

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, November 9, 1966.

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

**POLICE PENSIONS ACT AMENDMENT
BILL.**

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended to the House of Assembly the appropriation of such amounts of money as might be required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

QUESTIONS**TOMATOES.**

Mr. HALL: People in the Virginia district are beginning to show concern at the implications affecting this district that might arise because of the provisions of the Underground Waters Preservation Act Amendment Bill, which was passed this year. I have received a letter from an important resident in the district, from which I should like to read the following extract to show the concern felt:

In the current *Hansard* No. 17, page 2425, the Minister stated, "Glasshouse tomatoes would be watered only once in five or six weeks, even in the summer period." On inquiring from the local producers I was told that this is far from the truth, as the normal pattern, when the plants start to bear fruit, is a watering every six to 10 days according to the weather conditions. If the control of the water is to be implemented by persons with as little knowledge of the subject as the Minister, Heaven help the market gardeners. The suggestion that glasshouse tomatoes give a better return for the amount of the water is probably good, but, as the market prices are governed by supply and demand a sudden switch to glasshouse tomatoes would over supply the market and quickly bankrupt all the producers.

Will the Minister of Agriculture ask the Minister of Mines when the new regulations are to be proclaimed to control the various aspects in this and other districts, so that producers will know what they can do and what they can produce?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: I shall ask the Minister of Mines when the regulations will be promulgated. However, I heard the comment in the letter about the Minister, and assume that it referred to me. The knowledge I have of the glasshouse tomato industry may not be as wide as that of the honourable member or of his constituent, but I had been informed by glasshouse tomato growers in my district that this was the normal pattern of watering, and I only repeated what I have

been told. The main point raised by the Leader's constituent was that I would be administering the legislation, but this is far from the truth as it is controlled by the Minister of Mines.

STATE'S FINANCE.

Mr. HUDSON: Has the Treasurer any information about the financial results of the activities of the South Australian Government for the month of October?

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: I have authorized the release of the monthly statement this afternoon. The surplus on Consolidated Revenue Account in October, 1966, was \$419,000 compared with a minor deficit of \$34,000 for October, 1965. Compared with earlier months of the financial year, the figures showed a considerable recovery. For the four months to the end of October the accumulated deficit was \$4,965,000 compared with \$1,676,000 for the first four months of 1965-66. A major factor in this is the relatively later billing of water rates, which have yielded \$6,039,000 in the first four months as compared with \$8,012,000 during the same period last year. It is expected that this lag will be subsequently overcome, and the total revenue from this source for 1966-67 will be about \$22,150,000 compared with just over \$20,000,000 last year. In addition, both rail and harbours revenues have lagged in the early months of 1966-67 but are expected to increase considerably when the effects of an exceedingly favourable harvest are felt.

On Loan Account, expenditures during October fell back somewhat from the high levels of earlier months, and the aggregate for the four months was \$24,468,000, or 31.6 per cent of the amount estimated for the year. Apart from the expenditure upon public buildings, which is running considerably ahead of the year's estimates, the Loan expenditure for the four months is reasonably in line with the Budget approved by Parliament.

CITRUS INDUSTRY.

Mr. QUIRKE: I ask this question on behalf of the member for Ridley (Hon. T. C. Stott), who is temporarily absent. About two years ago a leaf analyst was appointed to the Loxton Research Centre to undertake research. As that officer has now resigned, can the Minister of Agriculture state the reason for this early resignation from an appointment that is so important to the growing of citrus?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: Mr. Leith, the officer concerned, who was recruited to the Agriculture Department for leaf analysis work,

has proved a very valuable officer indeed. One of the difficulties in regard to resignations is that I usually hear about them after the event. The first information that I received about this matter was that the resignation had already been tendered. I assumed the portfolios of Agriculture and Lands last year, at about the time when Mr. Leith commenced work in the department. To my horror I learned that he was working in the district without equipment. Naturally, there is not much use in employing a specialist in this field unless he has the necessary equipment. Having immediately taken steps to ensure that the equipment was sent to Mr. Leith, I understood that from then on he was happy in the job; indeed, I heard nothing to the contrary.

As I was concerned about resignations that I thought might sometimes have been avoided, I asked the Public Service Commissioner whether he would arrange for the appointment to the department of a public relations officer who could discuss with various departmental officers any problems they might have. I have been told that many officers do not wish to approach senior men with their problems, and consequently resign without giving any reasons. Although that may not be so here, it is often the case. As the officer concerned was appointed only a short time ago, I have asked Mr. Paeker the personnel officer in the department, to interview him to ascertain whether he has reason to leave the department. At times we have no control over resignations.

Mr. Quirke: I suppose you know that he had to work in the mill without any facilities.

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: I am unaware of the situation at this stage. However, if I can help retain the services of this person and perhaps remove an anomaly about which I know nothing at present, I will certainly do so.

UNLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Mr. LANGLEY: Recently, the Unley and Mitcham Girls Technical High Schools combined and transferred to a new school in Kyre Avenue, Kingswood, and I am pleased to say that the merger has taken place satisfactorily. However, since the students from the Unley school vacated that accommodation, some prefabricated classrooms that were left vacant have been removed, leaving a large unpaved playing area. Will the Minister of Education ascertain whether complete paving and draining of this area is planned during the coming school holidays at what is now solely the Unley Primary School?

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

FLUORIDATION.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: During the debate on the Dentists Act Amendment Bill last evening, the Minister of Works, by way of interjection, said, in effect, that there would never be fluoridation of the water supply of this State while he remained a Minister.

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: I did not say that.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: That is pretty close.

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: Quote me correctly.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: The Minister said that it would never be done with his approval. Can the Premier say whether the Minister's interjection reflects Government policy, or whether the Minister was speaking merely in a personal capacity?

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: The Government has at no stage decided whether fluoride will be added to the reticulated water supply of this State. At present there is no Government policy on this matter.

Mr. Millhouse: Is it to be considered?

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: It will definitely not be considered during 1966. What happens in the future remains in the future.

SCHOOL MILK.

Mr. HEASLIP: Last week I asked whether the Government would subsidize the cost of the refrigeration of milk at country schools. Has the Minister of Education a reply?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: Recent investigations have shown that, although refrigeration would be desirable, existing arrangements for delivery of milk are reasonable. The cost of refrigeration would be considerable and, in view of the present financial position, approval of this item for subsidy purposes is considered not to be warranted. On the other hand, there is no objection if the individual committees wish to hire refrigerators and meet the costs from their own funds.

GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL.

Mrs. BYRNE: An 18-acre site, bounded by Smart and Reservoir Roads, Modbury, was purchased by the Government for the erection of a Government hospital. Will the Premier, representing the Minister of Health, obtain a report on the progress that has been made towards the erection of the hospital?

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: Yes.

COOKE PLAINS SCHOOLHOUSE.

Mr. NANKIVELL: I received a letter from the Chairman of the Coomandook Area School Committee concerning a house which, I

believe, is in the Minister of Agriculture's district. However, I do not think he will mind my asking this question. The Cooke Plains schoolhouse could be occupied by a teacher at the Coomandook Area School if the house were in a satisfactory state of repair, but certain conveniences are not up to standard. Will the Minister of Works inquire whether certain work required on this schoolhouse could not be completed as quickly as possible so that the teacher who now has to arrange other accommodation could occupy the departmental house?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: As I think the honourable member would undoubtedly know, schoolhouses and school buildings come under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Education, and the Public Buildings Department carries out work at the request of the Education Department. If this request is with the Public Buildings Department I will, in view of the honourable member's request, see whether early work can be done.

GILBERTON FLATS.

Mr. COUMBE: Some months ago I asked the Premier, in his capacity as Minister of Housing, questions about the building of flats at Gilberton. In view of the reply given then that planning was to be resumed on this project, will he ascertain what progress is being made on this planning and when it is confidently expected that a start will be made on the project?

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: I have arranged to have a discussion with the Chairman of the Housing Trust (Mr. Dridan) and the General Manager (Mr. Ramsay) to obtain information about this matter and other matters. Although I do not think I can arrange that appointment for at least another couple of weeks, I will let the honourable member have a report if I obtain it earlier.

BEEF ROAD.

Mr. CASEY: My question refers to the road, now classified as a beef road, between Yunta and Frome Downs. In view of the heavy movement of cattle and sheep and the transport of wool over this road during the past few years, will the Minister of Lands take up with the Minister of Roads the advisability of extending this road further from Frome Downs, through to Wertalooona? This area covers a large portion of the State, and the road would benefit not only the State in general but also the people living in this area, for those people could get their stock and their goods down

much more expeditiously than they can at present. I know that recently great difficulty has been experienced on the road, particularly between Wertalooona and Frome Downs, through the prevalence of bulldust, which is particularly hazardous to semi-trailers.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I shall be happy to refer the question to my colleague and obtain a report for the honourable member as soon as possible.

LUCINDALE LAND.

Mr. RODDA: Last Thursday I directed a question to the Minister of Lands regarding certain surplus land in the Lucindale district. Has he a reply?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: In reply to the honourable member last week, I said that I thought the area to which he referred was situated in the hundreds of Conmurra and Townsend, and I take it that that is the case. I said that negotiations had been proceeding with the Commonwealth Government, as this was land surplus to the war service land settlement scheme. I also said that representations had been made to have the area investigated as a site for a wild life reserve. I am now informed that the investigation regarding a wild life reserve has been carried out, and that it has not been recommended that the area should be set aside as a reserve. Areas of peat have been burnt out, but a report of wallabies in the area has not been substantiated. The sections involved are section 236, hundred of Townsend and sections 244 and 245, hundred of Conmurra. A total of 2,762 acres will be subdivided: section 244 will be divided into four sections of about 345 acres each; section 236 will be divided into two sections of about 514 acres each; and section 245 will remain as one section because it comprises only 354 acres. The survey has yet to be undertaken, but instructions have been given for this project to proceed. The basis of allotment will be on sale, but the conditions of payment will make it reasonably easy for those people fortunate enough to be able to purchase this land.

ABORIGINAL RELICS.

Mr. HALL: Can the Minister of Education, as the Minister responsible for the administration of the Aboriginal and Historic Relics Preservation Act, 1965, say whether the Act has been proclaimed and, if it has not, when it will be proclaimed, as the board to be set up under section 6 of the Act will be responsible for protecting Aboriginal relics?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: I believe that the Act has been proclaimed but I should like to check that. Therefore, I will obtain a reply for the honourable member as soon as possible.

COOMANDOOK ROAD.

Mr. NANKIVELL: Yesterday I asked a question about an accident that had occurred at the Coomandook corner on Highway No. 8. I believe that many accidents have occurred at this corner each year. Consequently, the Highways Department is at present seriously considering re-routing the highway past Coomandook. Residents of Coomandook, including people associated with the school committee, have expressed concern at certain proposals (about which they apparently know something) concerning the proposed route of this by-pass. Not only does the new route come out near the school, but apparently it by-passes the town. Consequently, people who do business with the public travelling on the present road are also concerned. Some years ago consideration was given to completing the highway between Coomandook and Taillem Bend parallel to the railway line, and I understand that the sealing of the road between Moorlands and Coomandook was delayed for some time while a decision was made on this matter. If this section of road were constructed it would save a distance of seven miles for those travelling to other States or to the South-East. As it appears that certain work will be done on the present highway, involving not only land acquisition but also considerable expense in the construction of the new roadway, can the Minister of Lands, representing the Minister of Roads, say whether this would not be another opportunity to reconsider the possibility of re-routing the highway between Coomandook and Taillem Bend parallel to the railway line rather than to adopt the present route, which deviates from Coomandook back to Moorlands and a large section of which, between Coomandook and Moorlands, is dangerous to the travelling public because it contains many curves that were not designed to be taken at the speed at which traffic travels today?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will obtain a report from my colleague.

LICENSING COMMISSION.

Mr. COUMBE: Can the Premier say whether the Royal Commission on the Licensing Act has completed taking evidence and when its report is likely to be presented?

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: The Commission has completed its working sessions and expects to present a report by December this year.

PENOLA COURTHOUSE.

Mr. RODDA: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my question of last week about courthouse facilities at Penola?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: The Director of the Public Buildings Department states that planning for the erection of a new courthouse at Penola has reached the stage where tenders could be called within a short time of funds becoming available. The programme of works for 1967-68 has not yet been prepared and commencement of the Penola work will depend on the priority allocated to it.

GILBERT RIVER BRIDGE.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Has the Minister of Lands, representing the Minister of Roads, a reply to my question of last week about the Highways Department's contribution towards completing the rebuilt bridge over the Gilbert River at Hamley Bridge?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: My colleague reports that the construction of the approaches to the reconstructed bridge over the Gilbert River at Hamley Bridge is being carried out on behalf of the department by the District Council of Owen. The work is expected to be completed before the Christmas holidays.

NANGWARRY AMENITIES.

Mr. RODDA: I again draw the attention of the Minister of Forests to the conditions obtaining at Nangwarry, where residents have formed a social and recreation committee and plan to provide amenities. I understand they have applied to the Conservator of Forests for a subsidy of about \$9,000, as the swimming pool they intend to construct will cost about \$10,000. Can the Minister of Forests say whether his department is aware of this application and what assistance these people can expect, in view of the trouble we have had with people moving from this district and the present efforts of those remaining to help themselves?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: As yet, I have not had this matter brought to my attention, but I shall inquire now that the honourable member has raised it.

WATERLOO SCHOOL.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Some weeks ago the Minister of Education wrote to me indicating that he was investigating the possibility of closing several small country schools, including the one at Waterloo in my district. He invited me to communicate with the parents of children attending that school in order to obtain their views on the closure. Subsequently, parents wrote to me and the parents of every child

attending the school indicated in writing that they opposed the closure. I have handed this letter to the Minister. In the face of this unanimous opposition, can the Minister of Education say whether his department intends to close this school?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: The matter of closing these schools will be the subject of a report about all the schools in question, but I have not yet received it. I have no doubt that my officers are considering the replies received, but I should think that in a case such as that referred to by the honourable member, where all the parents are opposed to closing the school, it would be most unlikely that the school would be closed, because the department has followed the policy that, generally speaking, unless there are exceptional circumstances, the school is not closed if parents object. Usually there has to be a majority in favour of closing the school for this to happen. However, I shall obtain a report as soon as possible.

HIGHBURY ROAD.

Mrs. BYRNE: At the corner of Valley Road and Lower North-East Road, Highbury, many accidents have occurred, one as recently as yesterday. Will the Minister of Lands request the Minister of Roads to ask the Road Traffic Board to investigate means of making this corner safer?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I shall be happy to do that for the honourable member.

EGGS.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I do not have to remind the Minister of Agriculture that the plan of the Council of Egg Marketing Authorities involves the collection of fortnightly levies from owners of laying hens. Recently, the Commonwealth Parliament passed legislation that would allow any authorized officer of the C.E.M.A. organization (and I presume in this State it would be an officer of the Egg Board) to enter premises anywhere in the State in order to count the number of poultry to ascertain whether the full amount of each levy was being paid. Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether there has been evidence in this State of egg producers avoiding the payment of the levy for which they are responsible?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: True, legislation was passed by the Commonwealth Parliament giving powers to inspectors to count birds if there were any need to do so. Earlier, I doubted the wisdom of this provision because I thought that the power might be abused,

but I have been told that, although this power has been provided in our Act for some time in respect of producer licences, it has not been abused. Indeed, I cannot ascertain when it was last used. The Commonwealth Government introduced this legislation because it had been told that there had been wide abuse of the provision concerning the payment of the fortnightly levies by some producers.

Mr. Freebairn: One serious abuse has been reported from Victoria.

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: This has probably happened in most States. It was brought to my notice that in this State some producers were not revealing the correct number of birds they had and, although they paid a levy, it was suspected that they possessed many more than the number they were showing in their returns. These people had been approached, but had told the inspectors that they had no power to do anything about the matter and, in effect, had ordered them off the property. This legislation gives inspectors the right to enter properties and count birds, if necessary. I believe it will not be necessary, because people who have been abusing this legislation will now comply with it. While they were aware that no action could be taken against them they took advantage of the position.

POTATOES.

Mr. McANANEY: On October 18 the price of potatoes was increased by the Potato Board, but the board reduced the price on October 21. Can the Minister of Agriculture ascertain which members of the board were present at the meeting when the price was increased and which members were present when it was reduced?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: I have a knowledge of this subject. I am informed that when the prices were fixed they were for potatoes from Victoria, and not for South Australian potatoes. It would not matter which members of the board were present when the prices were fixed as the action did not affect South Australian growers. Victorian potatoes were imported by the board because of the shortage in this State.

Mr. McANANEY: Only the Potato Board in South Australia has the power to fix prices, but the Minister says it was not necessary—

The SPEAKER: The honourable member cannot make a statement.

Mr. McANANEY: Can the Minister of Agriculture say which members of the board

were present at the meetings that fixed the price of potatoes, when only the board has the authority to fix prices?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: I do not have the names of the members present, nor do I intend to ascertain them. It is the board's function to fix prices, and that, to the best of my knowledge, applies in this case.

COTTAGE FLATS BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 26. Page 2554.)

Mr. HALL (Leader of the Opposition): This Bill, which was reasonably well explained by the Treasurer, concerns taking money from the Home Purchase Guarantee Fund and placing it at the disposal of the Housing Trust. Clause 4 provides:

The trust shall expend the amount paid to it in each financial year for the purpose of building cottage flats which shall be let by the trust to persons in necessitous circumstances. That procedure is something akin to the procedure contained in a measure introduced by the former Government in 1958, when \$200,000 was allocated from this fund for the purpose of building cottages in country areas to house people in necessitous circumstances. That measure became the Country Housing Act, which was subsequently amended in 1960. It laid down the minimum weekly rent to be charged, namely, \$2 or "such other amount as was prescribed by regulation"; and provision was included authorizing the Government to make regulations in accordance with the legislation. It is not wrong to take surplus money from the Homes Purchase Guarantee Fund for a worthy cause, as in this instance. However, I doubt the wisdom in extending this scheme for a five-year period. We must bear in mind that we are allocating \$50,000 for five years and that, whilst the fund will apparently easily stand the payment of that sum, that may not apply over the next five years.

Although we expect that the fund will not be used to guarantee any specific sums in that period, we cannot definitely say so. I am not so sure that it is wise to legislate in this way, particularly when financial measures dealt with by this House operate only from year to year. I believe the first payment was made from the fund in 1960-61, when \$200,000 was granted to the Housing Trust for the erection of small houses for pensioners in country districts. The second payment was made when the Housing Loans Redemption Fund Bill was

passed in 1962, and when \$100,000 was transferred to that fund. It is interesting to note that, at the time, this procedure was criticized by the present Treasurer when he was Leader of the Opposition: I believe that he said it was wrong for one set of borrowers to subsidize another. The Treasurer is reported in *Hansard* on October 3, 1962, as saying:

The point that I am making is that the Home Purchase Guarantee Fund is being built up by the Government from three lending institutions, namely, the South Australian Superannuation Fund, the S.A. Savings Bank, and the Co-operative Building Society, but the Government is now proposing to use this fund, which was acquired from existing borrowers under the Homes Act, to subsidize several borrowers. It is financially as well as morally incorrect for borrowers under the Homes Act to be forced to subsidize other classes of borrower.

Mr. Jennings: He must have been wrong!

Mr. HALL: I am not saying he was wrong then any more than I am saying he is right now, but he could not have been right both times.

Mr. Coumbe: He could be wrong all the time!

Mr. HALL: I will not go into that. Obviously, though, four years ago the present Treasurer said that it was "financially as well as morally incorrect". In that short time a sudden change has occurred in the Treasurer's attitude on obtaining money to complete programmes that he believes are necessary. Although I agree with his present attitude, I wonder what his attitude will be next year, or the year after that. We know that in three years' time his attitude will not matter. It is interesting to witness this change of face. I believe that the proof that this fund will obviously stand the removal of such a large sum from it is the fact that, during 1963-64, the first and only claim was paid from the fund, amounting to \$954. Therefore, that being the first and only claim (a small sum in relation to the size of the individual borrowings made from the fund), it is evident that the fund can provide moneys for other essential works. The Bill, however, will not accomplish the same as was accomplished by the Country Housing Act. This is not a Country Housing Bill; it gives full control to the trust in regard to the siting of cottage flats. The Bill contains no provision as to where those flats will be built.

The Treasurer's second reading explanation contained one or two somewhat alarming statements from which one gained the impression

that the trust was being relieved of a responsibility in one direction, in regard to provision out of its existing facilities for these types of people. If we are to remove a responsibility in one direction and give it in another, one wonders whether we are actually going forward, and whether this is a clear-cut provision of more facilities that are needed. If it means that so many people are being housed at present by the trust in such a way as may be inconvenient for the trust, and that we are to provide more suitable accommodation, it does not follow that, because we may be removing older folk from houses that are too large, or from unsuitable flats, and placing these people into more suitable flats, we are, in fact, housing more aged people. Although I am confident that the trust will ensure that the right thing is done, we are not providing by legislation additional facilities for the people who should enjoy those facilities. These objections should be met in the Bill.

Although no-one would be so one-sided as to say that this should be a Bill only for country housing, we should ensure that at least some of these facilities shall be in the country. We must remember that the trust is now providing accommodation for many aged people in this State, and it would be good to know that at least some of this money was being reserved to help solve a similar problem in the country. In his second reading explanation the Treasurer said that the trust now had 804 cottage flats with 150 more to come. No rental is stated, whereas I believe that this Bill should state the rental that will be expected from pensioners' and other aged persons' incomes. The responsibilities for rental, choice of site, and the degree of necessity of the occupants are being handed over to the trust. I protest about the practice of looking five years ahead in regard to taking money from a guarantee fund, although that criticism will not cause me to oppose the Bill. If the Treasurer thought it was morally wrong to take money from this fund in 1962 (and I do not agree with his opinion), how does he justify taking it five years in advance? I hope the Treasurer will answer this question in Committee. I believe that the fund can stand this payment; the need to provide extra accommodation for aged and necessitous people obviously exists, and will probably continue to exist for a long time. I have no quarrel with the intentions of this Bill and, with the reservations I have made (which I

will follow up in Committee), I support the second reading.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Gumeracha): I, too, support the Bill. I say at the outset that I have no objection to the amount standing to the credit of this fund being used for this purpose. When I was Treasurer I used the money for a somewhat similar purpose on several occasions, and I do not agree with the Treasurer's statement (made when he was Leader of the Opposition) that we are using one set of people to subsidize another set of people, because the money in this fund results from the Government's guarantee which enables a person to borrow money, up to 95 per cent, at a low interest rate that could not be obtained by the borrower without the benefit of the Homes Act. The Treasurer made himself responsible for any shortages arising as a result of the advances from the fund. Consequently, the commission earned by the lending institution was for a favourable guarantee; the scheme was developed in South Australia, but the Commonwealth Government has now copied the legislation. If the fund were not in ample credit now, I do not know how much could be provided for the fund, because the Commonwealth Government is now providing similar assistance. This Bill will be used less in the future because of the legislation of the Commonwealth Government, and consequently the number of guarantees, and the amount of commission that we will get from the guarantees, will be very much less.

I want to put to the Treasurer the grounds for an amendment I will move regarding the making of some provision for the country. When the Right Honourable Ben Chifley was Prime Minister, the Savings Bank offered to the State Government money at a low interest rate, because the Savings Bank did not make any payments to the Treasurer in the form of taxation and, in lieu of taxation, the bank decided it would be right for it to make money available for a social purpose in this State. The Savings Bank Board agreed to make available \$500,000 a year for eight years, and the Government provided that the money was to go to the Housing Trust at a low interest rate—a slightly better interest rate than the bank was getting as a depositor with another bank. All that money went to the trust to be used for social housing in the metropolitan area, and the reason the trust has done such a good job (and I believe that the Treasurer would agree that the trust has

done a magnificent job in social housing) is because of the very generous terms given by the Savings Bank. The loan has been repaid long ago, but it enabled the trust to build up its social housing scheme.

In addition, everyone knows that the Commonwealth copied legislation which had been initiated in this State to provide subsidies for charitable bodies, mainly church institutions, that were providing accommodation for aged persons. The State legislation was on a 50/50 basis, but the Commonwealth Government offered help on a \$2 for \$1 basis for institutions that were providing homes, without profit, for aged persons. Nearly all of that money, too, is spent in the metropolitan area. Therefore, the Housing Trust activity was designed to relieve the problem of aged persons' homes in the metropolitan area.

With the exception of certain activity at Mount Gambier, Port Lincoln and Quorn, almost the whole of the benefit of the Commonwealth legislation and the whole of the benefit of the State legislation went to the metropolitan area, where the various church organizations have responded magnificently and have provided much accommodation in the way of homes for aged persons. I believe that will continue, for the Commonwealth legislation is continuing and the State is still giving some supplementary assistance. In consequence, a tremendous amount has been done. However, none of these provisions operated very widely in the country. The trust found it almost impossible from its own resources to go into country housing for social purposes. In fact, in some instances it could go into country housing only through a sale programme.

As a consequence, the Government of the day found that whereas some provision was being made in the metropolitan area practically no provision was being made in the country, and that was the reason for the establishment of the country homes scheme. The Government made available free to the trust sums that were available from time to time, and the conditions under which the trust operated were as follows: first, the houses were to be built in the country; secondly, they were to be of solid construction; thirdly, the rent was to be \$2 a week or one-sixth of the income of the family that was to occupy a house; and fourthly, the whole of the rents, less only the cost of maintaining the houses in repair, were to be placed in a circulating fund for the erection of new houses under the scheme.

Although I have not checked on the position for some time, I think I am correct in saying that only 150 or 160 of such houses have been built by the trust in the country. I know the number is relatively small, taking into account the country population compared with the population of the metropolitan area. In these circumstances, I could not agree with the provision in this Bill that the whole of this money should be spent in the metropolitan area. I realize that the Bill does not specify that, but the money is to be used for flats and the only place the trust has ever built flats is the metropolitan area. Therefore, the implications undoubtedly are that the money is to be used exclusively in the metropolitan area.

Although I do not wish to put this matter on a country versus city basis, I believe that at least a proportion of this money should go to the country housing scheme. The annual report of the Housing Trust does not give a break-down of this figure: it gives only the number of cottage flats in South Australia, and it quotes this as being 1,248. As I said earlier, I believe that only about 160 of these cottage homes have been built in the country, so honourable members can see that there has been a big lack of support for the country districts in this matter. In those circumstances, I will ask the Treasurer later to agree to an amendment to enable half of the money provided under this legislation to be used in an extension of the country homes scheme.

I know that members, particularly country members, have always been most anxious to get additional houses built in their areas. I know, too, how much it has meant to the elderly people in the country. As this money is being made available for social purposes, I cannot but feel that there is a strong case for a better distribution of the money provided under this legislation.

Summarizing my views on this matter, I believe that the competition of the Commonwealth legislation will make this fund very much less productive in future. In the past, we have been able to get some useful assistance in social housing from this fund, and indeed the fund was used as a nucleus for the housing loans redemption scheme that was placed on the Statute Book by the former Government. I believe that there is a strong moral responsibility for this Parliament to provide that some of the proceeds of this hand-out should go to country areas. I think that one-half of the money would be a fair apportionment, as the city has already had

much more assistance in the past and has of necessity received a much larger amount of both Commonwealth and State funds by way of subsidy for homes erected by charitable institutions and religious denominations.

Mr. Coumbe: There are many more applicants.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Although the population ratio would be about 60 per cent to 40 per cent, I should say that 90 per cent of the total assistance in social housing has gone to the metropolitan area. In those circumstances there is a very strong ground for a provision that some of the money should go towards the alleviation of the social housing shortage in the country. Legislation which already exists and which has had the support of local government bodies has operated successfully. It might surprise members to know that nearly every country council in the State collects rentals. They work for country housing schemes without any charge because of the benefit they obtain from them. Under those circumstances, at a later stage I shall ask for some alteration in the distribution of the money provided under the Bill.

However, there is nothing improper at all in the use of the money for this purpose. The Bill provides a concession for house purchasers. There is a guarantee that enables them to borrow money at an interest rate at least 1 per cent less than they could borrow it elsewhere. They can borrow up to 95 per cent of the cost of a house if the loan is to be about \$7,000. In my opinion there can be no objection to the Bill or to the money from the fund being used for this purpose. However, I believe the Treasurer would agree that there was a strong case for a better distribution of the building of these houses than the distribution provided for in the Bill, which provides that the money will be used entirely in the metropolitan area, although no provision is made at present for country areas. Today a dire need exists in the country for this type of assistance for housing.

Mr. McANANEY (Stirling): I strongly support the Bill. It is interesting to see, from time to time, various Acts on the Statute Book which show that South Australia has led Australia in the provision of social legislation in certain respects. That is contrary to what has been said by members opposite recently. The Home Purchase Guarantee Fund provides something of real value to people in necessitous circumstances, whereas the social progress of which

we have heard so much in the last 18 months is concerned more with providing a totalizator agency board system of betting, dog racing, and so on. In the provision of the Home Purchase Guarantee Fund, South Australia has led Australia and, probably, many other parts of the world. The Housing Loans Redemption Fund is another sound means of assisting people who are prepared to help themselves.

In the speech I made at the by-election in my district, I said (and I have repeated it here) that we should put more heart into the Housing Trust. That is why I strongly support the Bill. When people reach an age where they cannot look after themselves, it is the responsibility of the Government and of the rest of the people of the State to see that they are cared for adequately. Today we have full employment and rising living standards; therefore, it is not so necessary to look after people working now as it is to look after those who worked in hard times when it was difficult indeed to save money. We are obliged to care for these people. Some difference of opinion exists on the way in which old people should be cared for. Some doctors think that they should be put into homes for old people whereas others say it is better for them to live in their own homes for as long as they can. This depends on the individual. This Government tries to put us all in the same mould and have us act in the same way. However, I believe there should be an alternative. When old people have a house that is too large for them, it is much better for them to be put into a smaller house that is easier for them to look after and is better for them than a home for old people.

Although, in the country, most people save enough money to have \$1,600 to enable them to go into a house provided by a church or something of that nature, in many cases (and not through lack of efficiency) people are unable to provide this sum. In Victor Harbour and Strathalbyn live many people who would go into cottage homes if they were built. They would leave the unsatisfactory lodging they have at present, and this would benefit them and the rest of the community because, by their going into smaller houses, accommodation would be made available for somebody else. If a person is lucky enough to rent or buy a trust house, he has an advantage over those who have saved their money to pay a deposit on a house through other institutions. In the latter case, people have to pay more and do not get the value

of this free money. Therefore, I believe the first responsibility of the trust should be to provide homes for the aged.

The two previous speakers covered the Bill well. I support what the member for Gumeracha said about the need for a definite allocation to country areas. However, I do not believe that a great proportion of people in country areas (apart from those in the towns) would require this aid. Country people who stay in a business must accumulate some money or they could not stay in the business; they generally provide for themselves. In view of the sum quoted by the member for Gumeracha, there might not be many country applicants. Nevertheless, I believe that people in the metropolitan area have received a reasonable share of recent housing provisions. Some years ago, when a person applied for a permit to build a house, he could not obtain it, although the trust was building many houses in the metropolitan area. As city people have had their needs provided for reasonably in this respect, I support what the member for Gumeracha said about providing for country areas. Under the Bill, resources available to the Government are made available to people who need and deserve them the most.

Mrs. STEELE (Burnside): I support the Bill, which interests me greatly. Many of these types of unit have been established by the Housing Trust in my district, and I believe they provide a much needed service to the community. The first time this type of cottage was instituted and provision made for aged persons was many years ago when homes were opened at, I think, Payneham, for which the Government had made money available on a \$1 for \$1 basis. I believe that the Prime Minister opened the homes, and this inspired the Commonwealth Government to offer, what is now currently available for charitable organizations, a \$2 for \$1 subsidy. This is different from what is envisaged in this Bill, but that was the genesis for plans to provide homes for aged people, and it originated in this State. This extension is a worthwhile one because it provides good housing. Learning from experience, the trust, which builds many of these cottage flats for elderly citizens, has greatly improved the units now being erected. An added advantage is that they are built in spacious grounds, which are kept in order by the trust, thus giving the elderly people, in the evening of their lives, the opportunity to live in congenial circumstances.

Although the grounds are maintained by the trust, these people can potter around in the plots adjacent to their flats. This has been a wonderful innovation, providing the kind of housing that is so suited to elderly people. It is on ground level, and provides a bedroom, sittingroom, bathroom and kitchen, so that any extension of this scheme is in the interests of the elderly citizens in the community. I understand that about half of this money will provide these facilities in country areas. As a fair proportion of elderly people live in country towns, this kind of housing provides a facility for them, or for those who have attained the retiring age and who have worked on properties all their lives but who still want to live in a country community rather than come to the city. This is a good idea, as these people can be kept in a community which they know, where people know them, and where they are known as citizens in that community. No-one can disagree with the principle that some of the money available under this scheme should be used in country districts.

Mr. HUDSON (Glenelg): I, too, support the Bill because in current circumstances it is a worthwhile measure. I emphasize "in current circumstances" because it seems that the circumstances that exist for housing elderly people are clearly unsatisfactory for those who have no finance of their own. The Commonwealth Government provides a \$2 for \$1 subsidy for the building of cottage flats by private organizations, and these organizations either sell a life interest in the flat to a prospective buyer or they rent the flat to elderly people at a purely nominal rental. Because private organizations are subsidized on this basis, there is a strong inducement at present for them to sell the flats they build for a sum that started off at \$2,000, but which is now about \$2,500, and use that money to build further flats to attract further Commonwealth subsidy. The result of the Commonwealth subsidy scheme has been that the demands of people for cottage flat accommodation where the elderly person can afford to pay a capital sum of \$2,500 are being well met, but the demands of elderly people who cannot afford to pay that sum are not being met at all.

Unfortunately, the main authority providing "rental only" accommodation of cottage flats for elderly people is the Housing Trust, and that organization, as a State Government instrumentality, does not qualify for the

Commonwealth subsidy. Consequently, since the institution of the cottage flat programme by the trust there has been a long waiting list: at present it is about nine years for those who want "rental only" accommodation. I believe that the scheme was instituted in 1956, but only recently the people who put their names down in that year have been accommodated, and the trust is now dealing with applications made in 1957 and 1958. The present great shortage of accommodation for elderly people clearly lies in the field where people have no capital and can afford only a small rent. The long waiting list of the Housing Trust is clear evidence of that fact. I support the Bill because I think the Government has made it clear that there is a real need for accommodation, particularly for elderly single women, and is trying to do something to rectify the position.

However, I regret the necessity for the South Australian Government to subsidize the Housing Trust on a \$1 for \$1 basis. A simple amendment by the Commonwealth Government to its scheme to include the Housing Trust as a body that could be subsidized on this basis would, in a few years, probably result in a complete solution of this difficult problem. I think those words need to be said. I was rather alarmed at the suggestion of the member for Gumeracha, taken up by the members for Stirling and Burnside, that some fixed percentage (the member for Gumeracha said half) of these flats should be built in country areas. For an elderly widow desiring "rental only" accommodation from the trust there is still an eight-year or nine-year waiting list. The needs of these people should surely receive a No. 1 priority.

The Hon. B. H. Teusner: Many of them go to the country.

Mr. HUDSON: Yes, and I was concerned with the case of someone living at Nuriootpa, for whom I was able to find accommodation on Seacombe Road in my district. I merely point out that it would be completely wrong for the House to stipulate an arbitrary percentage of the allocation of, say, 50/50 of these cottage flats between the country and metropolitan area if the Housing Trust waiting list were distributed 80 per cent in the metropolitan area and only 20 per cent in the country.

Mr. McAnaney: Do you know the figures?

Mr. HUDSON: No, but neither does the member for Burnside, the member for Stirling, or the member for Gumeracha. The proposal currently being canvassed by the

member for Gumeracha is, I suggest, completely unjust and wrong. If, as is the case, people have had to wait for as long as 10 years for a cottage flat, the acceptance of the suggested restriction by the member for Gumeracha could well mean that people in one part of the State received preferential treatment over people in another part. That would be wrong. I support the Bill and hope that it will be supported by members in its present form. The Housing Trust has the relevant information as to where we shall find the needs that have to be satisfied in this respect. I am sure that the trust can be relied on to ensure that those needs are satisfied to the fullest possible extent, allowing for the demands of those people, who have waited longest, to be met as a first priority.

Mr. Jennings: A Commonwealth Labor Government will see to that, too.

Mr. Millhouse: There's not going to be one.

Mr. HUDSON: Apart from that question, it would be wrong for the House to insert in the Bill a restriction that could result in members of the community, who have already waited eight or nine years for a cottage flat, having to wait still longer whilst others received priority.

Mr. Quirke: Are you assuming that these people are all in the city?

Mr. HUDSON: No; I am merely saying that if the current list in regard to people waiting for, say, nine years, is represented by 20 per cent in the country and 80 per cent in the city, anything inserted in the Bill should relate to a 20/80 basis. I took the suggestion made by the member for Gumeracha to relate to a 50/50 basis, which would mean that some people in the metropolitan area would have to wait still longer for a cottage flat. That proposal is unfair and would place an unnecessary restriction on the trust's freedom of action.

Mr. Quirke: People would live much longer if you sent them to the country.

Mr. HUDSON: That may or may not be the case. However, I should think that the criterion related to where elderly people wished to live. By and large, they desire independence; they wish to be able to live on their own and to look after themselves in cottage flats. I know of cases in which people have waited longer than perhaps was necessary, because they desired accommodation near to where their relatives, including children, lived. That is a completely understandable

motive, and one that I believe would be accepted by the member for Burra. We cannot get away from the fact that, because of the Commonwealth Government's refusal to subsidize the trust for the building of these flats (because the private organizations that build them concentrate heavily on flats for sale), we have this extraordinarily long waiting list for people who desire "rental only" accommodation. No restriction must be placed in this Bill that prevents the trust from meeting the priorities that already exist in regard to its waiting list. In supporting the Bill, I hope it receives the unanimous support of the House.

Mr. COURCE (Torrens): I, too, support the Bill. As a metropolitan member, I have had much to do with housing problems, and have received many housing queries over the years. The Bill has a worthy object and will help meet a great need in the community. It continues, of course, the policy of the previous Government in this regard. The housing position seems to have eased somewhat in recent years, although, as the member for Glenelg has just said, a long waiting list exists in regard to cottage flats, which we all regret. When I came into the House about 10 years ago I suppose that almost half of my constituency problems involved housing troubles. The emergency housing scheme was then functioning as an effort to house many people. Elizabeth had not been started, so we did not have the advent of the terrific volume of housing that exists there today, including houses for both rental and purchase.

Members of districts comprising the inner-suburban areas have found in recent years that the demand for housing has somewhat diminished. I believe that is the result of sound governmental policies, as well as sound policies on the part of the Housing Trust, largely helped by the Commonwealth Government's move to assist young people wishing to buy houses. That great asset has been augmented by the work of church and charitable organizations that are building many houses today, through the subsidy arrangements under the Commonwealth scheme. With all these things working that did not exist some years ago, in addition to certain other social changes, the housing position is not nearly as acute today as it was about 10 years ago. However, the cottage flat problem is still acute. I found myself in a rather curious position a few years ago, as possibly one or two other metropolitan members found

themselves, because in my district I have not one trust house, although I have some modern trust flats. I found that every constituent whom I assisted in regard to housing promptly moved out of the district. Nowadays many people are moving out of the older, inner suburbs to other parts of the State, especially Elizabeth and the districts of Glenelg and Barossa. This is understandable because young people do not care to stay home with Mum and Dad (something they were forced to do some years ago because of the housing shortage). I wholeheartedly support this Bill because it continues policies commenced by the former Government, and I hope this sort of thing will continue, especially if it results in the waiting list being shortened. Regarding the foreshadowed amendment, I want houses to be built wherever they will give the greatest relief, irrespective of locality.

Mr. Quirke: Say, at Wallaroo.

Mr. Hughes: Hear, hear.

Mr. COURCE: It might well be in Wallaroo, or in the metropolitan area. Where the need is greatest, the greatest amount of good will be achieved. I do not care how the money is split up, but I want it to be used in the most effective manner. As a metropolitan member, I realize that most of this State's population lives in the metropolitan area, and I assume that there are more widows in the metropolitan area than in the country; therefore the greatest number of cottage homes would be needed in the metropolitan area.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra): I support the Bill. I trust that a proportion of these homes will be built in the country, and when I say "country" I mean the whole of it: on the seacoast, at Wallaroo, Port Pirie, and Port Augusta, and at Peterborough, Jamestown and Clare. People in all these towns should be able to share in this highly desirable project of providing cheap housing accommodation for elderly people. In order that this may be done, a canvass of country areas might be desirable in order to discover the proportion of people in dire need of this sort of housing. Honourable members might be surprised at the number of people who require such accommodation, and it must not be thought that by far the greater proportion of necessitous people is in the metropolitan area. There can be worse conditions in some country towns, particularly the older towns and industrial towns, where elderly people may be living in one room. Such conditions exist in the metropolitan area, but city amenities are better:

for instance, footpaths and public transport are provided, whereas in country towns elderly people experience considerable difficulties.

Mr. Casey: They must walk long distances.

Mr. QUIRKE: And not necessarily with good conditions underfoot. We must not think that because they are in the country they have better facilities. The member for Wallaroo has spoken up: Wallaroo is a big town; elderly people there might have to walk considerable distances to a shopping centre and not necessarily on the best footpaths in the world, and the same applies elsewhere.

Clare has six of these homes for elderly couples, and the homes are very beneficial, but the rent is increasing as costs increase. I want to correct the assumption that country conditions are necessarily better than metropolitan conditions and, therefore (probably because there are more people in the metropolitan area) it might be said, "We do not want these things in the country at all." That, however, is not correct. I support this measure and hope that country towns will share in the benefits. I am not making a plea for any particular town in my district, but for any towns where there is a concentration of people who sorely need this type of accommodation.

Mr. BURDON (Mount Gambier): I support the general principles of this Bill. In the past I have supported the building of flats for aged people. In my area and in other country areas, the trust will survey the need for these flats. I believe that there is a need for this type of accommodation in my area, and I trust that the House will support this measure and that, because of that support, some people in my district who are now in necessitous circumstances will be provided with more suitable housing. Many widows and elderly people need this type of accommodation. Several homes have been specially built in my district for pensioners, and those places are a credit to the district and to the people who live in them because those people have made them very attractive. I cannot speak too highly of the way in which these people have developed and improved the surroundings of their houses. I believe this would apply also to many people living in flats.

The Hon. FRANK WALSH (Premier and Treasurer): One thing that has come out of this debate this afternoon is a general acknowledgment that the Housing Trust is doing a splendid job with its housing programmes. If we keep that fact in mind, I

think that we can go a long way towards achieving the purpose of this Bill without the need for any amendment. The report of the Housing Trust for the year ended June, 30, 1966 (page 4), indicates that there are now two schemes involved in country letting. The majority have been let under the normal rental scheme for people of average or above-average income. Other houses are provided under the rental-grants scheme at a low rent to people who cannot afford to pay normal rates, a scheme made possible by the assistance of Commonwealth grants totalling \$936,038.

These places are mostly four-room units, and the rent paid is dependent upon the family income, the minimum rent being set at \$2 a week. The income from the rents of these houses, less outgoings, is utilized in further buildings under this scheme. No interest is payable on the money provided. As at June 30, 1966, 184 houses had been completed under the rental-grants scheme in 39 towns. Those houses are of two designs, each of four rooms, with a detached sleep-out provided if a larger family deems it necessary. The names of the 39 towns referred to are listed in the report, although the number of houses in each town is not given. Under the Country Housing Act of 1958, the funds now in hand total \$34,000. This fund is to keep pace with the demand in country towns for this type of accommodation.

The trust is doing everything possible to assist in this project of trying to help the people who through misfortune or age have to come under this special rental-grants scheme. I am sure that members of this House do not wish to upset the workings of the trust. The member for Torrens (Mr. Coumbe) said that he would support any scheme that would give the greatest benefit to the greatest number of people. The member for Glenelg (Mr. Hudson) referred to a waiting time of nine years, which would indicate that there must be a considerable demand in the metropolitan area. A communication from the trust dated August 11 this year states:

In November, 1963, the Treasurer wrote the trust indicating that with the approval of Parliament he intended to make available to the trust £50,000 to provide for expenditure upon housing for persons in necessitous circumstances. This amount was applied by the trust to the construction of cottage flats for pensioners. At June 30 a total of \$2,795,000 had been expended on these cottages. You are well aware of the economics of projects of this nature when the trust has to meet the full cost compared with a two to one subsidy

by the Commonwealth to outside organizations which enter into programmes of this type. Apart from this, the trust at June 30 was charging reduced rents to 1,547 other tenants who were in necessitous circumstances. In view of the decision of the Government in 1963 to assist financially the trust in this type of housing, could the Treasurer be approached to ascertain whether some further grant could be made annually to lessen the commitment of the trust in the provision of a particular housing which is becoming increasingly necessary?

As a result of that, the Government, after mature consideration, introduced this Bill. I know that members support and have the fullest confidence in the trust, and I hope that there will be no attempt to suggest that the trust should do anything to jeopardize what is contained in the Bill.

Mr. Quirke: Is the Treasurer now saying that none of this money is to be spent in country towns?

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: Not this money. However, \$34,000 is provided under the Country Housing Act and that is designed to provide for the demand in country areas. I have given a list of country areas in which the trust is building houses under the rental-grants scheme. The cost of building a house in the country is no lower than is the cost in the metropolitan area. Each case is examined and people are required to pay the full rent on a house if circumstances warrant it. However, for those in most undesirable circumstances, the rent can be as low as \$2 a week. I have now supplied the necessary information concerning the Bill. I sincerely trust that the House, on reflection, will support the Bill as it stands.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 passed.

Clause 4—"Application of moneys paid to trust."

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I move:

After "expend" to insert "one-half of"; before "The" to insert "(1)"; and to insert the following subclauses:

- (2) The trust shall expend the other half of the amount paid to it in each financial year in the building of houses in country areas which shall be let by the trust to persons of limited income.
- (3) The provisions of the Country Housing Act, 1958-1960, shall apply to and in relation to any house built by the trust in pursuance of subsection (2) of this section.

My amendments enable part of the money in this fund to be spent in the country. The Bill precludes country areas from any participation

in this expenditure. I am rather surprised that so few country members are taking an interest in this matter. At present, only four members of the Government Party are present in the Chamber, and three of them represent country districts.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: My attention has been drawn to the state of the Committee. Ring the bells.

A quorum having been formed:

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The report of the Housing Trust for this year states:

One hundred and forty cottage flats were completed by the trust last year, 133 in the metropolitan area and seven in Elizabeth.

None was completed in the country. The report continues:

As at June 30, 1966, there were 56 cottage flats under construction in the metropolitan area. In all, the trust has built a total of 1,248 cottage flats.

All of those cottage flats are in the metropolitan area. Further, the Government's programme for social amelioration for the country has resulted in 184 houses being built in the country, whereas 1,248 were built in the metropolitan area! Yet the Treasurer said that country areas would be looked after, and he questioned the need for these amendments. There would be as many needy persons in the country as there are in the city, but because it is more convenient for the trust to build in the city, that is what happens. At present, many elderly citizens in country areas have no opportunity to obtain housing unless they leave their associates, relatives, and friends, and come to the city. That is not desirable because it causes much distress. A substantial portion of the money we are spending on housing comes from the sale of houses in country areas but under this Bill, this money will be spent in the metropolitan area. This legislation is iniquitous, unjust, unfair, and improper. This money was left to the present Government by the previous Treasurer, and a large part of it came from the country, so it should not all be spent in the metropolitan area. Country members, knowing the circumstances in their districts, should not support this Bill, because it does not provide for cottage flats to be built in country areas.

The Hon. FRANK WALSH (Premier and Treasurer): With his experience, the member for Gumeracha should not insinuate that the Housing Trust has not performed creditably in the interests of the people of this State.

I know that some people from the metropolitan area have been pleased to live in country areas. To my knowledge, not one house in the metropolitan area is let at the rental at which this type of house is rented in country areas, and that is the preference that has been extended to people in the country under the rental-grants scheme. Many people on the waiting list in the metropolitan area are paying three times that rental for one room and the use of a gas cooking ring. In the special housing fund, \$34,000 is to be used to erect this type of accommodation for people in country areas, but the member for Gumeracha does not want to believe that. Under the rental-grants scheme, 39 country towns are to be provided for: what more can I do to convince honourable members? This proposal was examined by the Housing Trust and the Government. Having regard to where the greatest need existed, we were also anxious to reduce the waiting period and to alleviate the problems confronting many widows and unmarried females who had reached retiring age. For the benefit of the member for Gumeracha, I repeat that the trust is aware of the requirements, because it has a record of the people registered as applicants for this type of housing. The trust will continue to provide accommodation for country people who are unable to provide for themselves. I ask the Committee to accept the Bill in its entirety.

Mr. SHANNON: I am afraid that we are spreading the skimmed milk very thinly over the country areas. I have been working with the Apex organization and the Returned Services League in an effort to encourage the Housing Trust to try to buy a block of land for the erection of cheap rental houses in my district, for which it is intended that a tenant shall not pay more than one-sixth of his income. A man who resides in one of the little towns in my district, and who reaches retiring age, usually wishes to settle where he has lived and worked all his life. Although the trust built two or three cheaper types of house at Mount Barker, it was not nearly sufficient to meet the needs of what is really only a country village. The paltry sum of \$34,000 is available for this scheme, but I should have preferred \$340,000, for that might take up some of the slack that at present exists in country areas. In the case of many country people it will not involve a waiting list: it will be "never". For districts such as mine in which more widows than widowers

are to be found, much more money should be made available for people needing this sort of accommodation.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Treasurer said that areas had been considered, in which the greatest need existed. Having recently been approached by an elderly widow living in the district of the Minister of Agriculture, who wished to know how she could obtain accommodation, I suggested that she apply for a cottage flat in the metropolitan area, as no other avenue existed. I should say the member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Burdon) also had a problem in this regard, on which he has expressed strong views. At present, if a person wants a cottage flat, the metropolitan area is the only area in which he can obtain one because that is the only place where flats are being built. The applications are made for the metropolitan area because that is the only area where cottage flats are available. To say that we have dealt with the problem of housing aged people by the erection of 184 cottage flats is ridiculous. Something should be done for the country in this Bill. I cannot agree with such lopsided legislation which ignores the country completely although the country has contributed a large percentage of the money in this fund.

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: The trust is building large numbers of this type of accommodation for charitable organizations. During 1945-46, the trust began to build houses expressly for sale in the metropolitan area and the country. Much of the trust's building has been in the form of rental-purchase houses, so surely most of the funds obtained by the trust are contributed by occupants of trust houses in the metropolitan area. I ask members to vote against the amendments.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I support the amendments. A real need exists for this type of accommodation in country areas. The Returned Services League has done a great job in providing "Darby and Joan" cottages over several years. They are occupied mainly by widows and most of them have been built in the metropolitan area. I know of one woman living in one of these cottages who would still be living in her native country town had similar accommodation been available there. The R.S.L. is considering extending its scheme to country areas. Therefore, why should we pass a Bill providing accommodation specifically for the metropolitan area?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Not only does the Bill provide that accommodation be built only in the metropolitan area, but it applies for five years. Therefore, not one property will be built in the country from this money for five years. The money available for housing should be spent equitably throughout the State. The Government often refers to decentralization but the Bill will mean that many people from country areas will have to come to the metropolitan area because this type of housing will not be available anywhere else. This will cause grave hardship to country people.

The Committee divided on the amendments:

Ayes (16).—Messrs. Bockelberg, Brookman, Coumbe, Ferguson, Freebairn, Hall, Heaslip, McAnaney, Millhouse, and Nankivell, Sir Thomas Playford (teller), Messrs. Quirke, Rodda, and Shannon, Mrs. Steele, and Mr. Teusner.

Noes (18).—Messrs. Broomhill and Burdon, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Bywaters, Casey, Clark, Corcoran, Curren, Dunstan, Hudson, Hughes, Hurst, Hutchens, Jennings, Langley, Loveday, McKee, and Walsh (teller).

Majority of 2 for the Noes.

Amendments thus negatived.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I move:

After "flats" to insert "or other social housing accommodation".

Cottage flats exclude any country building because they cannot be built by the trust in the country. This amendment would not limit it exclusively for five years to the metropolitan area.

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: This is another new definition, but I am not prepared to accept the amendment because I do not know what it means. I have dealt with the complete preference that has been extended to country areas under the provisions of this Bill. I am prepared to further examine the rental-grants scheme to see whether further preference can be given to country areas, but this Bill provides for people who are in dire need, and extends a special preference to widows. By moving the amendment, the member for Gumeracha proves that he does not want anything to be done in the interests of the widows of this State because they live in the metropolitan area. The amendment represents an innuendo against the trust's administration and competency.

Mr. SHANNON: I am a little disappointed that the Treasurer cannot see his way clear to permit the trust to build accommodation other than flats.

The Hon. Frank Walsh: I will amend the legislation at the appropriate time.

Mr. SHANNON: The Bill is definitely confined to groups of cottage flats, and I understand that it is not a practice to build only one isolated cottage flat.

Mr. Hudson: You could build two.

Mr. SHANNON: That would be unlikely. Building a number of cottage flats represents a saving in capital cost, as well as providing more accommodation, but the country people will not benefit, because the demand for groups of flats in the country does not exist. I should like to see single-unit houses erected, containing a minimum of space but providing a maximum of comfort. The average country person is not a flat dweller. People in the country will not benefit by this measure, because the money just will not be available, except of course in regard to, say, Whyalla and Port Pirie. The amendment moved by the member for Gumeracha will at least give some elbow room in which to manoeuvre—elbow room that may indeed be necessary before the five-year period expires.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Experience has shown that it is not practicable to build cottage flats in the country. The Bill in its existing form, although it does not provide as much (and the member for Glenelg agrees with its implications), relates only to the building of cottage flats for people "in necessitous circumstances". My amendment does not tell the trust whether it shall or shall not build flats: it will merely authorize the trust to vary the type of accommodation to be erected.

Mr. Hudson: What is the significance of the word "social" in your amendment?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Although that has had a particular meaning in regard to housing for a long time, if the honourable member's objection is to that word, I shall be prepared to alter the wording to "other housing accommodation".

Mr. Hudson: Let's compromise and delete "other housing accommodation" altogether!

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: No, because that rules out for five years any possibility of a country town obtaining housing for a necessitous person.

Mr. Hudson: It does not.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: It does. The honourable member frankly admitted that previously; he said that, with people in the metropolitan area who had been waiting for nine years, cottage flats should be built in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Hudson: I did not say that.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I do not believe that this amendment would harm the Bill in any way; it enables a different design to be erected if the Housing Trust so desires. As the trust is under the control of the Treasurer, I should not have thought that there would be any objection to the amendment.

A division on the amendment was called for.

While the division bells were ringing:

Mr. QUIRKE: Mr. Chairman, on the opposite side of the Committee is an incapacitated member. In the division, could he declare, so that he might remain in his seat? I do not think it should be necessary for him to cross the floor.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I cannot uphold the point of order because Standing Orders specifically provide that the Ayes shall pass to one side of the Chair and the Noes to the other, and no exception can be made.

The Committee divided on the amendment:

Ayes (16).—Messrs. Bockelberg, Brookman, Coumbe, Ferguson, Freebairn, Hall, Heaslip, McAnaney, Millhouse, and Nankivell, Sir Thomas Playford (teller), Messrs. Quirke, Rodda, and Shannon, Mrs. Steele, and Mr. Teusner.

Noes (18).—Messrs. Broomhill and Burdon, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Bywaters, Casey, Clark, Corcoran, Curren, Dunstan, Hudson, Hughes, Hurst, Hutchens, Jennings, Langley, Loveday, McKee, and Walsh (teller).

Majority of 2 for the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived; clause passed. Remaining clauses (5 and 6) and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

MONEY-LENDERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Legislative Council intimated that it did not insist on its amendments Nos. 1 and 2.

MOTOR VEHICLES ACT AMENDMENT BILL (REGISTRATION).

(Continued from November 8. Page 2828.)

A message was received from the Legislative Council agreeing to a conference to be held in the Legislative Council conference room at 8 p.m. on November 15.

EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 27. Page 2626.)

Mr. NANKIVELL (Albert): This is an interesting Bill and I can see nothing but good coming from certain matters with which it deals. Provision is made to classify teachers into one list from which the most appropriate person can be readily extracted, whether male or female. I can see no reason why the harshest penalties should not be imposed to make sure that advantage is not taken by sending a child to work at the age of 14 years 10 months, for instance, whereby he would gain the advantage of having a job although the law would still be broken as he would have left school before he was 15 years of age. Another matter in the Bill looks like Parkinson's law. Although the Minister went to great lengths to explain that there would be no increase in salary for the Director-General or Deputy Director-General of Education, I could only interpret from reading between the lines (as much as reading the lines themselves) that this will create a new hierarchy in the Education Department. I do not think that is necessarily bad.

Mr. Clark: The provisions are there now.

Mr. NANKIVELL: We have a Superintendent and three Assistant Superintendents in the Primary School Branch. In New South Wales they have a Director and two Deputy Directors; however, there can be Assistant Deputy-Directors and so on, if it is desired. I do not complain about this provision, for I think it is only proper that our officers should be placed on a similar basis to their counterparts in other States. However, I draw the attention of the House to the fact that when the positions of Director-General and Deputy Director-General of Education are created, it leaves room for other intermediate ranks. As most of the matters in the Bill are perfectly proper, I commend it to the House.

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

ENFIELD GENERAL CEMETERY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 4. Page 2000.)

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens): This is a simple Bill which I support and which I believe has the general support of the House. It is a hybrid Bill, which passed the scrutiny of a

Select Committee of another place with approval. Some years ago I was a member of the Select Committee that considered this legislation in another respect. With other members opposite, I have some knowledge of the operations of this cemetery, especially as it happens to be in the northern suburbs. One of the main purposes of the Bill is to provide financial resources to the trust to build a crematorium. Honourable members know the need in a densely populated area for a crematorium. However, no financial provision has previously been made for a crematorium at this cemetery. The need for it is accentuated when we realize that at the North Road cemetery, in the northern suburbs, no space is available, and the only burials are in plots that were purchased many years ago. At that cemetery, the church authorities intend to erect a columbarium, a wall usually built of bricks but containing niches in which the ashes from the crematorium are placed for perpetuity. This system operates at the Springbank cemetery. It is to be built at the North Road cemetery because no room is available for a crematorium. As it is intended to build a crematorium at the Enfield cemetery, where the ashes of a deceased person can be interred, the proposed columbarium at the North Road cemetery can be used. Where necessary, facilities at the Enfield cemetery can be used for people in the northern parts of Adelaide.

Provision is made for members of the Enfield council to become members of the trust, and the trust may, but only with the consent of the Minister, borrow money to construct a crematorium or effect other capital improvements. The trust can also mortgage land within the cemetery that is not used for burial purposes, but I cannot understand how this land will be used or who will be interested in taking a mortgage over such land. The trust may invest moneys not only in Commonwealth bonds but in trustee investments or Commonwealth securities. Fees to be paid to members of the trust have been raised to a realistic value. At the same time some confusion that existed about the various denominations' rights of interment has been clarified. As this Bill was considered by a Select Committee, I support its second reading.

Mr. JENNINGS (Enfield): This Bill has run the gauntlet of a Select Committee in another place and has had the blessing of a preview by the House of Review, so I merely content myself by saying that I support it. It provides that members of the Enfield General Cemetery Trust, who are nominees of

the Enfield council, cease to be members of the trust when they cease to be members of the council. The provision at present has often embarrassed the council. Provision is also made for money to be borrowed to build a crematorium, which is something that has been talked about for a long time. Evergreen Memorial Park Limited has not gained my support by its door-to-door salesmanship of cemetery burial blocks. However, as that has nothing to do with the Bill, I support the second reading.

Mr. HALL (Leader of the Opposition): I, too, support the Bill. Although the cemetery is in the Enfield district it will serve the northern section of the metropolitan area. Recently, I have received complaints about the distance of the present crematorium in Adelaide from the northern suburbs, and I understand that much inconvenience has been caused because of this. As I believe the existing crematorium has been heavily taxed by the number of funerals for which it caters, an additional crematorium is urgently required. Ideally situated to serve the northern part of the city, it will also serve my district. I have heard much praise for the type of plot transaction that is entered into at this cemetery, where the title of the plot is held by the family, whereas in other cemeteries the title is held by the undertaker. At a subsequent death, it is difficult and inconvenient to obtain the title from this undertaker if a different one performs the burial service. As a representative of a district north of the metropolitan area, I support the Bill.

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

CAMBRAI AND SEDAN RAILWAY DISCONTINUANCE BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 4. Page 2006.)

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER (Angas): This Bill empowers the Railways Commissioner to take up, remove, or otherwise dispose of a portion of the railway line in the Murray Plains area between Cambrai and Sedan, involving about six miles of line. Section 10 of the Road and Railway Transport Act, in part, provides:

(1) If the board, after due inquiry and investigation, is of opinion that it would be in the best economic interests of the State to close the whole or any part of any line of railway, . . .

Subsections (4 and (5) then provide:

(4) An order closing a line or part of a line of railway shall not be made—

(a) unless the board gives notice to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works of its intention to make the order:

(b) if the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works reports to the board within 28 days after receiving the notice that it is expedient to keep the line or part of a line open.

(5) The board shall not make any order closing any line of railway or part of a line of railway under this section unless it is satisfied that there will be, on and after the day on which the order takes effect, other transport facilities for serving the area previously served by the railway or part thereof.

The necessary procedure under that Act has been carried out as regards the Transport Control Board and the Public Works Committee. An effort was made in 1959 by the Transport Control Board to close the railway line from Sedan to Monarto South, including the six miles of line to which this Bill refers. At the time, the Public Works Committee having been notified by the board of its intention to close the line between Sedan and Monarto South, it was my view that such action was premature. As a result of inquiring whether people in the district would be prejudiced by the closing of that line, I found that many people in the area, including business people and primary producers, believed that the railway still served a useful purpose and that no action should be taken to close the line. I collected evidence and introduced a number of witnesses to the Public Works Committee, which investigated the matter. In addition to me, people from the Murray Plains area, in giving evidence before the committee (I think in October, 1959), urged that the railway line be retained.

I also presented two petitions signed by 47 Sedan residents and 61 people living in Cambrai and the Sanderston district of the Murray Plains. After due investigation by the Public Works Committee, its recommendation to keep open the railway line from Sedan to Monarto South was accepted. At that time, this line, including the section between Sedan and Cambrai, carried a considerable quantity of freight consisting mainly of wheat. The position has changed since then because several bulk silos have been constructed at Cambrai and no wheat is now being carried from Sedan on this line. Consequently, the Sedan-Cambrai section does not serve such a useful purpose now as it did prior to 1962. Authority for the construction of this line was given under the

Mount Pleasant, Sedan and Truro Railways Act, 1914; it is noteworthy that the railway lines from Nuriootpa to Truro, Palmer to Sedan, and Balhannah to Mount Pleasant (constructed pursuant to this Act) were not constructed immediately after the passing of the Act, but in about 1920, that is, soon after the First World War.

All these lines served useful purposes, particularly in the early years and until 1960, because they helped open up the areas they served. The primary-producing communities in those areas derived tremendous benefit from those lines. However, this line is the second of those three whose closing has been proposed.

The Balhannah to Mount Pleasant section was closed a few years ago pursuant to a Transport Control Board order, and legislation was introduced in this House enabling the Commissioner to take up the railway line and dispose of it. On March 1, 1963, the service between Cambrai and Sedan was reduced to one train a fortnight, and the average train load in 1963-1964 was six tons inwards and 17 tons outwards, so members will see that very little freight has been carried on this line in recent years.

The Transport Control Board took evidence in the Murray Plains area in 1964 and recommended the closing of the line and, pursuant to section 10 of the Road and Railway Transport Act, gave notice to the Public Works Committee of its intention to close the line. That committee then took evidence and concluded that the small amount of traffic on the Cambrai-Sedan line (carried at a substantial loss to the Railways Department) did not justify the line's remaining open.

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

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: The conclusions of the Transport Control Board should be included in *Hansard*, because they indicate considerable justification for closing the line. The board's conclusions, as reported in the Parliamentary Papers of 1964 and annexed to the report of the Public Works Committee dated October 20, 1964, are as follows:

1. The volume of traffic on the Cambrai-Sedan line is showing marked decline.
2. The selection of Cambrai for silo construction to cater for bulk grain has practically eliminated Sedan as a grain receiving port.
3. As Cambrai is only six miles distant, the construction of a bulk grain installation at Sedan is not contemplated.
4. The revenue is now averaging £1,590 per annum.

5. Closure of the line could effect a railway saving of about £4,855 per annum.

6. An additional saving of £35,080 would result if the delayed expenditure on re-sleepering, repairs to telephone line, and replacement of fencing could be avoided.

7. Sedan is partially served by an existing licensed carrier and the board would grant on application special permits to enable road cartage comparable to a licensed route.

8. Alternative transport can cater for the area concerned.

These conclusions are significant, particularly in view of the small quantity of freight patronage that had been given to this line in recent years. Bearing in mind that the Public Works Committee and the Road Transport Board were satisfied that adequate alternative transport was provided for the area, I consider that this Bill cannot be opposed. Work is about to commence on the Swan Reach to Stockwell main, the route of which will pass about five miles north of Sedan. Possibly some use could be made of this railway line during the next two or three years to cart pipes and other material needed to construct this main. I understand that a camp is being set up in the Sedan area at which most of the men working on the main will be located, and that the camp will have to be supplied with water and other requirements. I do not know the department's intentions: it may be planned to supply the camp by road transport, and that may be the means by which pipes are carted to the site. However, this line would be suitable to transport these materials. With that additional observation, I support the Bill.

Mr. FREEBAIRN (Light): I, too, support the Bill. It is a short Bill to enable the Railways Commissioner to take up a section of the railway line not now required, between Cambrai and Sedan. Every honourable member should be sad when a railway line is closed, especially in this case, because this line has made an important contribution to the economy of the Murray Plains district. I speak as a member representing part of the Murray Plains and as one who has personal association with the Cambrai-Sedan district, because one of my migrant forebears settled in the Cambrai-Keyneton district. Although the line was mooted in 1914 it was not built until 1920. It is easy to have hindsight, but one wonders why the Government of the day continued to build railway lines in areas like this as late as 1920 when the motor lorry, then in its infancy, had clearly indicated that it was the future form of rural transport.

The reason for this Bill is, as the member for Angas has said, that the Transport Control Board had recommended that this line be

closed, and the Public Works Committee investigated the economics of the Cambrai-Sedan section of the line, reporting that it now served no economic purpose. I was interested to read the report of the Public Works Committee. It is evident that it examined thoroughly the economic situation of this railway line. I quote from the relevant part of that report:

As extensive rehabilitation costs have now been incurred and in three of the last four years the line has more than met expenses of operation the board considers there is justification for continued operation of the line—and it is referring here to the Monarto South to Sedan section of the line—

with the exception of the terminal section between Cambrai and Sedan. . . . However the Railways Chief Engineer now reports that, to keep the track safe, special expenditure will be required over the next few years in sleeper replacements as 8,300 of the original sleepers are still in position after 45 years. One of the keys to the situation lies in the declining earnings of the Sedan-Cambrai section up until the end of 1964, when the line was finally closed. Over the last four or five years of operation, the total earnings of that line did not greatly exceed \$4,000. The report continues:

The Sedan-Cambrai section of line is considerably below the standard of the Cambrai-Monarto South line and delayed expenditure on sleeper replacements and repairs to the railway telephone line and the boundary fencing will have to be faced within the next five years.

The report goes on to indicate the large capital investment necessary to put the Sedan-Cambrai section into a satisfactory condition. Sleeper replacement is estimated at \$56,000, telephone line rehabilitation at \$5,160 and the replacement of boundary fencing at \$9,000, making a total of \$70,160. So the economic future of the Sedan-Cambrai line is indeed bleak.

As the member for Angas said, the building of the silo at Cambrai and the assurance by the South Australian Bulk Handling Co-operative that Cambrai would continue to be a major receipt centre have just about delivered the death blow to the Cambrai-Sedan section of the line. I am pleased that the Monarto South to Cambrai line will be kept in operation, at least for the present. For the last 15 years or so there has been much local dissatisfaction in the Murray Plains area about the railway line there. We all know the disability suffered by farmers in the lee of the Adelaide Hills because of restrictions imposed by the Transport Control Board, and especially those restrictions on stock movement

between the Murray Plains and the Gepps Cross abattoirs. When we appreciate the long, slow, tedious railway haul over the Adelaide Hills and the relative ease with which motor transport can deliver stock from the Murray Plains straight through to Dry Creek, we can easily understand why railway freights have declined so drastically on that line. The people of that area are well satisfied with the road transport service they are now receiving.

There is no doubt that, but for the fact that the bulk handling co-operative has a substantial installation at Cambrai, the future of the rest of the line as far as Monarto South would not be bright. I support the Bill, which will enable the Railways Commissioner to take up the line between Sedan and Cambrai and dispose of the materials.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 passed.

Clause 4—"Power to remove part of railway and dispose of materials thereof."

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Can the Premier say what plans the Railways Commissioner has for disposing of this railway line? Will the Commissioner be empowered to call for tenders or is it intended to dispose of the railway materials using the Railways Department's own staff?

The Hon. FRANK WALSH (Premier and Treasurer): I recommend the honourable member to read what was said before a Select Committee in another place on these matters, this being a hybrid Bill. All the evidence is there.

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: Can the Premier say whether the line would be useful in the next year or two for the carrying of the pipeline needed for the main from Swan Reach to Stockwell, bearing in mind that it will pass about five miles north of Sedan? This matter has been agitating people in the district: they are wondering whether temporary use will be made of the line for that purpose and also for the purpose of supplying the men in the camp employed on the construction of that main.

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: That is a matter for the Engineering and Water Supply Department. I have no report on that but am prepared to take up with the Minister the honourable member's suggestion.

Mr. McANANEY: When the Bahannah to Mount Pleasant line was closed, as a result of which materials were sold by tender, the purchaser used only materials that were suited

to his purposes, but left unsightly sheds and timber, etc., in the area. Will the Premier ensure that that does not occur in this case?

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: I am not responsible for the calling of tenders in regard to the disposal of the line. As the Minister of Transport is concerned with that matter, I shall forward the honourable member's request to him.

Clause passed.

Clause 5 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

HARBORS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 3. Page 2778.)

Mr. RYAN (Port Adelaide): Listening to certain honourable members saying "Hear, hear" as I rise to speak, I point out that I am not a new member but that the Harbors Board is old and ancient. I do not think that by supporting this Bill I shall alarm any member of either the Government or the Opposition, because I have always advocated an alteration in one way or the other to the constitution of the Harbors Board. I have not expressed that view in the House, however, simply because I represent the district in which the board's main activities have existed for many years. Having had much experience in this matter and worked in close collaboration with members of the board over the years, I believe that people who now say that the board should not be abolished would, if asked the relevant question, be unaware of the board's composition or of how it functioned.

In his second reading explanation, the Minister of Marine said that the board was administrative and not advisory; it had terrific powers for a department under the control of the Government of the day. Nobody can dispute the fact that the Harbors Board is substantially, although not completely, a Government department. It is one of the few departments in this State administered by people other than civil servants; yet the people employed by the board have always considered themselves to be civil servants, whose rights concerning employment have not been the same as those of ordinary civil servants.

The member for Flinders, who was loud in his opposition to the Bill, and who was for a considerable time Minister of Marine, in charge of the board, has often said that if we cannot convert people we must confuse them. The honourable member has never been able to convert people who have been opposed to

the board's constitution, and has, indeed, set out to confuse them. Being the only Opposition member who has so far spoken to the Bill (naturally opposing it), the member for Flinders said that the only reason that he could see for this Bill was the fact that it represented Government policy. But is that not why Governments are elected? If a Government is not elected for the purpose of implementing its policy, why do we have Governments? Why do we have Parliaments? Why do we have the Party political system that exists throughout the British Commonwealth today? The Government is elected expressly to implement its policy.

Mr. Hurst: Do you want to see the board abolished?

Mr. RYAN: Yes.

Mr. Quirke: Why?

Mr. RYAN: Because it has outlived its usefulness.

Mr. Quirke: How?

Mr. RYAN: Because it is a Government department administered by business people who do not have a direct interest in or knowledge of the industry in which the board is engaged. If the member for Burra wished to engage somebody in his winery, he would at least select a person with a knowledge of the wine industry: he would not put a square peg in a round hole.

Mr. Quirke: The board hasn't let the industry down.

Mr. RYAN: It has done an excellent job, bearing in mind the capabilities of the people in charge. Unfortunately, the board's officers have been pushed and shoved around. Indeed, that has been amplified by people representing the board over the years, and illustrated by the conditions under which they, as commissioners, have worked. In the first speech that I ever made in Parliament I referred to the activities of the board, and I said that unless the people in charge were well versed in the industry we would see the time when the activities (vital activities in this State, both in employment and in revenue) of the board would greatly deteriorate. That has come about. At one stage the Harbors Board was probably the greatest revenue earner on a net basis of any department, but its record has deteriorated.

Mr. McAnaney: Over the last 18 months, particularly.

Mr. RYAN: I came into this House in 1959, and I predicted then that it was on the way down.

Mr. Heaslip: There were a lot of strikes about that time.

Mr. RYAN: They were not useless strikes.

Mr. Heaslip: They don't cost money!

Mr. RYAN: I do not know what the member for Rocky River would do if his union went on strike. He would probably want to resign, because he does not believe in strikes.

Mr. Hughes: What would be the attitude of the waterside workers to this Bill?

Mr. RYAN: They have a great interest in it. The Harbors Board is an employer of labour, but it never wants to put itself in that category because it might then have to deal with people representing the trade union movement. I can distinctly remember, when the member for Flinders was in charge of the Harbors Board as Minister of Marine, that a big strike took place. To save face, the board found a back-door method of agreeing to the men's demands so that it would not have to say that it acceded to those demands, which were just demands. The same sort of thing exists today. Although the board is an employer of labour, it would not agree with the award or decision of the Conciliation Commissioner who was appointed to investigate a problem.

Mr. Heaslip: You believe in arbitration, do you?

Mr. RYAN: Certainly I believe in arbitration and conciliation, and probably I have appeared before the Arbitration Court on more occasions than the member for Rocky River has ever dreamed about. The honourable member does not believe in arbitration. In fact, he opposed the granting of an award for the primary industry that he was interested in. I said earlier that the former Minister of Marine always tried to confuse people over this issue. To amplify that point, I will now quote from *Hansard*, which is a well recognized authority and a true record of speeches, of questions asked by members, and of replies given by Ministers over the years. It will be seen that if anybody has done a complete somersault in this matter it is the member for Flinders. Practically every time this matter was raised over the years the honourable member, as the Minister of Marine in those days, did a complete somersault in the hope of confusing people so that they would not persist in the attitude they had adopted regarding the need for an alteration of the board. I often wonder how the board made any progress at all. On June 9, 1959 (page 14 of *Hansard* of that year) my late colleague, the member for Semaphore (Mr. Tapping), spoke on Harbors

Board administration. No-one could say the late Mr. Tapping was a radical. In fact, I think his opinions were greatly admired by all, irrespective of Party allegiance. Mr. Tapping said:

I shall refer to Harbors Board administration, which I consider is a matter of urgency. I have no desire to criticize the present board commissioners but consider there are not sufficient of them. For many years in South Australia there have been only three commissioners controlling the functions of the board, whereas in other States and in certain overseas countries the practice is generally to have at least five commissioners. Our commissioners have done a yeoman job over the years. Sometimes one may go overseas to gain further knowledge, with which practice I agree, or a commissioner may be laid aside with sickness, and under the regulations two commissioners can carry on the important administration of the board.

Two commissioners! Two people, who devote only a couple of hours a fortnight to administering a department which is one of the largest in the State and which is employing probably more funds than most other departments.

Mr. Hurst: The commissioners have as much power as the Minister.

Mr. RYAN: More. Mr. Tapping went on to say:

In the last 12 years the Government has appointed men to the board who have not always had the desired knowledge of marine matters. I do not reflect on their integrity or business ideals. The present board comprises Mr. H. C. Meyer, Mr. Crawford (Chairman) and Mr. Vereco. Mr. Meyer is an outstanding gentleman who knows Harbors Board administration and has known the ideals of the board for many years, and I consider him the ideal administrator. He has played an important part in the progress of the board. The Chairman (Mr. Crawford) has business ability and has done a mighty job. The third commissioner, Mr. Vereco, who was appointed last January, is associated with South Australian commerce and no doubt is a wonderful businessman, but from my knowledge I should consider he would be sadly lacking in Harbors Board administration.

Mr. Hurst: Did any of those gentlemen have any experience on the waterfront?

Mr. RYAN: Mr. Carl Meyer was actively concerned with the Harbors Board practically throughout his lifetime, but he was appointed commissioner only in the latter part of his activity with the department. Mr. Crawford, the Chairman, who was a very elderly gentleman (and I do not criticize him because of his age), was chairman of directors of a motor company in Adelaide, and the third commissioner was the chairman of directors of a glad rag shop in Hindley Street. That is an indication of their knowledge of the waterfront.

Mr. Hurst: Did the waterfront industry have a representative on that board?

Mr. RYAN: Never. It often made representations in that matter, but it was always refused. At one time the waterside workers' representative on the Melbourne Harbor Trust was the Chairman, and many people admitted that he was a very fine gentleman and that he did a fine job. He was an employees' representative who became Chairman of the Melbourne Harbor Trust.

Mr. McAnaney: Is that an independent board?

Mr. RYAN: It is an independent board set up by Act of Parliament and controls only one port. However, as far as Melbourne is concerned, the activities are divided between the Marine Board and the Melbourne Harbor Trust.

Mr. McAnaney: You haven't caught up with me yet. There is Geelong, too.

Mr. RYAN: I passed the honourable member years ago. Ministers of Marine about that time were confused, and this statement by the late Mr. Tapping had reference to square pegs in round holes:

When I first entered this House in 1946 I asked the then Minister of Works, the Hon. Sir Malcolm McIntosh, why Mr. C. B. Anderson had been appointed a commissioner. He had just retired as Railways Commissioner. I was told it had always been the Government's policy to appoint men who were considered most suited to fill such positions. Mr. Anderson, Sir Malcolm added, was appointed because of his special ability as an administrator and because of his expert knowledge of the handling of goods and transport, combined with his admirable personal qualities. I subscribe to most of that. However, railway administration has no relationship to Harbors Board administration. We should do everything possible to have experts appointed to this board, as is done in the other States.

He went on to cite the provisions of the Victorian Act. Although Mr. Tapping would not have been regarded as a militant man, he was admired for the way he expressed his opinions, and he was outspoken about the need for a change in the set-up and administration of the board.

Mr. Hughes: His opinion was highly respected.

Mr. RYAN: Yes, not because some of the activities of the Harbors Board were carried out in his district, but because he believed that the administrative powers should have been vested in the same way as applied in other departments. On October 11, 1960, when I

had been a member for a little more than 12 months, I again raised the matter in the House and said:

Under "Harbors Board" there is a line for £500 for the Chairman of the board and £400 each for two commissioners. The composition of the board has been referred to frequently in Parliament, and until such time as it is altered it will continue to be raised. At present there are many rumours as to the future composition of the board. Representations have been made to the Minister on this topic.

The General Manager is to retire within 12 months, so that will mean a vacancy on the board. In the past the Minister has promised to favourably consider the employee's requests for representation on the board and for the numerical strength of the board to be increased. An enormous programme confronts this Government instrumentality which, I believe, is the only body with a 50-year plan. Obviously the present board members will not see the completion of that plan. There should be sufficient members on the board to enable a quorum to be formed at all times. With its present composition of two business men and the General Manager, at times it is difficult to get a quorum. With increased membership the businessmen would be able to attend to other matters and the board would be able to continue operating.

I shall not read the reply given by the Minister, but he told me at that time that he would seek further information regarding the formation of the board. I am glad that my persistence about the matter has resulted in what many people desire, namely that the board be under the control of a Minister directly responsible to Parliament. I do not think anyone can criticize that. I again raised the matter and on October 4, 1961, as reported at page 1058 of *Hansard*, I was given the following reply:

As regards the board's efficiency, I believe that the new General Manager has settled well into his position. He is an able administrator and a first-class engineer, which is the basis of his appointment to the Harbors Board. He has won the confidence of the other members of his staff and of the board. I, too, hold him in high regard for the capacity he has already displayed. I am satisfied that any economies effected by this arrangement will not affect the efficiency of the board. I am of the opinion that perhaps there was a little too much top weight on the board previously, which this re-organization will overcome if that was the case.

The Minister of Marine believed that there was too much top weight on the board. He was referring, of course, to the commissioners.

Mr. Hurst: In effect, he wanted to abolish the board, but was not going to do it?

Mr. RYAN: I am referring to the confusion in the mind of the Minister of Marine, as displayed to people who were trying to

overcome the difficulty. The late Mr. Tapping was as persistent as I was, and on July 31, 1962 (page 314 of *Hansard*) he said:

Last week I asked a question relating to the Harbors Board commissioners. I hasten to assure the Minister of Marine that the reply he gave me was most satisfactory, as he said that it would be wrong to consider this matter before the tenure of the present commissioners' term of office had expired, but I reiterate some statements I have previously made in this House. I say now, with even more force, that a Harbors Board comprising three commissioners is not large enough because of the magnitude of the work contemplated by the State. Previously, I referred to the Melbourne Harbor Trust which comprises seven members. A most pleasing aspect of the trust in Victoria is that it includes one representative of the shipping interests and one of the Waterside Workers' Federation.

I interjected, "And he was the board's Vice-Chairman." Mr. Tapping went on to say (and this again refers to square pegs in round holes):

I do not in any way reflect on the present members of the board, but occasionally some must go overseas on business or to increase their knowledge on certain aspects. Yesterday, Mr. Verco, a member of the board, returned to South Australia from overseas after some months' absence. No doubt Mr. Verco absorbed much worthwhile knowledge from which will derive benefit, but my point—and I was concerned about this in 1946—relates particularly to the time when it is necessary to change the personnel of the board. The late Mr. C. B. Anderson, who was the Railways Commissioner, retired at the age of 65 years and was thereupon immediately appointed by this Government to the South Australian Harbors Board. That was my first objection. I believe it is necessary to apply the old axiom "horses for courses". Mr. Anderson was an excellent officer in the Railways Department, but he was not necessarily the man for the Harbors Board position because that work requires special training. The question of economics is involved. That is why I advocate that a man from a shipping company or a representative of the Waterside Workers with first-hand knowledge would contribute to the common pool of thought that could not be obtained from three men lacking that knowledge.

Later in that speech he said:

When Mr. Verco was overseas, Executive Council appointed Sir William Bishop as acting commissioner. Sir William has a record unequalled in the State for his knowledge of finance, but I do not think he has the desirable knowledge of marine matters. We should be consistent and appoint men with first-hand knowledge, whether shipowners, shipping company employees, or waterside workers.

That was not my opinion but the opinion of my late colleague, Mr. Tapping, who was equally as outspoken as I on this matter and who raised it every time he had the opportunity.

Mr. Hughes: He was very firm in his opinion that they were not serving a useful purpose.

Mr. RYAN: I have mentioned the funds used by the board and the powers it exercised. I emphasize that businessmen who devote a couple of hours a fortnight to this work administer one of the most important departments of this State. They should at least have had the opportunity to administer it without being pushed around as they have been.

Mr. Quirke: How many members of successful boards have a close knowledge of the businesses they control?

Mr. RYAN: In most cases, I think the people who appoint members to boards appoint people who have this knowledge.

Mr. Quirke: I could name highly successful boards the members of which would not know a baling hook from a truck.

Mr. RYAN: That is not necessarily so. If this is the attitude of members opposite, why are not all Government departments under the control of boards? When he was Minister of Lands, the member for Burra would have objected strenuously if the Lands Department had been administered by a board of businessmen, and that applies to every member opposite who was a member of the previous Cabinet. If members opposite use this argument, why were not the Engineering and Water Supply and Education Departments placed under the administrative control of businessmen on a part-time basis? The Opposition would revolt if that were suggested, and I would not want to be a member of a Government that suggested it.

Mr. Quirke: What knowledge would the Minister necessarily have of it?

Mr. RYAN: The Minister is advised by people considered to be experts.

Mr. Quirke: All these advisers are there now.

Mr. RYAN: They are not advisers, and that is why I object to the set-up of the board. If it acted in an advisory capacity to the Minister, I would not have objected as strongly as I have over the years, but the board has been not an advisory but an administrative board, with powers greatly exceeding those of the Minister, who has been only a rubber stamp.

Mr. Quirke: The board has done exceedingly well.

Mr. RYAN: Night after night members of the Opposition have been arguing about definitions of words. Last night we saw a spectacle in relation to the definition of "he" and "she".

The SPEAKER: Order! We are not going to have a repetition of last night.

Mr. RYAN: Nobody disputes what is said by the Auditor-General, who is considered to be an expert on many matters. I did not say that there was completely administrative control, but in his last report the Auditor-General said:

The South Australian Harbours Board has the control and management of all harbours in the State and of navigation therein, and of all harbour works which are not private property; also of all navigation lights, buoys and other sea marks which are not vested in the Commonwealth. Subject to Ministerial control in certain cases, the board is responsible for the construction, improvement, maintenance and repair of harbour works within its jurisdiction, and for the deepening of channels.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: Read out the part about the rubber stamp!

Mr. RYAN: The Auditor-General says that the Minister has limited control. The member for Alexandra is keen on having the correct interpretation of words: the Act provides that the Minister may do certain things on the recommendation of the board, and "may" cannot be interpreted as "shall". In other words, the power of the Minister is negated by the board. If the board does not agree with something submitted to it, how can the Minister approve it?

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: That word is used in many Acts of Parliament.

Mr. RYAN: The honourable member would be the first to admit that "may" did not mean "shall". The member for Flinders went to great lengths to mention the various sections where the Minister had complete control. One section provides that the Minister on the recommendation of the board may appoint a secretary.

Mr. Quirke: And he may not!

Mr. RYAN: If the board does not make a recommendation to the Minister, he has no say.

Mr. Quirke: If it makes a recommendation, he does not have to act on it.

Mr. RYAN: I cannot hear that remark. If members opposite mumble because they do not want me to hear, that is not my concern. My support of this Bill is definite: I do not speak with tongue in cheek as do many

members opposite who wanted things done when they were in power but did not do anything about it, yet when others want to do these things they object.

Mr. Millhouse: Where do you stand on this matter?

Mr. RYAN: Don't tell me dear little Robin Redbreast has finally awoken!

The SPEAKER: Order! Does the member for Mitcham take offence at the statement made about the honourable member?

Mr. Millhouse: No, Sir.

Mr. RYAN: What I am saying is bringing out members opposite just as rabbits come from the burrow! I am looking for the provisions mentioned by the honourable member indicating that the Minister has complete control over the board, but I cannot find them; there is no such authority in the Act.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: You probably have the wrong Act.

Mr. RYAN: I know it is extremely hard to drive anything home in the mind of the member for Alexandra; he finds it hard to understand anything if he knows it comes from the Government, but he regards anything as definitely right if it comes from the Opposition. The member for Flinders said last week:

I can see no just reason for, or any advantage to be gained from, changing the structure of the administration of the activity in this way.

He was not referring to the advisory capacity of the board, but its administrative power.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: There was no reason given.

Mr. RYAN: Only the implementation of Government policy, and that is not a reason! The attitude of the Opposition seems to be, "You do not elect Governments for the implementation of Government policy; such implementation is the last thing you want; you only elect Governments for fun." The administration of the previous Government undoubtedly embarrassed everybody.

Mr. McAnaney: Was this in the policy speech, or the Australian Labor Party platform?

Mr. RYAN: Both. As a matter of fact, we are being criticized for doing what the people elected us to do.

Mr. Hughes: And we are criticized for not doing it.

Mr. RYAN: We are criticized for, allegedly, spending money like drunken sailors. The implementation of our policy has been likened to putting poison in the hands of children.

Unfortunately, I cannot quote the member for Alexandra because he has not spoken on this Bill. I cannot criticize his opposition to the Bill.

Mr. Clark: I understand he will support it.

Mr. RYAN: If he did, it would be the greatest wonder of this century because he never supports anything introduced by the Labor Government. I do not think that all my eloquence and persuasive powers could ever change the mind of the member for Alexandra and so cause him to support a measure brought down by a Labor Government; I am not Mandrake. This Bill is necessary to alter the system that has existed over the years. The member for Flinders went on to say:

Of course, I am aware that it is the policy of the present Government to take this and similar action wherever it can. However, I disagree with that policy and, therefore, I disagree with the Bill.

Opposition members say that no reason has been given for the change in the composition of the board; they say that the only reason they disagree with it is that it is an implementation of Labor Party policy. The member for Flinders went on to say that he believes that important functions should not be in the hands of the board but directly under the control of a Minister who sits in this House. Nobody could agree with that more than I. I will further clarify the matter by quoting from *Hansard* of July 25, 1963:

On several occasions I have raised with the Minister of Marine the matter of increasing the number of the Harbors Board commissioners. The Minister informed me previously that it was inopportune to raise the matter then and that it would be better to discuss it at the expiration of the terms of the present commissioners. These terms vary in accordance with each individual. The first to retire by effluxion of time is Mr. Verco. His term expires on January 7, 1964—within a few months. Can the Minister say whether the Government has considered increasing the number of commissioners or, alternatively—

I was not flat-footed in my suggestion to the Minister; I offered an alternative, as follows: Has the Government considered abolishing the board and replacing it with a director responsible to the Minister?

The Hon. G. G. Pearson in reply said:

The honourable member's statement in regard to the termination of Mr. Verco's appointment is correct.

Even the member for Port Adelaide can be correct sometimes! The report continues:

On further investigation he would find that the Chairman, Mr. Crawford, is due to retire 12 months later. I am not sure of the date for Mr. Meyer.

Mr. Ryan: The same time.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: I have had several discussions on this matter with the Chairman, one as recently as this week, and the honourable member can be assured that it is under active consideration. I have also had conversations with the Public Service Commissioner, and the honourable member's proposal has been considered. The Harbors Board fulfils an important function. It has wide powers within its own jurisdiction, and has many matters to consider, which, in its own authority, it is able to determine.

It was not the Minister but the board itself that was able to determine matters. The Minister continues:

Usually, however, where expenditure is involved, the matter has to go to the Minister, and to Cabinet if necessary, for approval. On the general matter raised by the honourable member the answer is "Yes". The matter is under active consideration at present, and although I do not expect legislation to be introduced this session it could be possible, but I have not had discussions with Cabinet at this point.

This was the Minister in charge who last Thursday said that it was the wrong thing to do.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: What about the other States?

Mr. RYAN: I will give the honourable member the answer about the other States. On October 22, 1963, at page 1182 of *Hansard* I raised the matter again by the following question:

During this session I have drawn the Minister's attention to the fact that one of the commissioners of the Harbors Board is due to retire in February, 1964. I asked the Minister whether the Government was considering altering the constitution of the board by increasing the number of commissioners or, alternatively, whether it was considering abolishing the board and creating an administrative post for a head of department who would be answerable to the Minister. As one of the commissioners will retire soon, the Government must consider now whether the commissioners are to continue in office. Can the Minister give an answer as to the ultimate fate of commissioners of the Harbors Board?

In reply, the Hon. G. G. Pearson (Minister of Marine) said:

True, one member of the board retires in February next. He is Mr. Verco, the latest appointed commissioner on the board, and I have no doubt that, if he is prepared to accept reappointment, he will be reappointed. The other commissioners, Mr. Crawford (Chairman) and Mr. Meyer, are due to retire a year later. I have considered the matter because it has been raised several times and in reply to one or two questions I said that an increase in the number of commissioners and the constitution of the new board would be considered. I have had several discussions with the Chairman. We have not come to a firm conclusion, so I have not yet raised the matter in Cabinet. At

present, the matter is being actively discussed by the Chairman of the board and me. Before any action is taken we shall have reached a conclusion and I shall have obtained the views of the Government on the matter. I am unable to say what will be done, but I know many requests have been made by various sections of the community for representation on the board and this will have some bearing on the ultimate result.

On August 11, 1964, I asked a further question, but as it was a matter of Government policy the Minister asked me to put the question on notice, which I did as follows:

1. Has a decision been made, relative to an increase in the number of commissioners of the South Australian Harbors Board and the constitution of the new board, in accordance with the Minister's statement on October 22, 1963, *vide Hansard*, page 1182?

2. If so, what decision was made?

3. Was Mr. Verco, whose period of office expired in February, 1964, reappointed?

4. If so, for what period?

The Hon. G. G. Pearson said:

The replies are:

1 and 2. No decision has been made to increase the number on the board.

3. Yes.

4. Five years.

We now come to a time when there was a change of Government and in *Hansard* of August 26, 1965, five months after the Labor Party assumed office, the previous Minister, who was so concerned with this proposition, raised the matter with the present Minister of Marine, as follows:

My attention has been drawn to a report in the stop press of the mid-day edition of the *News* which, under the heading "Harbors Board could disband", states:

The South Australian Harbors Board may be disbanded early next year. The Works Minister (Mr. Hutchens) said today the decision on the board's future would not be made until then. For the time being the board would continue to function as it had in the past. It is understood the doubt over the board's future emanates from concern that the structure of South Australian harbors administration may be unwieldy in an age of big fast ships and increasing oversea trade.

As the Harbors Board was constituted early in the history of this State and has performed its function, I think, with great value to the State's development over past years, I am wondering whether it would be timely to abolish it. I do not want to debate this matter, but I draw attention to the services the board has given over the years. I know, too, that the members of the present board (which has just been reconstituted following the retirement of the previous Chairman and Mr. Commissioner Meyer) are extremely estimable and capable gentlemen. Over the years, I had representations made to me not that the board should be contracted in respect

of its functions or its size but that it should be enlarged. I therefore consider that the Minister of Marine may desire to amplify the statement which he is credited with making. Has the Minister any further comment to make on this rather revolutionary proposal at this time?

The Hon. C. D. Hutchens (the present Minister of Marine) said:

I am glad of the question, because it gives me an opportunity to do something that I should like to have done publicly before this. The honourable member for Flinders, as a former Minister, appreciates that when I took office the board consisted of Commissioners Crawford, Meyer and Verco. On the retirement of Messrs. Crawford and Meyer I wrote to them expressing my sincere appreciation of their work. I join with the honourable member in saying that not only did they do a good job as commissioners, but they went far beyond their duties in the interests of South Australia and served well and loyally. On the expiration of the period of service of Mr. Crawford and Mr. Meyer, Mr. Verco, the remaining member, was appointed chairman and Sir William Bishop and Mr. Pounsett (the ex-Public Service Commissioner) were appointed deputy commissioners.

These appointments caused much speculation about why we did not appoint permanent members. The honourable member said that he had representations made to him to enlarge the board. I was not in office long before representations were made to me for the same purpose. The Government was asked to appoint to the board representatives of the shipping companies and of the employees of the Harbours Board. Suggestions were made that the time had arrived when the board should be not a controlling body but an advisory one. It was suggested that the board might be disbanded and become a department under the control of a Minister. These suggestions led me to appoint two deputy commissioners, and, fearful lest I might act in haste and live to regret my action, I appointed the deputy commissioners to report on the representations that had been made to me. Questioned about this, I said that I had not made a final decision and did not expect to make one until early next year. I think that that is wise. The board as constituted is carrying out its duties faithfully and well. The honourable member, in asking the question, said that the board was appointed many years ago. Since then, however, shipping and cargo handling have become more competitive, and we are competing with other parts of the world. I am concerned that something should be done about the constitution of the board and its functioning so that decisions may be made more quickly than they are today, but that matter will have to be determined. I assure the honourable member and the House that no decision has been made at this stage and that the matter will be investigated before a decision is made. I am deeply grateful to Sir William Bishop and Mr. Pounsett for having accepted the positions of deputy commissioner to conduct the investigation.

The statement by the present Minister showed that this was not a hasty decision of the Minister or of the Government. The Government took much time to consider it. Although this question was answered in August, 1965, the Bill has only now been introduced, so that for 15 months the Government has considered the matter, and it was taken to the commissioners for their consideration also.

Mr. Hughes: You can see that more definite action has been taken about it.

Mr. RYAN: True; there has been no disagreement about policy as far as the members or employees of the board are concerned. The only disagreement about this proposition has come from bodies pressing their claim for representation on the board. Pressure has been put on members on this side of the House to prevent this policy being implemented.

Mr. Nankivell: You want waterside workers on the board.

Mr. RYAN: Why should they not be on the board? But they are not the people putting pressure on the Government to refrain from going ahead with this legislation to abolish the board. Knowing these people as I do, they were in perfect agreement that we should at least offer an alternative to our proposition: either increase the board or abolish it altogether.

Mr. Nankivell: They will have more say now than if they just had one representative on the board.

Mr. RYAN: Fancy Tories agreeing to a representative worker being on a board to advise on these matters!

Mr. Hurst: They are embarrassed.

Mr. Quirke: We look embarrassed, don't we?

Mr. Nankivell: You are stonewalling, and holding up the Bill.

Mr. Heaslip: Last night we were told we were stonewalling, and holding things up.

Mr. RYAN: We have been accused of being silent Government members but, when we disillusion the poor old Tories by forthrightly amplifying the policy of the Party by legislation, members opposite say we are holding up the legislation. At least, we can put forward our viewpoint on these matters. This is not legislation that should be held up now: it should have been introduced years ago.

Mr. Nankivell: What's the matter with you; why hold it up now?

Mr. RYAN: Because the Tory Government did not do anything about it. The previous Minister said he would consider it. He thought

the board was hamstrung because of its constitution and something should be done about it. Members opposite say that something should have been done but, when this Government does something, it is definitely wrong in their view.

Mr. Nankivell: The Minister puts forward your policy; why don't you support him?

Mr. RYAN: The Minister is one of the Government Party: that is more than the Opposition members could say when they were in Government. They were only one of a mob, and they know it.

Mr. McAnaney: If you get your trade union representative on this board, he will not let you have any say at all.

Mr. RYAN: The trade union representative on any board or organization will definitely express his viewpoint—not a biased viewpoint on behalf of one section but an honest viewpoint of all concerned, for the welfare of the State.

Mr. Clark: On behalf of the majority.

Mr. RYAN: He believes in the majority viewpoint as being the accepted policy. The Harbors Board for many years comprised three members, and this is a board administering one of the most important departments in this State. I quote from the Auditor-General's report to amplify that statement:

The total funds employed at June 30, 1966, amount to \$44,652,000 (up \$1,922,000 on the previous June) and included Loan funds to the extent of \$43,172,000.

This is big business in anybody's language.

Mr. McAnaney: It must have been a good board to get through all that money!

Mr. RYAN: They have been getting through it so fast that there has been no revenue coming back to the Government. If you want me to quote the Auditor-General's figures further, I can do so. Of course, practically all these funds are Loan funds, which are the prerogative of this Parliament to handle. The objection raised is that they are handed over to private businessmen to administer on behalf of the State. For many years we have had a board of three businessmen, working part time in exercising administrative control over this large department, a quorum of only two being necessary. This is the democratic power vested in this administrative body which could meet with only two members present; it still had the power to act as a board and, if any disagreement arose, the Chairman or the acting Chairman had a casting vote. Two men could

meet and determine the policy of administration of the Harbors Board: that was the quorum.

The Hon. C. D. Hutchens: It meant that one man had the ultimate say in determining policy.

Mr. RYAN: Yes; one man had the say over this important department because, if only two men were needed to hold a board meeting, if there was a disagreement between the two, the Chairman, the acting Chairman or the senior man present had a casting vote; so one man determined policy.

Mr. Hurst: Who would be the more competent man—the Minister or the Chairman of the board?

Mr. RYAN: At the present time the man with the say is the Managing Director of a glad rags shop in Hindley Street, and I understand that the business is not doing too well. When I say that I am not doubting his business ability.

Mr. Hall: That remark does not raise the tone of the debate.

Mr. Quirke: Would the criticism that the honourable member is making of the Harbors Board apply also to the Electricity Trust? What is your policy on the Electricity Trust—to take that over, too? We cannot expect you, of course, to take over more than one trust a year.

Mr. RYAN: You always have to have something up your sleeve for the next occasion, but at least we went to the people and said, "This is what we will do."

Mr. Nankivell: You did not.

Mr. Heaslip: It was not in the policy speech.

Mr. RYAN: The North Terrace wizard!

Mr. McAnaney: You charge people 50c to get your policy speech.

Mr. RYAN: Have you read it?

Mr. McAnaney: Yes.

Mr. RYAN: What is in it?

Mr. McAnaney: Nothing, but it cost the people of South Australia \$100,000 to get a referendum.

The SPEAKER: Please get back to the Bill.

Mr. RYAN: If the member for Stirling cares to study the Government's policy on boards, he will find that, if they are at all necessary, they should be advisory and not administrative. We were elected on that policy, but because it may not have been stated in black and white in the policy speech, we are told that our attitude on this matter does not conform to the Government's policy.

At least this Party has a platform and a policy that it will implement. Today's *News* clearly illustrates how the Holt Liberal Government will latch on to something popular in order to return itself to office. The Liberal Party has no policy except a negative one. Is there any objection to this Bill's intention to take away the board's administrative power and to vest that power in the Minister?

Mr. Shannon: Yes!

Mr. RYAN: Of course, because it is a policy of the Labor Party

Mr. Clark: I fancy you are converting the Opposition.

Mr. RYAN: Although I do not think we shall ever be in Opposition again, at least we, as Opposition members, were constructive and not destructive. We have seen nothing else but this Opposition's destructive attitude since the Labor Government came into office, in respect of each Bill seeking to implement Labor policy.

Mr. McAnaney: What about your switch of policy in regard to road transport?

Mr. RYAN: I like to speak to the Bill, and members of the Opposition would learn something if they followed suit.

Mr. Hughes: Would you say that the whinging interjections made by the member for Albert were made by a disappointed aspirant to membership of the board?

Mr. RYAN: The Opposition, having been defeated at the elections, just cannot take it. Coming back to the functions of the board, for the benefit of the member for Onkaparinga—

Mr. Shannon: I didn't ask you a question; when I wish to know something I shall ask a question of someone with some sense.

Mr. RYAN: That is the reason why members opposite are in Opposition; the people realized their limitations and put them in Opposition. The board comprises three commissioners on whom administrative powers are conferred; two may form a quorum, and one has a casting vote if a disagreement arises. The board used to meet once a week until 1965, when it was decided that it would meet for half a day each fortnight. One would think that, with the expansion of business, the handling of funds amounting to \$45,000,000, and the urgency to make more administrative decisions, it would be necessary for an administrative board to meet more often, but one half day each fortnight was apparently sufficient.

Mr. McAnaney: You're the worst stonewaller we have had this week.

Mr. RYAN: One thing members of our Party do not do is make long-winded speeches.

Mr. McAnaney: What are you running on if it is not wind?

Mr. RYAN: I wish a gale would blow the member for Stirling away. In New South Wales, which, of course, is economically the largest State in the Commonwealth, the Maritime Services Board, comprising seven commissioners, controls only certain ports.

Mr. Shannon: Which ports does it not control?

Mr. RYAN: It controls only certain ports. Many ports in New South Wales are not under the board's control.

Mr. Shannon: Which ports are they?

Mr. RYAN: I do not have the details.

Mr. Hall: You are talking rubbish.

Mr. RYAN: When anything is over the Leader's head, it is rubbish. It is a pity the Leader did not understand an intelligent argument for a change. It is nice to see him here occasionally, though; indeed, a privilege. The Melbourne Harbor Trust controls only the Melbourne harbor itself, including Williamstown, which is inside the bay. Geelong and Portland come under a different control altogether. The trust comprises six commissioners who administer the provisions of the relevant Act. In regard to both New South Wales and Victoria, the Acts stipulate the requirements of the commissioners on each of the authorities. It is not a case of three members being nominated by the Government; the Governor in those States may appoint the commissioners in accordance with the Act; they must be connected with the industry, or otherwise conform to the requirements of the Act, and include primary producers and an employee representative. The Queensland situation is considered to be comparable with that of South Australia; the Act provides that two of the five appointees to the board concerned shall be well versed in matters relating to shipping and to the industry in general in that State. The officers to whom I have referred are appointed according to a certain professional category.

Mr. Nankivell: You want a bigger board now, do you?

Mr. RYAN: The member for Albert must have been asleep. I am pointing out the policy of the board as constituted under the Act in this State. Western Australia, which is considered to be not comparable with South Australia in many respects, has five commissioners controlling the port of Fremantle only. This authority is known as the Fremantle Port Authority. The Act in that State stipulates

that those appointed to that authority shall be representative of certain bodies or organizations or have certain qualifications; it is not left open to the Government or even to the Minister to make recommendations regarding appointments.

Mr. Shannon: Who appoints them?

Mr. RYAN: The Governor, I believe.

Mr. Shannon: I think you are right.

Mr. RYAN: We agree! Political history has been made. It is not often that I can get the member for Onkaparinga to agree with me, because he does not believe in Labor policy and he does not like supporting anyone who amplifies that policy.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Port Adelaide will make political history if he addresses the Chair.

Mr. RYAN: Mr. Speaker, nothing delights me more than to address my remarks to both you and to the Bill under discussion, and I always endeavour to adopt that policy. In Tasmania, nine wardens form the port authority that controls the port of Hobart only, and those wardens must be persons who are engaged in a certain profession or industry or who possess certain qualifications. The Tasmanian Act strictly limits those professions and qualifications.

Launceston, a port which is probably comparable with one of the outports of South Australia, has five wardens who form the port authority of that city. In response to the invitation of members opposite, I have tried to tell them what happens in other States. Members can see that the other States have sufficient qualified people with a great knowledge of relevant matters to enable them to function on a vastly different basis than in this State, where one man can comprise the board in voting strength and in the implementation of policy.

Mr. Nankivell: Why don't you change the representation on the board instead of doing what you are doing?

Mr. RYAN: We offered the alternative. What would the attitude of the member for Albert be if we said we were going to place the Engineering and Water Supply Department under a board with administrative power? The honourable member probably would be the first one to say that was not right, that we were elected as a Government to administer Government policy, and that we were running away from the issue. I believe we would be shirking the issue if we did that. Why have a Minister of Marine—

Mr. Nankivell: That's a good question.

Mr. McAnaney: You have one man running social services now.

Mr. RYAN: According to the honourable member, the person to whom he refers spends money like a drunken sailor.

Mr. Clark: I don't think the member for Stirling said that: I think it was one of his mates.

Mr. RYAN: The employees of the Harbors Board consider themselves (I think justly so) to be public servants. However, the unfortunate aspect is that they do not have the same rights as public servants. Section 62 of the Harbors Act states:

All officers, servants and other persons, whilst employed for the purposes of this Part, shall, subject to any direction by the Minister, be under the sole direction and control of the board.

Section 63 states:

Before any officer or other person appointed under this Part, who is to be entrusted with the custody of money or other property, shall enter upon the duties of his office or employment, the board shall take from him such security as the board deems sufficient for the faithful execution thereof.

Even though such a person is a public servant engaged in a Government department, he has to offer security determined by the board before he can be appointed to a certain position. Under the powers of the Harbors Act, the board itself becomes the employer of the people it engages, and this is very different from the provisions of other Acts affecting other Government departments. Under this Bill these sections are abolished and the employees are to come under the jurisdiction of the Public Service Commissioner.

Surely members of the Opposition would not disagree with that. If these people are employed by the State, they should have the same conditions that apply to other departments of the State. At the present time the revenue of the Harbors Board must be transferred to the Treasurer, whereas other trusts and boards in this State (such as the Housing Trust and the Electricity Trust) do not pay their revenue to the Treasurer, and that is the very reason the Harbors Board is objecting to the provisions of the Act. My own opinion, formed from my active experience of the Harbors Board, is that the board considers that as it determines its own administration it should not have to pay its revenue into the Treasury of this State. I think that has been one of the bug-bears of the board itself. It considers that it is a board, and that as conditions

of employment and other things are determined by the board it should be able to determine what it does with the revenue it receives.

However, that is not the way a Government department works, and, if the Harbors Board is to be a Government department, its expenditure and revenue are matters for the State, just as the administration should belong to the State. I wholeheartedly support the Bill and hope that it will receive the sincere consideration that it deserves. If the Minister is to be criticized regarding administration, he should be given responsibility for the control of the department and be able to obtain reports when questions are raised by members.

On many occasions I asked the former Minister of Marine for information regarding certain activities of the board that were the subject of world-wide discussion. Several times he said he thought the board would supply the information but the board refused to make it available even though it had been requested by a member of Parliament. If we, as the Parliamentary representatives of the people, are to make funds available to authorities, we should have some control over their activities. One of the essentials of the Bill is that the Minister shall be answerable to the people, through Parliament, and that is the method by which the activities of this department should be carried out.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga): Never was so little said at such great length. The member for Port Adelaide said that the proposals contained in the Bill were included in the Government's policy speech, but he also said that the Minister was considering, during the last 15 months, whether to abolish the Harbors Board. I hope the Minister is not being embarrassed too much by his supporters. They complained that the board was virtually a one-man authority, because when one member was absent the other two members formed a quorum and the chairman was able to determine the matter by a casting vote. Does the member for Port Adelaide know that his Government intends to have one-man rule, this time by the Minister?

Mr. Ryan: It will be under the control of the Minister.

Mr. SHANNON: I want to take the member for Port Adelaide back to his own argument, because he complained about one-man rule and then sought to justify it.

Mr. Ryan: We want a full-time administrator, not a two hours a week man.

Mr. Nankivell: The General Manager of the board works more than two hours a week.

Mr. SHANNON: The General Manager is a full-time officer.

Mr. Ryan: The members of the board are not. How often do they meet?

Mr. SHANNON: I suggest that the whole of the member for Port Adelaide's speech was a reiteration of his policy when he was a member of the Opposition. I have often heard him stating what I thought was his policy when he spoke of increasing the number of members of the board. He did not know all the answers to the questions I put to him.

Mr. Ryan: Do you?

Mr. SHANNON: I have a few more answers than the member for Port Adelaide, although he is the marine expert. I think I know a little more about the position in New South Wales than he does.

Mr. Ryan: I am more concerned about South Australia.

Mr. SHANNON: The honourable member is free in giving advice regarding what is happening in the other States but he has not cited one harbour control administration that operates on a similar basis to that proposed in the Bill. I would not complain if people went to other States to check their funny ideas. As a rule, that is a sensible practice, especially when consideration is being given to making an alteration as vital as this alteration to a system that has operated almost since South Australia has been a State.

Mr. Ryan: That does not show that it is correct.

Mr. SHANNON: The member for Port Adelaide was not able to cite one similar set-up. If that is the kind of support he is giving his Minister for the policy now being pursued, I have sympathy for the Minister and suggest that he put up other speakers to try to improve the case. The Maritime Services Board in New South Wales has a big job, because it controls all ports in New South Wales, not only the port of Sydney. It has an admirable organization. The numbers on that board that the member for Port Adelaide gave were correct, but the board has advisory committees in the major ports and the committees in Newcastle and Port Kembla comprise eight members and nine members respectively. The volume of shipping in New South Wales could not be dealt with by a one-man authority.

South Australia has a big coastline, with many ports. We have put them all under con-

authority and I am the first to admit that a reconstitution of the board would not be an inept approach to the problem of administering our waterfront, which is a big undertaking. Our ports extend as far west as Thevenard on the edge of the Great Australian Bight, back to Wallaroo and Port Pirie in Spencer Gulf, Port Augusta (although that is not so important now), Port Lincoln, Port Adelaide, Giles Point (which will be important some day) and Ardrossan. If the gravamen of the charge made by the member for Port Adelaide is that the chairman of our board, by his casting vote, is able to determine matters being considered by the board, surely he would have had discussions with officers conducting similar undertakings in Western Australia and New South Wales.

Mr. Ryan: They are full-time officers.

Mr. SHANNON: I had better correct the honourable member again. The honourable member has his facts only half correct. The New South Wales Maritime Services Board has three full-time and four part-time commissioners.

Mr. Ryan: I said some were full-time.

Mr. SHANNON: At Portland, where about \$20,000,000 has been spent on development, only three commissioners administer the port. As the member for Port Adelaide has said, each port in Victoria has its own administrative authority. The Portland Harbor Trust has powers as wide as those of the South Australian Harbors Board: in fact, it has a power that I do not like to see any board have—the power to resume possession at any time, without payment of compensation, of any land required for the ingress, egress and regress to and from the shore. However, I have no doubt that there are times when a board should have some authority to bring about development.

The Harbors Board has done a very good job. As the Minister knows, I have had the pleasure of hearing the General Manager and members of the board give evidence before the Public Works Committee on projects for the further development of the harbours of this State. I should like to say one or two kind words in contrast to the derogatory statements made by the member for Port Adelaide, which I did not think were in good taste. When Mr. Sidney Crawford was Chairman, he took an active interest in the board's affairs, and it was his drive that brought forward for consideration by the committee a proposal to improve

the upper reaches of the Port River. One day this will be one of the greatest tourist attractions of this State.

Mr. Nankivell: It will be a valuable asset.

Mr. SHANNON: Yes, and it must come. Luckily, it will not be an expensive exercise. Although it will cost a fair sum to initiate, the money will be returned fairly quickly, and this area will become a permanent drawcard for people from other States and provide facilities for our own people to engage in water sports. The Gold Coast of Queensland has been such a popular tourist attraction that I suppose the money spent there has been repaid many times over. There is nothing so satisfactory to a Government as tourist traffic, as it does not cost the State very much and tourists always leave behind money that is useful to the State's economy. Everybody gets a share of it.

Mr. Sidney Crawford and the late Mr. Cartledge were the driving force behind this development scheme. I have the greatest admiration for the assiduity of the Minister of Marine, who always attends to his work, but he has to administer the Engineering and Water Supply Department as well as an undertaking involving the whole coastline of South Australia. To load these two big undertakings on to one Minister and ask him to make important decisions will be asking him to do something beyond the capacity of any man. I should like to have the opinion of other people. The Minister does not have to sit on the sidelines in relation to harbours any more than he has to take the advice of the Director and Engineer-in-Chief. If it is true that he took 12 months to decide whether to abolish the board, I am disappointed that he did not take the other line, which would have been in keeping with the practice in other places, of increasing the size of the board and choosing its members from people who have some special knowledge.

The Minister should not forget that various Governments have appointed to boards people from commerce, trade and sometimes the Public Service. An outstanding example of this was the case of Mr. Les Hunkin, who went from the position of Public Service Commissioner to that of Chairman of the Forestry Board, and has done remarkably well. While Public Service Commissioner, he did not know any more about forestry than Mr. Clem Pounsett knew about harbours. I know, however, that both are very able men. It is not essential that every person appointed to these boards

must be an expert. In the Eastern States there is a wide range of people on such boards. At Port Kembla, for instance, nine people (a fair cross-section) advise the seven people who control. That is a line of thought the Government should consider.

Unfortunately, our coastline is unsuitable for deep-water ports, and the construction of such ports is costly. At present, we are spending about \$6,000,000 in taking another 3ft. out of the old Port River. The member for Port Pirie knows that the deepening of the 8½ miles of entrance channel to the Port Pirie harbour is another very expensive project. Fortunately, there is very little silting in that channel. Already, much bigger ships can tie up at the Port Pirie wharves; it would have been short-sighted not to have carried out such a project. The same problem exists at nearly every other port, particularly Port Lincoln and Thevenard: Port Stanvac is our only deep-water port, but we have no shelter there.

Mr. McKee: You could lose shipping by failing to deepen the harbours.

Mr. SHANNON: Yes. Of course, the current trend is for containerization of all types of commodity, and that trend will certainly continue. Our harbours will be of a subsidiary nature until we establish a port equipped for container movement. Until then, we will have to rail, or send by coastal steamer, our goods to the Eastern States. In view of the trend towards containerization and the use of larger ships, I am convinced that the problems that will confront the Harbors Board will require a very intelligent approach: I do not envy those who will have to make the decisions. If I were the Minister, I would have been cautious about introducing this Bill. However, I realize that the introduction of this Bill is a Government decision and not that of the Minister alone. I believe the Government would be wise not to rush in with this legislation but to consider strengthening the board. Sir William Bishop and Mr. Pounsett are very able, but neither is young; Mr. Verco, the youngest, is in charge of the firm of Miller Anderson's. However, such a connection is not unusual: the man in charge of the West End brewery was chosen to be on the Royal Adelaide Hospital Board because we wanted somebody with a fresh approach to the board's problems and we chose one of the keenest business brains available. Unfortunately, he could not put up with the petty-fogging business, and he resigned.

The Harbors Board's problems will multiply in the next few years and more assistance will be required. I am not suggesting that the Government is unwise (that is the last thing I would say about the Minister): what is necessary is a body of people who will go into every aspect of a problem. My experience as Chairman of the Public Works Standing Committee tells me that the problems can best be solved by a group of people. The member for Port Adelaide is a valued member of that Committee. I know his policy, and I am sure he must be disappointed that he is not getting the bigger board that he has advocated ever since he has been a member of Parliament. Unfortunately, he did not get his way. I oppose the Bill because it is unwise.

Mr. HALL (Leader of the Opposition): This is obviously a simple matter between the Government and the Opposition, and there is a fundamental difference in thinking concerning the management of South Australian ports. The case for the Opposition was well stated by the member for Flinders who, in his administration of the portfolio he once held, had close contact with this subject. Consequently he brings a fund of knowledge on it. Undoubtedly, we are facing Labor policy and you, Mr. Acting Speaker, in your capacity as member for Port Adelaide, demonstrated that the main reason for this fundamental change is that it is Government policy.

Mr. McKee: That's a fair enough reason.

Mr. HALL: The reason is not the inability of the board to cope with the problems. Private members sitting on the board can bring new ideas that public servants may not be able to bring to this task. Is Government policy sufficient justification to disturb one of the most successful operations carried out in South Australia under the administration of the Harbors Board? I believe the Minister was embarrassed by the support he received from the member for Port Adelaide, one of the left-wing supporters of the Government, who quickly outlined the basis for his political thoughts on this matter.

Mr. McKee: He's a left-winger!

Mr. HALL: Yes, a left-wing member of the Government who quickly made known his views on private enterprise. He dislikes private industry and makes no bones about it, taking pains to criticize one member of the board by making derogatory remarks about his private occupation. These remarks could have been left out of the debate, but they indicated the honourable member's attitude to private enterprise. Perhaps one reason why

private enterprise has been doing so badly in this State recently is the attitude demonstrated tonight and the belief that it is wrong. Part-time boards have been criticized as not being successful in carrying out management of large enterprises, but this attitude flies in the face of the practice throughout private enterprise in Australia and throughout the world.

Mr. McKee: The Harbors Board is not private enterprise.

Mr. HALL: You, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, criticized the board because it was managed by people involved in private enterprise. Does the member for Port Pirie deny that? Do we say that the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited, the Australian Mutual Provident Society, stock firms and the multitude of successful enterprises in Australia could not be run without the full-time boards? This reasoning is not consistent with the facts of management in private industry, the most efficient sector of our industrial life. I thought you, Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker, as member for Port Adelaide, would support your Minister.

In support of a case to retain the board I obtained information on Australian ports and on the authorities that administer them. I found, Mr. Acting Speaker, that you outlined, at some length, the same details; at enough length to drive most of your supporters from the Chamber. You, Sir, took great pains to outline the details of the administration of ports in Australia and, by doing so, I thought you did a great disservice to your Minister, because in every instance the controlling body to which you referred was a board and not a Minister. I shall not repeat what you said because you used the main ports of Australia—for what reason I could not understand. You did not refer to oversea administration, but there are over 300 ports in Britain, where under the provisions of the Harbors Act, 1964, the National Ports Council was set up as a statutory body. The functions of the council are primarily advisory, and the executive powers needed to enforce its recommendation are vested in the Minister of Transport. In Great Britain there has been a Socialist Government in power since 1964, yet the National Ports Council, as a statutory body, still existed then. Other ports in Great Britain are controlled by public trusts on which are represented users of the ports, such as shippers, importers, and shipping companies, and other bodies such as local authorities. Examples are London (controlled by the Port of London Authority), Liverpool (Mersey Docks and Harbour Board), and Belfast (Belfast Harbour Commissioners). Are

we to disregard a practice followed by one of the greatest trading nations in the world? Are we to disregard a practice carried on by other States of Australia? The only reason why we do disregard these practices, apparently, is that it is Labor policy: no other justification has been presented to the House, or will be, because there is none.

Mr. Quirke: Nor can be.

Mr. HALL: No, it is not available. It is interesting to note that in 1952 a report on the turn-round of ships in Australian ports was presented by Mr. (now Sir) Henry Basten. In an appendix, and speaking about Port Adelaide, he said:

It is unnecessary, therefore, for me to give more than the briefest summary of my impressions of the port. They are (a) the port has great promise because it is endowed with ample room in which to develop; (b) The South Australian Harbors Board has well performed its duty as the planning authority for the port and sound development seems assured.

We are aware of many developments since 1952, and the port has fulfilled the promise of that report. It is significant that the reference to the able administration of the board and its ability to plan and develop has to be ignored, because we are ignoring the accomplishments of the board. New developments have occurred in the last few years in harbours administration; new facilities of great importance to the economic life of the State have been established, such as Port Stanvac, the development of gypsum loading works on Kangaroo Island, and many important installations for bulk handling of grain in the various ports of the State. These are only a few of the important matters that have originated from the thoughts of members of the board, but they have contributed to the development of this State. Can the Minister or his supporter point to any aspect of shipping around our coast that has not been developed?

Great changes are imminent throughout the ports of the world. Undoubtedly, the development of bulk carriers will have a significant effect on the depths of water that are and must be available at bulk handling installations. We know that containerization will cause tremendous changes throughout the world. We fear that, in the short term, Port Adelaide will probably become a feeder port for containerization to the three main shipping ports in Australia. What does this mean to this State? It means that we need men of vision to advise and administer in this sphere, with these great changes imminent. Individuals with a close contact with private business

will have an advantage over men employed solely as Government servants. In saying that, I do not cast any slur on the very fine administration we have in our Public Service, but this is a matter of common sense and is directly opposite to the view that part-time boards are harmful to administration. In fact, they can be an advantage because, as the members of such boards work part-time and are involved in many other activities, they have a much wider view of the problems and policies with which they are dealing. So it is an advantage that the men at the top in management should have as wide an experience as possible.

In view of what has been said by the member for Port Adelaide, we can foresee the advent of further legislation, if this Bill passes, attacking the autonomy of such institutions as the Electricity Trust of South Australia. There is no reason why the management of that body should not go the same way. As I said at the beginning, this illustrates the simple and fundamental difference between the Opposition and the Government: we believe in private enterprise. We make no bones about it or offer any excuses or apologies for that belief. We believe in encouraging private enterprise because we know it is the producing segment of our economy. Men involved in a wide range of activities will bring to this job of administering the Harbors Board new ideas and motives that probably will not be available to people involved full-time in one vocation. We strongly resist the change mooted, disregarding almost every other body that has been mentioned in the debate this evening, where men of international experience are to be replaced because of Labor policy. I oppose this attack on this most successful institution, which has given long service to the State.

Mr. McANANEY (Stirling): I support what members of the Opposition have said about this Bill. The present Harbors Board can be of immense value. Sometimes the value of such a board is lessened if its personnel remains in office for too long. It often happens that people remain on boards for too long. I have had some experience of sitting on boards and dealing with people in close contact with a particular industry. It is an advantage to have people with a wide experience of administration, with new ideas in accountancy and ways of doing things. People doing the same job all the time are not usually as receptive of new ideas as they should be.

It is emphasized in the second reading explanation that the board has terrific power to do many things. It can fix charges, but only recently the regulations fixing them came before Parliament; they are under the control of Parliament to a great extent. Any capital expenditure above a certain amount contemplated by the Harbors Board has to go before the Public Works Committee. For instance, the present Government was not too keen on the idea of establishing an installation at Giles Point, and it postponed its decision on that. Up to a point, the board has not the independence that the Government has tried to make out it has: it is under the control of Parliament. As the member for Port Adelaide says, it does not matter whether a man is experienced in controlling a rag trade or any other industry. Management is the scarcest commodity in Australia today. It is a matter of years of training and experience; there is always a limited amount of top quality management. For instance, the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited has called in a group of management consultants from America to advise it on new ideas. A board that can introduce fresh ideas is of tremendous value. For that reason, I oppose the setting up of Ministerial control.

It has been suggested that perhaps the present set-up with only three members results in one-man decisions being taken and that if the membership was increased to five it would not happen. That poses a problem that can be eliminated. If a Minister is to be in charge of this department, there must be another Minister. Already the Premier complains that he has more departments to look after than he can really manage. It will be necessary to have another Minister to do the job efficiently. Yet I do not see how he can, because he is not in touch with the latest business procedure and administration as the leaders of business are. A change of personnel on a board is a good thing. People should not sit on a district council for more than about 10 years, and the chairman of a council should not occupy that position for a very long period. A change of ideas in any organization is necessary, but can be achieved only in a board of this nature, rather than in a department under a Minister's control. An independent board is the only means of establishing a progressive administration. That has been proved in ports throughout the world which, in nearly every case, are under the control of a trust. I oppose the Bill.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra): The second reading explanation of this measure occupies little

more than one page of *Hansard* and contains no real reason for the Bill's introduction. The only Government spokesman apart from the Minister, namely, the member for Port Adelaide (Mr. Ryan), gave no reason why this legislation should be placed on the Statute Book, the Harbors Board abolished, and the Minister placed in control. The Bill has been introduced in a perfunctory way that does not give any credit to the idea behind it. Indeed, the manner of its introduction is almost tantamount to saying that no credit is attachable to the measure, and I believe that to be the correct situation. The Minister stated:

The Minister of Transport is charged with the co-ordination of the transport system while such matters as the future operation of containers have become important In any event in the eyes of the public it is the Government which is finally responsible and it is considered undesirable that it be placed in the position of having to work through and seeking the approval of a board.

That is the only reference to the reason for the introduction of this measure being one of Labor policy. If that is Labor's policy, why is it peculiar to South Australia?

Mr. Coumbe: Are you suggesting that Labor's policy is peculiar?

Mr. QUIRKE: The Labor Government in office in Queensland for years made no change in the set-up; the Labor Government in power in Tasmania for years has never found it expedient to change its policy in this regard; and a Labor Government in office for years in New South Wales never changed the set-up. To say that the Bill is introduced because of Government policy is utterly wrong. This Bill cannot and will not result in a better system. Therefore, if the authority will not function better than it has in the past, no warrant exists whatever for changing the present set-up. The board represents a business of considerable magnitude.

I agree with one feature of the speech made by the member for Port Adelaide in that the Harbors Board, numerically, is not sufficiently strong. I would agree with the idea to establish two sections of the board (as applies elsewhere), one controlling, say, Port Adelaide and the other, say, Port Pirie and Port Augusta. That may assist the board's functioning, but in no way will the efficiency of our ports be improved by abolishing the board and placing the Minister in control. The General Manager of the board and officers, excluding the three commissioners, carry out their duties effectively and well; indeed, the history of the organization shows

that it has worked smoothly. I do not think the Harbors Board can be reproached in any way for failure to do its duty. The member for Port Adelaide certainly did not indicate in any one particular where the board had failed.

On the contrary, piles of evidence can be brought to bear to show that the board has enhanced the reputation of South Australian ports and that, with its far-sightedness in relation to the ultimate improvement at Port Adelaide, we have every reason to be proud of the people who originated the idea of increasing the efficiency of the port and beautifying the Port Adelaide area generally. No evidence has been given to the House that it is necessary to alter the existing system. I suggest, if an alteration should be made, that the board should be expanded, which might assist in regard to our far-flung ports. It is remarkable to think how effective the control of these ports by one board has been, but the board's administration might be facilitated if it were expanded. It may become even more effective, although I suppose no-one reaches the peak of perfection. We can nearly always improve upon something. Probably in this case we could improve by expanding the board, but we will not improve the administration one bit by just placing the board under the control of a Minister. In fact, we would probably deadlock it. It has never been found necessary or expedient to make this move in any other State, yet out of the blue, because it is Labor Party policy, we are going to do it here.

Mr. Hall: It is a restricted outlook.

Mr. QUIRKE: Yes, and it is evidently a policy that is restricted to South Australia.

Mr. Ryan: Why won't the other States follow if we do it?

Mr. QUIRKE: I do not think the other States would be silly enough to do that. Why should they follow? They are completely efficient in themselves, and they would not be prepared to break down efficiency, which is what this Government is doing.

Mr. Ryan: Aren't other Government departments efficient?

Mr. QUIRKE: Yes, they are; I never said they were not.

Mr. Ryan: You implied they would need a board to make them efficient.

Mr. QUIRKE: At least this Bill is not going to make the South Australian harbours authority more efficient.

Mr. Curren: How do you know?

Mr. QUIRKE: I do know, and I am giving some reasons why this change should not be made. The member for Port Adelaide, although he spoke for two hours, did not give one word of reason why this policy should be implemented.

Mr. Ryan: And you are not saying why it should not be.

Mr. QUIRKE: I am saying that it will be detrimental. My idea is opposed to the idea of the member for Port Adelaide. Although the Government has the numbers to carry the Bill through this House, it will be carried not on the power of the debate of the member for Port Adelaide but because it is Party policy, and Party policy peculiar to South Australia. That, to my way of thinking, is not sufficient reason for making this change. There is no merit in it, and where there is no merit there is no necessity to make any change.

Is this policy also to be applied to other organizations, such as the Electricity Trust and the Housing Trust? Are they going to be put under the control of Ministers? Is that Party policy, too? Is the Government going to take over a vast business organization like the Electricity Trust, which is perhaps even greater in its ramifications than the Harbors Board? I do not know what the Government has against the Minister. I have not got as much against him as members of his own Party apparently have, because they want to inflict this on him. The Minister will look like the old picture of Atlas walking along with the world on his shoulders, and there will be no Hercules to give him a spell, unless the member for Port Adelaide wants to fill that role.

Mr. Ryan: The Minister will revel in it.

Mr. QUIRKE: I think I have said enough to indicate that I am opposed to this measure. Before the debate closes I should like at least one Government member to give one good, sound reason why the action that is contemplated in this Bill should be taken, because up to the present that one reason has not been given.

Mr. HURST (Semaphore): I support this measure, for I consider it is necessary for the betterment and the progress of the State. We have been told of the constitution of the present board and the way in which it functions, and we know that there are times when one man determines the policy of the board. I ask members: who is more competent to determine the policy of a Government department than

the Minister who is responsible for the operations of that department? Although the harbours authority has been handed over to a board, it is still a department under the Government.

It has been said that no reason has been given for this proposed change, but in my opinion members of the Opposition themselves have demonstrated why it is necessary to put the board under the control of the Minister. South Australia was for some 30-odd years governed by a Liberal and Country League Government. The member for Port Adelaide often raised with the then Minister of Marine the question of whether consideration would be given to an expansion of the board. Members opposite are now suggesting what should be done, but I say it is quite apparent that during those years the board was not prepared to recommend to the Minister, and the Minister was not prepared to make a decision, that the board should be more representative. This alone, in my opinion, makes it necessary that the man who is responsible to the Parliament should be the man to be put in charge, and I believe he is the most competent man in this case to make decisions on the things for which the Government is responsible.

The Bill, which is quite brief, clearly states what it seeks to do. We on this side of the House make no apologies for the measure and the steps we are taking to try to bring this about. I am pleased to see that the Government in this Bill has taken the necessary measures to ensure that officers and employees of the department will not suffer any hardship or be prejudiced in any way. I feel that this alone will tie a closer bond between the Minister and the officers and employees of the department, and that as a result we will get greater efficiency and a better operation of the department.

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS (Minister of Marine): At the outset, I wish to contradict an impression that I think has been created regarding the board's commissioners. I have nothing but the highest regard for Mr. Meyer and Mr. Crawford and the present commissioners, for they are good South Australians of the highest ability and integrity. The Leader of the Opposition referred to this Government's attitude towards private enterprise. I do not know what brought forth those remarks, because I think it would be acknowledged by every thinking person that every cent spent in Government enterprise

is spent for the sole purpose of providing a benefit and assistance to private enterprise. The member for Burra (Mr. Quirke) complained about the brevity of my second reading explanation, but I am a man of few words, and I thought that was the order of the day. I shall say few words in reply.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: Every word you said meant something.

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: Yes. It did not have to be said three times before it sounded like something, either. There has been mention of one-man rule and the policy of the Party. I challenge anyone to cite, in the second reading explanation or in the policy laid down in the rule book, anything indicating that the abolition of the board is the policy of the Party.

Mr. Nankivell: You are quite right. It is not there.

Mr. Quirke: Why did your members put it forward as your policy?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: I am stating the fact. However, the Government has given much consideration to its attitude about the board and the Bill has been brought forward after long and careful consideration and for the reasons given in the second reading explanation. Those reasons may not be long and drawn out but they are stated distinctly. The abolition of the board is not stated and that is not the reason.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: I shall have another look to make sure.

Mr. Quirke: Members on your side evidently thought it was.

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: It is not stated that it is Party policy. I congratulate the Opposition on having handed its case to the member for Flinders (Hon. G. G. Pearson). I think he did a remarkable job with a poor case. His speech was the only one that dealt strictly with the Bill. I have already replied to his statement that abolition of the board was Party policy. He also referred to my remarks that, although some of the operations of the board were subject to Government approval, the board was its own master in many respects and that for the most part the Minister could act only on the board's recommendation. However, the member for Flinders said that that was tipping the scales the wrong way and he went to great lengths to refer to provisions in the Act. I intend to refer to them, also.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: You did say, as reported at page 2619 of *Hansard*, that it was the Government's policy that harbours should be under the direct control of the Minister.

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: I did say that, but I did not say that it was Party policy. There is a difference between the two.

Mr. Quirke: It was interpreted by a member of your Party that it was.

Mr. Ryan: I said "Government policy".

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: That is what I said.

Mr. Coumbe: You boast in the House that it is Australian Labor Party policy.

Mr. Ryan: I am proud of our policy.

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: When the rabble-rousers cease, I shall continue my remarks. The member for Flinders referred to sections in the Harbours Act and said that the board, with the approval of the Minister, could do certain things. However, he conveniently ignored that the Minister did not have the powers of initiation. As I have said in the second reading explanation, the Government of the day, irrespective of its political colour, is criticized about what happens regarding our harbours, and yet the fact that the Minister has not the powers of initiation is ignored. If the board is not pleased to initiate, then there is no initiation.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: Doesn't the Minister sometimes whisper in their ears?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: In some places that whispering from a Minister can be heard and in other places it is sometimes not heard. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition. When the board was first appointed, commerce and trade were not as well organized as they are today and the purpose of the board was different from the position today. Commerce and trade are now able to make approaches. The board has the right to make decisions or to refrain from making them. The Leader of the Opposition correctly stated that containerization would need careful and speedy handling and a greater degree of co-ordination of our transport than was ever needed previously. Port Adelaide will, at the best, be only a feeder port for containerization. The major ports will be in another State, because South Australia will not be able to provide sufficient cargo at all times.

It has been said that the Minister of Marine will not be able to handle this matter. However, there is no problem in transferring

if that becomes necessary. If the railways and wharves are not going to benefit from containerization, it will be a sad thing for the State. Speedy action will be necessary and we cannot wait for fortnightly meetings in order to get this action.

The Government has been asked whether it is going to take notice of other States. The idea that we should wait for other States is antiquated. This was the first country in the British Commonwealth to introduce the vote for women.

Mr. Quirke: And they have never forgiven you!

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: Every member opposite who spoke in this debate tried to show that a department could not do what the board had done. They have said the Bill is a retrograde step, but I remind them that some departments cover the whole of the State and are under the control of a Minister.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: You interjected, when I was speaking, and I did not deny that.

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: It was not freely admitted.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: I would be silly to deny that, as the Minister knows.

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: I know that the honourable member appreciates that we have some very good departments. The Engineering and Water Supply Department controls the supply of water for the whole State.

Mr. Bockelberg: Except Kimba!

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: That statement is incorrect. That department advises the Minister, and he and the Government can initiate things. However, an administrative department largely pleases itself. We believe

that a Minister should be responsible and that Parliament should have the right to scrutinize the policy of the Government of the day, but this will be denied the people of this State if the Harbors Board is retained.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: This is Government policy?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: Yes, because this Government believes in democracy.

Mr. Quirke: Poor old democracy!

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: If members opposite would not sing in discord I might be able to hear their interjections. We believe that prompt action is necessary to meet the demands of the day, and I hope the House will support the second reading and take the Bill through Committee so that we may get on with the job and advance this State in a democratic way.

The House divided on the second reading:

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

Noes (16).—Messrs. Bockelberg, Brookman, Coumbe, Ferguson, Freebairn, Hall (teller), Heaslip, McAnaney, Millhouse, Nankivell, and Pearson, Sir Thomas Playford, Messrs. Quirke and Shannon, Mrs. Steele, and Mr. Teusner.

Pair.—Aye—Mr. Lawn. No—Mr. Rodda.

Majority of 3 for the Ayes.

Second reading thus carried.

Bill taken through its remaining stages.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 10.56 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, November 10, at 2 p.m.