20 last setting out the consumer price index for the six capital cities separately and combined from the year ended June, 1949, to the end of the June quarter, 1961. This, of course, does not give any comparison between the price levels in each city, but it does show the comparative rise in prices in the various cities during that period. What do we find? In Sydney the rise has been 62.9 points, in Melbourne 66.1, in Brisbane 64, in Adelaide 62.7, in Perth 61.8 and in Hobart 63.2. A note at the bottom of this comparison states that decimal points are really irrelevant and should be disregarded. The rise in price levels in the capital cities during that 12 year period were generally within one or two points. I suggest, without going into the figures further, that it is a most extraordinary argument to say that price control in South Australia has kept the cost structure down after increases in the basic wage. It just has not done that!

The Premier's next claim was that the cost of housing in South Australia for a five-roomed brick house was about £750 less than in other States. I do not quarrel with that figure, but I do quarrel with his conclusion that it was entirely due to the activities of the Prices Department. That is not the case! I am prepared to concede that the activities of the department may be one ingredient, but surely all members are aware (and I know that the Leader of the Opposition and other Opposition members are aware) that at present there is intense competition in cottage building in South Australia. Competition, good labour relations, better processes and the activities of the Housing Trust are all ingredients in keeping housing costs down in

South Australia. It is not accurate to say, as did the Premier, that it is due to the activities of the Prices Department, and I join issue with him on that.

His next point was that in view of the highly competitive export trade we must have price control. I am at a loss (and perhaps the member for Burra can enlighten me) as to what was meant by that. It had no conclusion whatever. Even the member for Whyalla didn't use that argument this afternoon. The same goes for the Premier's claim that since the hire-purchase legislation has been enacted the Prices Department has been very effective there. For the life of me I cannot see any activities that the department can usefully undertake in that field that could not be undertaken by other bodies. I should be glad if the Premier could amplify what he said in that regard.

His next argument related to restrictive trade practices which, he said, could take many forms and in many cases required delicate handling by a specialized staff. That sounded almost like an advertisement for women's corsets. He said that the Prices Act gave a fair measure of control over restrictive trade practices. The only time on which I have ever referred a case of restrictive trade practice to the Premier he sent it on to the Prices Commissioner. I never had an acknowledgement. I never heard of it again, and that was two or more years ago.

Mr. Shannon: Perhaps it was not a restrictive trade practice.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: It was, and it is still continuing. It has my wholehearted opposition. When he sent it on to the Prices Commissioner the Premier said, "See, Millhouse, what the Prices Commissioner can do. Even you are getting some benefit from him." I have not heard about it from that day to this. That is my only personal experience of the effectiveness of the Prices Department concerning restrictive trade practices. It is well known that the Commonwealth, in conjunction with the States, is at present doing its best to devise effective legislation to control such matters. That legislation will undoubtedly encounter many difficulties, but it has my wholehearted support, because as a Liberal I entirely condemn restrictive trade practices. However, I do not think that price control is a means of combating them, nor has it been, so far as I am aware, effective in so doing.

The Premier then gave facts and figures about petrol prices and the fact that they were lower here. He ranged as far abroad as the western and eastern seaboard of the United States of America and quoted San Francisco and New York. It is easy to put such facts and figures before the House, but it is not so easy for a humble private member like myself to check or review them. I have, however, done my best to check them and I am surprised that the member for Whyalla did not do so on this occasion. The information I have is, I believe, reliable, but is definitely at variance with the information the Premier put before the House. I am not saying outright that I am right or that he is wrong. I believe that his figures were inaccurate, but if he can show me that my figures are wrong I will withdraw them, because he has better sources of information available to him than I have. However, I shall put before the House figures about the very matters he put forward. I received them from the oil industry, which obtained them from the Petroleum Information Bureau in Melbourne. They may or may not be accurate; I believe they are accurate, but I am prepared to concede that they are not if the Premier can show me I am wrong.

Mr. Fred Walsh: Give the figures so we shall understand your speech.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I am about to do that. The Premier said that in this State the retail price of petrol was 3s. 3d. a gallon for standard grade motor spirit, and that that was 1½d. a gallon lower than in other States. That is correct, but later I shall say something about who suffers as a result. He went on to say:

It is also the equivalent of 2d. a gallon below the price at which the same octane spirit sells in San Francisco and 3d. a gallon below the price in New York.

I have been told that standard grade spirit in South Australia has an octane rating of 83, and super grade 93. In New York the octane rating for standard is 90, so a superior product is being sold in the United States; it is not the product with which the Premier endeavoured to compare prices. That is enough to make the comparison entirely inexact.

Mr. Hall: It is still a good comparison.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Perhaps the honourable member would be interested if I told him that I had been informed that regular grade (90 octane) sells in San Francisco for the equivalent of 2s. 11½d. a gallon Australian compared with 3s. 3d. a gallon here (although the Premier put it at 3s. 5d.). The price in New York is

equivalent to 3s. 3½d. Australian, which is only ½d. above the South Australian price, although the Premier put it at 3s. 5d.

Mr. Hall: Have these overseas prices been subject to recent variations?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I cannot say; this information was obtained for me yesterday through a representative of the oil industry in South Australia from the Petroleum Information Bureau in Melbourne. The figures may be wrong, but if they are I should like the Premier to correct them.

Mr. Shannon: The octane rating is important.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Of course. It is a better quality product in the United States than it is in Australia. The Premier compared the two, but they were not comparable commodities. I am told that our price is 3s. 3d. a gallon and that that is less than the price in other States of Australia, but perhaps members would be interested to know that in South Australia the reseller's margin is 4½d. a gallon whereas in other mainland States it is 5½d., in Hobart it is 6½d., and in Darwin 7½d. If these figures are accurate (and I am assured they are) the person hit by price control on petrol is not the wicked company directly but the reseller himself. His is the margin that is lower—the little man in the suburban garage, who suffers from price control.

Mr. Hall: That is a matter for internal administration.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: The honourable member may say that, but they are my figures and, if they are accurate, the man who suffers from price control on petrol in South Australia is the little man, who I believe needs the most support. The person who suffers from price control in other instances is the small store-keeper.

Mr. Hall: Perhaps the honourable member can tell us why people are rushing around to take leases on service stations.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I do not believe they are; my information is to the contrary. I have invited the honourable member to speak in this debate, but no doubt the Premier will reply because, if I am wrong, I shall certainly withdraw. However, I have been told that the price of 90 octane petrol in New York is 3s. 3½d., and in San Francisco 2s. 11½d.

Mr. Shannon: Are these prices related to our currency?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yes. They are substantially below the prices the Premier quoted, and the octane rating is 90 compared with 83 in Australia.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford: What about interstate comparisons?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I have already mentioned them. The Premier's figures were correct, but the reseller is the person who suffers, because the margin on each gallon is almost as much less in South Australia as the price is lower, and I think that is a bad thing. Other members do not seem to have much sympathy for petrol resellers, but I think the figures show they are getting a raw deal.

Mr. Shannon: The man who makes a living is making it out of sidelines.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: That is so. The Premier also referred to the prices of superphosphate and timber. I do not intend to go into detail on these matters; however, one irate man (not in my electorate) rang me after the Premier had made his speech and pointed out that timber had been free of price control for the last seven years. Nevertheless, the Premier presumed to say that the people of South Australia had saved a tremendous amount of money thereby, even though timber was not under control. Of course, I know what the Premier means—that the Prices Commissioner in the role, one might say, of "Big Brother" stands over timber producers and says, "Now, don't put your prices up too much or you will be under control again." However, I am informed (and again I am subject to correction) that at no time has the Prices Commissioner challenged increases in the prices of timber. If that is so, it just does not add up!

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford: There is another side to it: Has the Prices Commissioner ever suggested reductions that have not been made?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I cannot answer that.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford: Frequently, when prices of imported products go up, the local price goes up, but when the price of imported commodities comes down local businessmen forget to lower prices.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: That may be so. As I said a few moments ago, the Premier is the man with all the information and the knowledge, and I am only a humble backbencher. What about the price of superphosphate? I am told—and here again I am subject to correction—that the manufacturers have not even applied for an increase in the price of superphosphate in the last three years. We all know that there is a crowd from Victoria called Pivot which is giving much competition in the South-East. That is as I understand the position, and I think if the facts were

analysed they would not support the Premier in his claim that the people of this State have benefited from the legislation. However, if my argument is not sufficient to defeat the Bill, I will support the amendment. The one point I get back to, as I have on previous occasions, is this: if price control is so effective in this State, and if it has given us all these alleged benefits, why is that not obvious to any other Government in Australia? Whether it be the Labor Government in New South Wales or Tasmania, or the Liberal Government in Victoria, Queensland or Western Australia, why, if price control is so obviously a good thing, does it not follow our example and reimpose or continue price control?

Mr. Loveday: They have never taken their Acts off the Statute Book.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: That may be so. Some weeks ago a member of the Queensland Parliament came to South Australia, and when I met him he said, "You know, one of the things our Government has learned from your Government is price control. We have price control in Queensland." However, when I analysed it I found that they have price control on only four lines at the moment—bread, flour, kerosene and petroleum products. That member—a Liberal—said to me, "We are following your example with regard to price control in Queensland." Little did he know of the long list of goods under price control in this State. When that member returned he sent me a copy of the Queensland *Hansard* for August 30, 1961, on which date the Labor Party moved the following motion:

That this House resolves that the Order in Council, dated June 8, 1961, executed under the provisions of the Profiteering Prevention Act, and laid upon the table of the House on the 22nd instant, be disallowed.

The Act mentioned in that motion is the equivalent of our Prices Act. Mr. Duggan, who moved the motion, is a member of one or other of the Labor Parties in that State; the position is far too intricate for me to know which one.

Mr. Ryan: He is the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: He is a member of one or other of the many Labor Parties.

Members interjecting.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Mr. Duggan said:

On many occasions we have seized the opportunity in this House to declare our opposition to the continual eroding away of the powers vested in the Government to deal with price control.

That was the Labor Party's song.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford: Obviously, what they were objecting to was the taking off of price control.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: That is so. The Labor Opposition, from whatever front it might have been, was objecting to the taking off of price control. At the end of the debate the Attorney-General of Queensland (Mr. Munro) replied on behalf of the Government.

Mr. Dunstan: Which Government Party was he in?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: The very successful coalition Government which has brought Queensland out of the black night of Socialism in the last four years to a period of some considerable prosperity.

Members interjecting:

Mr. MILLHOUSE: How have they done it? They have done it, among other things, by abandoning price control. Members opposite may be interested in what Mr. Munro said in answer to the Labor motion. He said:

Let me quote what we said in our policy speech in 1957.

Honourable members opposite will remember that that was before the very successful general election which threw out one or other or both of the Labor Parties in that State. He went on:

I will not have time to read the whole of it, but this is what we said among other things at that time: "Price-fixing orders can temporarily control prices, but in their long-term effect they just as often aggravate the evil." We quite recognize that this artificial set-up of governmental control of prices creates a state of affairs like a patient who comes out of hospital and is supported on crutches. Immediately after the crutches are taken away there may be an adverse effect. We have had to watch the economy very carefully to see that we did not take any action that would harm it. The success of our efforts has been beyond our expectations because there has been substantially no increase in prices as the result of our actions, and that can be amply proved by figures that I will give the House in a few moments.

Interesting, is it not, the experience of another State that abandons price control? Very interesting indeed! Mr. Munro went on:

I will have to pass on very quickly. The Leader of the Queensland Labor Party—

I do not know which one that is, but apparently it is the Opposition Party—

referred to remarks that had been passed by Sir Thomas Playford at one time supporting Queensland, but I will make comparisons later between Queensland and South Australia that will completely disprove any value in that.

He then goes on to make a comparison that will be of interest to members opposite, for it underlines the paramount point that if it is so

good here why does it not catch on in other States. He goes on:

One honourable member has asked me to make a comparison between the States. Our major move away from price control in Queensland was made in February, 1959. In the two years since then the price increase in Queensland has been the lowest in the six Australian States. Using one method of computation, that is, a combination of the C series index and the consumer price index, South Australia, the one State that has clung most tenaciously to price control, had the highest increase of the six Australian States, and if we compute it on the consumer price index only for the same two periods, South Australia had the second highest increase.

The only point that I make from that is that surely, if the Queensland Government—a Liberal Government after many years of Socialist rule in that State—wanted a model of prosperity and success in this field, it could not have done better than to look to the Government in this State, yet it deliberately turned its back on our legislation in South Australia.

Mr. Fred Walsh: Did you say "Socialist rule"?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yes.

Mr. Fred Walsh: What did the Labor Party socialize while it was in office?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I understand that the honourable member belongs to one of the same Parties, and if he cannot answer that question I cannot answer it for him.

Mr. Fred Walsh: You can't because you don't know.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Is the honourable member saying that it was not a Socialist Government in power in Queensland from 1930—or earlier than that?

Mr. Fred Walsh: Your knowledge is lacking. You have to quote from the book.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Unfortunately, the honourable member has put me off the track. Here, the Queensland Government had, if it wanted to follow it, the model of South Australia, yet it deliberately did not follow it in February, 1959: it substantially abandoned price control. Two years later, when its attention is consciously and directly turned to South Australia, what does it say? A Minister of that Government says, "No. We have done better without price control in Queensland than South Australia has by tenaciously clinging to it." Surely to goodness the experience of five other States, no matter what their political complexion (for this is not a Party political matter), is of some value? If things are so good in South Australia and price control is so effective, why does it not

catch on in the other States? I just cannot answer that, and no member on this side (which includes the Premier and the member for Gouger) or members opposite in their chorus-ing myriads have ever given me the answer to that. If some member could give me the answer, maybe even I would be convinced of the efficacy of price control, but the experience of every part of Australia is against it. They do not have second thoughts on it and say, "No. We have made a mistake by abandoning it and are coming back to it." Not a bit of it! There is the case of Queensland. I do not understand it and I do not believe, in view of that, that any arguments brought forward by the Premier, either today or on any other occasion, or by the member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday) have any force in them. It is regrettable that they should continue to cling to something that is outmoded and inefficient and does not achieve the object it sets out to achieve.

My last point is this. In his speech the member for Whyalla asked, "If it is ineffective why is there opposition to it?" There is opposition to it for many reasons, the first of which is that it is unjust that one or two sections of the business community should be penalized while others are not. The second reason is that, even though it is ineffective, it is a complete nuisance and a time-waster. It is all very well for us to say that the Prices Department will cost £70,000 in South Australia and that is the price of price control. It is not. There is a tremendous figure of hidden costs to industry which has to supply all the required information. The cost will be far more than double the cost we have here. Those are the reasons why, even though it is inefficient and does not achieve its object, it is entirely undesirable. I much regret every time I have to oppose the Government. It hurts me very much to see in the *Advertiser* a cartoon such as we saw last week of the Premier on a rocking horse—but, unfortunately, that gives a true picture of the Government's outlook on this matter. For these reasons I very much regret that again in 1961 I am unable to support the second reading of this Bill.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart): I support the Bill and also indicate my support for the amendment foreshadowed by the member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday). I suggest to the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) that, if it could be carried, he would be saved the anxiety that he has to go through every time he finds himself in the position of opposing

the Government. I support the Bill because I believe there should be effective machinery that could be brought into operation to protect the people at any time that that protection might be considered necessary. In spite of all that the member for Mitcham has attempted to tell us, not even one State has decided to discard that machinery. Other States may have decontrolled various items and services but they have held intact the machinery by means of which control could be re-imposed if it were proved that the interests of the public were being outraged. That machinery should be a permanent feature of our legislation. It should not depend merely upon legislation being re-enacted year after year. The effectiveness of the work of the Prices Department, to my mind, lies in the fact that that machinery is still there and the knowledge that the business community has that it can be put into operation at any time has had and is having an effect upon many of the bread and butter lines so important to the economy of the families of this State. I suggest that this machinery could be more effective if a degree of permanency were attached to the department. We want our best and most skilled men in economics to be associated with the Prices Department.

Mr. Millhouse: Are they?

Mr. RICHES: I do not know. I do not cast aspersions but, if I were a young man with the necessary qualifications, I should think twice about joining a department that could go out of existence next year, that depends for its life upon legislation passed from year to year. In those circumstances I am amazed at the efficiency that the Prices Department has brought to bear on the inquiries it has made. I want, first of all, to get back to the principle of price control. Every member here has to accept this fact that there is price control whether the Government exercises some supervision or not. The only question we have to ask ourselves is: who is to have the over-riding authority? Who is to impose price control? The principle that there should be price control does not enter into the argument at all because price control is there.

Mr. Hall: Not on all things, only on most.

Mr. RICHES: With great respect, there may be a few, but I cannot think of any that are not controlled.

Mr. Hall: What about electrical goods?

Mr. RICHES: If I may give an instance, a shopkeeper was selling Bex powders at less than a shilling a packet, and he learned quickly

that there is such a thing as price control. I am not criticizing the people who manufacture Bex powders. They have not increased their price and I think they were justified in the action they took, but price control was there. The people who handle Bex powders know it and I suggest that that same control applies on nearly everything sold, that somebody somewhere along the line (not necessarily the reseller) fixes the prices. Much has been said about petrol. The price of standard grade petrol has been fixed under the Act by the Prices Commissioner. There has been no Government fixing of price for premium grade petrol, but somebody has fixed it because one can go to any part of South Australia and find every brand of premium grade petrol selling at the same price. All prices are fixed. The market, to which fruitgrowers go each morning, fixes the price of the fruit to be sold. The principle of price fixation is with us and we accept it, and the only question to be decided in this legislation is whether there should be some overall supervision at Government level—whether the people should have any voice in the determination of prices. We have given to authorities apart from the Prices Commissioner the right to fix prices. The Milk Board fixes the price of milk and the Potato Board the price for potatoes. The principle is accepted by this Parliament, by all Parliaments and by the people, and the overriding power should reside in the people.

Mr. Millhouse said that the cost of the Prices Department was increasing while the number of controlled items was reducing. I know from personal knowledge that the Prices Department has been engaged in inquiring to good effect in my electorate into items that are not controlled. The whole community objected to the sustained high prices of meat and when representations were made to the department officers were sent to the country. They made investigations and suggestions that, I understand, have been acted on by the butchers and which have been accepted by the consumers. We cannot measure the volume of the department's work by the number of individual items controlled, and I hope we will never try to do so, because the greatest work of the department is in keeping the machinery alive and in maintaining investigations to ensure that if people are being exploited at any level recommendations can be made and articles brought under control. If ever the need for controls was evident, it was clearly demonstrated in respect of chemists.

Mr. Millhouse also mentioned that in other States prices were kept down on many items, even though price control did not operate. I have definite information on the effectiveness of price control as administered by the individual States and I believe that the only effective price control, so far as price reductions are concerned, would lie with the Commonwealth Government. When we had it, Commonwealth price control was effective. On one occasion the people were given the opportunity of expressing their opinion of the efficacy of price control. A referendum was held. However, the question put to the people was not whether there should be price control or whether it should be abolished but whether the Commonwealth Government should continue to exercise it or whether it should be exercised by the States. All of the propaganda in South Australia, which was directed against the continuance of Commonwealth control, was that South Australia could do it better. The overwhelming vote at that referendum was in favour of continued price control. Those who did not vote directly in favour of it as an exercise at Commonwealth level, voted for it to be exercised at State level. They favoured the power to control prices and not necessarily that the price of every article should be listed and controlled when competition was fair and the margin of profit reasonable. It is to the department's credit that it has not unnecessarily overloaded the regulations and that it has been prepared to remove controls where such action can be justified. It has not exercised control merely for the sake of so doing.

It is important that this machinery should be kept intact, but the Government should provide this as a permanent feature of our legislation. Mr. Millhouse said that one of his objections to the legislation was that it acted unfairly on some businesses, which had been penalized. Surely that would mean that if price control were lifted those businesses would immediately seek a higher margin of profit. By the same token, however, he argued that there would be no increase in prices without price control. He cannot have it both ways. He also said that he could not understand what the Premier meant when he referred to the fact that competition on the export market meant that in the interests of primary producers price control should be continued. Surely those who have been telling the producers from one end of Australia to the other that they must pay attention to reducing their costs know something of the subject. The primary producer has to be protected against

the demands of the makers of machinery and the suppliers of commodities. Of all industries, the cost of employed labour would be less in primary industry. Most farmers are farmers in their own right and, unfortunately, they do not employ much labour. Their costs are made up primarily of the costs for services and goods that are essential for production. If they are to keep their production costs down, there must be some oversight of the costs of services and goods. Every primary producer would agree with that.

I do not intend to speak at length, but I re-emphasize my belief in the principle of price control. As long as business and the world of commerce remain as they are today we must have price control, and the power should reside in the people rather than in vested interests.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide): In supporting the Bill, I wish to reply to the member for Mitcham, who gave some figures to the House (to which I shall refer later) and referred to the list of meat prices compiled by the Prices Commissioner. He said that his wife kept the list and compared the prices with those actually paid. I remind him that when speaking on another Bill a few weeks ago he said, concerning his wife, himself and his dog Susie, that Susie was the most intelligent member of his family. I think, because of his statement that Susie was the most intelligent member of his household, and because she is probably the biggest meat eater in the family, that he should have submitted the list to her. However, the value of the figures I think can be summed up in this way: I remember last session, when a similar Bill to extend the Act for another 12 months was before the House, the honourable member sponsored a statement and a graph drawn up by the Chambers of Manufactures and Commerce. The chambers engaged the services of a Mr. Shrapnel, who prepared a graph on price movements in Australia for some years. The statement may be summarized as follows:

In 1957-58 South Australia had the lowest index in the Commonwealth, and at this time South Australia and Queensland were the only States with price control operating. In 1958-59 South Australia was the second lowest to New South Wales, and in 1959-60 was third lowest. The chart shows that Western Australia jumped from the lowest position to the top when it abolished price control, that Victoria jumped from lowest to second highest and South Australia from lowest in 1957-58 and the first half of 1958-59 to second lowest, and in 1959-60 to third lowest.

Despite this, the honourable member on that occasion sponsored this graph prepared by Mr. Shrapnel as a reason why price control should be abolished, and put up figures again today believing they were arguments why price control should not be continued. Mr. Shrapnel blew himself up last year with the graph he prepared, and I suggest that the figures supplied by the member for Mitcham this afternoon were about as valuable as the figures he submitted last year. He quoted some figures that allegedly came from the Commonwealth Statistician and said they had been used. The member for West Torrens said they had not been used, and the member for Mitcham accepted that statement. He is not as sure of his facts as one would expect a member of this House to be. This afternoon he said (it could be called an admission) that the Premier would have a greater knowledge of the working of the Prices Department than he would have. I agree with that statement and accept the statement that the Premier, being in effect the Minister of Prices, would have a greater knowledge of what value the department has been to the people of South Australia than would any member of the House or of the community.

Mr. Loveday: Including another knight in another place?

Mr. LAWN: Yes, including all the knights in another place and in the Adelaide City Council. We do not want to forget the facts given by the Premier in introducing the Bill, when he said:

An average five-roomed brick dwelling can be built in South Australia today for about £750 lower than the same type of house built in any other State. The lower building costs enjoyed by this State have enabled the number of houses built here for the year ended June 30, 1961 (9,376), to be built for about £6,000,000 less than the same number of houses could have been built in any other State. This has also meant that semi-governmental authorities have been able to erect an additional 600 houses from funds available.

That may not mean much to the member for Mitcham, but it means a lot to myself and to those people who purchase these houses.

Mr. Jenkins: The Prices Commissioner said that those prices were conservative.

Mr. LAWN: The Premier did not say that.

Mr. Jenkins: The Prices Commissioner told me that.

Mr. LAWN: I see. Even on that figure, there was to purchasers of houses a saving of £6,000,000 overall, or more on what the member for Stirling said. Each purchaser saved £750 or more and, in addition to the houses built

by the Government, many semi-governmental bodies were able to build 600 more houses than they would normally have been able to build. I pay a tribute to the officers of the Prices Department. I, like other members, have on occasions approached them on various matters. I have asked the Premier questions about certain matters, but not all have been reported back to the House because the House would have been astounded at the facts. The Premier would not report back to the House, because that would have meant exposure of what big business was doing before an officer of the Prices Department acted on the matter. During this session in a question I mentioned a person who went to one of the hire-purchase places in the city (claimed by some Government members to be one of the most reputable lenders of money in the city) and borrowed £1,500 to build a house. After paying £20 a month for three years, this man wanted to liquidate the debt and was advised that he still owed £1,540. I raised the matter with the Premier and he gave me the docket to copy the reply, but would not give the reply in the House. As a result of an investigation by the Prices Department, the company reduced the amount by £488.

Mr. Quirke: That is not much to a man buying a house!

Mr. LAWN: Not much! This case can be added to what the Premier told us when introducing this Bill. I copied the reply from the docket, as the Premier was good enough to say I could copy anything I wanted from it, but he would not reply in the House. This information is available to any member. On other occasions I have mentioned what has happened regarding the purchase of television sets, painting and plumbing jobs, and so on. The Premier has referred these matters to the Prices Department and, even when the things were not under control, the department, as it has been able to negotiate with the businesses concerned, has in many instances been able to effect a considerable reduction. The Premier also said:

Investigations carried out by the department into individual industries alone have resulted in some very substantial savings. In a little more than the last four years there have been 12 successive series of reductions on major petroleum products without any increases. With the exception of relaxation in customs duty all these reductions have been initiated by the South Australian Prices Department and the savings over this period for South Australia alone total £8,695,000. Of this amount, customs duty totals £614,000. In effect the department itself has saved consumers in this State over £8,000,000.

The Premier also added:

In the last five years, primary producers have been saved almost £1,000,000 on superphosphate, and in the last three years users of timber have been saved a total of £600,000. I could quote many more instances of individual industry savings effected by the department, but the facts given are more than sufficient to illustrate the position.

When we oppose this Bill in the face of evidence submitted by the Premier, information which I accept, we are told that we are not using our position in this House in the best interests of the people of the State. The member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) said that one of his reasons for opposing the Bill was that one section of the community was protected and the rest were not. He also opposes it because he does not believe in control and restrictions. He has said that in other sessions. Mr. Riches this afternoon indicated that prices were fixed—whether fixed by the Prices Department in accordance with this legislation or not, they are fixed by someone. He gave instances. He mentioned the case of Bex powders and others.

A statement was recently made by the top man in Australia of General Motors-Holden's in connection with the lay-off of 8,000 men this year. The press referred to the fact that this firm could sell its product more cheaply. People have made statements and written letters to the press to that effect and have said that this firm could sell more of its cars and possibly save laying off 8,000 men. What was the statement made on behalf of the company? I can well remember that it was that if the firm reduced the price of the Holden car it would have an adverse effect on the rest of the industry. The company's spokesman in effect admitted that the company could reduce the price. It could not deny that, because some two years ago it made a profit of some £15,000,000. We do not know what it made last year. This firm could substantially reduce the price of its car and still show a profit, but it was said that if that were done it would be detrimental to the rest of the industry. That statement indicates that General Motors-Holden's fixes the price of its car.

Mr. Millhouse said that price control meant that one section of the community was protected and the remainder was not. If the honourable member had his way this legislation would be taken off the Statute Book. However, we would still have price control. It would mean that big business would be protected because it could fix its own prices. That would apply to timber, bricks, television sets, motor cars and many

other things. Rent is fixed under separate legislation. We could probably apply Mr. Millhouse's statement in some way or other to other legislation. While we have this Act controlling prices, we still have other legislation that fixes the prices of various commodities. For instance, we have the Potato Board, which fixes the price of potatoes and also the Bread Board, which fixes the price of bread. We have the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act, which fixes rents; we have the hire-purchase legislation that controls hire-purchase (although it does not fix the interest rate charged, it controls and protects). Then there is the Industrial Code, which protects one section of the community. It may be said that a worker is granted a legal wage and he has some protection. This applies to those under Commonwealth and State awards, but rural workers are not protected. So, when the honourable member talks about protecting one section of the community and if he believes it right to protect one section, the Code should apply to rural workers as well.

Mr. Jennings: The price of labour is controlled.

Mr. LAWN: Yes, but Mr. Millhouse disagrees with price control. What is wrong, if the price of labour is controlled, in having some tribunal to fix and control prices of other requisites and commodities? There is nothing wrong. It is consistent and fair. We have a Companies Act that controls companies. Does Mr. Millhouse believe that we should abolish that Act and have a free-for-all? Then we have a Dog Fence Act, which makes it an offence for people to damage dog fences. Let us abolish that Act. Then we have the Early Closing Act. I suppose that Act protects some people, but I do not know whether it goes far enough. If the honourable member followed out his ideas far enough he would try to abolish that Act. Then we have the Transport Control Board and the Road Traffic Act; and I believe the honourable member is Chairman of the State Traffic Committee appointed under that Act, the object of which is to control a section of the community—those using the roads. But according to Mr. Millhouse's argument this afternoon, we should not have such an Act. We have a Health Act, a Hawkers Act, a Nurses Registration Act and a Police Offences Act. They all provide for controls and all were passed by Parliament to protect the public. We have the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Marriage Act. They

were all passed with the object of protecting a section of the community. Coming now to the honourable member's profession, we have the Justices Act and the Supreme Court Act, and lastly we have the Workmen's Compensation Act, which was passed to protect a section of the community and to award certain benefits in case of accident.

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

Mr. LAWN: Recently we have had criticism from organizations and from individuals regarding the prices of bread, meat (particularly lamb) and soft drinks. I understand that the price of bread is fixed by a bread board. I raised a question with the Premier only last week on behalf of an organization that had written to me claiming that much money was unnecessarily spent in advertising bread, because although advertising may be advantageous in certain respects, no-one can say that more bread will be sold as a result of it; people need bread every day of the week to live, and will buy it irrespective of how much it is advertised. I think this is an item that should be under the control of the Prices Commissioner rather than a bread board.

Meat has been controlled, de-controlled, re-controlled, and de-controlled again, with the result that the position is rather chaotic. There have been so many protests lately regarding the price of meat that the Premier has asked the Prices Commissioner to issue a guide to meat prices. Rather than issue a guide which had no legal effect and which no butcher had to follow—the member for Mitcham has assured us this afternoon that butchers do not follow it, at least not out his way—it would be far preferable for the Prices Commissioner to exercise the power he has under the Act to control the price of meat. Whether there is a drought year or a good year, there is always some reason that can be advanced why meat prices are high. One member raised a question earlier about the price of a side of lamb, which it was said could be purchased for a little over 9s. I assure the honourable member that I have not seen sides of lamb at that price in the city, and the cheaper sides of lamb are so small that they would not give a family even one decent meal.

Clothing has been controlled, de-controlled, re-controlled and de-controlled again, and I will admit that in this regard the Prices Commissioner has done a fairly good job. When

clothing was de-controlled the threat was there that if the retailers did not play the game price control would be reimposed, and it was, in fact, reimposed. We had another instance recently of soft drinks being increased by a penny a bottle. It was announced in the press that there was to be an increase of one penny a bottle imposed as a refrigeration charge. Later, I think in reply to the member for West Torrens (Mr. Fred Walsh), the Premier said that the penny a bottle increase was not a refrigeration charge but that the retailers had intended imposing such a charge and that the Prices Commissioner (who, I understand, had no authority to control the price of soft drinks) used his good offices and as a result agreed to a straight-out one penny a bottle increase in the price of soft drinks, not as a refrigeration charge. There is an instance of the necessity for price control, because if the Prices Commissioner had had no authority or if there had been no Prices Commissioner at all, we probably would have had an increase of twopence a bottle or even more; we certainly would have had a penny a bottle increase additional to the increase in respect of a refrigeration charge.

I remind the House of some of the reasons advanced by the Premier in 1948 when introducing this legislation for the first time. I suggest to the House that the conditions have not changed since then and that there is every reason why we should support the suggestion made this afternoon by the member for Whyalla that this legislation should be made permanent rather than being extended for 12 months.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member must not debate the amendment.

Mr. LAWN: I am not going to debate it, Mr. Speaker. I intended advocating that instead of the Act's being extended for 12 months it should be made permanent. I shall refer to the reasons why the Premier introduced this legislation in the first place, and I suggest that the same reasons have continued right through and that this legislation should therefore be made permanent. The Premier, when introducing the legislation in 1948, said:

This legislation arose out of the fact that the Commonwealth submitted to the people the question of whether the Constitution should be altered to empower the Federal Parliament to legislate in regard to prices and charges. That referendum was not carried and the Commonwealth Government has taken the view that in these circumstances it should not carry on price control indefinitely, but that price control, if necessary, should be exercised by the States.

The Premier went on to say that he did not quarrel with that decision. He then said:

The fact remains that hostilities ceased a considerable time ago, and, if the States are to exercise permanent control of prices and rents, it is fitting that at some stage they should assume the control which the Constitution vests in them.

I should like to repeat those last few lines in case members missed the context of the statement. They are:

The fact remains that hostilities ceased a considerable time ago, and, if the States are to exercise permanent control of prices and rents, it is fitting that at some stage they should assume the control which the Constitution vests in them.

The Premier indicated to the House in 1948 that the States were or might be introducing permanent control of prices and rents. There is therefore no reason why we should have to go to the trouble of extending this Act from time to time. He went on to say:

We are approaching the position when the Commonwealth legislation, which has been in operation during the war, is to terminate very abruptly, and the question immediately arises whether we are in a position to abandon price and rent controls or whether it is necessary to carry on controls and, if so, what form they should take. I say unhesitatingly that it is necessary for controls to be maintained over rents and prices under existing conditions.

At that time we had full employment. We had rising prices, but we did not have rising prices on the scale we have them today. Anyone knows that since 1949 the price structure has got absolutely out of control, and that is the reason the Commonwealth Government last year introduced its credit squeeze as a means of curbing inflation. It had no other means of curbing inflation. When I raised the question during the Address in Reply debate this year the Premier agreed that there was no need to have a credit squeeze to maintain full employment and curb inflation. We have a similar position now to that which existed in 1948, the only difference, I suggest, being that the position is worse. That is all the more reason why we should talk about permanent control of prices and rents. The Premier continued:

If we allowed prices to assume their natural limit it would inevitably mean that the people who had the most money would get the most goods.

Is that not the position today: if we lifted the lid off all controls would not the people with most money get all the goods? They would get all the goods and all the land that was available at the prices people were asking, and that is why we should not allow prices to assume their natural limit. The Premier went on to say:

If that is accepted by members, and I hope it will be, the question arises as to what form the control should take, what items should be covered, and what should be the administration. Later on he said:

Control will be a direct control of prices.

I point that out to the member for Mitcham, who said this afternoon that this legislation meant profit control and not price control. The Premier said that control would be a direct control of prices, and he went on to say:

I do not propose in any way to criticize the administration by the Commonwealth of prices during the war. I know that there has been considerable difficulty and confusion due to the fact that the system in operation in some instances took the form of profit control. In that case it immediately becomes a subsidy upon inefficiency, because the firm making goods at the cheapest rate is compelled to sell them at the lowest rate, and the firm which does not regard its costs to the greatest extent is given a higher price for its commodities. Under that system there is no incentive to keep costs down to the lowest figure.

In his second reading speech on this Bill the Premier said that prices had been kept down with great advantage to industry. He said also that the primary producers had been saved £1,000,000 on the price of superphosphate, and that they had been saved a large sum in connection with petrol, oils, etc. In 1948 the Premier answered the criticism that has been made by the member for Mitcham this afternoon for he said it would be price control and not profit control, and he instanced that the inefficient firm would receive a greater benefit than the efficient firm. The Premier has given us details of the help that this prices legislation has been to primary and secondary industries in reducing costs. In 1948 he also said:

Land values are one of the matters where another State is not prejudiced by what takes place in South Australia.

He had referred previously to a conference that had agreed on uniform price control, where it was said that consultations would take place between the States before prices were increased, or exempted from control, that is, if the prices had application in the various States. I agree with the Premier's last few remarks. Ever since the Act has been in operation the Government has not introduced control of land prices. The matter was debated here last year. In 1959 Parliament considered the Succession Duties Act Amendment Bill, and one of the sections in it stated:

Subject to the provisions of the Part a rebate shall be allowed on the duty payable in respect of property consisting of land used for primary production derived from a deceased person by will or under an intestacy by the widow or widower or any descendant or ancestor of the deceased person.

The rebate is set out in the legislation, but during the debate on the Bill the Premier gave the reasons why it should be accepted. He said that land values were fictitious. He also said that the primary producers particularly, if not solely, would be given a rebate in regard to their succession duties. He stressed that land values were inflated, and said:

I believe that a measure of relief along the lines which I have mentioned will commend itself to all members. I think they have realized that our primary production lands today, owing to circumstances completely removed from anything that can be gained from primary production, have assumed capital values far in excess of their actual primary production value; but when it comes to paying probate, those properties are assessed upon a fictitious value, and the person who is left to carry on primary production is frequently in very difficult circumstances indeed.

The Government found it necessary then to introduce this special legislation dealing with a rebate on succession duties for the people who held considerable areas. That was done because of the fictitious land values. We could apply the same argument to land around the metropolitan area. The Premier gave the reason why the Prices Act should be continued. It gives the Government power to reimpose controls on land prices. If the Government had done its job it would not have been necessary for the Succession Duties Act Amendment Bill to be passed. A few weeks ago we considered a Bill dealing with land tax, and covering the same matter. The Premier said that it was necessary because of inflated land values. One provision said that for land in excess of £5,000 in value there would be a reduction of one-halfpenny in the pound in the tax. That is not the way to deal with the matter. The proper way is to control land prices under the Prices Act. If that were done we would not have had the succession duties legislation in 1959 nor the land tax legislation in 1961. In 1948 the Premier said also:

If we allowed the values of agricultural lands to follow the price of our primary produce we would soon have extremely inflated land values. Is that not what we have seen since 1948? The Premier said that if we allowed the value of agricultural land to follow primary produce prices we would have inflated land values. I support this Bill and hope it will pass in such

a way that the Government will have the powers that are already in the Act, but we should seriously consider making the Act permanent rather than have it continued from year to year. We shall have price control, whether or not the member for Mitcham likes it. It comes to a question of whether we should have price control in accordance with the Act, following on an inquiry by the Prices Commissioner and his officers who will fix a fair price, or whether we should have the procedure we had before the war when the person with an article to sell could fix his own price. The labourer and the artisan cannot fix the price for his labour and there is no reason why people with goods to sell should be able to fix the prices. I can see no reason why the worker, who has his wages fixed by a tribunal, should be any different from the manufacturer. The prices of all goods should be fixed by a tribunal, whether those goods are grown or manufactured. No-one can deny the fact that price fixation as we have it today, particularly if it is implemented properly—that is, if the full powers of the Act are used—has proved to be of untold value to both industry and producers on the land. I instance the savings mentioned by the Premier. Also, it has been of untold value to the purchasers of houses and of other things of all descriptions, such as clothing. I urge the House to support the Bill and hope that it will seriously consider the suggestion that this Act should be made permanent.

Mr. RALSTON (Mount Gambier): I support the Bill and indicate that I propose supporting the amendment foreshadowed. The Prices Act that has been operating in South Australia since 1948 has over the years proved its worth. I regret that the other States have in the main exempted many of the goods that have been subject to price control in those States, but they have not taken those Acts off the Statute book. They realize that those Acts, although not operative at the present time, are always a threat to those who wish to exploit prices to the detriment of both the working people and the primary producers. Those Acts are on the Statute book and the goods can be brought under price control at any time thought necessary.

In his second reading speech the Premier made a point of speaking of the benefits that had accrued to the State through the continuance of the Prices Act since it was first enacted in South Australia. He drew attention to many things that have been controlled and are much to the advantage of the people of South Australia compared with those of

other States. We support the Premier in his contentions on those matters and feel that we have benefited to a large degree from the actions of the Prices Commissioner in South Australia. But we should not gloss over all the benefits, because the operation of the Act can and should be extended a little further, in some respects, than is the case today. For instance, my first experience of the Prices Act was in 1958 during an investigation of the price of petrol in Mount Gambier. I note that the Premier has pointed out now that the savings to this State from petrol prices alone have amounted to over £8,000,000 in recent years. In 1958 when I queried the price of petrol in Mount Gambier and pointed out that 4½d. a gallon was being charged as a freight rate based on Port Adelaide when most of the petrol coming into the South-East was coming through Portland in Victoria, the Premier in reply to representations made to him at that time said:

Fuel coming from Victoria is not under price control and its selling price is a matter determined by the seller. This Government has no control over petrol landed at Portland. The costs we are regulating are the costs of fuel that comes from Port Adelaide.

The Premier also agreed to have the matter investigated and, on investigation, the Prices Commissioner discovered that he had any amount of power over petrol coming in from Portland and discovered that he was able to reduce the price of petrol in Mount Gambier by 1½d. a gallon because all fuel that was coming to South Australia had to come either from other States or from overseas anyway, whether it came from Portland in Victoria or through Geelong in Victoria or Kurnell in New South Wales or Kwinana in Western Australia or from overseas. It had to come in from somewhere and was subject to price control. As the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) pointed out earlier, the Prices Commissioner has only the power to control the margin of profit on the price that the reseller or the retailer can charge. He sets the percentage or margin at that level. The production or wholesale cost is not subject to any action by the Prices Commissioner where petrol or any other goods coming from other States are concerned, but he has the power on all goods that are subject to price control to set a reseller's margin, and it is that reseller's margin that the member for Mitcham had a lot to say about when he was speaking of the Prices Commissioner's powers in relation to petrol.

As regards the price of standard petrol in South Australia, the Prices Commissioner has kept a firm control over the margin of profit allowed. Until recently it was 4½d. a gallon, and now it has been increased to 4¾d. I do not think that is a great margin of profit on the costs involved in the resale of petrol and the servicing of cars at the bowzers. But we must remember that they get a far greater margin of profit when they are selling premium spirit which is not subject to price control in South Australia. In fact, the price margin between premium and standard spirit is greater in South Australia than anywhere else in Australia. Of course, in other States the price of standard petrol is substantially more than it is in South Australia, which accounts to some degree for the smaller margin between the two types of motor spirit in those States compared with South Australia. But that, too, reflects itself in the bulk sales in the various States. Figures supplied by the Division of Fuel, Department of National Development, show that in New South Wales (this is for 1960, the latest figures available) the sale of premium motor spirit amounted to 256,486,000 gallons while the sales of standard motor spirit amounted 172,379,000 gallons. New South Wales sold much more super grade petrol than standard spirit. That pattern follows fairly consistently in the other States except in South Australia where price control has had some effect on standard motor spirit sales. For the same year 72,831,000 gallons of standard grade petrol were sold here against 51,001,000 gallons of premium motor spirit. A big variation in the prices of the two grades of petrol is reflected in the sales of each grade. If there is only a small difference in the price, as in New South Wales, substantially greater quantities of the premium grade spirit compared with the standard grade are sold, but the reverse applies in South Australia. The price factor largely determines the type of spirit sold. In South Australia, where standard motor spirit is subject to price control and the Prices Commissioner has fixed a reasonable profit margin for the reseller, standard sales are much greater in relation to the premium spirit sales.

The Premier, when introducing this Bill, said that the Prices Commissioner was instrumental in obtaining 12 successive reductions in the price of petroleum products (with no increase) in a little over four years. The reason for the price reductions is that crude oil prices on the world market have dropped substantially. There has been over-production and the prices are continually being reduced. With all due

respect to the Premier, I submit that the Prices Commissioner has little to do with the oil price reductions that are occurring throughout the world. They are reflected in the prices paid in Australia, and customs duties have been successively reduced. They are the basic reasons for the price reductions. The Prices Commissioner has maintained the percentage of profit to the reseller on his sales of petroleum products. Members must agree that without price control South Australians might have been paying substantially more for their petroleum products, particularly if the oil companies in conjunction with the resellers had determined the reselling price at their own stations. We must face up to the fact that, in the main, the resellers are the oil companies, because the companies own about 80 per cent of South Australia's reselling stations.

Although the member for Mitcham made a plea on behalf of the little man at the reseller level—and I am sympathetic towards his needs—the private reseller plays only a minor part in the retailing of petroleum products today, because throughout South Australia the stations are all practically one brand stations owned by the oil companies. We need shed few tears over their plight. Members could agree that there has been some price control over building materials and on some lines that has resulted in containing prices within reason. I was surprised when the member for Mitcham said that timber had not been subject to price control for seven years. The South Australian Government is a major seller of timber for house-building purposes and possibly, if the price were fixed, it would be the price at which the South Australian Government would be prepared to sell its products; that could have a stabilizing effect on timber prices. That may have been the reason why it was decided to release building timber from price control.

Officers of the Prices Department possess high qualifications. They have a knowledge of and inquire into many subjects. In many cases the officers determine a fair margin of profit and a reasonable selling price and, from the very method of renewing or extending this legislation year after year, these people must feel little security for the future. They must know that this legislation could lapse and that they may be transferred to another department or that they may be out of work. That is not the way to induce capable men to enter a department and to give their future in qualifying themselves to the standard necessary to make a success of their vocation.

Unless Parliament gives the Prices Act more stability and security I visualize that in future there may be a drifting away from that department of the most able officers who should be retained.

If the member for Mitcham is so anxious to disband this department he may find that the loss to South Australia is immeasurably more than anticipated. In that case the member for Mitcham would be one of the first to want price control re-introduced. The honourable member has been advocating the policy of the Chamber of Commerce and the major resellers, especially those in Rundle Street. He has given little thought to the effect of the removal of price control on goods purchased by working people and primary producers. Everything purchased by them would rise in price immediately and the cost of primary production would be increased substantially. That is the very thing Parliament is trying to keep down. The working people of South Australia who depend upon the Arbitration Commission to determine a fair wage for them would be afforded no protection. If we agree that the Arbitration Commission is the proper body to determine wages, we must also agree with price control to enable the wages determined by arbitration to provide for the purchase of essential articles. I support the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

APPROPRIATION BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

PUBLIC SERVICE ARBITRATION BILL.

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

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution: That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to provide for the appointment of a Public Service Arbitrator and for other purposes.

Motion carried.

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

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to enable the appointment of a Public Service Arbitrator. It is introduced

following discussions with the Public Service Association. The basic provisions of the Bill may be summarized as follows:

- (1) The Arbitrator will deal only with salaries: he will have no jurisdiction in respect of other conditions of employment which are directly or indirectly regulated by the Parliament through the Public Service Act.
- (2) Claims can be submitted only by groups of officers whose duties are substantially identical. Where an officer's duties are unique the individual officer can submit a claim, but this will be the exception since there are few such officers in the service. First division officers, heads of departments and officers of the State Bank are excluded.
- (3) The broad outlines of procedure are set out in the Bill. Claims are lodged first with the Public Service Board: if agreed, they are embodied in a return by the board; if not, they go to the Arbitrator for determination.
- (4) The right of access to the Industrial Court is not affected, nor are the general provisions of the Public Service Act affected.

I deal with the clauses of the Bill. Clauses 3, 4 and 5 are machinery clauses, providing for the appointment of an Arbitrator, salary and term of office, on lines similar to those relating to holders of other statutory appointments where independence of the Government of the day is essential. Clause 6 relates to staff.

Clause 7 provides for the jurisdiction of the Arbitrator which is limited to determinations affecting salaries. Clause 8 sets out the general procedure in regard to claims. As I have said, claims by individual officers cannot (except in those few cases where an officer's duties are unique) be made. Lodged with the board in the first instance, if not accepted by the other party they go to the Arbitrator for determination. Effect is to be given to an agreed claim or determination by return under the Public Service Act in the usual manner.

I draw attention at this stage to subclause (5) of clause 8, which provides for the Arbitrator to decide whether an officer or officers constitute a group and for the board, where it thinks it desirable, to refer a claim by an individual officer or officers (not eligible to make a claim directly) to the Arbitrator. Clause 9 deals with the general powers of the Arbitrator, which includes power to summon

witnesses. Clauses 10, 11 and 12 provide that the Arbitrator is not to be bound by technicalities, that costs are not to be allowed in connection with proceedings, and that paid agents cannot appear except by leave. Clause 13 provides for punishment for contempt, clause 14 for summary procedure for offences, and clause 15 for regulations.

When Mr. Schumacher retired, a desire was expressed by the Public Service Association to have some other form of salary fixation, and this Bill is the result of discussions between the Chief Secretary and the association. I do not believe that the association agrees with every clause but, as far as I know, it welcomes the Bill and agrees with the provisions in general terms. Incidentally, the provisions are similar to those that have been operating in the Commonwealth Public Service.

Mr. LAWN secured the adjournment of the debate.

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

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act, 1942-1960. Read a first time.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its principal object is to extend the operation of the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act for a further 12 months. Accordingly, clause 6 amends section 123 of the principal Act by substituting "62" for "61" in that section, thus extending the operation of the Act to December 31, 1962.

The demand for rental housing is still greatly in excess of supply and, apart from flats, little housing for rental is being built except by the Housing Trust. During the year which ended in March, 1961, the trust completed just over 3,000 houses but it received 6,000 applications for rental houses and over 3,000 for purchase houses, making a total of over 9,000 applications. During the previous year nearly 6,000 rental applications and over 3,000 sale applications were received. It will be apparent from these figures that there is no diminution in the rate of demand.

I point out to honourable members that amendments made to the Act from time to time removing various types of lease from control have led to heavy increases in rents; and I am

informed that since January, 1960 over 5,400 tenants have complained to the trust about such increases. Over the past few months complaints have disclosed an average rental of some £6 16s. a week for premises the average rental on which would, if they had been under control, have been about £2 5s. a week. The houses concerned are mainly in the city and older suburbs, and range from premises verging on a substandard to older types. The Government feels that the time has not yet been reached when control of rents should be allowed to lapse.

The Bill effects three other amendments. Clause 3 is designed to close up a loophole which has been discovered in section 6 (2) (b) of the principal Act deriving from the form in which that section now appears. It is a result which was possibly not foreseen when the Government accepted an amendment in 1959 or, at any rate, was not intended. Section 6 (2) (b) of the Act exempts from control certain leases of premises or any part thereof which or any part of which was not let between 1939 and 1953. As expressed, these provisions give rise to a peculiar result which is best explained by way of an illustration. Suppose that a landlord had a house property which had been let before 1953 and on which the rental had been fixed. Let us suppose further that recently some additions were made to the premises. It appears that the whole premises would be free from control because they are premises part of which, namely the recent additions, had not been let between 1939 and 1953 for the simple reason that the additional part was not in existence. It is accordingly proposed to amend section 6 (2) (b) so that it will provide for an exemption of premises or part of premises which were not let wholly or in part between 1939 and 1953. In the hypothetical case I have mentioned, the composite premises (that is, the original premises plus the additions) although not let as a whole between 1939 and 1953, were certainly let in part during that period.

Clause 4 will amend section 21 of the principal Act, subsection (2) of which provides that in fixing rentals the basis to be taken is the general 1939 level increased by 40 per cent, that percentage having been raised from 33½ per cent to 40 per cent in 1957. It is proposed to liberalize this provision by empowering the trust or the local court (as the case may be) to take as a basis the 1939 level plus such percentage as it considers just, but

the percentage is not to exceed 60 per cent in any case. The Government believes that this provision will operate as a measure of alleviation in proper cases.

Clause 5 provides that no notice to quit can be given in respect of any premises in respect of which rent has been overcharged without the consent in writing of the trust. New section 48a will avoid the notice to quit and make the giving of such a notice an offence. The reason for this amendment is that the experience of the trust shows that not infrequently after an investigation of a complaint for the overcharge of rent the landlord gives the tenant a notice to quit and worries him out of the premises. New section 48a is designed to prevent that from happening.

Mr. DUNSTAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

GAS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Gas Act. Read a first time.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The object of this Bill is twofold—to remove the present limitation on dividend rates of the South Australian Gas Company and to authorize the provision of provident fund contributions for directors and retirement benefits for directors. Clause 3 amends section 27 of the Gas Act which now limits the rate of dividend of the company to 5 per cent on paid-up capital or such higher rate not exceeding 6 per cent as the Treasurer approves. Clause 3 provides that the rate may be at 6 per cent or such higher rate not exceeding 7 per cent as the Treasurer approves and this provision will apply as from the commencement of the amendment to all shareholders whenever the shares were issued.

Clause 4 amends section 43 of the principal Act. That section empowers the directors to establish and contribute to a superannuation fund, to contribute to sick or accident funds and to pay retiring allowances, but in all cases the benefits are restricted to officers, servants and employees of the company. It is proposed to authorize the extension of the power in regard to sick and accident funds and the grant of retiring allowances to cover directors. At the same time the powers of contribution to sick and accident funds are being extended to provident funds. The principal effect of the amendment will be that the company will be

in a position to make some provision for its directors. Similar conditions are, I understand, being adopted in industry generally—many active directors serve their companies over long periods of time and it is becoming recognized that there is no reason why directors should be in a different position from other servants of the company in this respect.

I would draw attention to the new subsection (4) to section 43. This provides that no retiring allowance shall be paid to a director without the consent of the company in general meeting, a safeguard against any possible abuse of the new powers. This being a hybrid Bill, it must be referred to a Select Committee in accordance with the Joint Standing Orders.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): Irrespective of what I may say, this Bill must go to a Select Committee before it can be considered by the House. The obligation of such a committee is to make all necessary investigations. Consequently, I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time and referred to a Select Committee consisting of Messrs. King, Heaslip, Jenkins, Jennings and Bywaters; the Committee to have power to send for persons, papers and records, to adjourn from place to place, and to report on October 31, 1961.

SURVEYORS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 10. Page 1134.)

Mr. CLARK (Gawler): Section 34 of the principal Act makes it an offence to interfere with pegs or survey marks, but, at the moment, only during the progress of the actual survey. Clause 4 of the Bill makes it an offence to damage, destroy, remove or interfere with any survey mark at any time whatever. The Bill gives a careful definition of "survey marks", and I am glad of that, because I remember that when similar legislation was introduced in this place several years ago there was much discussion and criticism because survey marks were not clearly defined. If I remember rightly, in the debate on that legislation, which was not proceeded with, reference was made to "marks or things of any kind" as survey marks. That has now been omitted, and I am sure that this will satisfy the people who objected to that provision. The definition was considered to be too wide, for it meant that it would have been possible for people to unwittingly shift, damage, or run over any survey marks. Now the definition is more specific.

I remember that on that occasion—I think it was 1955—the member for West Torrens, the former member for Torrens (Mr. Travers) and, I think, the former member for Port Adelaide (Mr. Stephens) had much criticism to offer on those grounds. I remember also that objection was then raised to the fact that the interference to these marks could be completely accidental. It seems that this is now adequately covered by the words “wilfully or recklessly” that have been inserted in the new section 34. I understand this amendment is designed to prevent hooligans and vandals from interfering with survey marks and thus causing the loss of valuable professional time and costing much money. I am completely in accord with the Bill and I support it.

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

AUCTIONEERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 10. Page 1131.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): I agree with the Bill which contains only one substantive clause. That clause inserts new section 10a, which states:

A person (whether a natural person or a company) shall not offer, deal in, sell or put up to sale, or cause or permit to be offered, dealt in, sold or put up to sale, any land or any estate in land, by way of auction on any Sunday.

When explaining the Bill the Premier said that it would not prohibit ordinary land sales on Sundays, and he went on to say:

The Government decided to introduce this legislation following representations that the holding of auctions of land on Sundays was undesirable, a view with which the Government agrees.

So does the Opposition, but we go a little further. I am concerned at this juncture to know whether this principle should not be followed also in the Early Closing Act. Sundays should be reserved and on such days the carrying on of non-essential business should be prohibited. We claim that this is a Christian country, so let us stand up and proclaim it as such. Our pioneers, both the earliest ones and those of more recent times, went through many hardships to secure reasonable conditions in which people could earn their livelihood. We have reached the position in this country by legislation and agreement that 40 hours is the recognized working week. What are we doing to prevent this Sunday activity?

I realize that certain transport facilities and other services, particularly for people who have to travel, must be provided. The Opposition does not complain about these things, but it considers that in the case of a commercial enterprise we have to be a little more firm in our approach.

I understand—and I believe it is correct—that the Housing Trust in this State sells more houses than does anyone else, and I should be very much surprised if the trust sold houses on Sundays. I am concerned that the Government has not gone further than it has done in this Bill, and I think it should further examine the matter. If it agrees that land sales should not be conducted by auction on a Sunday, why is it not prepared to say that other land sales should not be conducted on Sundays? Most people in industry have Saturday free, and even if they have not, they have their evenings free and they have access to the telephone. I do not believe that it is necessary to trade in this way on a Sunday. With some hesitation I support the second reading, because the Bill provides some benefit but I would like to hear the Premier's comments on my remarks, for I do not think the Bill goes far enough.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham): For once I am substantially in agreement with the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Frank Walsh: That would not be unusual.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: It is a pleasure, whether or not it is unusual. I am substantially in agreement with what I understand the Leader of the Opposition said.

Mr. Frank Walsh: It is not my fault if you don't understand.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I support the second reading, as I think the Leader of the Opposition does. I do not think this Bill goes far enough. We should deal with the matter under another Act. There is much selling of land and perhaps other commodities on Sundays, which I think is entirely unnecessary and should be stopped. I hope that this is the first step towards taking effective action in the matter, whether it is done by legislation or otherwise.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: Why?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Because I think it is wrong to sell land on a Sunday. I don't care if the Minister likes it or not. I think it is unnecessary and I hope that it will be stopped.

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray): I find it hard to support the Bill, but I will do so for what it is worth, and I don't think it is worth very much. We have been told that the Bill prevents the

auctioning of land on a Sunday, but that rarely takes place. I made some inquiries and I have learned that in recent years there has been only one auction on a Sunday. The member for Mitcham said that this is not the Act that we should amend, and I agree with him. I thought the Premier would say that he intended to introduce another Bill, and that this measure was only a beginning in the attempt to deal with Sunday sales of land. I asked him a question about satisfying the request of people who wanted to prohibit the sale of land on Sundays, and he said that he had had a number of representations from different people, which was the reason why this Bill had been introduced. He said that difficulties would arise if anything more were done, because private sales of land could be made under any conditions. He said that the Government would not go beyond the ordinary auctioning of land, because that was the matter raised in the first place. I have made some inquiries and I do not know whether other people have requested the cessation of sales of land on Sundays, but I do know that the Real Estate Institute is interested, as are the churches.

I support the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Mitcham because I think that Sunday should be a day of rest. It is not becoming to have land sales on Sundays and to have the tremendous advertising in the newspapers and the blare of trumpets, besides the erection of large hoardings and streamers. I asked the Real Estate Institute for the details of its request to the Premier. I asked whether the first request had been for the banning of auction sales and Mr. Gaetjens, President of the Institute, said that the word "auction" had not been mentioned during the interview with the Premier. I have a copy of the screed that was given to him.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford: What is the date of it?

Mr. BYWATERS: There is no date on my copy. The information I have says that the purpose of the Institute was to seek legislation banning Sunday trading in real estate. It said that the Federal body, the Real Estate and Stock Institute of Australia, had passed the following resolution at the 12th periodic conference held in Adelaide in October 1959— "That all States seek legislation banning Sunday trading in real estate". At the special general meeting of the State Institute held on May 2, 1961, the following resolution was unanimously passed:

That this meeting is opposed to Sunday trading in real estate and urges that steps be taken to seek legislation to ban such trading but in order to establish the feeling of all members recommends that a ballot be taken of all full members of the Institute on the following question: "Do you favour the banning of Sunday trading in real estate?"

Of the replies 87 per cent were in favour of the proposed ban. There were 147 in favour of the ban, 27 against, and there were three informal votes. At the meeting there were some people who had previously transacted land business on Sundays, yet the motion was carried unanimously. I suggest that the people at the meeting who had previously conducted Sunday land sales were anxious to get out of that practice, but were forced into it because others did it. Some of the people who did it were not associated with the Institute, but the competition had forced them to go in with the others. On the information given to the Premier it was pointed out that there was full support from the United Churches Social Reform Board, within which is incorporated the Council of Churches in South Australia. I am a member of the Church of Christ and its conference in September last opposed the selling of land on Sunday. It was agreed that representations should be made to the Premier along those lines, and I believe that was done. I understand that the Methodist Conference only two days ago suspended standing orders in order to unanimously pass a similar resolution. This shows that the churches are behind the banning of the Sunday sales of land. Then, public opinion, expressed in letters to the press and in letters to the institute, opposes the selling of land on a Sunday. Members will recall that earlier it was said that it first came out of a Federal resolution that all States seek legislation banning Sunday trading in real estate. In Tasmania a full ban has been in operation for 15 years, not only on Sundays but on Saturdays as well. No land is allowed to be sold in Tasmania on Saturdays or Sundays. In New South Wales the police have threatened action under existing legislation at the request of the institute, and under the Police Offences Act they have that power. I will read from section 61 of the New South Wales Police Offences Act:

Whosoever trades or deals, or keeps open any shop, store, or other place, for the purpose of trading or dealing on Sunday . . . shall be liable to a penalty. . . .

That is the position in New South Wales: they have power there already. In Victoria the Real Estate Board has applied already

to the Victorian Government and I understand it has received a sympathetic hearing. It is expected an amendment will be brought down this year to their Estate Agents Act. I will read to honourable members presently what it is expected will be brought down.

The Western Australian Government has not taken any action, but here again I understand that representations have been made. In Queensland there is no report on what has taken place as yet but the Real Estate Institute and the churches have full support from the stock and station agents. The reasons for the ban are that they believe that there is adequate time between Monday and Saturday to purchase real estate; that Sunday should be kept as a holy day; that it is a family day, and land salesmen should not be required to work; also, that it encourages noise. This is so because often loud amplifiers are on the spot advertising the land. They believe also that it encourages impulse buying, which can easily happen when a mass of people is attending a sale. They believe, too, that it encourages part-time salesmen who indulge in high pressure selling. Many of them have other occupations during the week. The institute would not state that if it were not quite sure of its facts.

The remedial action it asks for is an amendment to the Land Agents Act in the terms of the proposed amendment to the Estate Agents Act in Victoria. This is the suggested amendment for the Victorian Government to consider. It is headed "Sunday Trading" and reads:

No person on a Sunday shall sell or offer for sale or canvass persons to purchase land or any interest therein or invite any person to enter into a contract for the construction or acquisition of any building or part thereof provided that it shall be lawful for the person to sell or offer for sale or to canvass persons to purchase land owned by him on which is erected a dwellinghouse *bona fide* occupied by him as his principal place of residence.

The purpose of this amendment would more than likely cover the Premier's suggestion this afternoon, that private sales could be arranged under any conditions. The purpose of the Real Estate Institute and the churches is to stop the organized selling of land on Sundays. If this were done, it would overcome most of the objections that have been raised. Private sales would possibly not come into the same calculations as the organized sales that we have seen in subdivisions over the last year or two. We have noticed that some of these Johnnies-come-lately

into the land estate business come in on a subdivision, and go out again without any redress to the people to whom land has been sold; we have seen that happen over the years. Some land agents conducting sales on Sundays are not members of the Real Estate Institute; they have come in only of recent years and do not have the long standing of some members of the institute. All the recognized firms of long standing are members of the Real Estate Institute. As regards the Premier's reply to me this afternoon, that a person who owned a house could perhaps have someone around on a Sunday to ask him if he would be interested in it, this amendment to the Act as suggested would not preclude such a person from selling his house, because the wording is:

Provided that it shall be lawful for the person to sell or offer for sale or to canvass persons to purchase land owned by him on which is erected a dwellinghouse *bona fide* occupied by him as his principal place of residence.

That provision has been made for that purpose. The purposes of the Real Estate Institute have been set out in order to overcome something that is now a menace and should not be allowed to continue.

I suggest that the Premier further consider this matter and bear in mind the thoughts put forward today by the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Mitcham and myself. Failing this, of course, there is an opportunity for us in private members' business to introduce an amendment to the Land Agents Act to comply with their wishes but I would prefer the Premier himself to reconsider the representations made to him by the institute and church bodies asking that they have the right of representation because, if this Act is allowed to remain as it is, it is not what those people have asked for. The opportunity is here to comply with their request. I have spoken to many people about this, and many people have come to me about it asking what can be done to prohibit the selling of land on Sundays. Surely to goodness it is time we regarded this as a matter of great importance and concern to the Real Estate Institute, both here and in other States of the Commonwealth—for it concerns the whole Commonwealth. It is nothing new to South Australia or to the ministers and the various religious organizations in this and other States, because it is spoken of frequently. I support this Bill with reservations, only because it can perhaps preclude one or two auction sales of the sort

that have taken place from time to time. I still maintain it is not the right Act to amend.

Mr. TAPPING (Semaphore): I agree with the previous speakers—the Leader of the Opposition and the honourable members for Mitcham and Murray. The important clause is clause 3. I shall read it for the benefit of members. It states:

A person (whether a natural person or a company) shall not offer, deal in, sell or put up to sale, or cause or permit to be offered, dealt in, sold or put up to sale, any land or any estate in land, by way of auction on any Sunday.

If the words "by way of auction" were deleted the Bill would be worthwhile and the desired purpose achieved. I have from time to time spoken about certain Sunday sporting activities that have not been countenanced because organized sport is not permitted if any entrance fee is charged. We should consider these matters so as not to make our Sunday a Continental Sunday. In this case we are making it a commercial Sunday and that will break down our conceptions if the practice is permitted. I ask the Premier to consider the matter and ban Sunday sales completely. The member for Murray said that land sales could be witnessed on the North Road on Sundays.

Mr. Lawn: And on the South Road also.

Mr. TAPPING: Yes, and whilst we permit this practice it will worsen and get out of control. People are prepared to bid for land on Sundays because they realize available land is hard to obtain in the metropolitan area. They have no trouble obtaining the money required by the agents and in that connection. I refer to the terrific amount of money the Government is forced to pay for land on which to build hospitals and schools. Parliament should consider controlling land sales and the price of land. The present practice reacts unfavourably against people wishing to build houses. The position has become burdensome for home builders. I have for some years been concerned about the practice that has become common amongst television and radio stations of advertising on Sundays. I have no doubt that this practice also obtains in other States. It is common to see or hear about 20 advertisements in one hour on a Sunday. The position on Sunday is the same as that applying on a week-day. Station 5KA does not indulge in Sunday advertising and I believe it has a wonderful reputation. The tendency to advertise on Sundays is growing with the tendency to disregard the importance of Sunday. I appeal to the Premier and to the Government to give

this matter close consideration and to prohibit the auctioning of land and houses on Sunday.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood): It appears to me that there is probably legislation in force already in South Australia which does prohibit land sales on Sundays. This is by no means certain because there has not been a case to decide whether land sales fall within the terms of this particular enactment. However, the Act is "The Sunday Observance Act, 1677," and it is law in South Australia. The Act is:

For the better observation and keeping holy the Lords day commonly called Sunday bee it enacted by the Kings most excellent Majestie by and with the advice and consent of the lords spirituall and temporall and of the commons in this present Parlyament assembled and by the authoritie of the same that all the lawes enacted and in force concerning the observation of the Lords day and repaireing to the church thereon be carefully putt in execution. And that all and every person and persons whatsoever shall on every Lords day apply themselves to the observation of the same by exercising themselves thereon in the duties or piety and true religion publicly and privately and that noe tradesman, artificer workeman labourer or other person whatsoever shall doe or exercise any worldly labour, busines or worke of their ordinary callings upon the Lords day or any part thereof (workes of necessity and charity onely excepted) and that every person being of the age of fourteen yeares or upwards offending in the premisses shall for every such offence forfeit the summe of five shillings.

Unfortunately the penalty is not very great and what is more, by a later section, a complaint has to be made within 10 days which sometimes may be a bit difficult to get done. It is not quite certain that land salesmen fall within the category of "tradesman" which has been defined as a man who carries on a business of buying and selling things. Farmers, solicitors, barbers and stage coach drivers have been held not to come within the section. However, as lately as 1935 the proprietor of a lending library was found to come within the section and indeed there have been prosecutions quite recently in England under this particular enactment. I say this because I do not imagine that prosecutions under the Sunday Observance Act would be terribly effective in South Australia because the fining of a land salesman of 5s. would not discommode him disproportionately.

Mr. Clark: Is that for a first offence?

Mr. DUNSTAN: No, it is for any number of offences. I mention this particular enactment to show that it is really not particularly hard to prohibit land sales on Sunday if

Parliament set about doing it, and I respectfully disagree with the view the Premier gave to the House earlier today that it is not easy to get at land sales other than auction sales. I do not believe it is terribly difficult at all and if the House is minded to do it I think that could be accomplished without much difficulty.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide): I support the remarks of speakers from this side of the House protesting against the provisions of the Bill in its present form. It appears from the remarks of the member for Murray that there has only been one land auction in recent years on a Sunday.

Mr. Bywaters: That is all I could find.

Mr. LAWN: I have not seen any advertisements for sales of land by auction for years but I have seen many advertisements advertising land for sale off the Main North Road and Main South Road. Last Monday I travelled along the Main North Road and land was then being sold on the holiday. Representations made to the Premier by the Real Estate Institute were to prohibit the sale of land on Sunday, not merely to prohibit auctioning of land. I do not know whether the Government will rely on the Act referred to by the member for Norwood, but I do not believe that would be adequate.

Mr. Loveday: It has no teeth in it.

Mr. LAWN: This Government allegedly upholds the Lords day. It bans organized Sunday sport and shopping on Sundays except in the case of certain exempt lines which are mainly food, chocolates, etc. Under a recent amendment to the Early Closing Act the Premier said that certain goods such as butter, matches and cigarettes could be sold. The member for Whyalla stated that amusement shows are banned on Sunday. What are we going to do? What sort of State is this?

Mr. Loveday: This Bill will help big business.

Mr. LAWN: That is what I was coming to. We ban sport and the purchase of clothing and other articles on Sundays, but this will permit an open go for land sales. Last year motor cars were being sold on Sundays and the Attorney-General intervened. I do not know the outcome, but apparently it was found that our present law was sufficient to prohibit such sales because they ceased, and no legislation was brought before Parliament. If the Government prohibits the sale of cars and the other articles I have mentioned there must be something behind its intention in deciding to permit large-scale land sales on Sundays. If

it believes that Sunday should be observed as the Lord's day and that we should not have a commercial, sporting or amusements Sunday, the Premier should agree to our representations to amend or withdraw the Bill or to introduce more appropriate legislation.

Mr. STOTT (Ridley): This Bill is either badly drawn or it needs further consideration. The prohibition of auction sales of land on Sundays will not achieve much, because I do not know of one occasion when land has been auctioned on Sunday, although the member for Murray mentioned one. It would be better if the Premier approached the Real Estate Institute, because I am sure that every member of the institute would agree that sales of real estate should not be conducted on Sundays.

Mr. Bywaters: The institute has said that. I read it out.

Mr. STOTT: I did not hear it. In this Bill it is provided that real estate sales by auction on Sundays shall be banned. A speculative company or real estate agency purchases broad acres, surveys the land and subdivides it, constructs roads and determines the price for each block. There is no auction. A small tent is erected on the land, a few flags are flown, and the blocks are sold. This Bill, which is aimed to stop such sales on Sundays, refers only to sales by way of auction. I have never heard of auction sales of land on Sundays at Elizabeth, Morphett Vale, "Golden Heights" or some of the other glamorously-named subdivisions. However, I do know of land being offered for sale and sold on Sundays. The Bill provides that:

A person (whether a natural person or a company) shall not offer, deal in, sell or put up to sale, or cause or permit to be offered, dealt in, sold or put up to sale, any land or any estate in land, by way of auction on any Sunday.

It might be suggested that the deletion of the words "by way of auction" would achieve the objective of prohibiting land sales on Sundays, but this Bill amends the Auctioneers Act, so such an amendment would be a complete farce. The Government is to be commended for trying to stop all land deals on Sundays, but this Bill will not achieve that purpose. I am apparently guilty of an offence under the prehistoric legislation quoted by the member for Norwood because some time ago my wife and I saw an advertisement offering land for sale and on a Sunday morning we visited the area to see the location and to determine whether water was available. We had no intention of buying land then, but if we thought it suitable we

would consider it later. However, a salesman was in attendance and as I was satisfied with the location and services, he booked us up for three blocks. Under the legislation mentioned I could have been fined 5s. This Bill does not accomplish much and the Government should approach the Real Estate Institute.

Mr. Bywaters: It approached the Premier.

Mr. STOTT: For this?

Mr. Bywaters: No, it wanted a total ban on land sales on Sundays.

Mr. STOTT: I am not happy about permitting land sales on Sundays, and appropriate legislation should be introduced to prohibit them if the Government wishes to prohibit all sales. This Bill does not achieve that objective.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa): This matter has been widely discussed. I would not favour any action that would tend to promote a Continental Sunday. I concede that the sale of certain personal requirements, including petrol, on Sundays is in order, but I do not favour the promotion of business activity on Sundays, therefore I would not favour any action that would tend to increase such activity on Sundays.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): I would not delay the House except that the member for Murray tended to imply that I had not given him accurate information on this matter. I said that the matter that had been brought before the Government concerned auction sales, and for his information, so that he will not make incorrect assertions again, I should like to read a letter I received on April 17, dated April 14, 1961. This letter, which was addressed to the Chief Secretary, states:

I am directed by the Council of the Congregational Union to draw your attention to the enclosed advertisements. I would ask whether such auction sales are legally possible on Sunday and, if so, whether the Government intends to introduce legislation to prevent such Sunday auction sales being held.

Yours faithfully,

H. G. Wells,
Minister and Secretary.

Mr. Bywaters: I referred to the Real Estate Institute.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The discussions with the Real Estate Institute the honourable member mentioned were more recent, and even those discussions were not fully canvassed by him tonight. The institute said it could not see any way to deal with an individual sale, as that was so difficult to police, and it specifically excluded from the request anyone selling his own house.

Mr. Bywaters: That was in the suggested amendment.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: If members see how wide it is necessary for the definition of "sale" to be to make the legislation effective, they will realize that "offer for sale" is included in the definition of "sale." It has to be. If members consider what is involved and look at any other Act in which the word "sale" is defined, they will see that the definition always includes "offers for sale" if it is to be effective. Let us get down to one or two fundamentals in this matter. What constitutes an offer for sale? If I have a house for sale and put a notice-board at the front of my house (as frequently happens) do I have to take it down every Sunday?

Mr. Clark: That is not an auction, though, is it?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: No, but the member for Murray does not want it to be confined to auctions: he wants to have all sales of houses on Sundays banned. I thought the member for Norwood was realistic about this matter. He does not agree with having land sales on Sundays; neither do I. However, when framing a law to deal with this matter, difficulties arise because of the problem in defining a sale. It is hypocritical to say that it is all right to buy and sell oranges or other things on a Sunday and then suddenly to say (perhaps because the person saying this does not want to buy it) that it is wicked to sell land. It is no more morally wrong to sell on Sundays land than oranges, a loaf of bread or anything else which may not be regarded as a strict necessity and which could not be delivered on any other day. The Government submitted this problem to the Crown Solicitor; he examined it fairly and clearly, and pointed out first that these transactions never took place within a shop. (As members know, the Early Closing Act relates to shops.) He did not recommend a prosecution, which he said could not, because of the definition, succeed, as the sale does not take place in a shop. He concluded his report by saying:

Whether or not this state of affairs should be allowed to continue—

And he is addressing himself to the complaint, which was about auction sales—

is a different matter and one on which there may be room for conflicting views. This question is one of Government policy, and I make no comment thereon. Should any action to amend the law be considered necessary, I

think it should be implemented by way of an amendment to the Auctioneers Act.

The member for Murray made some statements about the Real Estate Institute, so it may interest him to know that we checked with the institute about the extent to which it spoke for all the people licensed to buy and sell land. In the *Government Gazette* of May, 1961, 451 licensed land agents are listed, but only 237 of them are members of the institute. At the meeting at which the first resolution was passed, I have been informed by letter signed by a reputable person that only 30 of the 237 were present, so this almost unanimous request that we have heard about boils down to a request from a small minority.

I believe that later the matter was submitted to a vote of many more persons, but the vote was still only of members of the institute. However, the request received and acted upon by the Government was to prevent auction sales on Sundays. There was not just one or two as the honourable member would have us believe; there were enough to become a public nuisance. The Parliamentary Draftsman has felt it necessary, in order to make the word "sale" effective, to say:

A person (whether a natural person or a company) shall not offer, deal in, sell or put up to sell, or cause or permit to be offered, dealt in, sold or put up for sale, any land or any estate in land . . .

Members will see that every conceivable thing it is possible to buy or sell is offered for sale by advertisement on Sundays. The *Sunday*

Mail (which is freely on sale on Sundays) offers for sale everything under the sun. Although it would be easy to make a law to prohibit every sale of land on a Sunday, it would be about as effective as the law mentioned by the member for Norwood a few moments ago. That law has long since gone into disuse because it is impossible to police the terms necessary under the definition of "sale".

I am pleased that no members oppose the Bill. I can say just as definitely as other members that the Government does not want a Continental Sunday; in fact, this State has frequently been criticized because it has not allowed picture theatres to open or other activities to take place on Sunday evenings. The Chief Secretary has policed the Places of Public Entertainment Act in a way that has done him the greatest credit. Frequently people wanting to organize amusements of various types for charity criticize the Government because it will not permit this, as it believes that it is a good thing not to encourage a Continental Sunday in this State. I thank members for their consideration of the Bill.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.42 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, October 18, at 2 p.m.