HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, September 15, 1965.

The SPEAKER (Hon. L. G. Riches) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DISTRICT COUNCIL OF EAST TORRENS) BILL.

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

QUESTIONS

HOUSING TRUST RENTALS.

Mr. COUMBE: Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked yesterday about the recently announced increases in Housing Trust rentals?

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: I received a report just before lunch today and, although I have not had time to consider it fully, I believe it is not acceptable to the Government.

MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE.

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: Has the Premier a reply to my recent question about motor vehicle insurance?

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: The following report is the result of a communication sent by the Treasury at my request:

1. The recently announced increases in motor vehicle comprehensive premiums will be effective Australia-wide, with the exception of Queensland which will be dealt with separately.

2. Private cars: The average premium for private cars is over 40 per cent higher in Victoria, 30 per cent higher in New South Wales, and over 30 per cent higher in Western Australia. The private car premium in Tasmania is £20 8s., compared with district "A" £18 8s., and district "B" £12 18s. in South Australia. The corresponding premium in Queensland is £17 5s.

Goods-carrying vehicles up to 2 tons carrying capacity: The average premium for goods-carrying vehicles is over 50 per cent higher in Victoria, over 60 per cent higher in New South Wales and over 30 per cent higher in Western Australia. The premium in Tasmania is £17 8s., compared with district "A" £20 6s. and district "B" £12 4s. in South Australia. The corresponding premium in Queensland is £19 14s.

Business cars: In the case of business cars none of the States makes any differentiation as to district, and comparative premiums are: Western Australia £30; South Australia £30 6s.; Tasmania £30 16s.; Queensland £32; New South Wales £37 8s.; and Victoria, £41.

All premiums quoted relate to vehicles not under hire purchase, and insured for £200. District "A" comprises an area within a radius of 20 miles of the G.P.O., Adelaide. District "B" comprises an area anywhere in South Australia outside district "A". There is no "district" rating factor in Tasmania or Queensland.

MURRAY AREA SCHOOLS.

The Hon. T. C. STOTT: Can the Minister of Education say when the terms of reference relating to the Agincourt Bore school (which, in turn, affects the Paruna school) are likely to be forwarded to the Public Works Standing Committee?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: As yet, my Secretary has not received the relevant information from the proper quarter, but I will get it as soon as possible.

RENMARK SCHOOL.

Mr. CURREN: Has the Minister of Education a report on new buildings for the Renmark Primary School?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: A proposal for the erection of a new solid construction building for the Renmark Primary School at a cost of about £170,000 is expected to be referred to the Public Works Standing Committee shortly. Plans provide for a two-storey building with accommodation for about 600 students in 14 classrooms, activity room, library, administrative offices, medical inspection room, store rooms and the usual modern toilet, ablution, cloak and shelter facilities. The Renmark school is the largest primary school in the Upper Murray area, and the Education Department recognizes the many unsatisfactory features of the present accommodation. The enrolments are expected to stabilize at a figure between 700 and 750, and the erection of the new building will enable the removal of present unsatisfactory classrooms.

POWERED CRAFT.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: Has the Minister of Marine a reply to the question I asked yesterday regarding the terms of reference of the committee to be appointed to inquire into the advisability of registering small boats?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: The suggested terms of reference to the committee of investigation are as follows:

To inquire into and, if necessary, make recommendations in respect of the following matters:

(*a*) The control and registration of power-driven craft used for recreational or other purposes.

(*b*) The licensing of drivers of power-driven craft used for recreational or other purposes.

(*c*) The periodical survey of power-driven craft used for recreational or other purposes.

(*d*) The size, type and power limitations of the craft to which any recommended control, registration, licensing and survey regulations should apply.

(*e*) Any other cognate matters which the committee deem it desirable to include in their report, including methods of implementing and policing any regulations that may be recommended.

I should add that the inquiry shall not embrace commercial vessels or other craft already covered by legislation in respect of registration, survey and manning.

PARA HILLS SCHOOL.

Mr. HALL: Will the Minister of Education obtain a report on the proposed provision of secondary school facilities at Para Hills in the future? I believe a site has been purchased where the Para Hills West school is now situated, which site is to serve also as a site for the secondary school when that time arises.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: I shall be pleased to do so.

RHYNIE SCHOOL.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Will the Minister of Works inquire of the Public Buildings Department when tenders will be called for the rebuilding work at the Rhynie school?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: I shall be happy to do that, and I will inform the honourable member when the reply is to hand.

GOVERNMENT PRODUCE DEPARTMENT.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Considerable rebuilding work is under way at the Government Produce Department at Port Lincoln covering a wide range of activity there. Will the Minister of Agriculture make a progress report on the various phases of the work?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: I will get a full report for the honourable member. Satisfactory progress is being made, and it was thought that the opening could be held soon. However, as it is the lamb season and difficulties could arise because of a stoppage of the chain, it has been decided that the opening should be held later, after the lamb season has finished.

PORT PIRIE TRADE SCHOOL.

Mr. McKEE: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question regarding an automotive shed at the Port Pirie Trade School?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: The Director, Public Buildings Department, has made a recommendation for the acceptance of a tender and this will receive early consideration by Cabinet.

PLASTIC TWINE.

Mr. NANKIVELL: Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to a question I asked several weeks ago regarding the possible use of plastic twine in South Australia?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: Following commercial development of synthetic rope in Great Britain, the United States, Japan and also Australia, American interests have been experimenting with the possibility of developing a synthetic twine. This work has advanced to the stage at which trials have been conducted in at least one of the big hay producing areas. The high cost of the synthetic product is limiting development at present. In the case of synthetic rope, the higher cost (about three times that of sisal) is offset by greater durability. However, durability is of less importance in respect to twine. It is understood that work is proceeding in America with the objective of producing a synthetic twine at a competitive price.

PORT VICTORIA JETTY.

Mr. FERGUSON: On August 18 I asked the Minister of Marine whether local fishermen and residents had been consulted before the flashing light was removed from the Port Victoria Jetty, and whether he would give the reasons for the discontinuance of that light. Has he a reply?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: I admit that the residents were not consulted. The light was discontinued and removed on the recommendation of an officer of the Harbors Board. However, I am pleased to be able to tell the honourable member that, following the representations made by him and by some of his constituents, the General Manager of the Harbors Board has informed me this morning that the light is to be reinstated, although in a somewhat different form. I have been assured that the light will be satisfactory and that it will achieve the same purpose as the one previously there.

MILANG WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. McANANEY: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my earlier question regarding the water in the Milang system?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: I have ascertained that a sample of the water at Milang has been referred to the department's works at Glenelg for analysis. It is hoped that that analysis will be available in a few days' time and that further action can then be taken.

SOUTH-EASTERN ELECTRICITY.

Mr. RODDA: My question concerns the extension of electricity to the northern part of my district. I understand that some connections have been made, particularly to the repeater station at The Gap, where a considerable voltage drop has occurred. Plans are in hand to bring the power around in another direction, but I believe this depends on the construction of a substation at Keith. Can the Minister of Works say whether a contract has been let or whether progress has been made with the construction of a substation at Keith to facilitate the extension of Electricity Trust power to the districts to which I have referred?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: I regret that I am not able to give the honourable member the particulars he desires, as I am not fully acquainted with the problem. However, I will have an inquiry made and will let the honourable member know the position soon.

STOCK UNTHRIFTINESS.

Mr. NANKIVELL: On August 24 I asked the Minister of Agriculture a question relating to the problem of unthriftiness in stock in the Keith district. Has the Minister a reply?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: The problem mentioned by the honourable member in his question has been investigated by the Agriculture Department in the Keith district and elsewhere in the State more or less continuously for the past three years. The early stages of the work have been directed towards the elimination of recognized causes of unthriftiness, such as deficiencies in copper or cobalt, and infestations with internal parasites. One important outcome of these investigations has been the establishment of the fact that much unnecessary treatment for worms is carried out in South Australia. This has enabled immediate savings to be made by reducing the numbers of treatments carried out by farmers.

During the last year, the work has produced two possible causes of unthriftiness which are being investigated further in co-operation with the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science and Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization. It is at present too early to predict the outcome of these recent investigations. The shortage of veterinary officers referred to by the honourable member is still a matter of concern and has caused considerable strain on existing staff. The investigation work has suffered because of the necessity to carry out routine veterinary work to which we are unavoidably committed. However, the position is now being given special consideration and it is hoped that some relief will be found soon.

WATER SUPPLIES.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Will the Minister of Works obtain a report from the Director and Engineer-in-Chief about the supply of water at present held in the various catchments of the State and about the future pumping programme to augment water supplies? I know there is a formula used by the Engineer-in-Chief. Will the Minister include in the report details of that formula and say whether it is considered adequate under present conditions?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: I shall be pleased to obtain this report. It is important that not only the Leader of the Opposition but all members of the House be acquainted with these particulars.

PARAFIELD GARDENS ROADS.

Mr. HALL: On my regular visit to Parafield Gardens district last weekend I was informed that the installation of sewer pipes in Sunderland Avenue had resulted in a subsidence and the consequent dangerous road level. The person complaining said that he realized some subsidence must occur in filling and that it would be some time before the department could resurface the road, but that at present the subsidence was dangerous. Will the Minister of Works investigate the sewerage installations in Sunderland Avenue to see whether a temporary reinstatement of the surface of the road can be effected?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: I assure the honourable member that both my department and I are concerned that anything dangerous should result from this operation. I will investigate the matter to see whether conditions can be made safer.

TEACHERS.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Has the Minister of Education reached a decision on the permanent employment of married women teachers in the Education Department?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: A full statement on this matter will be made soon but, briefly, my objective is to do away with the three-day break that has been in force when a teacher marries. This broke the continuity of her service and deprived her, in those circumstances, of accrued long service and sick leave. A statement will be made in the next week or so, but the matter has been held up because of doubt on the subject of the superannuation of a woman in these circumstances.

BARLEY.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Announcements have been made from time to time by the Australian Barley Board and South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited which have outlined the proposed arrangements and the centres at which they are likely to operate in respect of certain grades of barley during the forthcoming season. There seem to be some doubts in the minds of growers as to what procedures will be adopted in respect of grading at the receival points. Hitherto all grading has been done at the head office of the Barley Board in Adelaide, to which samples have been referred to be classified and returned to the agent at the respective receiving centres. I understand that this year certain of the agents are being trained to do the grading at their receival points and that, after this, the samples of barley as received will be forwarded to head office for verification or otherwise of the grading. I should like that point clarified. Secondly, I understand that barley with a moisture content of up to 13 per cent will be acceptable at bulk delivery points this year, but there are two methods of measuring the moisture content of grain: either by the whole-grain method or the crushed-grain method, with a variation in the results according to which measurement is used. Will the Minister of Agriculture endeavour to collate the various matters of concern to growers and make a statement on this matter soon?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: I shall be pleased to get as comprehensive a report as possible on this matter.

AXLE LOADINGS.

Mr. NANKIVELL: I understand from correspondence that consideration is being given to reducing the front axle loading limits on trucks. Will the Minister of Education ask the Minister of Roads whether it is intended to reduce the maximum axle loading on rear axles of trucks (which now stands at eight tons) and, if it is, to what extent it will be reduced, as I have heard figures of six tons and four tons mentioned as a possible load limit on rear axles?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: I shall be pleased to get that information.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT: HOUSING TRUST RENTS.

The SPEAKER: I have received the following letter from the honourable member for Glenelg (Mr. Hudson):

I wish to inform you that I desire to move today that the House at its rising do adjourn until 1 p.m. tomorrow to enable me to discuss a matter of urgency, namely, the recently announced rental increases for Housing Trust houses and flats.

Does any honourable member support the proposed motion?

Several members having risen:

Mr. HUDSON (Glenelg): I move:

That the House at its rising do adjourn until tomorrow at 1 o'clock,

to enable me to discuss a matter of urgency, namely, the recently announced increases in Housing Trust rents. We were rather surprised yesterday afternoon when the honourable member for Torrens asked a question about the increases in rents. Obviously he was better informed than were members on this side of the House. In yesterday's paper appeared the headline, "Rent rises for some up to 10s. a week."

The report stated:

Sweeping rent adjustments, including a rise of up to 10s. a week in some older South Australian Housing Trust homes, were announced today. Many rents are substantially higher, some are lower, and many are unaltered.

It appears from the trust's circular letters, dated Monday, that many of its residents have received notifications not only that their rent will increase by 10s. a week as from the week commencing from October 16, 1965, but that their rent will increase by a further 10s. as from the week commencing October 1, 1966, and by a further 10s. as from the week commencing September 30, 1967. The trust then, in great consideration for the tenants, notifies them that it intends to review its rents at three-yearly intervals (the next review to take place in July, 1968), so that tenants can confidently expect that they will be faced with a further increase in rents in 1968. The trust informed the public, through that statement issued by Mr. Cartledge in yesterday's *News*, that rents had not been reviewed overall for

10 years, and that over that period rates, taxes, maintenance and building costs had increased.

It appears that the trust did nothing to obtain a general review during the previous 9½ years, or that if it desired to, it was not allowed by the previous Premier to do so. However, within six months of the new Government's taking office, the trust announces increased rents. I understand that members of the Cabinet had not been informed of that intention, nor did the Premier know what was intended until a report was given to him today.

Mr. Heaslip: He didn't know rents were going up?

Mr. HUDSON: The effect of his answer was that he knew something was under consideration. He knew certain costs had recently risen, but no details had been given to the Premier until today, when he was presented with a *fait accompli* of what the trust intended to do. This means that, under a Labor Government, the Housing Trust is prepared to increase rents, regardless of what Cabinet says, and without even the matter being referred to Cabinet. Previously, however, no attempt had been made under the previous Government to do this. Many members on this side of the House are asking the question, "Is this a political stunt?" How is it that the *News* in its first edition yesterday knew that questions would be asked about the matter in Parliament, before members of this side, Cabinet members included, even knew that the Housing Trust's rents would be increased?

The Hon. T. C. Stott: Could you explain that statement, seeing that the Premier is the Minister of Housing who would be interested and have some say in this matter?

Mr. HUDSON: That is what we want to know. The Housing Trust, as we all know, has statutory independence. At present the trust can, if it likes, thumb its nose at the Government and say, "We are putting up rents, whatever you do", although it never did that to the previous Government.

The Hon. T. C. Stott: That is the point I wanted you to clear up.

Mr. HUDSON: The honourable member should have it cleared up by now. It was interesting also yesterday afternoon to receive the Auditor-General's Report, which at page 240 states:

A surplus of £131,000 was obtained on rental and home-financing operations. In my last report attention was drawn to the declining surpluses on these operations despite the increasing capital investment, and it was pointed out that, although costs had risen, there had been no general rent increase since 1956 other than after vacancies. Although the surplus for 1964-65 showed an improvement of £5,000 compared with the previous year, two factors contributed largely towards the surplus of £131,000, viz.: (*a*) interest capitalized for 1964-65—

and, therefore, I presume not charged as a cost against rental income—

was £97,000 higher than in the previous year, due in the main to employment of larger amounts of the available funds on projects carrying a high interest capitalization rate, with a corresponding relief in the amount of interest chargeable against income; (*b*) an improvement in the earnings from home-financing operations because of the large increase in rental-purchase homes financed and revision of interest rates on second mortgages.

It is a little difficult to make head or tail of that, but I think the Auditor-General is arguing that the interest provision to be charged against income should have been higher than it was. If that is what paragraph (*a*) means, it is worth noting that the Housing Trust's investment in rental houses was valued, as at June 30 this year, at about £65,784,000, as against £62,820,000 at June 30, 1964. That is an increase of £3,000,000 in the trust's investment in rental houses over the year. If interest were charged on that at 5 per cent, it would mean an increase in the interest bill to be charged against rental houses of 5 per cent of £3,000,000, or £150,000 a year. When we check the trust's accounts we find that the interest provision to be charged to rental houses had been increased by £180,000, which, from a superficial reading of the trust's accounts, is more than appears necessary. It is suggested that the Auditor-General's remarks in paragraph (*a*) are inappropriate in that the trust's provision correctly mirrors the capital investment in rental homes. The Auditor-General also attempts to point out that the trust's earnings from rental and from house-financing operations are mixed up together, as well as are the trust's costs in earning that income. The Auditor-General attempts to suggest—

Mr. Nankivell: Surely he does suggest it!

Mr. HUDSON: He does not provide any sound argument for demonstrating that what he suggests is correct. The Auditor-General explains that during the year an examination was made of rental earnings, costs and charges relating to flats, and that it was found that many rents were uneconomic. He concludes this portion of his report with this remark:

It is understood that this matter is being reviewed by the trust at the present time.

His second point suggests that, if we take out the earnings from house-financing operations,

and the costs associated with earning the sums under those operations, the trust's rental income does not cover the costs associated with that income. How can one make a proper allocation of joint costs in these circumstances, where costs are involved in respect of the same people and employees in earning rental income and in house finance?

Mr. Millhouse: You have omitted some fairly significant statements in that paragraph, haven't you?

Mr. HUDSON: I shall leave the member for Mitcham to quote them. I did not wish to bore the House with too detailed a reference.

Mr. Millhouse: Why not give us the whole thing?

Mr. HUDSON: I have just given a summary of it. The Auditor-General says that costs are not allocated between rental and house-financing operations in the accounts of the trust. I have already said that once, and I do not see why I should repeat it by quoting from the Auditor-General's Report as well. Opposition members are not children, and surely they can understand what I am saying.

Mr. Quirke: One thing the Opposition cannot understand is why you are bringing this matter up here. Doesn't it concern your Government?

Mr. HUDSON: I am a private member and I am entitled to raise it here. The matter concerns the Government which, no doubt, will have much to say about it as well; Opposition members will certainly hear from the Government about it. When one looks at the trust's statement on what has happened to the surplus on rental and house finance operations, one finds that in 1960-61 the figure was £390,000, in 1961-62, it was £245,000, and in 1962-63 it was £166,000. This means that by 1963 the main decline in the surplus on rental and house financing operations had already taken place. However, presumably the previous Government did not allow the trust to do anything about it then. There was a further decline in 1963-64 to £126,000. Again nothing was done by the trust under the regime of the previous Government. In 1964-65, the figure increased to £131,000 and the trust, under a Labor Government, has announced that it will increase rents by up to 30s. a week when the full increase becomes effective. This is in spite of the fact that the trust is already this year charging for excess water for the first time and again using its statutory independence although, under the previous Government, it did not charge for excess water.

Mr. Nankivell: Why not instruct the trust?

Mr. HUDSON: We cannot do that. If the charge for excess water averages £2 a year per rental household this will mean extra income of £54,000 a year to the trust. If the average charge for excess water is £4 a year then the extra income for the trust would be £108,000 over a full year, and that sum (other things remaining equal) would almost double the surplus obtained in 1964-65. Yet the trust is prepared to come out and say that further increases are necessary up to 30s. a week. This would amount to £78 a year for some householders, and would probably mean, when the full increases have taken effect, an overall extra rental income for the trust of almost £1,000,000 a year. I suggest that there is something highly unsatisfactory about the trust's procedure in this matter, and that more than a suspicion exists that there might be some playing of politics going on.

Mr. Quirke: Rubbish!

Mr. HUDSON: The honourable member may say that if he wishes. However, why has this not happened before? The previous Premier always boasted of the great co-operation he received from the trust, and everyone knows that the previous Premier knew what the score was and made sure that the trust knew the score, too. It is being suggested that in relation to this matter the Government has not had the co-operation it should have had.

Recent cost increases have taken place over the last few months associated with the trust's activity, and I suggest that most members on this side would say that if the rental increase were confined purely to the recent cost increases then there might be some case for it. However, the recent cost increases on account of council, water and sewerage rates could not amount to more than about £7 10s. a year or about 3s. a week. This would be the limit of the rental increase if the trust were attempting only to recover the recent cost increase on account of the council, water and sewerage rate increases. But this is not the case: the trust is going to make up for the previous 10 years' cost increases. It is not satisfied to try to make up for merely the cost increases over the last few months. It wants to make up for all the years of the previous regime when, presumably, it was not allowed to, or it did not want to, exert its independence, because it managed to co-operate so well that it did not need to. Therefore, we have this situation: no increases for 10 years, and then a Labor Government is elected and the trust exerts its statutory independence. I

believe members on this side consider that legislation should be introduced to bring the South Australian Housing Trust under the overall direction of the Minister of Housing to ensure that this sort of thing cannot happen again. If Parliament is responsible and is going to be held responsible for increases in rent and for housing problems generally then it should be able to have a say in the determination of policy. It is all very well for honourable members opposite to laugh. I know they think that the rent increases are a huge joke.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: They have done nothing but laugh since you started.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not want to have to name honourable members; they will maintain order.

Mr. HUDSON: I think members on this side of the House believe such legislation should be introduced and, if honourable members opposite are sincere in their alleged concern about the increased rents, they will support any legislation of this type that comes before the House.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I ask your ruling, Mr. Speaker, on whether the honourable member for Glenelg is using Parliamentary language when he says, "If honourable members opposite are sincere".

Mr. Jennings: He only said "if they are".

The SPEAKER: Does the honourable Leader take exception to that?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes, undoubtedly.

Mr. HUDSON: I will not withdraw.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition has taken exception to a remark that he considers offensive to him. I ask the honourable member for Glenelg whether, in view of all the circumstances, he would agree to withdraw?

Mr. HUDSON: I do not see how I can be called on to withdraw.

The Hon. T. C. Stott: You have been asked by the Speaker to withdraw.

Mr. HUDSON: I am asking for the Speaker's guidance in this matter. How can I be called on to withdraw a statement that started with "if"? I said, "If honourable members opposite are sincere''. I hope they are all sincere, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: I do not want to have to give a ruling or make an order at this stage. I am appealing to the honourable member for Glenelg, in the interests of the decorum of the debate, to agree to withdraw a remark that is considered offensive by another member.

Mr. HUDSON: In deference to you, Sir, and to your position, and in deference to the thin skins of members opposite—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Glenelg.

Mr. HUDSON: Honourable members opposite have made it clear that they are very concerned about the rental increase. The Leader of the Opposition took umbrage when I suggested by means of a conditional statement that perhaps they might not be sincere. This, I would think, would lead them to fully support any legislation that might be introduced to give control to Parliament over the Housing Trust to ensure that these recent rent increases do not take place.

Mr. Lawn: They can prove their sincerity then.

Mr. HUDSON: Yes. I hope (I know that all members on this side of the House will agree with me) that the rent increases that have been announced by the Housing Trust to take effect in 1966 and in 1967 will be rescinded and will not take place. I hope also that the rent increases (and I again know that honourable members on this side of the House will agree with me in this) announced or already applied by the Housing Trust for this year to both houses and flats will be reviewed so that the increases are limited to the recently increased costs of the Housing Trust which, as I have already indicated, could not amount on average to more than a rental increase of 3s. a week, if that. I do not see why this Government should have to pay politically for the sins of omission that applied over the previous nine years.

Mr. Quirke: I don't think the householders think they are sins of omission.

Mr. HUDSON: The honourable member would agree, I take it, with the Auditor-General's Report, and therefore, presumably, he might think that the rental increase of 30s. a week that is to be ultimately applied could be fully justified in terms of cost increases.

Mr. Quirke: I never said anything of the sort.

Mr. HUDSON: Then I hope the honourable member will join with members on this side of the House in criticizing the decision of the Housing Trust in this matter, because it is clear to me that over the last few months the rental increase that could have been justified could not possibly exceed 3s. a week, and

that would suggest that the increased costs resulting in the other 27s. a week were experienced by the trust while the previous Government was in power, yet it did nothing about it while the previous Government was in power.

When the Housing Trust was first established it was recognized that the trust would provide rental accommodation for people who needed that sort of accommodation, and would assist in keeping the rent for such accommodation as low as possible. Only last Saturday I saw a constituent of mine at his request. This man, with a wife and six children, complained bitterly about the fact that he was committed to a prospect for years ahead of never being able to get anywhere, never being able to save anything, and just doing all he could by working up to 60 hours a week to provide his family adequately with food, clothing, shelter and the necessities of life.

Mr. Nankivell: Was he in a purchase house?

Mr. HUDSON: No, a trust rental house. I saw this constituent of mine last Saturday, and he rang me last night. He was one who rang to inform me that he was going to experience an increase in rent of 10s. a week this year, 10s. next year and 10s. the year after. His basic rate of pay is £18 a week. He and his family spend £15 a week on food, and it is only by dint of working long hours overtime that this man can provide for the costs associated with purchasing the other necessities of life that he needs. If his is a typical case, the trust is completely defeating the original purpose for which it was set up. It was not set up to ensure that all rents were economic: it was set up to ensure that the people of this State would be given housing accommodation which, if necessary, would cost them something in line with their earnings. I suggest that the trust, in proposing these increases, has failed in that particular duty. The trust also has attempted to ignore the Government of this State. It thinks it can get away now with ignoring the Labor Government. However, I think the Labor Government will demonstrate to the trust that it and not the trust is the Government.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Leader of the Opposition): This, if I may say so, is a most remarkable debate.

Mr. Lawn: It would not be tolerated if you were in Government, would it?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have never yet heard a motion of no confidence moved against a Government by its own supporters.

Mr. Hurst: Nothing of the sort.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Also, the mover tried to angle to get the support of members in the carrying of it.

Mr. Ryan: In other words, you will support any increases?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: This is something that I never thought I would witness in this Parliament, and certainly not so soon after the election in which the Government, of course, had a magnificent victory. Here we have already what may be regarded as, I was going to say, a palace revolution: my colleague sitting alongside me has said it is a harem revolution. May I say two or three words upon this matter. First, I pointed out to the House on two occasions recently that if the costs of the Housing Trust are pushed up by the Government the inevitable result is that there has to be an increase in rents.

Mr. Hudson: Of 30s. a week?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I asked the Premier specific questions about the cost of building houses today, and I followed it up on three occasions. On the Loan Estimates debate I pointed out how the Government was heaping costs against the trust.

Mr. Hudson: Most of the cost increases occurred over the previous nine years.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The honourable member claims to have so much knowledge of economics, and if he thinks about it he will know that the Housing Trust is in difficulties today because the Government is heaping costs upon it.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: Rubbish!

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Premier himself announced that the trust, which had previously not been charged certain developmental expenses, would now have to pay those expenses. He boasted of it. I said in the House that this inevitably would have an effect upon rentals. We were told that the Government was going to finance houses by an amalgamation of two institutions, which shall be nameless for the moment. I have had much experience with the Housing Trust over a long period of years. I think I can claim to have had a more intimate experience with the trust than has any other member in this House.

Mr. Hudson: That is obvious.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: A bit too intimate.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The results of my association and my negotiations with the Housing Trust also are obvious. Under the system that operated we had in South Australia a housing condition that was the admiration of other States. It resulted from the Government making available to the trust money at the lowest possible rate that it could make it available. Secondly, we made available to the trust the services that are normally provided by the Government at the most favourable terms available. Thirdly, we did not interfere with the administration of the trust. They were the three things involved in Government policy. What happened? The Housing Trust had not been operating under the new Government for 10 minutes before the Premier announced to the world that he had stopped it from building several flats which would have been highly profitable. He said that he told the trust that it could not go ahead on the flat-building proposition as it was forbidden to do so. The Housing Trust had been making profits—

Mr. Ryan: And still is.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: — from the provision of better-type flats and shops.

Mr. Hudson: You are in conflict with the Auditor-General. He said that the flats were uneconomical.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Mr. Speaker, except to ask your protection from insulting remarks, I did not interrupt the honourable member when he was speaking. In my opinion the Housing Trust did not take this action without consulting the Premier. On every occasion when there had been a minor adjustment the Chairman of the trust always approached me when I was Treasurer to give me the full facts. I have introduced legislation dealing with this matter: it was approved by the House and gave the trust certain additional powers. I do not believe that this is something that took place without the knowledge of the Government.

Mr. Ryan: You're learning fast.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I believe the trust informed the Government that it intended to take this action.

Mr. Ryan: Do you know that?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I resent remarks of the honourable member that the increase of rents would be approved by members on this side of the House. The policy of the Housing Trust, which incidentally, for the benefit of the honourable member, was established by a Liberal Government—

Mr. Shannon: He was in napkins then, and would not know anything about it.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: —was to provide houses at the cheapest possible rent to the lower-income group. It is true, as the honourable member for Glenelg said this afternoon, that the Auditor-General has repeatedly drawn attention to the fact that the trust is not making a profit. I have pointed out to all and sundry, and have said in this House many times, that the purpose of the trust is not to make a profit, but to pay its way. It was to provide houses at economically the lowest possible cost.

Mr. Ryan: You are against this rise?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Honourable members opposite do not seem to realize that cheaper houses cannot be provided if additional costs are charged against the Housing Trust. I ask the honourable member for Port Adelaide, who is interjecting, whether it is not a fact that the Premier announced publicly that it was the Government's policy to debit additional charges to the Housing Trust? He is silent now, because he knows that was stated to be the policy of the Government. The Government is debiting the trust with charges that were never imposed on it by the previous Government.

Mr. Hudson: Name some.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: As the Minister of Works knows, at present charges for sewerage and development have to be met by the trust, whereas they did not have to be under the previous Government. That is the whole basis of the problem.

Mr. Hudson: Why should that affect the rent of a house 10 years old?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: This Government is not giving the same terms or the same services, and that is the trust's problem. I shall listen to this debate, this palace revolution, this vote of no confidence moved by the honourable member for Glenelg, with considerable interest. This is a most refreshing interlude.

Mr. BURDON (Mount Gambier): I am completely opposed to this increase because in my district there are about 1,350 housing trust houses, which is a quarter of the houses in Mount Gambier. I take exception to these steep increases announced by the trust, and announced without the prior knowledge of the Government. I noticed, with interest,

the smile on the face of the Leader of the Opposition while the member for Glenelg was speaking, and to me this shows guilt in his mind.

Mr. Coumbe: What rubbish.

Mr. BURDON: He is endeavouring to create the impression that he is the god of this State, and he has tried to do that for many years. This is the Parliament of the State of South Australia, and this side of the House will be the Government.

Mr. Coumbe: Do something about it.

Mr. Quirke: How many Labor members will vote against the motion?

Mr. Ryan: This is the Parliament, and the sooner you wake up to it the better.

Mr. BURDON: Yesterday the member for Torrens, in asking a question said that a savage increase of 10s. a week had been imposed on tenants of trust houses. There was also an announcement in yesterday's *News* that questions would be asked in the House today. Who had prior knowledge? Certainly not the Government, but evidently it was leaked to the Opposition.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: Didn't you have any constituents complaining?

Mr. BURDON: Many could complain. How many Housing Trust houses would be in the district of Torrens? I doubt whether there would be more than half a dozen, if that, but it is a different story in my district.

Mr. Quirke: I can appreciate that you are really in bother, now.

Mr. BURDON: I can appreciate what 30s. a week in increased rents will mean, too. It has been indicated by the member for Glenelg (Mr. Hudson) that some of the increases relating to excess water or sewerage will be paid for. If it is to be an increase of, say, £2 a year, it will result in an additional revenue of £50,000 a year; if it is an increase of £4 a year, the revenue will be increased by £100,000. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that the Housing Trust was established to provide housing at an economic rental for the workers of this State, and that is what this Government intends to maintain. When I was speaking to the Estimates recently I believe I made the point that when this Government took office it found the cupboard bare. Why have the finances of this State been allowed by the previous Government to run down? No increase in Housing Trust rentals has occurred for 10 years, but immediately the Labor Government takes office we find not only an increase being sought in respect of Housing Trust rents but an increase being sought by various other departments, saying, "We want an increase, because we haven't had one for years." Why should a Labor Government be burdened with these extra charges and problems thrust on its shoulders, when, through the negligence of the previous Government, increased charges have not been imposed? If these increases are justified today, surely they were justified two, three or four years ago.

Mr. Quirke: You would have agreed with that, would you?

Mr. BURDON: It is the responsibility of the Government to govern, and that is what the Government of this State will do, but we want to know what is going on in relation to certain matters. The previous speaker indicated that we did not know what was going on in this regard. It is all right for the member for Flinders (Hon. G. G. Pearson) to wave his hands around and to look innocent, but I have seen him on several occasions this year try to indicate to the House his sincerity in these matters. When using the word "sincerity", I have to be careful—

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: Yes, you do!

Mr. BURDON: —because the previous speaker became a little ruffled on this subject.

Mr. Quirke: You will be on the outside looking in!

Mr. BURDON: I am on the inside looking in, and that is where I intend to stay. In the interests of the Housing Trust's tenants, I stress that it is necessary that the trust be brought under the direct control of a Minister of Housing, similarly to the way in which other departments are directly under Ministers, who are responsible to Parliament, Parliament, in turn, being responsible to the people. Therefore, I support the member for Glenelg in his request that legislation be introduced to bring the Housing Trust under the overall direction of a Minister. I also support the request that the rental increases recently announced by the trust be rescinded. Every honourable member would agree that public charges, such as water, sewerage or council rates, must be met by the general public, and I therefore believe that it is only fair and right that certain charges be made. Indeed, it is the responsibility of all householders to meet those charges.

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens): I addressed a question to the Premier yesterday on Housing Trust rents, which question, the member for Glenelg stated, caused considerable surprise on the part of members of the Government. However, at that time I was quoting from a copy of the *News* that was on my desk.

Mr. McKee: Were you the member who, according to the statement, was to ask the question in the House?

Mr. COUMBE: If the honourable member reads the article he will see that it did not say who that member was, and it certainly was not I. I raised the matter in the House at 2 o'clock yesterday. It was left to a member of the Opposition to raise the matter; it was not raised by a member of the Government. I point out that the afternoon edition of the *News* is available to everybody, including members of the Government, but it was left to the Opposition to criticize this action. In dealing with the charges of insincerity that have been made, I point out that I asked my question in all sincerity and that all speakers on this side will address themselves to this debate with one object in mind, namely, to have these steep increases reduced or deferred. Indeed, I shall be the happiest member in the House if we succeed in achieving that.

Mr. Jennings: You haven't said you support the motion!

Mr. COUMBE: The reply that I received to a subsequent question that I asked of the Premier today was that he had received a report only a short while previously, that he had not been able to consider all facets of that report, but that it was not acceptable to the Government. In answering my question on this matter yesterday, the Premier said:

I have no doubt that I would be able to justify any increases—

How does that statement square up with the actions and speeches made today by members of the Premier's Party? I repeat that the Premier said:

I have no doubt that I would be able to justify any increases, but whether my reasoning would be acceptable to the honourable member and to other members of his Party, I am not sure.

I do not know who is trying to convert whom in this case.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: Or who is trying to whitewash whom!

Mr. COUMBE: We have witnessed one of the most extraordinary happenings that I have ever witnessed in my term in this House—the spectacle of a member attempting to whitewash his own Leader. He tried to impute something to the Opposition in respect of a statutory body over which the Opposition has not the slightest control, but for which the Government has the complete responsibility. This authority is under the auspices and aegis of the Government. Yet we have had the spectacle of a back-bencher moving a no-confidence motion in his own Party, which is the responsible Government of the State. This is a motion of no confidence in the Labor Party, because the Housing Trust is a statutory body under the direct aegis of the Government. The Government's responsibility is shown not only in the Act but in the Estimates, in which sums of money are being allocated by Parliament to the trust. Sums were also voted to the trust in the Loan Estimates, which were discussed in this House earlier in the year.

Mr. Shannon: Quite large sums.

Mr. COUMBE: Yes. The Government is responsible to this House and to the people of the State for the actions of the trust.

Mr. McKee: You are about to find that out.

Mr. COUMBE: The Government is responsible for statutory authorities under its control. The member for Glenelg moved this motion in all his innocence, and it is a no-confidence motion in his Party.

I object to the honourable member's imputations against members of the board of the trust. The chairman and members of that board are highly respected citizens of the State. The honourable member's imputation that the trust board members had done certain things for political reasons was little short of scandalous. The honourable member said that the trust was playing politics, but if anybody is playing politics it is the honourable member himself. I now charge him with bringing politics into the whole question of housing in South Australia. I resent the imputations he made against the integrity and personal honesty of board members in their administration of the trust.

Mr. Jennings: Yesterday you said they were savages.

Mr. COUMBE: I have the highest regard for the board members. I believe the honourable member's imputations could well have been left out of this debate. It has been suggested in this debate that the trust should be placed under the control of a Minister of Housing. Of course, as Labor policy, this was announced before the last election, and we expected that sooner or later such a Bill would be brought into the House.

Mr. Ryan: You can rest assured that it will be.

Mr. COUMBE: I am glad to see that at least one election promise is going to be honoured. We have been waiting to see when the

Government would bring in a Bill to establish a Housing Minister. This is a question of complete control by a Minister, and certain matters should be debated when that Bill is being discussed and not necessarily on the motion now before the House. Some of these matters are extraneous to the motion.

Since I asked a question yesterday I have received many telephone calls from irate tenants of the trust protesting against these steep increases. One tenant suggested that a modest increase of a few shillings could be reasonably expected. What was objected to was the suggested rise by 30s. over something like two years. In one case in my district this would mean almost double the rent now paid would have to be paid. This type of increase justifies my use of the word "savage". One of the first things I said was that I would be the happiest member of the House if these announced increases were reduced or deferred.

All in all, this has been an extraordinary chain of events. First, an announcement appeared in a newspaper yesterday by a body under the control of the present Government. This was followed by my question and by the reply of the Premier to the effect that he would be able to justify the increases. Following that, I asked a question earlier this afternoon, to which the Premier replied that the report he had received was not acceptable to the Government. Then the member for Glenelg got up and moved a motion of no-confidence against his own Party. This was the most extraordinary thing I have seen in this House.

Mr. Shannon: We had better forgive him a little because of his inexperience.

Mr. COUMBE: I think he is rather naive. I shall be very happy, as I am sure will other members of my Party, if these steep increases can be avoided. What has caused some concern, apart from the increases, is the most extraordinary way in which this action was taken by a member of the Government Party who, in fact, sought to whitewash his Leader and his Party.

Mr. CLARK (Gawler): Several members opposite have said how surprised they were this afternoon when this matter was brought forward. That is a little different from the experience of members on this side, because our surprise came yesterday. After being 13 or 14 years in this place I suppose I should be inured to almost anything and surprised by nothing. However, I admit that I was surprised yesterday, and so was every other member on this side of the House when the member for Torrens (who I understand has an enormous number of trust rental houses in his area) made the announcement to this House of these savage increases or slugs, as they have been termed. I know that nothing should surprise me, but that certainly did because I knew nothing about it previously, nor did my colleagues.

I know that the member for Torrens, as he said, was speaking this afternoon not in the interests of his constituents but out of pure benevolence. It was unusual benevolence, if I may say so in the interests of the people of the State. I agree with something he said, namely, that they were savage increases. The honourable member for Torrens this afternoon went on to make some plea (not a bit successful, although he gave the impression he was being successful) regarding a question he asked the Premier yesterday, when the Premier said he had no doubt he would be able to justify the increases. I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that that is what the Premier thought at that time. He knew there was talk of increased rentals for trust houses; he knew no details at all, and it was just a matter of conversation to him, and quite naturally he had every right, I submit, to say what he did. He took it for granted that such increases would be just and equitable. However, he now knows the position and he knows that the reply he gave yesterday was not an appropriate one because the increases are not just and equitable. The Premier has said that his Government could not support the increases, and I believe it will not support them.

I do not suppose too many members have had more dealings than I have had with the trust over the years, and I can say that my dealings with the trust have always been on a friendly and amicable basis. I am not saying for one moment that I have always received what I wanted, but when the trust has had to refuse me it has usually done so in a nice, polite way. My dealings with the General Manager, particularly, have been very friendly. I have always understood that the trust was set up for a particular purpose. I know that it has done all sorts of things since then, and I know there was a time (as the Leader of the Opposition mentioned this afternoon) when we passed legislation to validate something the trust had been doing for some time. I understand that the trust was originally set up to provide houses at reasonably low cost to people who needed them, and it has carried out this task very well indeed. However, it is one of my regrets that the trust has drifted into other activities as well. I

have had some interest in the trust because in my district alone up to June 30 this year there were 4,773 Housing Trust rental houses at Elizabeth, 286 at Gawler and 1,696 at Salisbury, making a total in my district of 6,755. Probably we could add another 100 more on to that total. In addition, there are over 200 rental flats.

I believe that some of these increases are warranted, but I object to many of them, particularly the increases in respect of the older houses, of which I have a number in Salisbury North and at Gawler. The ones at Salisbury North are far from modern; they do not have the conveniences of the newer trust homes, and their stoves are poor old things. To put it plainly, they are not very good houses in comparison with the ones being built now. This applies also to quite a number of the early houses in Gawler. The newer houses in that area have improved considerably, but it is the older houses that are going to be hit most severely in this increase that was announced to the House by the member for Torrens yesterday. I never heard the Leader mention those houses: he spoke mostly of new places.

There is a group of Housing Trust houses at Evanston, which is near the Gawler racecourse. For years the people in those houses have been troubled with the disposal of sewage effluent. I have raised this matter over and over again. All sorts of things have been talked about, but very little has been done. One resident from that area spoke to me on the telephone last night, pointing out that he did not object to paying an increase of 5s. a week as long as his house was in good condition. He went on to say that the place was all right, except for this obnoxious sewage effluent. Naturally, if people are going to be asked to pay increases, they want things to be as near as possible to perfect. I know that many other members want to know the same things as I do. We want to know why there has been a 10-year wait before adjustments are made. I always understood that when a person moved out of an older trust house and a new tenant moved in, the rent of that house was adjusted to bring it more into line with modern rents. Of course, this sometimes resulted in inequities arising, and therefore I am not sure that it was a good practice. However, I believe that that was done, and I thought it would have helped in keeping the rents equitable, but apparently it has not. I want to know why the increase is so steep. I believe there should be a small increase, for I believe certain charges have gone up and that those charges have to be paid.

Mr. Millhouse: How much do you think the increase should be?

Mr. CLARK: I know the honourable member is seeking information, and he could probably do with it, but at this stage I do not know that I would be prepared to commit myself to any figure. Perhaps the member for Mitcham has worked out a figure and he may give us the benefit of his mathematical calculations if he gets on his feet, which I hope he does not. I believe there is some excuse for a small increase. I do not think there is any justification for this belated slug after 10 years, and I would like to know why such a long wait has been necessary. In fact, I have never before believed in dictatorship. I cannot imagine that the present Premier could possibly be a dictator, for it is not in his nature to be that way, but after what has gone on over the last 10 years and what is happening now it looks as though possibly a dictatorship certainly managed to control things in the Housing Trust before. I believe that what is necessary is what should have been done years ago, namely, that the Housing Trust (which, of course, is a Government concern) should be controlled by the Minister of Housing. I believe that we will introduce that. We should do it by legislation, and I believe we will do it by legislation. I support the motion.

The Hon. FRANK WALSH (Premier and Treasurer): I wish to make it known that the Chairman of the South Australian Housing Trust a few weeks ago consulted me concerning the need to increase certain of the trust's rents. However, I did not receive any information concerning the details of the proposed increases until just before noon today. Although the Housing Trust has the necessary authority under the Act to increase rents, the Government naturally expects to be consulted on details before those increases are determined.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford: Did you ask for details?

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: These increases are not acceptable to the Government. My association with the trust has been, I believe, on a high plane. In this respect I do not wish to name individuals associated with the trust, but I have been received on the best of terms as a private member, as Leader of the Opposition, and as Premier. The only regrettable feature of this matter is the aspect of my responsibility to know what

is being considered by the trust. I believe that details should have been shown to me before the announcement was made, and I am perturbed about this aspect. I do not think it was any person's fault. It could have been mine for not asking questions of the trust as to how soon the details would be ready. However, I expected that I would be informed before the increases were made public. That was not done, and people have received letters and been told what to expect. However, the Government is not prepared to accept the report in its entirety. I have been unable to consider the report fully, but I wish to discuss it at top level with the Chairman and probably the General Manager of the trust.

It is almost 10 years since the trust's rents were increased. During that period water and sewerage charges have increased and, although the present Government is responsible for some increase in costs, some costs were increased prior to this Government's election. There have been increases in council rates, and these combined increases have made it reasonable to expect some increases in rents. There has to be a maintenance charge for rental houses, and such a charge is reasonable under any Administration. A Bill will be introduced this session to bring the Housing Trust under the supervision of a Minister responsible to Parliament, but whether it will be acceptable to members opposite is another question. It is not a question of criticizing what has been done or is likely to be done by the trust.

I know that the trust has done much planning, although I do not agree with all its developmental projects. At Whyalla, for instance, things have not proceeded as one would desire, but I do not hold that against the trust. There have been two controls in Whyalla until recently, with the Lands Department having the major control over planning, but this has been altered somewhat. The trust could not know how far the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited would expand its activities in Whyalla: probably the company itself did not know fully. But whatever expansion took place in the industry would affect the housing problem in Whyalla: it would require more houses, more planning and would require the trust's staff to develop plans to the best of its ability in order to meet the emergency. No housing authority really knows what will be required if the steelworks is extended, but the trust is hoping for success in its planning. Members will agree that on major projects the trust has been reasonably successful in meeting emergencies. It was established to provide homes for low income earners. A person on a certain wage could rent a house at 12s. 6d. a week, but the rent gradually increased. In 1942 or 1943 a further amendment was made to the Act because of certain activities associated with the building of houses in both the metropolitan and country areas. It was suggested that, because of a certain sales tax being imposed on building commodities, it was necessary for the Housing Trust to have the right to average its rentals, so that it could meet that contingency. Houses built in that period were more costly than those built in earlier years. The Housing Trust considers certain cases of hardship, where families request a reduction in their rents, and the trust determines a rent accordingly. Indeed, it has already been intimated that, in respect of the proposed increases, the board of the trust would continue to consider such cases of hardship.

Some of the earliest houses erected by the Housing Trust are in my district. I know that they are still tenanted but that their tenants are certanly not paying the same rents that were originally paid. The life of these houses is said to be about 45 years, and some houses have already been in existence for about 30 years, so, from the trust's point of view, they must surely be reaching the stage of complete amortization. Mention has been made of certain letters and of telephone calls that have been received, relating to the proposed increases. It has already been intimated that no increases will be effective for at least a month. Naturally, nobody desires to pay increased rents. We have already had evidence of many sectional increases being imposed. However, there would have been no need for this discussion to take place today, had a little more understanding existed between the Chairman of the Housing Trust and me.

I make no apology for the answer I gave yesterday, concerning the increases being justified, because I believed at that time, having had some discussions with the Chairman on the matter, that I would at least be consulted on the proposals before they were released for publication. I accept the responsibility of having made a statement, but I was completely in the dark on the matter. Further, I make no apology for having said earlier today that a review of the whole matter would take place, concerning the administration of the Housing Trust. I do not believe any difficulty will occur in discussions that I shall have with the Chairman of the trust and his officers with a view to overcoming certain disabilities that will arise.

—I do not think it is fair to suggest in a letter to any tenant that, where the rent will be increased by more than 10s. a week, it will be increased in instalments of 10s. this year, a further 10s. next year, and a further 10s. for I do not know how many years after that. However, I believe that when a review takes place it will not be after another 10 years has elapsed. Nobody would desire to forecast what would happen within the next 10 years. When in Opposition, I spoke in a certain debate on the increases sought 10 years ago. At that time I think I would have had as many Housing Trust houses in my district as any other member had. Discussions that I shall have with the Chairman and his officers will concern just how long will elapse before reviews are made.

Nobody can forecast what the basic wage will be in 10 years' time, in this State or in any other State. If that could be forecast, we would not need to review these rentals for another 10 years, but I think it is fair that not more than three years should elapse before the rental position is reviewed. Indeed, this would be more in keeping with the way in which the basic wage is reviewed from time to time. These rentals were originally related to what was in the pay packet, and I believe that most people agree that this is still the measuring stick when it comes to fixing a reasonable rent.

At 4 o'clock, the bells having been rung, the motion lapsed.

TOWN PLANNING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 1. Page 1401.)

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham): I support the Bill and, because I support it, I very much regret the way in which the Attorney-General got up and killed it when it was last debated. He killed it in the most unsatisfactory way by saying that he had some sympathy for its objectives but that he could not support it in its present form, and that the Government intended to do something (and he was vague about what it intended to do) at some unspecified future time. At one stage he said that legislation would be introduced during this Parliament; that is, during a period of three years. Later, he said that it would be introduced this session. I do not know how long the session will last, whether until Christmas or whether it will extend into next year. But however long or short it is, it is different from the length of this Parliament. I believe the need to set aside areas for reserves in the metropolitan area and round about is urgent, and I do not think it is satisfactory for the Attorney-General to say, on behalf of the Government, that he has some sympathy with the objects of the Bill, but that he is going to do something about it at some unspecified time in the future, without saying what he intends to do or when he intends to do it.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: As soon as you blokes stop wasting time.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: That is hardly the language that would be allowed at the bar, and I do not know whether it is allowed in this House. However, I remind the Attorney-General that one of his own back-benchers has just wasted two hours of the time of this House on a motion of censure of the Government. The "blokes" who wasted time today were not on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker. This is an urgent matter and, as the Attorney-General should know, if no action is taken soon then it will be too late.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: Far more action has been undertaken by this Government since it has been in office than was undertaken in the preceding three years.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I am not prepared, nor do I intend, to argue that matter with the Attorney-General. I am not concerned with what has gone on in the past. I am criticizing the Attorney for his action now, and I am concerned about his action in the immediate future. I will not argue that everything that should have been done in the past has been done. The point is that it is now in the hands of the Attorney-General to do something if he wishes to do it, and he should bestir himself and do it as soon as possible.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: The draftsmen have been working overtime, I assure you.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Unfortunately, the Attorney-General was not here when I pointed out that, in his speech a fortnight ago, he said that action would be taken during this Parliament, which is a period of two years from the end of this session, and later said that action would be taken this session.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: I meant to say this session. Mr. Ludovici is engaged on this Bill right now.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Splendid. Can the Attorney-General say when it is likely to be introduced?

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: That depends on how long the Budget debate takes.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I suppose that is a veiled threat to members. I do not know why these threats should be made, but no doubt the hint is that we should shut up on the Budget. I do not know whether we can do this, as there are many important things that concern the Budget and should be debated. Of course, we could sit in the evening, but the Government seems unwilling to do that at the moment.

I support the Bill because it draws attention to an urgent need in the community. I have some doubts about the way in which the honourable member for Gouger is setting about remedying the lack of reserves in the metropolitan area. I cannot agree with previous speakers on this side when they suggest that the cost would not be borne by those who bought in the subdivisions. I have no doubt that if a subdivider has to set aside 15 per cent, rather than 10 per cent, of his land he will load the extra cost of that 5 per cent (as he does now with the 10 per cent) on to the prices that he will ask for the blocks. The argument will be (and purchasers will have to accept it) that the larger reserve increases the value of the blocks they are purchasing. I believe that this is inevitable, but it is unfortunate in some ways. It is unfortunate that people who live nearby should have to pay for the extra reserves, but at the moment I cannot see any way around this. I doubt whether we are doing anything effective by simply increasing the size of what is, in many cases, a pocket handkerchief reserve of an acre or less. Another 5 per cent of a subdivision of about 20 acres is not a significant area to add to a reserve.

Mr. Hall: There is the point of aggregation.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Unfortunately, the honourable member, in his Bill, does not set out any arrangement at all with regard to aggregation, and for the life of me (and I speak with due respect to him) I cannot see those provisions working as they are drawn in his Bill. Indeed, aggregation would be a very difficult matter. There would be at least two, and probably three, parties in it, and when one is haggling over money (and you will agree with me when I say this, I am sure, Mr. Acting Speaker) it is not always easy to get agreement between parties. I think that the proposals for aggregation that are set out in the Bill are not effective at all.

I represent the area of the Garden Suburb, Colonel Light Gardens, which was one of the early attempts in this metropolis at town planning, and no doubt (in fact, I know this, because I have seen them myself) the original plans for Colonel Light Gardens look delightful, with little reserves here and a lawn there, and service lanes behind the houses, and so on, but it has not worked out that way. The Garden Suburb Commissioner has never had enough money to develop the area or to make all the footpaths in Colonel Light Gardens, let alone look after the little reserves dotted all over the place, and they have become in some cases (as have the lanes behind the houses) simply undesirable rubbish dumps. Therefore, the theory and practice do not always go together, and I have little doubt that many of the small areas set aside in subdivisions today for reserves will not be developed as we would like them to be, simply because the local government authorities will not have the money or the energy to develop them as they should.

Mr. Nankivell: Wouldn't there be more inducement to develop them if they were aggregated into one area?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yes, there might be. I do not think that the proposals in this Bill for aggregation will work. This is a very ticklish matter. If aggregation could take place, that would be a good thing. I personally regret that the previous Government did not take more energetic action to put into effect the proposals in the Town Planning Committee's report. This voluminous work, of which every member has received, I think, two copies, first appeared in October, 1962. It contains a description of reserves at present in the metropolitan area, and it contains proposals for future reserves. I must say, with due deference to the authors of the report, that it is not entirely easy to follow the proposals set out in chapter 23, but they are there for all to read and no doubt chew over and work out. All I can hope is that the Government and the Attorney-General, when he introduces this Bill as soon as the Budget debate is finished (we have his assurance that that is when it will be introduced, and we will keep him up to that; and I hope he is not offending his colleagues when he gives us that assurance today), will follow the proposals made by the Town Planning Committee regarding reserves. They are here, and I have no doubt that in consultation with the Town Planner and other members of the committee they can be put into legislative form. I believe that the only hope for the orderly development of the metropolitan area is that we should adopt substantially the proposals in the Town Planning Committee's report. I regret that more has not been done

up till now, but I hope that in future legislation introduced into this House the Town Planning Committee's recommendations will be adopted, not only on this point, but on many other points as well.

I support the Bill because I think that it draws attention to an urgent matter. I regret that the Government has indicated that it will not support it, but I am a little happier now than when I started to speak because the Attorney-General, in one of his brief visits to this Chamber, assured members that he intended to introduce legislation within the next few weeks. He flitted in and said that, and then he flitted out again, but at least the visit was worth while this time. That does assuage my anger to some extent, although I would far have preferred to see just what the Attorney-General and the Government had in mind before they tossed this Bill out of the window, as I understand they intend to do.

Mr. HALL (Gouger): Mr. Acting Speaker, I now view the possible progress of this Bill with some pessimism, as I understand the Government is going to treat it as a Party measure. Whether the strict discipline that has often worked so well, but which failed to work earlier today, is working in respect of this measure, I do not know, but I understand it is to be treated as a strict Party measure and therefore, by the weight of numbers, it will possibly fail.

Mr. Millhouse: Did you say "possibly"?

Mr. HALL: I suppose one must have a failure now and again, and apparently this is to be one of mine. I am sorry that this is to be treated as a Party measure and to be rejected because of some nebulous promise for the future. We have heard talk for many years of getting local government to agree to take part in a scheme whereby suitable areas could be acquired for open space recreation. I honestly believe it will be some time yet before the metropolitan local government bodies will agree to such a scheme. We must remember that subdivisions are being approved constantly. Each year sees a good number of subdivisions approved, and in each case (with the lack of the provisions of this Bill) we are losing 5 per cent in each subdivision of land that we could have for recreation purposes. I believe that, even if the Attorney-General's plans were successful, perhaps in 12 months' time the land gained because of the passing of this Bill would be valuable to the people of South Australia. Even as a stop-gap measure, it would be valuable. However, I believe that in his reference to this Bill the Attorney has the various aspects confused. For instance, he said:

> To make provision for such a fund as he proposes in a council area will run counter to the proposals at present under consideration for the funding of money for the acquisition of open space and support of councils therein, and it would be pointless to incorporate such a provision at this stage in the Town Planning Act.

This Bill, however, has nothing to do with the large-scale purchase of suitable land by a council from a fund to be set up under the scheme proposed by the Attorney-General. This is a matter whereby money may be accepted from a subdivider, and has nothing to do with the broader aspect of what councils may do with a wider fund or in redevelopment. The fund envisaged by the Attorney-General would have nothing to do with sums acquired from the subdivider. We are losing the value of the land for no good purpose, except that the Attorney-General has a plan of his own. It is a loss to the State that this Bill will not be allowed to be discussed in Committee, and that members will not consider in detail the two main points contained in it. Speakers have asked how the people concerned are to agree on the value of land that may be subject to payment of money instead of being provided as public parks. The whole tenor of section 12a of the Town Planning Act is contained in the first few lines:

> The Town Planner may withhold approval to any plan of subdivision unless the Town Planner is satisfied . . .

We have this agreement envisaged by the Bill, but it cannot be entered into unless the Town Planner is satisfied. He has the supreme power, but the council, the subdivider and the Town Planner all have to agree. Undoubtedly this would reduce the occasions whereby an aggregation could take place, as anything else would obviously be against the wishes of one of those three. I do not intend to force any of them into accepting an aggregation of land. I wish to make it permissible and, unless there is agreement, it would not take place. I believe that in the short term the Bill is necessary, and if the proposals of the Attorney-General come into force in the next year or two on a long term basis, they, too, would be necessary.

The House divided on the second reading:

Ayes (17).—Messrs. Bockelberg, Brookman, Ferguson, Freebairn, Hall (teller), Heaslip, McAnaney, Millhouse, Nankivell, and Pearson, Sir Thomas Playford, Messrs.

Quirke, Rodda, and Shannon, Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Stott and Teusner.

Noes (19).—Messrs. Broomhill and Burdon, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Bywaters, Casey, Clark, Curren, Dunstan (teller), Hudson, Hughes, Hurst, Hutchens, Jennings, Langley, Lawn, Loveday, McKee, Ryan, and Walsh.

Pair.—Aye—Mr. Coumbe. No—Mr. Corcoran.

Majority of 2 for the Noes.

Second reading thus negatived.

PROHIBITION OF PREFERENCE AND DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 1. Page 1407.)

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens): This is a short, clear Bill, and I commend the member for Mitcham for introducing it and for his good and simple draftsmanship. It provides that there shall be no impediment in employment in the Public Service of South Australia. It also provides for several safeguards in employment in the Public Service. The conditions are all laid down for honourable members to see, and are against discrimination of association, race or colour. The Bill is the direct result of answers given to questions in this House concerning an industrial instruction issued by the Government to the Public Service of South Australia. The member for Mitcham, who asked those questions, is the author of the Bill.

This instruction means that in the future, if this Bill is not passed, no person may obtain a position in certain sections of the Public Service unless he or she first joins a union and pays the necessary fee. This, of course, means that one either joins a union or otherwise has no hope of getting into certain Public Service departments. The instruction also means that it is a shut door to certain people desiring to remain free to select employment. I believe (as I think every other member believes) in the greatest degree of freedom for the individual and in preserving personal liberties. Further, I sincerely believe in unionism and in the principle for which it stands. It has achieved much over the years, and it has especially enabled gains to be made by the various craft unions in Australia, including this State.

However, I believe that membership of a union should not be mandatory, and that it should be optional for a person to choose to join a union. I point out that the fees to join a union are required and, indeed, necessary. I dislike the coercion that is sometimes evident when, if a person does not join a union, he does not obtain employment. Preference for employment should not be given to a person simply because he belongs to a union. We are dealing here specifically with the Public Service of South Australia, and with those sections of it in which trade unions participate. In industry and commerce it is, of course, the policy of the Labor Party to promote trade unionism. That is a matter for that Party, and I do not argue about it, but I intend to argue about the subject matter of the particular instruction (No. 11A) that was issued by the Public Service Commissioner, explaining that this was a matter of Labor Party policy.

Preference to unionists leading to compulsory unionism is figuring on the Labor front at present. Compulsory unionism leads to the closed shop policy that we see in many parts of industry today. If the trade union movement desires to promote this idea in outside industry and commerce it is at liberty to do so, but I regard the Public Service of South Australia as something completely different from that: it is a field where this policy should not abide.

Mr. Shannon: Once you are a unionist you automatically become a subscriber to a political Party.

Mr. COUMBE: The honourable member knows as well as I that that is one of the facts of life.

Mr. Shannon: A pretty useful fact, too, if you are a member of that Party.

Mr. COUMBE: If this Bill is not passed, before a person can obtain employment in the Public Service he will have to join a union, and he will then become affiliated to the Australian Labor Party which, of course, is the Government of this State. If servants of the State are to be affiliated to members of the Government, it will indeed be an interesting situation. We have heard something this afternoon about responsible Government and about certain sections for which the Government is responsible but with which it does not agree. When the member for Mitcham introduced the Bill in such a facile manner we expected to hear an exposition from members of the Government of the virtue of trade unionism, because we know this is one of their faiths. We expected to hear the usual catch-cries and shibboleths, and we were not disappointed, because on came the Government's heavy guns in the industrial field. Indeed, we had no

lesser a member than the member for Semaphore expounding and fulminating on the virtues of trade unionism. However, we were rather disappointed in the way in which he wearied members, and I believe it was only the six o'clock bell that saved us. The tenor of his remarks was merely an outline of the functions of the trade unions in the various State and Commonwealth fields. He gave us a long history of the struggle to obtain recognition and to improve conditions, a subject with which, I believe, we are all well acquainted, and with which we are not arguing in respect of this Bill, which applies only to the Public Service. The honourable member's tirade of history was not exactly germane to this measure.

Mr. McKee: You are doing that right now.

Mr. COUMBE: The member for Semaphore made a rather personal attack on the member for Mitcham, not for the way he introduced the Bill, but for his temerity to speak out for certain categories of our citizens who do not wish to be herded and dragooned into joining a union to obtain employment. The member for Mitcham had the ability (and the temerity, if the member for Semaphore wishes) to espouse this cause, but all he received was abuse and attack. What a red herring the member for Semaphore dragged across the scene, when he spoke on this matter! He raised subjects that had nothing to do with the Bill, and dealt with the virtues of unionism as a whole. Unionism has many virtues and I agree with it in principle. However, I object to this instruction, which concerns the Public Service of South Australia.

Mr. Broomhill: Have another look at the Bill.

Mr. COUMBE: I have studied the Bill closely and it contains some interesting phrasing. It provides that there shall be no discrimination on the terms and conditions of employment because of race, colour, creed or for other reasons. The member for Semaphore spoke at considerable length and referred to the Commonwealth awards in industry, completely forgetting that we were not debating the question of unionism generally but that we were dealing with the question of preference to unionists in South Australia.

If the Labor Party wishes to have preference for unionists or compulsory unionism in industry as part of its policy, that is its own affair. I may not agree with it but it is for the Government to decide. However, the South Australian Public Service is another matter altogether. It must be completely independent and impartial, as it is today; and that is how I want it to remain. People who wish to join the Public Service, or those already in it, should not be forced to join a union.

Mr. McKee: Do you think it is fair for people to accept conditions that other public servants pay for?

Mr. COUMBE: That had to come; it is the old shibboleth. There are various professions and craft organizations in the Public Service formed to protect the interests of members and advance their point of view, and I agree with this. The Public Service Association is a splendid body and worthy of encouragement. It is open for members of various categories to join this association. However, it is completely different for preference to be given in employment to a person who joins a union, and it is different if a person has to join a union to get a job.

Mr. McKee: Do you know that preference for unionists is included in most awards?

Mr. COUMBE: I know this provision applies in industry generally and, if the trade union movement wants it, that is all right. However, I suggest that the Public Service is something apart. An interesting question was asked in another place to this effect: does this policy of preference for unionists in the Public Service mean that a Communist who belonged to a union would receive job preference in the Public Service over a returned serviceman who had no union affiliation?

Mr. Jennings: Did you see the answer?

Mr. COUMBE: The honourable member can give the answer when he speaks. Does this mean that a returned soldier must join a union before he can get a job in the Public Service? Has a Communist only to join a union to be assured of a job in the Public Service?

Mr. Casey: Don't be silly!

Mr. COUMBE: The honourable member may think that these questions are silly, and that I am wasting time. Does he think that it is silly that preference should be given to returned servicemen?

Mr. McKee: Does preference to ex-servicemen apply in industry generally?

Mr. COUMBE: In my own plant I have given preference to ex-servicemen consistently. The policy of this industrial instruction is rather interesting because it is in direct contrast to the provisions of the Industrial Code, which has wide application. Many of the craft unions engaged in the Public Service

are caught up by the provisions of the Industrial Code. Section 21 (1) (*e*) states:

. . . the court shall not have power to order or direct that, as between members of associations of employers or employees and other persons offering or desiring service or employment at the same time, preference shall in any circumstances or manner be given to members of such association or to persons who are not members thereof.

Section 122 (1) reads:

No employer shall dismiss any employee from his employment or injure him in his employment by reason merely of the fact that the employee—

(*a*) is an officer or member of an association;

(*b*) is not a member of an association.

That sets out clearly the provisions and instructions of the Industrial Code that apply to industry generally, to commerce, and to sections of the Public Service. Craft unions are involved in this industrial instruction, and yet it appears to run counter to the Industrial Code, which the present Government is administering. I do not recall the Government's attempting amendments in recent years in this direction. We know that the Government intends, if not to amend the Industrial Code, then to pretty well rewrite it. That legislation is to be introduced this session. I hope it will be, and I support this move.

This Bill seeks to remove discrimination between members of the public who wish to get a job in the Public Service, and to remove discrimination between members who are already in jobs in certain sections of the Public Service. It provides that a person shall not be dismissed simply because he is not a member of a union or an association. If the Bill is defeated by members of the Government Party, they will be perpetuating a system which, I believe, they will live to regret in the years to come. I believe that the Bill should be passed, and that the relevant sections of the Public Service should be completely free and unfettered by any Government or association in this regard.

Mr. BROOMHILL (West Torrens): I oppose the Bill. Although it is apparent that the honourable member has not raised this matter as a genuine issue, I welcome the opportunity to state the Labor Party's policy in favour of preference to unionists. Whilst the member for Semaphore has effectively traced the history that led to the introduction of this Bill, the reasons put forward as justification for the Bill are worth repeating. The member for Mitcham referred to his question of August 3 to the Premier. I think it is significant that the *Hansard* staff at that time gave the question the title "Compulsory Unionism". It is my firm view also that, until the member for Semaphore pointed out the difference between compulsory unionism and preference to unionists to the member for Mitcham, the honourable member was under the misapprehension that these two matters were the same. The honourable member's question was as follows:

Yesterday, I was speaking to a member of the Public Service who told me that a report was circulating in the Public Service that the Government intended to introduce what I suppose we can sum up in the phrase "compulsory unionism" in the Public Service, by giving preference in promotion to members of the Public Service Association. Can the Premier say whether there is any truth in this rumour and, if there is, what provisions the Government has in mind?

The Premier replied:

I consider that the honourable member is better informed than I am, as I have no knowledge of this matter.

The Premier was asked two questions that day. First, he was asked whether compulsory unionism, giving preference in promotion to members of the Public Service Association, was the policy of the Government. The industrial instruction, which the member for Mitcham apparently had not seen on August 3, made no reference to compulsory unionism and no reference to preference in promotion to members of the Public Service, and as a result the Premier properly replied that he had no knowledge of these matters whatever.

Mr. Quirke: What does it say?

Mr. BROOMHILL: I will be referring to the instruction later, but in brief it does not provide for any restriction on the employees of the Public Service: it simply indicates that persons who are not members at present should be encouraged to join. I think this is not an unusual or an unfair request. In point of fact, the previous Government encouraged persons to become members of the Public Service Association. I understand that the previous Government even arranged to deduct subscriptions from the salaries of members of the association.

Mr. Quirke: With their consent.

Mr. BROOMHILL: Yes, but it was an encouragement to the members to join that organization. As a result of this question and answer it has become clear, particularly after hearing the member for Mitcham, that he was under the impression that the Premier was attempting to evade the question.

Mr. Millhouse: Yes, and I am still under that impression, too.

Mr. BROOMHILL: He even went on to say:

The inference is irresistible that for reasons best known to himself and maybe to other members of the Government as well, the Premier did not want to make this policy publicly known. He attempted, rather clumsily, to conceal it.

This indicates the line adopted by the member for Mitcham when he misinterpreted the position because of his lack of knowledge of the difference between compulsory unionism and preference to unionists. It becomes apparent that he hurriedly drafted this Bill and placed it before the House, and he spoke for only about 10 minutes on the subject. His remarks make it apparent that he obviously has no knowledge of industrial law and certainly no knowledge of the industrial situation that exists in this State. To give a clear indication of how poorly the Bill has been drafted, I think the embarrassment the previous speaker, the member for Torrens, was confronted with when attempting to try to determine what the Bill meant became apparent, because the member for Torrens seemed to be under the impression that this Bill was intended to affect only members of the Public Service Association, yet when he was speaking on the introduction of this Bill the member for Mitcham made it abundantly clear what he was attempting to implement. When talking about definitions he referred to the definition of "employee", and he went on to say:

The latter definition is inserted to emphasize that the Bill is intended to prohibit preference and discrimination both in the Public Service and amongst all Government employees as well as in employment generally.

Therefore, the member for Torrens did not even know what he was talking about. One of the first points the member for Mitcham made when speaking on the Bill related to the intentions of the Government in introducing the industrial instruction referred to. He said:

Apart from such considerations of principle, there is a severely practical side to obliging persons to join trade unions. The funds of the Australian Labor Party are augmented through the contributions made by affiliated unions. I have no doubt that this has not been forgotten by the Government in adopting its present policy.

I think the member for Torrens made strong use of these terms, and I think the members of the Public Service Association in this State will be most offended at the snide suggestion by members opposite that any portion of their fees find their way to the Australian Labor Party. There are many thousands of members of the Public Service Association, and for many years they have adopted the proper attitude that their responsibility is to the Government of the day and not to any political Party. For the member for Mitcham to suggest that the Government takes some share of their contribution is an insult to them, and I am sure that they will make this point to the member for Mitcham when the opportunity presents itself.

Mr. Millhouse: If you read my speech a little more carefully you will find that it was restricted to the Public Service Association.

Mr. BROOMHILL: The honourable member apparently cannot draft a Bill, or he does not know what he wants to do because he has a definition of "employee" that includes a person employed in any capacity in the Public Service of the State, so obviously he intended to include the Public Service in the statement that he made. In fact, he makes it clear that he introduced this Bill because one public servant raised a complaint with him. Both the member for Mitcham and the member for Torrens (and the member for Torrens seemed to raise no new points in this debate) relied strongly on a section of the South Australian Industrial Code that refers to the question of preference to unionists. I refer to section 21 (1) (*e*), which reads:

Provided that the court shall not have power to order or direct that, as between members of associations of employers or employees and other persons offering or desiring service or employment at the same time, preference shall in any circumstances or manner be given to members of such association or to persons who are not members thereof.

This section does not meet with the approval of the South Australian trade union movement, and the honourable member for Mitcham indicated that he was aware of this feature. However, having heard him relying on this so strongly, I suspected some history behind the section and sought to trace its history in the Industrial Code. I was not surprised to find that the section was written into the Code when first introduced, and had been borrowed word for word from the Industrial Arbitration Act of 1912. This provision has operated in this State for over 50 years, and even the member for Mitcham will agree that considerable changes in our arbitration system have taken place since then, and that perhaps it is time we considered this clause in relation to present-day needs.

When speaking on this provision, he said that it remained for the good reason that it

expressed the views of most people. It was suggested by the honourable member that the only reason for it was that most people desired it. As the honourable member well knows, the rules of the Australian Labor Party indicate that the Party supports the principle of preference to unionists. Over 56 per cent of the South Australian public supported, the Labor Party policy as recently as March of this year, and one could well indicate to the honourable member that the views of the majority of the community seeks the removal of this provision and an alternative to replace it. In addition, it is recorded by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics that over 170,000 South Australians are currently members of their respective unions. When we consider the wives and families of these people, together with the attitudes of many people who support preference for unionists but who are unable, because of their occupation, to join an organization, it becomes apparent that the majority of the community are supporters of the Labor Party's policy. Although it has been difficult to obtain exact figures of the percentage of persons who are now union members in South Australia, an estimate by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics places the figure at 60 per cent of wage and salary earners in this State. It is completely untrue for the member for Mitcham to suggest that most people support his attitude. The only other real point made by speakers opposite was the strong use of the words "rights of the individual" and "freedom of association". It is amusing to hear these terms coming from Liberal and Country League members who, for many years, have denied the basic rights of individuals in Legislative Council elections by denying individuals the right to vote, and by their recent attitude when the Labor Party, which has always been recognized as the political Party that protects the rights of the individual, attempted to correct the position, and they indicated that they still intended to deny the rights of individual members of the community (or a large section of it) by denying them the right to vote.

I sympathize with members opposite when I find that they are being denied individual rights as members of the L.C.L. in this State. I was astounded to see, at the recent State convention of members opposite, that L.C.L. members of Parliament had been denied the opportunity to stand for election on the central executive.

Mr. Clark: That might be because of their calibre.

Mr. BROOMHILL: I do not think so. The L.C.L. intends to deny members opposite any say in the administration of the L.C.L. in this State. It seems that previously they were working under the administration of one master, but decided that this was impracticable and established 22 faceless men to control their destinies in this State. I sympathize with members opposite and wonder what the speakers who used the terms when attempting to define the rights of the individual had to say at this convention, when their rights as rank and file members of the party were denied to them.

Mr. Ryan: They cannot read their rule book on that, either.

Mr. BROOMHILL: I am aware of that. Persons holding important positions in the Australian community have expressed opinions that I think summarize my attitude. The first thing we must remember is that in Australia we have an arbitration and conciliation system vastly different from any other in the world. I do not intend to refer to sections written into Acts in 1912. I intend to refer to some of more recent origin, and perhaps I should explain them. I quote from an extract of the *Australian Industrial Law Review* of September 5, 1964, a decision by the Full Bench of the West Australian Arbitration Court on an appeal from a decision on a clause providing preference to unionists in an award.

Mr. Hurst: That bench would not comprise unionists, would it?

Mr. BROOMHILL: No. Its members are experienced in industrial matters, but they are not unionists. On reading the extract it becomes apparent that a Mr. Hosking holds the same out-dated views as those expressed by Opposition members on this Bill. The comments of the West Australian Industrial Court consisting of Chief Industrial Commissioner Schnaars, Commissioners Kelly and Flanagan, were as follows:

We do not consider that the clause set out in the proposed order imposes an unreasonable obligation on any employer or worker. We have given effect to the provisions of section 61B in the manner in which we think it was intended, and those workers who have a genuine conscientious objection to union membership are fully protected. We have also removed most of the features which Mr. Hosking regarded as objectionable in the clause claimed by the union. The proposed clause does not, for example, require the employer to contact the union when he wants labour; it places the obligation on the union and not on the employer to see that each member remains financial; it does not require

the dismissal of a non-unionist until such time as he has had a reasonable opportunity to become a unionist or to obtain exemption from union membership.

I should like the member for Mitcham to take particular notice of the next quotation:

In so far as the general question of freedom of association, to which Mr. Hosking referred, is concerned, it is our view that this freedom must be seen in the social, political and economic framework of the times. Freedom of any sort even in, or perhaps more especially in, the most highly-developed democracies is a freedom within the law and its importance must be assessed in the light of the relevant legal context. That context for our present purpose is largely one in which there exists a long-standing but well revised system which provides for the compulsory arbitration of industrial disputes; in which disputes are not between workers and their employers, but between unions and employers; which provides for the settlement of disputes by awards and workers in the industries to which they apply, whether those workers are members of the relevant union or not and whether they or their employers know of the existence of the awards or not and from which there is no exemption; and which provides for the close supervision of the affairs of registered unions.

In this context a clause which, by its terms, requires that a worker shall be made aware of its provisions and of the rules of the union before being obliged to become a member of the union or to exercise his right to apply for exemption from such membership, may not seem to restrict the freedom of association in an unreasonable way. And when, on the one hand, the legitimate rights of the minority are protected—as they are by the application which we have given to section 61B—and on the other hand, a provision is likely to meet with the conscious accord of the overwhelming majority of the class of persons most affected by it—as we are sure is the case here—it can hardly be said that we have offended against the basic principles of democracy.

I believe this summarizes the position and makes it clear that the rights of the individual, in relation to his trade union activities in Australia, must be governed and considered in the light of the arbitration system under which he works. In Australia many restrictions are placed on the trade union movement, in an attempt to make our conciliation and arbitration system workable. In the first place, the unionists of this State are denied the right to strike, and that does not apply in any other country. The courts have the power to deregister and fine unions. The unions are required to have rules conforming to the courts' standards and acceptable to the Industrial Registrar.

They are required to submit balance sheets to the court and to conduct court-controlled ballots. We can therefore see the relationship that has been built up in an attempt to have workable arbitration machinery in Australia, which is generally considered to be satisfactory, and which places all these obligations on the unions, requiring them to attempt to reach agreement with employers in industry, and failing that, to resort to arbitration. During such periods severe restrictions are placed on the activities of the unions. Following the remarks of previous speakers, I believe it is necessary for me to refer briefly to a decision of the Western Australian Industrial Court, which is the most recent reference concerning preference to unionists for all employees in that State. In 1961 that court decided to follow the Commonwealth, New South Wales and Queensland, and to provide for preference to unionists in all Western Australian State awards.

Mr. Hudson: It was a Liberal Government, too.

Mr. BROOMHILL: Yes, and I think it bears repeating that not only did the Western Australian Industrial Court include such provisions for preference under the administration of a Liberal Government: preference to unionists appears in every Queensland State award (under a Liberal Government). In addition, the New South Wales Arbitration Act providing for such preference has not been interfered with by the new Liberal Government in that State. I point out, too, that the Commonwealth court, which has power to provide for preference, takes advantage of this power on many occasions. Therefore, it would seem that those who support this Bill are certainly not conforming to what is being widely practised elsewhere. I shall now read portion of the decision of the Full Court, the President of which was J. Neville, and the two Commissioners, Christian and Davies, who established the principle of preference to unionists for all Western Australian workers. The reasons why that court was moved to provide preference clauses are as follows:

I have granted the union's claim in respect of preference because of the court's decision in the recent Metropolitan Transport Trust case. I appreciate that in that particular case the court referred to the fact that the trust was an agency of the Crown, and that a preference clause is the rule rather than the exception in Government awards. However, the court went further than this and referred also to the responsibilities of unions and to the additional control over unions that the court has been granted by the amendments made to the Act in 1952. In an industry of this nature where there can be a higher turnover of employees than in other types of normal permanent employment, the provision of preference should

assist the union in its negotiating with employer, and in its exercising the facilities of the Arbitration Act.

Later, the following appears:

Furthermore, as the court pointed out in the Metropolitan Passenger Transport Trust case, it is the rule in all awards binding on Government departments and instrumentalities for preference to be granted and I cannot see why such a provision is equitable when applied to undertakings operated by or on behalf of the State but not for those operated by private enterprise. Surely it is not contended that private management is less capable of dealing with any problems that may arise by reason of the inclusion of such a clause than are the officers of Government departments or instrumentalities for whom the provision, in practice over the many years during which it has been in operation, has caused remarkably few difficulties.

Then the court referred to a previous decision, which stated:

The union claimed a preference clause. Now it is clear that the policy of the Act is to encourage organizations of workers and employers for the purpose of entering into industrial agreements and facilitating the exercise by the court of its conciliatory and arbitral powers. Furthermore, since the amendments made to the Act in 1952, the Registrar and the court have been given extensive powers to control the functioning and administration of industrial unions, to prevent abuses in administration and injustice to and oppression of their members. Moreover, the trust is an agency of the Crown, and a preference clause is the rule rather than the exception in Government awards, and I therefore consider that preference should be granted.

The court then stated:

To that expression of my view of the important change in the circumstances affecting the question brought about by the 1952 amendments to the Act, may be added the changed attitude to the question elsewhere in Australia evidenced by the legislation in New South Wales and Queensland where a grant of preference is made mandatory in all awards in which it is sought and the increasingly frequent practice of Commonwealth Conciliation Commissioners.

I believe those extracts make it clear that over the last few years there has been a greater recognition by industrial tribunals of the need for trade unions to have employees in the various industries members of unions so that the unions can fulfil their functions properly.

Mr. Clark: That is a sensible approach.

Mr. BROOMHILL: Yes. Their functions are to meet with employees and to attempt to make agreements outside the Industrial Court, and for the Industrial Court to be required only to make decisions where this system breaks down and no agreement is possible. Unions can negotiate with employers only when all workers belong to them because once the parties have considered a matter the unions are required to consider it at a meeting of their members, who are required to vote on whether it should be accepted or not. The unions make a decision and go back to the employers. They tell them that they accept or reject the provision concerned and, unless everybody in the industry or factory has been given a chance to indicate his point of view, this would not be possible.

The Western Australian Industrial Court was the last authority to consider this matter and to provide for preference to unionists so that the conciliation and arbitration system could be administered properly. When he introduced the Bill, the member for Mitcham was honest enough to recognize that his Bill was unworkable. He admitted that he was forced to include a provision indicating that, where the Bill clashed with Commonwealth practices, it would not be applicable. As soon as he was forced to make this exclusion he was forced to acknowledge that the Bill could not work. It is well known that in South Australia over 50 per cent of the employees are, in fact, covered by Commonwealth awards. Under the Bill employers could not function, because any industry that employs more than 12 employees is certain to be covered by more than one award. In almost all cases it can be found that the Commonwealth award covers storemen, drivers, and maintenance workers in a factory and that a State award covers the factory workers generally.

Mr. Hurst: And the many salaried officers.

Mr. BROOMHILL: Yes. Under the Bill the position would arise, on the one hand, where an employer would be required under a Commonwealth award to apply preference to personnel such as transport workers and maintenance workers, and if he did not apply preference he would be liable to a fine under the award. On the other hand, if he did apply preference to his employees under the State award he would be liable to a fine of £100. The fact that the honourable member was forced to concede that the Commonwealth courts were able to apply preference showed that the whole argument behind this Bill was fallacious. He also said:

Even though I hold the views on preference which I have expressed, I do not desire to precipitate a clash between State and Commonwealth legislation nor to interfere with any established system of work.

If he really means this then, of course, he should never have introduced the Bill, because

the established system in most cases in South Australia is for the employer to apply preference in employment to unionists. He does this for the good reason that he finds it is the only way he can properly manage industrial affairs in his factory.

This Bill would clearly interfere with the established principle adopted by employers in South Australia and would seriously embarrass the Government in the establishment of new industries here. I can give one or two examples of this and I refer, first, to the last industry established in South Australia. Its factory was recently inspected by members of the Government Party. Immediately the factory began operating an award was obtained to apply to it on a Commonwealth level, and the complete terms of the award were agreed to by both the union and the employer. There are two important clauses that greatly affect the complete administration and the proper control of the entire factory. Clause 22 deals with preference and reads:

Preference of employment shall be given to financial members of the Federated Miscellaneous Workers Union of Australia.

Clause 23, which deals with settlement of disputes, states:

Any dispute arising under this award and not settled on the job, shall be settled by negotiations between representatives of the union and representatives of the company. Normal work shall continue while such negotiations are proceeding.

In this case an award was agreed to by the employer as the proper form of operation of his establishment. All employees of his plant should be financial members of a particular union, and this is immediately followed by a clause setting out the method of settling disputes. I put to honourable members that the settlement of disputes clause could not have been included in the award (and it is in the employer's interest and safeguards him by providing that any industrial problems are promptly settled without embarrassment to him) unless the first condition of preference to unionists had been included. This company deals in many States and it would not have been anxious to come to South Australia if it had not received the assurance that it could continue to work in South Australia in a manner similar to that under which it operated in other States.

Another industry operating in South Australia is one in which the Leader of the Opposition takes some delight. He claims much of the credit for its operation here. I refer to a factory that produces, among other products, cement pipes. It also employs only unionists, and it is particularly pleased that it has been able to go before the State Industrial Court for many years and indicate that there is no need for the court to determine any matter affecting employment because the union and the employer have agreed upon the working conditions in that plant. This state of affairs could not apply if the company did not have all the employees in the factory as members of the union.

At the expiration of the life of an award a claim is made on the employer for wages and other conditions. Discussions take place between the two parties and final propositions are taken to a meeting of all employees in the factory. They record their vote on all of the issues and, if they agree, the parties can then go into the Industrial Court in consent. I point out again that, if the employer in this factory was liable for a £100 fine by providing preference to unionists, some percentage of his employees might avoid their obligations and not join the appropriate union, and then these negotiations would not continue and the parties would be forced to rely on the Industrial Court to determine these issues. I oppose the Bill, and I look forward to the day when I can speak in support of a Bill that provides for preference to unionists in South Australia.

Mr. HEASLIP (Rocky River): I support the Bill, which is very simple and very short. It should not confuse or worry anybody, as far as I can see. Objections have been raised from the Government side in relation to it, but just why that is so I am not too sure, for I do not think there is any reason for those objections.

Mr. McKee: Would you employ a unionist on your farm?

Mr. HEASLIP: Such people do not belong to unions, but if they did I would not mind.

Mr. McKee: You would not encourage people to join unions?

Mr. HEASLIP: I have not done so, and I do not think I will, either, because I do not believe in compulsion. I know that in some cases compulsion is necessary, otherwise we would not have a Police Force. We have to compel some people in some directions. I believe in freedom of the individual. Being a democratic country, that is one of the things we believe in and one of the things we fight for, and to take away that freedom from the individual is against everything I believe in. I would not stop anybody from belonging to a union. Plenty of people working at the

Grosvenor Hotel are members of a union, and in that case I think it is compulsory membership. The member for Semaphore and the member for West Torrens went to much trouble in explaining that this instruction related not to compulsory unionism but only to preference, but no-one can tell me that this is not compulsory unionism. I should like to see two members opposite wanting a job, one being a member of a union and the other not a member. Under this instruction it would become compulsory to join that union if a person wanted that job. The man who was not a member would go without.

Mr. Lawn: Don't you believe in compulsion?

Mr. HEASLIP: At present with so much work about and such a shortage of labour, the question is not that important, but in the days when many people were wanting the limited number of jobs available they were compelled to join unions in order to get those jobs. It was compulsory then, and it will be compulsory again when there is a shortage of jobs and a surplus of labour. That position does not apply today.

Mr. Lawn: You support compulsion?

Mr. HEASLIP: I said earlier I hated compulsion.

Mr. Lawn: What about compulsory military service, and what about compulsory voting?

Mr. HEASLIP: I said it was necessary to have compulsion in some circumstances, and that is why we have police officers, for certain people have to be controlled. I believe in freedom for people, and I say that preference to unionists is compulsory unionism.

Mr. Lawn: You like compulsion when it suits you. Someone can go away to fight to protect your property in South Australia, and you believe in that.

Mr. HEASLIP: We are not talking about that. I agree that there are certain things for which compulsion is necessary.

Mr. Lawn: What about compulsory voting for the Legislative Council?

Mr. HEASLIP: I have quoted the example of the Police Force. Some of us would not be alive today if there had not been compulsion. I believe that army service is something for which there should be compulsion.

Mr. Lawn: You believe in compulsory voting.

Mr. HEASLIP: I did not say I believed in compulsory voting. I do not believe in unionism where it only goes to swell the funds of a particular Party. The member for West Torrens seeks to encourage membership of the unions. I see no harm in encouraging membership. However, this instruction would compel any man or woman wanting a job in the Public Service to be a member of the appropriate union.

Mr. Ryan: Who is your legal adviser on this interpretation?

Mr. HEASLIP: I do not need an interpretation. I have lived a long time, and one of the things I have learned is that in those circumstances it would be compulsory unionism. The member for West Torrens also mentioned how many (just how many I do not know) of the working force in Australia were union members. Of course they are members, because they have no alternative if they want to work. Every man wants to work, and he has to be a member of a union. This is compulsion again. The member for West Torrens said that awards in various States, and particularly in Western Australia, provided for preference for unionists. What is wrong with that? However, that has nothing to do with this Bill and nothing to do with the instruction given by the Government: it has not been provided for by award. I believe members opposite are trying to obtain reasons why they should not support this Bill. They should support it, or the Government should withdraw the instruction. Everything was working harmoniously and happily, and there is no reason why this compulsion should be introduced. This Bill safeguards the freedom of the individual and allows him to pick and choose.

It illustrates the difference between the Government Party and the Liberal Party, where in one everything is compulsory, whereas the other recognizes the freedom of the individual. We have freedom, but Government members do not have it: they are told how they must vote, and so they vote accordingly. I commend the member for Mitcham for questioning the Premier about this matter, although he did not get an answer to his first question and had to pursue the matter before he received any real facts. I believe the Government introduced this instruction in this way because it did not want publicity given to it. The Government should not be ashamed of anything it does, and should not evade questions on any matter. I have asked many questions this session, but I have seldom received a direct answer. What has the Government to hide? This instruction was given in the same way as so many other instructions have been given—in an evasive manner, so that it would not receive publicity. There are many other things that the Government does not want to publicize; they are kept in the background.

The Government wanted this to be effective without letting it see the light of day. That is not a good way of doing things. I see no harm in the Bill—in fact, I approve of it. In view of the arguments submitted from the Government side of the House, I do not know why the Government does not either support the Bill or withdraw the instruction.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra): I support this measure. As a preface to my remarks, let me say that no-one has a greater regard for trade unionism than I have. I have always encouraged my employees, when I have had them, to be members of trade unions, but never in any circumstances have I compelled them to join or victimized them because they were unwilling to. As every right-thinking person does, I acknowledge that most of the benefits that have accrued to the people of Australia and which they enjoy today result from past actions of the unions. One has only to read and study the history of the industrial movement and the people who initiated and fostered it and produced such enormous benefits for the ordinary people of this country to appreciate what a mighty job was done by the trade union movement. But in no case in those days was it considered necessary to compel people to be members of a trade union.

To say that this instruction issued by Cabinet is not compulsion is sheer humbug. It is compulsion in every facet. I will read it. This is Industrial Instruction No. 118 from the Public Service Commissioner's Department, Adelaide, dated July 19, 1965. It is as follows:

Preference to unionists. Heads of departments are informed that Cabinet has decided that preference in obtaining employment shall be given to members of unions. Therefore, a non-unionist shall not be engaged for any work to the exclusion of a well conducted unionist—

of course, there are no badly conducted unionists—

if that unionist is adequately experienced in and competent to perform the work.

That is straight-out, bare-faced compulsion, and nothing else, and no amount of argument can produce any other deduction from that screed. I always listen to the member for Semaphore with considerable respect, because of his knowledge of industrial relations in this State and, indeed, in Australia. However, I have never heard him at a worse disadvantage than he was on this matter; he was stumbling badly, but he stuck to his guns even though he knew that the ground was rocking under his feet. The member for West Torrens gave us case histories of Arbitration Court judgments and referred to statements made by judges of that court, which was all very interesting. It indicated that he knows his job in this regard, yet, he, too, never touched on the main issue of this Bill. This measure does not deal with an award of the court, or with an agreement between union and industry. It deals with a compelling instruction from the Government of the State, and that is where it falls down, for no Government should take part in such matters. Compulsory unionism, or preference to unionists, is all right on agreement, but for a Government to take part in it cannot be too vigorously condemned. It is completely wrong. The inference here is that if a man is to obtain employment in the Government he first of all must join a union. That is plain compulsion. The instruction states:

It is not intended that this instruction should apply to the detriment of a person who produces evidence that he is a conscientious objector to union membership on religious grounds.

That is persecution.

Mr. Broomhill: It is a standard provision.

Mr. QUIRKE: It means that a man seeking employment has to say, "I will not join a union because, on religious grounds, I am conscientiously opposed to it." That man will not receive employment, and the member for West Torrens knows he will not. It is easier to employ somebody else who is a member of a union, and that is tantamount to individual persecution. We can have agreements made between industrial organizations and the Arbitration Court, and we can have them made with individual unions. I do not disagree with that, but I object to the Government saying, under an edict of Cabinet, that there shall be compulsory unionism in the Public Service. Indeed, it applies not only to the Public Service but to everybody, because the instruction states.

It is intended that the provision of this instruction shall apply to all persons (other than juniors, graduates, etc., applying for employment on completing studies) seeking employment in any department and to all Government employees.

That means that not only public servants but people employed as labourers, carpenters, plumbers and so on will not be able to get a job in any department unless they are unionists. A man who is a unionist will get a job before a man who is not. Usually what happens is that the man who is not a unionist is the odd man out, and if there are three applicants for a job, irrespective of qualifications, it is a moral certainty that the non-unionist will not get the job. I believe some points in the Bill

need clarification but I support it wholeheartedly at this stage because I share the same opinion as many in the industrial movement that compulsory unionism is not right. I ask leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

TRAVELLING STOCK RESERVE: HUNDRED OF WALLOWAY.

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

SUPREME COURT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

PUBLIC PURPOSES LOAN BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 6 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, September 16, at 2 p.m.