

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, September 28, 1967

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

ASSENTS TO BILLS

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the following Bills:

Institute of Technology Act Amendment;
Land Tax Act Amendment;
Licensing.

QUESTIONS

DANGEROUS DRUG

Mr. HALL: My question concerns a subject that has been raised previously in this House: lysergic acid diethylamide (L.S.D.), and the possible control of its use. I draw the Premier's attention to the furore that has been raised in New South Wales concerning this drug and the conviction of four people in connection with its use. The Victorian Leader of the Opposition has said that the Victorian Government is not treating the use of drugs seriously enough, although I believe that a new law dealing with this matter will come into force in New South Wales on November 1 that will provide for a maximum fine of \$2,000 and/or a two-year gaol term. Today's *News* contains the following report of an editorial in the *Sydney Daily Mirror*:

Because the amendment to the Drug Act has yet to become law; because the Government, preoccupied with politics instead of people, has been so slow to realize that the drug problem is acute, they could be fined only \$100 each. The outraged magistrate, Mr. Lewer, S.M., described the amount as laughable. "You are unbelievably fortunate that the law has not yet been amended," he said.

The Premier has previously referred to a section in the Police Offences Act as covering this matter. I point out that that section provides for a maximum penalty of three months' imprisonment or \$100 fine. According to the thinking in other States, that penalty is inadequate. Does the Premier intend to expedite the preparation of the report he has promised the House on this matter? In view of the interest in other States and the need for urgency, will he act quickly to amend the South Australian laws to meet the situation?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I have previously assured the Leader that the matter is being examined carefully, and I expect that action will be taken during this session.

GRASSHOPPERS

Mr. CASEY: This morning I heard that there have been large infestations of grasshoppers in the Upper North. As this area is experiencing one of the most serious droughts for many years, it is unusual that there should be an infestation now. I know that the Minister of Agriculture and his department are anxious to control grasshoppers in South Australia because of the problem they present not only in the North but also in other parts of the State. However, I believe the department may be more concerned with the migratory or locust type of grasshopper than with the localized non-migratory type. To assist landholders in the Upper North, where a great many non-migratory grasshoppers breed and do tremendous damage, will the Minister see whether these infestations have been brought to the notice of the department and, if they have not, whether action can be taken now while the hatching is at an early stage?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: The honourable member will recall that, as a result of representations made by the members for Eyre and Ridley and him, last year we made an extensive inroad into the problem of non-migratory grasshoppers, particularly on Eyre Peninsula. Also, experimental work was carried out at Dawson, near Peterborough, in the honourable member's district. However, this work was experimental because last year not as many grasshoppers were evident in the North as were evident on Eyre Peninsula. Last year was the first occasion on which any real active effort had been made to control the non-migratory type of grasshopper. I understand grasshoppers of this type mainly congregate within a 15-mile radius, not moving outside that area to any great extent, whereas the locust or migratory type of grasshopper travels long distances in swarms. A fear exists that this type of grasshopper, too, is building up, particularly in the Far North and in the adjoining parts of Queensland. This problem is being examined by the Department of Primary Industry. I will most certainly carry on with the work commenced last year mainly as a result of the representations of the members to whom I have referred and as a result of my active effort in the matter. I believe the entomologists of the Agriculture Department gained much experience and knowledge from the work they carried out last year. I also point out that the district councils for the areas mentioned, at least on Eyre Peninsula and in the Orroroo district, took a prominent part in assisting the department in the active

campaign which we started last year and which I am anxious to continue this year. I am sorry that the number of grasshoppers in the North has increased so greatly, because we hoped that that would not happen. However, I assure honourable members that an active campaign will be conducted.

Mr. BOCKELBERG: I recently visited the Penong area, where the grasshopper infestation was fairly severe last year. Has the Minister a report on the conditions prevailing at Penong, where I understand a few grasshoppers are hatching?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: I have not yet received a report regarding conditions at Penong, but I will inquire.

WATER SUPPLIES

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: Several weeks ago the Minister of Works said, in reply to a question I asked, that unless bounteous rains fell by the end of this month, replenishing the supply of water in the Warren reservoir, he considered that restrictions would be inevitable in the area served by that reservoir, which area would include the Barossa Valley, areas farther north, and Yorke Peninsula. The Minister will realize, as I do, that such rains have not fallen. Can he say whether the position has been considered further and whether it is intended to impose restrictions in the area concerned? If it is intended to impose restrictions, will he consider sending senior officers of the department to the locality to discuss the matter with market gardeners and to allot water quotas on the spot? I understand that restrictions have not been imposed in these areas since the augmentation of the Warren main in the 1950's and the linking up of the reservoir with the Mannum-Adelaide main. When restrictions were last imposed, Sir Malcolm McIntosh (then Minister of Works) adopted my suggestion and arranged for the Engineer for Water Supply (Mr. Archie Campbell) and the District Engineer (Mr. Ray Harvey) to visit the Barossa Valley and discuss with the market gardeners the nature of the restrictions so that necessary quotas could be allotted on the spot. Those discussions created much goodwill among the market gardeners. I consider that, if restrictions are again necessary, such a visit to the district by senior officers could enable that goodwill to be maintained.

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: I regret that it is necessary to impose restrictions in the areas supplied by the Warren reservoir, and regulations imposing these restrictions were

approved in Executive Council today. Expecting this, I discussed the question of officers visiting the area with the Director and Engineer-in-Chief, and it has been agreed that early next week, when convenient to both parties, officers of the Engineering and Water Supply Department will meet the people in the Barossa Valley area to discuss with them the allocation of water that will be permitted. As the honourable member said, the department acknowledged that, resulting from previous visits, it received much goodwill, and it is confident that it will retain this goodwill by doing everything it can to help local residents by co-operating with them.

The position regarding supply from the Warren reservoir has been kept under close observation for the past few weeks, and it is now clear that unrestricted consumer demand during the coming summer cannot be safely met. The current storage in Warren reservoir is 695,000,000 gallons compared with 1,400,000,000 gallons at this time last year, and our chances of receiving significant natural intake are now considered to be very slight. Natural intakes since the beginning of this calendar year have amounted to only 102,000,000 gallons compared with 1,425,000,000 gallons for the same period last year. Although gravity flow from the Mannum-Adelaide main was commenced on January 21, 1967, and continuous boosting has been in progress since April 6 and intake from this source has now amounted to 959,000,000 gallons, this is not sufficient to ensure a satisfactory residual storage at the end of summer in April 1968.

For the period October to April inclusive we can expect a further intake of 850,000,000 gallons from the Mannum-Adelaide main which will, with current storage, provide a total of 1,545,000,000 gallons less an estimated 133,000,000 gallons for evaporation, making a total of about 1,400,000,000 gallons. Unrestricted consumer demand from October to April has been assessed at 1,260,000,000 gallons and it will be necessary to restrict this by 110,000,000 gallons in order to have a safe residual of about 250,000,000 gallons at the end of April, by which time it is expected that intake from the Mannum-Adelaide main will be sufficient to hold demand in the absence of early natural intake. It is expected that 110,000,000 gallons can be saved by the prohibition of sprinklers for watering of private gardens and the prohibition of all forms of irrigation, except under

and in accordance with permits that will be issued on application to the Regional Engineer, Central Region, Elizabeth. Under permit, consumers will be allocated a monthly quota that will be basically 25 per cent less than normal usage. This degree of restriction has been discussed with representatives of commercial growers, and it is considered that little real hardship will result. Savings will be made by the growers in the use of water, and certain private bores not usually used will be brought into commission by the growers.

Mrs. BYRNE: Much publicity has been given to saving water in this State but, as the Minister realizes, such statements have been published only in the English language. As further benefit may result if publicity is given in other languages, for example, Italian and Greek, will the Minister examine this suggestion if it is considered to have merit?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: Appreciating this valuable suggestion, I will discuss it with the advertising agent. However, if we publish something in foreign languages, we would have to do so in more than the two languages suggested by the honourable member because many new Australians also speak German. Indeed, we might even have to go further than that. However, I will take up the matter with the advertising agent.

Mr. HEASLIP: On August 3, in reply to my question regarding the artesian water supply near Ororoo, in the Pekina area, the Minister of Agriculture said that the maximum natural flow obtained was about 600 gallons an hour but that, with a pump installed, the bore could yield 15,000 gallons an hour. He also said that the economics of using this water were doubtful at that stage, and that he would see whether further information was available. Can the Minister now say whether he has received further information?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: I shall be pleased to take up this matter again.

Mr. NANKIVELL: Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked some weeks ago about the possibility of implementing a suitable water scheme for Narrung, a scheme separate from the proposal outlined in the debate on the Loan Estimates regarding a supply for Narrung and Point McLeay?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: In an interim report, the Director and Engineer-in-Chief has informed me that the preparation of the estimates of cost of the separate water schemes for Narrung and Point McLeay has

entailed considerable investigation but that they are now nearing completion. He expects to be able to submit the department's findings in about two weeks.

Mrs. BYRNE: Can the Minister of Works say what plans the Engineering and Water Supply Department has to improve the water supply in the Modbury, Tea Tree Gully and Yatala Vale areas?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: The department has plans and accordingly, on September 25, Cabinet approved the construction of 9,750ft. of 24in. main for water supply in the Modbury, Tea Tree Gully and Yatala Vale areas. In brief, it is intended to lay 9,750ft. of 24in. main from the Mannum-Adelaide main along Perseverance Road to supply the recently completed Steventon tank, and a new 2,000-gallon tank to be built at Tea Tree Gully. It is also planned that this main will supply a further tank to be built at Yatala Vale in a few years' time.

GAS REPAIRS

Mr. McKEE: Following a letter I had from one of my constituents querying the price charged for repairs made to her gas stove, I tried to obtain information from the Gas Company some time ago but I have not yet received a reply, although I have asked a couple of times that my correspondence be answered. I therefore decided to take up this matter with the Premier this afternoon. My constituent states:

Whilst the man was doing the job I asked if there was a charge for the repairs and he said, "No, only for the new parts that are used."

Although a gasket costing only 10c was supplied, my constituent has been sent an account for \$2.30. Will the Premier therefore ascertain the Gas Company's policy regarding its charges for such repairs?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Yes.

LICENSING COURT

The Hon. T. C. STOTT: Can the Premier say whether a Special Magistrate has been appointed to the Licensing Court to administer the new licensing laws and, if an appointment has been made, who has been appointed?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The Judge of the Licensing Court was appointed by His Excellency the Governor in Executive Council this morning. He is Mr. Johnston, S.M., and the Deputy Chairman of the court will be Mr. Marshall, S.M. A list of Licensing Magistrates, all of whom were previously carrying out this work, has also been approved.

BREATHALYSER

Mr. BROOMHILL: As I had difficulty in understanding clearly a recent press report concerning amendments made by the Legislative Council to the Road Traffic Act Amendment Bill dealing with the breathalyser test, will the Premier clarify the position?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Having seen the report, I regret that some confusion seems to have developed between the reporter concerned and me. The effect of what appeared in today's *Advertiser* is almost the exact opposite of what I intended to say. Indeed, I should think any lawyer reading the report would be somewhat amazed. The test that has been written into the amendment in another place puts a lesser onus on the defendant than did the test previously provided in the measure: there is a lesser onus on the defendant to satisfy the court as to the position than to prove the position to the court. It is a somewhat fine line dividing the two; what has been proposed in another place is in accordance with certain sections of other Acts in South Australia in which some onus is cast on a defendant, but it has never been considered proper to cast the whole onus of proving the case of a defendant at the same standard as is required of the Crown.

SEWERAGE

Mr. QUIRKE: Section 530c of the Local Government Act, which provides for the method of application for sewerage effluent disposal schemes, does not provide for a poll of ratepayers, although a property owner may lodge with the council an objection to a scheme within 21 days of receiving notice from the council of intention to proceed. Members may therefore realize that a negation of freedom can exist in this regard, and I do not think this is a good thing. As the present procedure is giving rise to dissension, will the Minister representing the Minister of Local Government ask his colleague to investigate the provisions of section 530c and bring down a report on whether he considers the section should be amended to provide for a poll of ratepayers if they so desire?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I am sure the Minister of Local Government will be happy to refer this matter to the Local Government Act Revision Committee, and I will try to bring down a report on the matter as soon as possible.

POULTRY

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to the question I asked on September 19 about a poultry farm survey?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: A preliminary summary has been prepared of the department's field studies on poultry farm management conducted in 1965-66. These studies have been essentially a pilot run for the more critical observations to be made in following years. For this reason the 1965-66 results are tentative only and not sufficiently substantial for publication. The 12 owners concerned have been informed of the preliminary results, and their attention has been drawn to the tentative nature of any conclusions that may be drawn from them. The more substantiated results for 1966-67 are now nearly completed and will be available for release by the end of October, 1967. It is important that the results when released to the public can stand up to critical analysis and have application to the price structure existing at the time of release.

Because of this, I have approved that the department withhold general publication of this report until at least the completion of the second year's study. The value of the data and experience that can be obtained from continued studies of this nature are considerable, both to the poultry farmer and officers of my department. I draw the honourable member's attention to the question that he asked and to the reply that was given when this matter was discussed during the Estimates debate. I am sure that, when he has considered that, he will make different statements from those he has made previously.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: Can the Minister of Agriculture yet say whether Government assistance is to be given to the South Australian Poultry Marketing Co-operative?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: No. As this matter was referred to the Treasurer only this week, I have not yet received a reply.

STATE'S FINANCES

Mr. McANANEY: Towards the end of the last financial year the Treasurer transferred from the Budget to Loan Account non-income-producing expenditure of \$2,600,000. Will he obtain a report of what this will cost the State in capital repayments and interest payments over the next 53 years? What would be the capital repayments and interest paid if this money had been made a funded revenue deficit?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I will obtain the information.

HACK SWAMP

Mr. RODDA: People interested in the Hack Swamp area as a wild life reserve have said it is a pity that certain parts of it have not been bulldozed to make small islands. Can the Minister of Lands say what is the extent of water imprisoned in Hack Swamp since the Mosquito Creek has been cut off and water run into the swamp by means of a new drain? As we have had no rain, this is entirely ground water and it appears likely that it could be the start of a permanent water reserve.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will obtain a report and bring it down as soon as possible.

TIMBER STOCKS

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Has the Minister of Forests a reply to my recent question about the build-up of milled timber in the mills of the Woods and Forests Department and about whether sales are keeping pace with new production?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: The Conservator of Forests reports that at present the rate of milling is greater than the sales rate. Similar trends have occurred before in this industry, notably in 1956-57 and in 1960-61. In the present instance, however, the situation is expected to be reversed by the end of the year. I point out that, although at the present rate more milled timber is being produced than is being sold, nevertheless record timber sales are taking place.

BILLIARD SALOONS

Mr. HALL: This morning I was contacted by the proprietor of a billiard saloon who expressed concern about the licensing of billiard saloons. Whereas, previously, other billiard saloon proprietors and he complied with the provisions of the old Licensing Act, at present (and this may well be an interim period according to the Premier's explanation yesterday) anyone can open a billiard saloon without complying with any regulation. The gentleman concerned believes that this could lead to a lowering of standards and that it is an imposition on him and his fellow proprietors because they have had to comply with the previous requirements. If the position is as I have stated, will the Premier ensure that standards are complied with and that the interests of proprietors are safeguarded?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: True, with the repeal of the old Licensing Act, legislation no longer applies in South Australia to control

billiard saloons. There will not be legislation until a revision of the Places of Public Entertainment Act comes before Parliament shortly. Although there will be an interim period during which there is no control, it will be fairly difficult for new billiard saloons to start in that time.

Mr. Hall: I am told one is already under way.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: If it is, the person concerned, in order to get a licence, will have to comply with regulations no less stringent than the previous regulations when the Places of Public Entertainment Act has been revised. Therefore, I do not think there will be any substantial lowering of standards brought about by this small interregnum in the legislation. I have received representations from some people with licences that there should be no licensing of billiard saloons. On the other hand, numbers of others with licences believe that controls should be continued. The Government considers that there should be a continuance of proper control, and that will be provided for in the Places of Public Entertainment Act.

BEEF ROAD

Mr. CASEY: Has the Minister of Lands, representing the Minister of Roads, a reply to my recent question about the possibility of constructing a beef road adjacent to the proposed gas pipeline from Gidgealpa to Adelaide?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: My colleague reports that the Highways Department has not received any official notification from the Natural Gas Pipelines Authority of its proposals relative to the pipeline north-east of Peterborough. Until this information is made available, no comments can be made relative to the justification of the beef road referred to by the honourable member.

BORDERTOWN RAILWAY YARDS

Mr. NANKIVELL: Has the Minister of Social Welfare a reply from the Minister of Transport to my question about proposals for the reconstruction of the Bordertown railway yards?

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: The Minister of Transport states that the position at Bordertown remains unchanged. The work on stage 3 will not be undertaken this financial year.

IRRIGATION

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Yesterday, the Minister of Irrigation said he hoped to introduce legislation providing for an increase in the size of holdings in Government-controlled irrigation settlements. Can he say whether this change of policy will apply to war service land settlement schemes as well as to the longer-established districts?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Yes, the change will affect all areas under the control of the Minister of Irrigation or under the Irrigation Act.

MAINTENANCE PAYMENTS

Mr. McANANEY: I understand that the Minister of Social Welfare has a reply to the question I asked last evening, and I think he has set a fine example by obtaining a reply so quickly.

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: I understand that during last evening's debate on the Estimates the honourable member asked about maintenance collections and payments in this State. The following information has been supplied:

<i>Receipts</i>			
	1964-65	1965-66	1966-67
	\$	\$	\$
In South Australia	972,528	1,038,858	1,136,140
Interstate authorities	39,192	49,820	31,269
Oversea authorities	—	—	—
Total	1,011,720	1,088,678	1,167,409
<i>Payments</i>			
	1964-65	1965-66	1966-67
	\$	\$	\$
In South Australia	943,594	1,032,268	1,089,548
Interstate authorities	51,398	53,101	54,412
Oversea authorities	11,386	14,476	17,425
Total	1,006,378	1,099,845	1,161,385

The collections being made by South Australia for authorities in other States compare favourably with receipts from the other States in pursuance of arrangements that have been made.

GRAIN CHARGES

The Hon. T. C. STOTT: Has the Minister of Social Welfare a reply from the Minister of Transport to the questions I have asked about the waiving of the charge of 83c a ton made by the Railways Department for the taking from silos erected on railway property of bulk grain used to feed starving stock?

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: I shall refer the matter to the Minister of Transport and obtain a report as soon as possible.

IRON ORE EXPORTS

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited has announced the export of iron ore pellets from Whyalla, and this trade will have a tremendous influence on the future development of South Australia. Will the Minister of Agriculture ask the Minister of Mines to ascertain whether large quantities of fuel will be used to make these pellets? Further, if the company intends

to use fuel oil in its furnaces in connection with the production of these pellets, will the Minister ask his colleague to consider discussing with the company the possible use of natural gas, because that would not only enhance the value of the industry to South Australia but also stimulate the search for gas in the northern part of the State. After all, gas is a valuable asset only if there is a market for it.

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: I shall refer the matter to the Minister of Mines and obtain a report.

BUSH FIRES

Mr. McANANEY: I refer to a water reserve comprising about 600 acres in the Hindmarsh Valley area that members of the local fire-fighting association consider to be a dangerous fire risk to the district. It is further considered that, if they could burn off the area, the situation would be improved, but the Engineering and Water Supply Department has refused them permission to burn off. Will the Minister of Agriculture obtain a report from the Bush-fire Research Committee about the merit of burning off this overgrown area?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: As the Engineering and Water Supply Department is involved in this matter, I shall have discussions with the Minister of Works and also with the bush fire authorities.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have been told that a suggestion has been made to standardize walkie-talkie equipment used to control bush fires, and that a new type is to be introduced that is effective in flat country but not suitable for steep hilly country, as no reception can be obtained in such country. As steep hilly country in the Adelaide Hills is one of the most dangerous potential bush fire areas, will the Premier ask his colleague to investigate this new equipment?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I will ask him for a report.

EUDUNDA CROSSING

Mr. FREEBAIRN: My attention has been drawn to the situation at the railway crossing near the flour mill at Eudunda where, because of the road approach, drivers of east-bound traffic, when stationary, cannot see the wig-wag signal. Will the Minister of Social Welfare ask the Minister of Transport whether flashing lights can be installed at this crossing?

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: I shall obtain a report as soon as possible.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORTS

The SPEAKER laid on the table the following reports by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence:

Salisbury East High School Additions,

Salisbury High School Additions.

Ordered that reports be printed.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Returned from the Legislative Council with amendments.

BARLEY MARKETING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS (Minister of Agriculture) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Barley Marketing Act, 1947-1962. Read a first time.

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to extend the life of the Barley Marketing Act for a further five seasons. This Bill has been prepared after consultation with

the Victorian Government, which has already taken steps to introduce a Bill for the extension of the Victorian Barley Marketing Act for a further three years. The proposal to extend the South Australian Act for a further five years should be welcomed by all sections of the industry in South Australia.

The Australian Barley Board is obliged, under the legislation, to meet reasonable requirements of barley for home consumption in the States of South Australia and Victoria. The surplus over these requirements varies from season to season, and is exported overseas. Home consumption barley is used mainly for malt production for both Australian and overseas markets, for feed grain, and by stockfood compounders. South Australian stockfood merchants have this year contracted to purchase increased quantities of barley. The board's main export outlets are the United Kingdom, Europe, and Japan, but in recent years valuable new markets with potential for expansion have been found in Pakistan, South America, South Africa, Taiwan, Saigon, the Arabian Gulf and Red Sea ports.

The Act provides that a poll may be taken if sufficient growers desire the Act to be terminated. A poll has never been sought and growers have indicated many times their desire to retain orderly marketing of barley. The board consists of three elected representatives of the South Australian barley-growers, one elected representative of the Victorian growers, a nominee of the brewers and maltsters, a person nominated by the Governor of Victoria, and the Chairman is nominated by the Governor of South Australia.

Rapid strides have been made in bulk handling of barley and, since 1962-63 when 143,000 bushels of bulk barley was first received direct from growers, the quantity received in bulk has increased to over 11,000,000 bushels in South Australia and over 3,000,000 bushels in Victoria for the 1966-67 season. The board has arranged a system which, with the co-operation of the bulk handling authorities in both States, enables growers to deliver bulk barley to wheat silos prior to the imminent wheat harvest. This system has proved successful and has enabled growers to deliver in bulk, barley which could not have been so delivered until more permanent bulk-barley storage facilities had been constructed. Further permanent storage facilities for bulk barley are being constructed by the bulk handling authorities as rapidly as finances will allow.

In the 1965-66 season the board initiated on-the-spot classification at Karoonda in South Australia, and at Beulah and Sunshine in Victoria. This procedure enabled growers to deliver barley to these locations without prior collection and classification of samples. The procedure was extended to 26 centres for the 1966-67 season and has greatly facilitated the delivery of bulk barley. In 1967-68, on-the-spot classification will be carried out at 32 receival points, and in the following season it will be further extended to at least another 10 centres in South Australia. In the coming season, bulk receival facilities will be available at 63 centres in South Australia and 65 centres in Victoria.

I thank the Victorian Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Chandler) for his co-operation. He has telephoned me many times when problems have arisen, and I have communicated with him in the same way. Each time we have arrived at a satisfactory decision without much delay. The present set-up concerning barley is an unusual one, with only two States operating, but the growers are fortunate in the way the board functions. I commend the Bill to the House.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

BUILDERS LICENSING BILL

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Premier and Treasurer) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to provide for the licensing of certain persons in the building trade and for other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill satisfies a long-felt need in South Australia and is principally designed to improve the quality and standards of building, to afford protection to the home builder and home buyer in this State and to protect the building industry and the public from exploitation by unqualified persons who, without accepting any responsibility for their negligence and incompetence, make full use of the industry to promote their own interests to the detriment and, often, the financial loss of many. We have seen an invasion of the building sphere in South Australia by persons who have no qualifications in building and who are, for the most part, building brokers. They go into the business of building and employ other people on subcontracting work. Many of them have inadequate financial backing for the work they undertake. The collapse of people in this area often means grave harm to those

who have sought to buy homes from them and causes harm to the people in the industry. This results in a general depression of the standards of the building industry in this State and in the value of houses on the market. There have been many examples of extremely shoddy building as a result of the activities of such people. This Bill has been prepared after consultation with all sections of the industry and has the overwhelming support of both employers and employees.

The principal method by which this Bill will achieve its objects is by requiring certain persons who carry out building work to be licensed and qualified in every respect to carry out the work. The Bill provides for two kinds of licence:

- a "general builder's licence" (which is dealt with in clause 14 and authorizes the holder thereof to undertake and carry out building work of any kind); and
- a "restricted builder's licence" (which is dealt with in clause 15 and authorizes the holder thereof to undertake and carry out building work within such classified trade as is specified in the licence).

"Building work" is defined in clause 4, and clause 28(i) contains a regulation-making power enabling building work to be classified into various "classified trades" for the purposes of the Bill. It is intended that a master builder will need a general builder's licence, while a person who undertakes subcontracting work within a classified trade would need a restricted builder's licence authorizing him to undertake and carry out building work within that classified trade. Work that is already adequately dealt with by legislation need not be included in a classified trade.

Clause 5 provides for the establishment of a board to be known as the Builders Licensing Board of South Australia. The board is to be a body corporate that will hold all its property for and on behalf of the Crown. Subclause (4) provides that the board is to consist of nine members appointed by the Governor, of whom:

- (a) two are to be appointed on the recommendation of the Minister of Housing;
- (b) one on the nomination of the Master Builders Association of South Australia Incorporated;
- (c) one on the nomination of the South Australian Chapter of the Australian Institute of Building;
- (d) one on the nomination of the South Australian Division of the Housing Industry Association;

- (e) one, who must be a registered architect, on the nomination of the Architects Board of South Australia;
and
- (f) three on the nomination of the United Trades and Labor Council of South Australia.

One of the members recommended by the Minister will be appointed chairman. The board as so constituted will be well balanced and well suited to discharge its duties and functions. Clause 6 provides that a member shall be appointed for such term of office, not exceeding three years, as shall be specified in the instrument of his appointment. This would enable the terms of office of members, if so desired, to be staggered. Clauses 7 and 8 deal with proceedings of the board and contain mainly machinery provisions. Clause 9 provides that the chairman and members of the board will be entitled to receive remuneration and allowances at such rates as are fixed by the Governor. Clause 10 deals with annual reports of the board and with the keeping and auditing of the board's accounts. Clause 11 provides for the appointment of the secretary and other officers of the board who shall be subject to the Public Service Act.

Clause 12 provides for the keeping and maintaining of a register of licensees and deals with incidental matters. Clause 13 provides that a licence shall be valid for such period not exceeding 12 months as shall be stated therein, but is capable of being renewed from time to time for periods of 12 months. Clause 14 prescribes the procedure and qualifications for obtaining a general builder's licence. Subclause (2) provides that an applicant, who is an individual, must satisfy the board—

- (a) that he is over 21 years of age;
- (b) that he is a person of good character and repute and a fit and proper person to hold such a licence;
- and
- (c) that—
- (i) he is a registered architect or a corporate member of the Institution of Engineers or the Australian Institute of Building and has not less than three years' practical experience in building work generally;
- or
- (ii) he possesses the prescribed qualifications for the holder of a general builder's licence; or

- (iii) although not satisfying either of the above requirements, he nevertheless has had such experience of building work generally as would render him fit to be the holder of a general builder's licence.

Subclause (3) deals with the case of an applicant that is a body corporate or a partnership. In such a case the board must be satisfied—

- (a) that all the directors or all the members of the board of management of the body corporate, or all the partners in the partnership, are persons of good character and repute;
- (b) that the body corporate or partnership has the power and capacity to undertake and carry out building work of any kind;
- and
- (c) that at least one of the directors or of the members of the board of management of the body corporate or at least one of the partners in the partnership is the holder of a general builder's licence.

Subclause (5) deems the South Australian Housing Trust to be the holder of a current and valid general builder's licence under this section. This will give the trust power to undertake and carry out building work, but subject to the work being carried out under the supervision and control of competent persons. Clause 15 contains provisions, in relation to restricted builder's licences, that are appropriately similar to those contained in clause 14 in relation to general builder's licences. Clause 16 gives the board power to refuse an application for a licence or renewal of a licence on any ground upon which the licence may be cancelled or suspended and to require any applicant for a licence to undergo a test or examination approved by the Minister. Clause 17 empowers the board by order to cancel or suspend a licence and to disqualify the holder of a licence from holding or obtaining a licence for any period. Subclause (3) enables a person whose licence has been cancelled or suspended for over three months or a person who is disqualified from holding or obtaining a licence to apply to the board for an order annulling such cancellation, suspension or disqualification.

Clause 18 requires the board to give reasons for any order made against a person and gives an aggrieved person a right of appeal to the Local Court of Adelaide of full jurisdiction.

The court has power to postpone the date from which the order appealed against becomes effective. The advantage of having one court to hear appeals against decisions of the board is that a consistent body of case law will emerge from that court and persons in the building trade will know where they stand in their relations with the board. Clause 19 confers certain powers on the board for the purposes of enabling it to consider or deal with any application or to conduct any inquiry and gives a person into whose conduct the board is holding an inquiry the right to be represented at the inquiry. Clauses 20 and 21 contain the teeth of the legislation. Clause 20 (1) is linked with the powers of the board when dealing with matters referred to in clause 19. It also makes certain acts done in contempt of the board punishable. Clause 20 (2) prohibits a person, after the appointed day, from describing his occupation as "builder", "building contractor", etc., or by any description likely to lead persons to believe that he is entitled or willing to carry out building work generally unless he holds a general builder's licence. It also prohibits a person from holding himself out as being entitled or willing to carry out building work within a classified trade unless he holds a general builder's licence or a restricted builder's licence authorizing him to carry out building work within that trade.

The appointed day is defined in clause 4 as the day declared by proclamation to be the appointed day for the purposes of clause 20. It would be necessary to fix as the appointed day a day some time after the Bill becomes law as some time would be needed after the Bill becomes law for the necessary machinery to be set up for the licensing of persons, etc. Clause 20 (3) provides that on or after the appointed day a person shall not carry out for fee or reward or undertake or submit a tender to carry out, either personally or through the services of others, any building work within a classified trade unless he holds a general builder's licence or he holds a restricted builder's licence authorizing him to undertake and carry out building work within that classified trade.

Subclause (4) of that clause gives the defendant a defence to a charge under subclause (3) if he proves that the total amount charged by him for the building work was wholly in the nature of wages or that the total amount charged for the building work, inclusive of labour and materials, did not exceed \$100 and approval by any coun-

cil of plans, drawings or specifications in respect of such work is not required under the Building Act. Subclause (5) of the clause provides an additional deterrent in depriving a person who contravenes the clause of any right to recover any fee or charge for the building work with reference to which the clause was contravened. Subclause (6) provides that, on or after the appointed day, a person shall not knowingly construct, or cause to be constructed, or employ another to construct, any building for immediate sale if such construction is not carried out under the personal supervision and control of the holder of a general builder's licence.

Subclause (7) provides a defence to a charge under subclause (6) for the defendant to prove either that the total cost of the construction of the building, inclusive of labour and materials, did not exceed \$500, or that, at all times during the construction of the building, he was the holder of a general builder's licence and, at all material times, the construction was carried out either under his personal supervision and control or the personal supervision and control of a competent person who is employed by him for that purpose. Subclause (8) provides that, for the purposes of subclause (6), a person who has constructed, or caused to be constructed, or employed another to construct, a building that he sells or offers for sale within 18 months after the completion of the construction shall, in the absence of proof to the contrary, be deemed to have knowingly constructed, or caused to be constructed, or employed that other to construct, the building for immediate sale. Subclauses (6) and (8) have as their main object the elimination of shoddy and substandard workmanship found in many houses that are built by unqualified persons and offered for sale to the public.

Subclause (9) provides that, on or after the appointed day, a person shall not for fee or reward construct or cause to be constructed any building or for fee or reward undertake to construct any building whether by himself or through the services of any other person unless he holds a general builder's licence and the construction is carried out by or under the personal supervision and control of the holder of a general builder's licence. Subclause (10) provides a defence to a charge under subclause (9) if the defendant proves—

- (a) that the total amount charged for the construction of the building was wholly in the nature of wages paid or payable to him;

- (b) that the total cost of the construction of the building, inclusive of labour and materials, did not exceed \$500; or
- (c) that at all times during the construction of the building he was the holder of a general builder's licence and at all material times the construction was carried out either under his personal supervision and control or under the personal supervision and control of a person who is competent to supervise and control the carrying out of such construction and who is employed by him for that purpose.

Subclauses (11), (12) and (13) impose on individuals, bodies corporate and partnerships that are licensees the obligation to inform the board when any of those individuals becomes or ceases to be a partner in a partnership or a director of a body corporate. Subclause (14) requires the holder of a licence to erect in a prominent position on the outside of any building work being carried out by him or on his behalf a sign with his name and licence particulars. This provision does not apply, however, to alterations or repairs to existing houses. Subclause (15) provides that, subject to that clause (clause 20), when any licensee undertakes any building work after the appointed day, that person shall cause the work to be carried out under his personal supervision and control or under the personal supervision and control of a person competent to supervise and control the carrying out of such work and who is employed by him for that purpose.

Subclause (16) requires any person carrying out, or supervising the carrying out of, any building work, when required by the board, to supply the board with any specified particulars relating to any contract or undertaking entered into by him in connection with that building work. Subclause (17) makes it an offence to furnish the board with false information in response to such a requirement. Clause 21 provides the board with certain powers to police the provisions of the legislation by giving any authorized member or officer of the board the right to enter council premises for purposes of examining papers, documents and records relating to any matter that concerns the board and to enter building sites to inspect building work and take necessary steps to prevent contravention of the legislation. Clause 22 is designed to protect licensees from disclosure by members of the board of information concerning the business of any

licensee which they acquire by virtue of their positions as members.

Clause 23 will have the effect of nullifying any provision of a contract for the performance of any building work that submits any matter or dispute to arbitration unless and until, after the matter or dispute arose, the parties to the contract expressly agree in writing that such provision is to apply in relation to that matter or dispute. In other words it will not be possible, after this Bill becomes law, to submit a dispute relating to building work to arbitration before the dispute arises. It has been a constant complaint in South Australia that building contracts have included clauses submitting any dispute whatever, before that dispute arises, to arbitration under the 1893 Arbitration Act of this State. Endeavouring, then, to sort out difficulties in building contracts runs the people concerned into enormous expense and continued delay.

Clause 24 is an evidentiary provision in relation to the signatures of the chairman, members and the secretary of the board. Clause 25 deals with proceedings for any offence under the legislation. Clause 26 gives the board power, with the approval of the Minister, to exempt any person or class of person or any building work or class of building work from the operation of all or any of the provisions of the legislation, either generally or subject to conditions. This would enable work of a highly technical nature that might be undertaken by interstate or oversea specialists to be exempted. Clause 27 contains the financial provisions necessary for the administration of the measure; and clause 28 contains the regulation-making powers necessary to give effect to the Bill.

Mr. HALL secured the adjournment of the debate.

PRIMARY PRODUCERS EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 30. Page 1743.)

Mr. McANANEY (Stirling): I support the general principles of the Bill, for the types of provision contained therein are necessary to meet the conditions that occur in a dry State such as South Australia. I should imagine that, in the average rainfall area of the State over the last 30 years, one year in five has been a drought year; in areas of below average rainfall, it would be one year in three; and in the drier areas difficulty exists in getting crops to mature at all. Although this is a necessary Bill, I think the best way to meet

the difficulties that arise under our climatic conditions is to provide a national insurance fund in case of floods, droughts, and other emergencies for which insurance cannot normally be obtained.

Such a fund would not only benefit in times of hardship those who contributed to it: it would also have a stabilizing effect on the economy of the community as a whole. Payments into the fund would be made continually, and payments out would occur only when necessary. This type of fund would be more effective than the provisions we are now considering. The Bill is different from legislation that has been enacted in other States: it will assist only the farmer who is destitute. It does not cover all farmers who suffer a reduction in income. I have said many times in this place that grants should be made available to enable hay reserves to be created. In 1940, a Liberal Government enabled much hay to be accumulated on the West Coast, but I understand that unfortunately the mice got to it and it finally went up in smoke. However, if grants could be made available at various times, hay reserves could be built up on individual farms where they could be looked after. Such stocks would help greatly. Before I became a member of Parliament, I sold much hay. For most of the year I had it available for dairy farmers at \$20 a ton from the paddock. Generally few bought it, but when it came to May or June people would ask me for the hay and would become annoyed that I could not sell it as I needed it myself. Hay reserves should be built up so that farmers can be tided over difficult periods.

I believe the Government deserves censure for the way it has dealt with this matter over the last three months. It has been dilatory and has not got down to the problem. The letter the Premier wrote to the Prime Minister shows that the Premier is a master of words, but that is about the end of his good features. We hear and see words from the Premier all the time through the radio, television and the press. However, when it comes to facing facts, he is one of the weakest specimens I have ever met.

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask the honourable member not to indulge in personalities.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Stirling.

Mr. McANANEY: Before I became a member of Parliament I never indulged in personalities, but the Premier used words yesterday—

The SPEAKER: Order! I ask all honourable members not to pursue that line in the course of this debate.

Mr. McANANEY: There has been a definite delay in getting this legislation before the House. It was first presented some weeks ago as an urgent matter and the Opposition was prepared to go on with it. However, the Government proceeded with the Licensing Bill so that it could be proclaimed by a certain day. In a general letter to the Prime Minister, the Premier referred to the Mallee but did not refer to the condition of the State as a whole. In fact, at about the same time as he wrote the letter he said in his Budget speech that conditions in South Australia were fairly good. Therefore, he made contradictory statements. In Victoria, at present, freight concessions are being made to farmers in certain areas. In time of drought, New South Wales made a similar concession almost immediately; before the Commonwealth Government gave any help that State committed millions of dollars of Government funds to assist in that way. The Premier's letter gives no indication to the Prime Minister of what this State Government is prepared to do. All the Premier said was, "Help me in this problem."

Over the years, we have seen that matters such as this are the responsibilities of the State. In cases where State Governments have been in difficulty because of climatic conditions, the Commonwealth Government has eventually assisted them as it did in the case of New South Wales. In fact, the Commonwealth provided for New South Wales and Queensland a rebate on rail freight, transport of stock and so on of \$4,750,000. However, in the district of the Minister of Agriculture the stock has been transported to other States. All the hoggets were sold two months ago for as low as 50c. Some of the best lambs that went to New South Wales brought \$2.50. The northern Mallee country is almost denuded of stock; this area has received no assistance at all. If the Commonwealth Government is prepared to make money available for freight concessions on fodder and stock, where will the Premier say he will use that money? The stock has already been taken away from this State. Although I am not allowed to repeat what I said before about the Premier, I think I have proved that what I said had a foundation in fact.

The Bill provides for loans at bank interest rates. The outright grant to New South Wales and Queensland from the Commonwealth Government was \$10,000,000. Will the State

Government charge bank interest rates on any money it gets as a grant? In New South Wales, the Government charged a normal rate of interest to cover administration costs. I believe this Government has proved that it is completely out of touch with the realities of life in this matter and with what has happened in other States. The Premier's approach was weak.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind the honourable member that he is not referring to anything in the Bill.

Mr. McANANEY: There should be something in process at present to cope with the situation. The Bill provides for advances to primary producers in necessitous circumstances as a result of drought, fire, flood, etc. I understand that bank rate of interest will be charged. Further, advances will be available only when accommodation cannot be obtained from a bank or stock firm. I, having had many years of experience on the land since the depression days, can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that a person who cannot borrow from a stock firm is really in trouble. Such a person would never be able to repay a loan granted under this Bill if he had to pay interest at bank rates.

The average earnings on capital of a farmer are only about 2 per cent or 3 per cent, and to expect farmers in the circumstances envisaged by this Bill to pay bank interest is unjust and unfair, particularly as this money will be made available by the Commonwealth either free of interest or at a low interest rate. I have tried to explain a better way of dealing with this matter and I think a Bill such as the one we are considering should be the last resort. I know that the Minister will be able to reduce the interest rate if he considers such a reduction to be necessary, but all persons borrowing under this measure should be treated alike. The granting of assistance to farmers should be proceeded with as a matter of urgency. I support the Bill and hope that it will be in operation soon.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra): I support the Bill and regret that we could not have considered it earlier. The situation is becoming more serious every week, as those who travel around the State know. We are losing millions of bushels of grain. Bountiful rains now would enable something to be salvaged but few crops would benefit from even extremely heavy rain to a sufficient extent to give a reasonable return. Many of the crops have hardened, and South Australia is going to have a fairly difficult time. It is well to face these matters,

because they are established facts. We must realize that the monetary return from country industries will be reduced, and that is more tragic because of the effect on the populations in the city.

I have read that already we have lost \$50,000,000, but I do not accept that figure, because our wheat crop is halved and we have lost \$25,000,000 on that cereal alone. In addition, we know what has happened in regard to wool. It is not good to have so many people in such serious difficulties. So many farmers will be able to withstand this drought and come out of it with only the loss of the return they would otherwise have got this year. However, other farmers have had three bad years. I am referring particularly to those in the low rainfall areas, and their position is precarious.

The Bill provides that consideration will be given to the ability of an applicant to repay any loan granted. The officers will decide whether an applicant can do that, or whether he has reached the point of no return and, therefore, should not be assisted. These loans will be similar to hire-purchase debts and the farmers will be mortgaging their future income. An amount of \$500,000 merely touches the fringe, and would not be sufficient to get farmers in one section of the Murray Mallee out of the mire. Much more money will be required if the position deteriorates further and, although we hope that 1968 will be a good year and that people will be able to forget the present vicissitudes, that may not happen. Rainfall gaugings show that 1967 is suspiciously similar to 1913.

The Hon. J. D. Corcoran: I hope 1968 will not be like 1914.

Mr. QUIRKE: These things run in cycles and if the present position continues better arrangements than those provided for in this Bill must be made. This proposal is a start on which further aid can be built, because the farmers must have aid. It is regrettable that people whose assets have gone down the drain have to come to the Government as the only authority that will lend them something irrespective of their mortgaged assets. It is a reflection on our methods that, when good honest-to-God citizens get into this trouble through no fault of their own, they have to do this. A man treading his soil can be proud, but when he sees nature tear and lacerate it and the wind blow it away it tears his heart out. Obviously, the area in county

Chandos is not functioning well this year, although we discussed what could happen to this country.

Mr. Nankivell: It has had only 4in. of rain.

The Hon. J. D. Corcoran: That does not mean it will be 4in. every year.

Mr. QUIRKE: The Minister realizes he must be cautious about this area. Because a primary producer has to approach the Government for assistance, and receives a pittance, how is the money to be used? Will he place it in the sock up the chimney? We have a paltry approach to the national problems of this country, and this nation will never be big whilst we have this pettifogging approach to the crises that afflict us. Apparently, this legislation provides the best that can be done at present: it may be belated but, to the extent that it will do good, I support it.

Mr. CURREN (Chaffey): I, too, support the Bill. Although we recognize that the immediate problem is the severe drought in the Murray Mallee districts, obviously, unless substantial rains are received, other areas of the State will be affected. This legislation sets up a permanent structure by which natural calamities can be dealt with and financial assistance given to primary producers. Any delay in passing this Bill was caused by the intemperate criticism of the member for Alexandra who, while ostensibly supporting the Bill—

The SPEAKER: I do not intend to allow discussion on the adjournment of the debate on this Bill and the decision of the House. I shall not allow reflections on the House and I ask members to speak within the Bill. I intend to insist on that being done.

Mr. CURREN: I bow to your ruling, Sir. The Government is to be commended for setting up an organization that will provide not only immediate drought assistance but also assistance on a permanent basis where damage is caused by hail, frost, fire, and flood. It is untrue to say, as was said by the member for Stirling, that the only provisions for payment were in respect of the transport of fodder and water. Clause 5 (1) (a) sets out quite clearly the circumstances under which finance can be made available to primary producers, and does not specifically provide for the cost of transporting fodder and water. Clause 5 (2) (b) clearly sets out the conditions under which advances will be made, and clause 5 (2) (d) gives the Minister of Lands power to remit

either part or the whole of any interest on or principal of the advance made under circumstances making it desirable for the recipient of the advance to have such conditions made available to him. I commend the Bill to the House.

Mr. NANKIVELL (Albert): I, too, support the Bill. There is already legislation on the Statute Book of this State covering certain aspects of assistance to farmers suffering from financial disability as a result of drought or other matters. As pointed out in the second reading explanation, the funds that have been accumulated and the Bills that have been enacted relate principally to debt adjustment, whereas this Bill is completely different: it provides that none of this money shall be used to help adjust past debts. The purpose of the Bill is to help rehabilitate those farmers still capable of being rehabilitated. Someone will have to make this decision, and a critical analysis of each case will have to be made.

On a first examination of the Bill my only criticism was that its provisions were too broad. I had examined the New South Wales legislation and the way the scheme functioned in that State. I considered that a more specific arrangement, such as that decided on by the New South Wales Government, might have been better in this case. In that State each loan is limited to \$6,000, and a special grant of \$10,000 is provided for restocking. It also specifies a term of interest and a period of years for repayment, which I thought was good until I realized the administrative complications that could arise from such legislation. Under the Bill now before the House, the Minister has power to waive interest payments, to fix interest and to make special arrangements regarding the terms of repayment; that is far better than setting out categorically what the terms of a loan shall be.

I believe that our legislation will work more efficiently if only one Minister acts on the advice of the specialist committee. A Bill of this sort should not be complicated. I commend its breadth; we tend to think of it at the moment in terms of drought relief only, but it will also provide "last resort" finance for other calamities such as fire, flood, frost, disease and insect pests. This aspect of the Bill has not been examined to any extent up to the present.

Mr. Quirke: I examined it.

Mr. NANKIVELL: I am sorry: I recall that the member for Burra drew attention

to this. Of course, the ultimate question is, "Where does the money come from?" On an examination of the Bill and its intentions, I can see nothing with which I can cavil. Certain improvements are to be made, some of which I approve. As has been pointed out by other speakers, the Bill will require substantial sums of money. Initially, it was thought that only a small section of the State might be critically affected. In fact, special reference was made to certain counties of the State in the upper Murray Mallee area which, it was said, were suffering a dire disability as a result of three years' drought and wind erosion. However, although this area was then looked on as the trouble area, it may only be the centre of a much bigger area that will ultimately be affected as a result of the present season unless we receive rains, which at present no-one can predict but which do not seem to be imminent. Financial assistance to deal with this matter effectively must come from somewhere.

When one examines the Bill and the Government's resources to finance this matter, one sees that only certain funds are available. The Bill provides that \$211,364 standing to the credit of the Farmers Assistance Fund may be paid out. According to the Auditor-General's Report, that fund stands at \$211,364. The Bill also provides that no more than \$150,000 standing to the credit of the Marginal Lands Improvement Account shall be used. That is a little less than half the money standing in that account in the Treasury at the moment, as the figure shown in the Auditor-General's Report is \$332,478. Therefore, the total sum the State is prepared to allocate for this purpose at present is \$361,364. I drew to the Premier's attention the \$804,636 standing in trust under the Debt Adjustment Fund in the Primary Producers Assistance Department, but I have been told that that is Commonwealth money that has been advanced for a specific purpose—debt adjustment.

I hope that the total I stated is not all the money that will be forthcoming. The member for Stirling was a bit ambitious, because on my reckoning the total of the money allocated in New South Wales by the Commonwealth Government was \$14,200,000. In the meantime, the State had borrowed \$7,000,000 on Treasury notes which it used for this purpose. Therefore, \$7,000,000 was made available to meet what was a major calamity, whereas here we have only \$361,364 to meet what might also be a national calamity.

I am a little concerned at the length of the Premier's letter which members have now had a chance to examine. I find some of the matters expressed in it hard to understand. The letter states:

The immediate problems are to maintain flocks of breeding ewes at an absolute minimum number—

I can understand that—

and to cope with the biological problems of grain feeding—

I do not understand that—

to ensure that farmers have enough to live on until seasons revert to a more normal pattern and then to cope with the problems of restocking and sowing the land to crop next year.

Although that part of the letter makes sense, I point out that this is a letter that is not included in the Bill.

The SPEAKER: And it is a letter to which the honourable member can refer, but I am not prepared to let it be the subject of debate.

Mr. NANKIVELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I refer to the letter in the sense that we must strongly press the Commonwealth Government for assistance, and I do not believe that the letter does that. We must be far more specific. We do not have a major calamity on our hands, as the other States had when they applied for assistance. The contribution that this State is at present prepared to make is nothing compared with the contributions made by the other States to meet a calamity. We are considering a measure that will invite people to apply for assistance, but I cannot see how assistance can be provided, in the light of certain allocations that have already been made.

I urge the Premier to be far more specific when seeking assistance. I wish to see this measure successfully implemented so that it can provide the finance that will mean the difference for some people between surviving in their occupations and sinking. We are considering finance of the last resort: finance will be provided similar to that provided by the Commonwealth Development Bank, but I hope the funds will be administered more tolerantly than similar funds have been administered by that bank. I hope that we shall be able to provide reasonable rates of interest and to adjust terms to meet the needs of a particular case. Not wishing to delay the Bill, I would have stayed here the whole of last night to see it passed, and I am sorry

that the Government took umbrage and adjourned the debate on this measure last week. As this is a sensible piece of legislation it has my support.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member heard me say earlier that any decision regarding adjournments was the decision of the House, and I am not having members reflect on such decisions.

Mr. NANKIVELL: Although I had finished speaking, I apologize, Sir.

Mr. RODDA (Victoria): I support the Bill. The present seasonal conditions being experienced are regrettable, and we can do nothing about the present agricultural situation other than accept the fact that this is a commendable Bill, for it will establish the machinery to deal with cases of hardship experienced by the primary producer. The man on the land appreciates the expanding market available to him in the city, but I point out that this market will be bereft of the goods normally supplied by producers, for instance, in the Murray Mallee, which is the hardest hit part of the State. Unfortunately, the hardship being experienced in that area may be a forerunner to what will occur in other areas.

Sharing representation of the South-East with the Minister of Lands, I point out that, although parts of the South-East have a lush appearance at present, other parts are suffering the effects of this dry September. Much as I hate to say it, people in our districts may well have to apply for some of the benefits that will be provided under this Bill. The finance to be provided will hinge on our approach to the Commonwealth. I hope that the strongest possible case will be made out to the Commonwealth Government in order that we shall be able to help those people, the success of whose livelihood is important to the State.

Mr. FREEBAIRN (Light): The Bill seeks "to provide for assistance to primary producers in necessitous circumstances as a result of drought, fire, flood, frost, animal or plant disease, insect pest, or other natural calamity, and for other purposes". Although the measure is designed to aid primary producers generally, I refer to one class of producer that could be helped more than it is helped at present, through resources other than those provided in the Bill. I refer to resources in

the form of the Council of Egg Marketing Authorities fund to which South Australia has access, as has any other State. A precedent having been established, this fund that has been set up under Commonwealth legislation allows for the disbursement of moneys to poultry farmers in necessitous circumstances, circumstances beyond their control,

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member must know that the C.E.M.A. plan is not part of this debate; the Bill refers to "fire, flood, frost, animal or plant disease, insect pest, or other natural calamity", and I cannot allow the honourable member to deal with anything other than those factors.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I previously referred to the title of the Bill, in order to point out that poultry farmers must be included in the term "primary producer". I was going to make a passing reference to the fact that the C.E.M.A. fund had been disbursed to poultry farmers in Tasmania after the Tasmanian bush fires. I was about to make out a case that poultry farmers in South Australia, who are primary producers and are entitled to benefit under the Bill, could be getting benefit from the C.E.M.A. fund disbursement. As I understand the Bill, all kinds of primary producer will be entitled to benefit, and there are some hard-working poultry farmers in the Murray Mallee who could expect to benefit.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have already told the honourable member that in my judgment the C.E.M.A. plan is not part of this debate. Poultry farmers are included in the reference to a natural calamity. I ask the honourable member to speak to the Bill.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I apologize to you, Sir; I was trying to amplify the point I was making. I support the Bill.

Mr. HEASLIP (Rocky River): I, too, support the Bill. I regret the drought that has necessitated the introduction of the Bill, and is a calamity to South Australia. The real difficulties it will cause are still ahead of us. It will affect Government finance, secondary industries and, more particularly, primary producers. I regret the delay by the Government in—

The SPEAKER: Order! I have ruled about three times this afternoon that any decision of the House concerning the adjournment of the debate on this Bill was a decision of the House, and that members are not in order in reflecting on that decision.

Mr. HEASLIP: I regret the delay in the passing of the Bill, because it is urgent. Other legislation has passed through the House, taking priority over this Bill.

The SPEAKER: Is the honourable member trying to persist with his reflection on the House? I ask him not to proceed with that line of discussion.

Mr. HEASLIP: Mr. Speaker, you have ruled me out of order in referring to this matter as I speak to the Bill. I cannot disagree to your ruling.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have not ruled the honourable member out of order for speaking to the Bill: he is quite in order in doing so. I have ruled him out of order in reflecting on decisions of the House.

Mr. HEASLIP: I will confine myself to the Bill. This measure should be passed as soon as possible because it has been on the Notice Paper for several weeks.

Mr. Lawn: Do you want an adjournment?

Mr. HEASLIP: No.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Rocky River is entitled to be heard without interruption.

Mr. HEASLIP: I refer to a question asked by the member for Ridley (Hon. T. C. Stott) early this week about the assistance to primary producers in necessitous circumstances. Primary producers are not able to receive social service relief, because they are landholders. They cannot get anything until the Bill is passed. In my opinion it should have been passed at least a fortnight ago. These people have worked 12 months without payment and now they will have to wait another 12 months before receiving anything. Such is the lot of a primary producer.

Primary producers are often held up as having all the wealth in the country, but if they make money in one year they can easily lose it the next year. In my district there is an area of bare, red paddocks. Much of this area has not been sown and where it has been sown the wheat has not germinated. Possibly that area will receive assistance under the provisions of the Bill. As it is still early in the season, areas such as this can be used. This morning's press contained an estimate of 22,000,000 bushels as the likely wheat harvest (last year the harvest was 53,000,000 bushels); it will depend on the next few weeks whether even that estimate can be realized. The Bill

has my wholehearted support and should be passed as quickly as possible so it can help those people that it sets out to help.

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER (Angas): I support the Bill and commend the Government for introducing it. I regret the circumstances that have made its introduction necessary. Unfortunately, South Australia has large areas which, from time to time, are liable to drought conditions. It has become necessary on, I think, six occasions in the past 50 years to introduce legislation in this Chamber dealing particularly with drought conditions. Legislation was introduced in 1914, 1927, 1928, 1929 and 1945. This legislation will help meet the emergency that has been created by the drought conditions prevailing in many parts of the State and particularly in the Murray Mallee, part of which is in my district.

The Bill provides that the Minister of Lands may make advances to primary producers (pursuant to clause 5) who are in necessitous circumstances as a result of drought, fire, flood, etc. Also, the Minister may make payments towards the cost of fodder or water for starving stock, including the cost of transport of such fodder or water. The Bill includes a number of important safeguards in clause 5 (2) (b), as follows:

No advance shall be made unless the Minister of Lands is satisfied that the primary producer is in necessitous circumstances solely or substantially because of the effect of drought, fire, flood, frost, animal or plant disease, insect pest, or other natural calamity, that the advance is necessary for the primary producer to continue in the business of primary production, that the primary producer has no other source of funds available to him for that purpose, and that given the advance the primary producer has a reasonable prospect of being able to continue in the business of primary production.

Unfortunately, this legislation may be too late for some cases but, generally, it will enable many primary producers to remain in business by obtaining satisfactory advances. Clause 5 (2) (d) is important, because it enables the Minister of Lands to remit part or whole of the interest on loans. Doubtless there will be cases where such remission will be necessary. I am sure members agree that the indomitable courage of hundreds of primary producers is to be admired. Some of them have been carrying on primary production for about 40 years in areas that have been subject to other droughts as well as the present. They have carried on undauntedly despite adversity, and many other people would do well to emulate that example.

One section of the community loses much money as a result of the effect of drought on primary producers. I refer to storekeepers, many of whom have carried primary producers through two years of adverse seasonal conditions. Although I know storekeepers who, as a result of their generosity in this way, have been obliged to call meetings of creditors or go to the Bankruptcy Court, no provision in this Bill will assist the storekeepers. Although many debts have been incurred in the last six months or 12 months by people who will be getting drought relief, storekeepers will have little chance of recovering all that is owing to them. I do not intend to delay the passage of the Bill. I commend the Government for introducing it and hope that it is passed quickly.

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN moved:

That it be an instruction to the Committee of the whole House on the Bill that it have power to consider a new clause dealing with regulations.

Motion carried.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Payments to Farmers Assistance Fund."

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I ask the Minister what the Government intends to do about the request for Commonwealth assistance. I have read the Premier's letter to the Prime Minister of August 3 and the Prime Minister's reply. Although the Premier's letter is lengthy, it misses important points and it would have been difficult for the Prime Minister to reply other than as he did. The Premier gave much information about serious soil erosion hazards and the hardship caused in certain areas. However, there seems to have been little in the way of a direct request.

The letter sets out certain types of expenditure and the ways in which money could be used, but the Prime Minister wants to know the sum involved. The Premier said that it was difficult to fix the quantum, but the Prime Minister will want to know what the State Government has done. To say that a Bill before Parliament provides for assistance totalling just over \$300,000 will not be encouraging. Both Queensland and New South Wales spent much money before the Commonwealth Government gave assistance. How can we expect the Prime Minister to agree to our request if we do not supply the necessary information

about what this State is doing? Our letter asked for immediate relief, but what is to be done now?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Lands): The Premier's letter was compiled by agricultural experts in the department. It seems that the honourable member is suggesting that it is our fault that the Prime Minister has not taken immediate action, but that is not so. I had hoped that by the time a further letter was sent this Bill would have been passed, because under this legislation some relief is provided to primary producers.

Mr. Quirke: It was a long letter.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: It is a matter of opinion how long the letter should be.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the Speaker ruled that this letter could not be discussed.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Such an important matter would require a lengthy explanation. The Premier has referred the matter to the Minister of Agriculture and asked him to compile the information that has been requested by the Prime Minister, so that a further letter can be forwarded immediately.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: A definition of "primary producer" was included in the 1936-37 Act, and any doubts were to be determined by the board. There will be no limit to the number of people who will consider themselves primary producers and who will apply for assistance, and the Minister should provide for some limit on the type of person who may apply for financial assistance. An amendment should be inserted that will at least provide that the Minister has authority to reject a claim not made by a *bona fide* producer.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Although I discussed this matter at some length with the Chairman of the Drought Relief Committee (Judge Gillespie) and the Under Treasurer, I am prepared to consider what the honourable member has said, but I should like a little time to do so.

Mr. HALL: I was disappointed to see that the letter written to the Commonwealth Government was so long and so—

The CHAIRMAN: The Leader is out of order. He heard me rule just now in accordance with the Speaker's previous ruling.

Mr. HALL: This clause relates to moneys obtained from the Commonwealth.

The CHAIRMAN: During the second reading debate the Speaker ruled that the letter to the Prime Minister could not be debated and, obviously, I cannot rule otherwise.

Mr. HALL: I accept your ruling, but I am disappointed, because there must be an obvious source for the moneys now under discussion.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no objection to the Leader's discussing the moneys.

Mr. HALL: Without discussing the letter, I am sure you, Mr. Chairman, will allow me to refer to the application that was made for moneys, the disbursement of which we are now considering.

The CHAIRMAN: The Leader can refer to the application but not to the letter.

Mr. HALL: I submit that I must be allowed to refer to the source of the moneys—the Commonwealth. We have applied in terms outlining the drastic situation in South Australia, and I can understand why we have been kept so long—

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member is out of order.

Mr. HALL: When explaining the Budget, the Treasurer said:

Fortunately, the winter rains, though sparse and contributing little to stored water supplies, have been reasonably widespread in area and favourably spaced in time, so that with normal spring rains a large proportion of the grain land and the developed pasture areas can look forward to production not seriously below average.

The Premier having previously outlined the position on August 3, I point out that the statements made on that day and the statement to which I have just referred are completely conflicting. The Premier should have set out the effects of the drought on the State more realistically. The Government has not handled this matter efficiently; we could at least have stipulated a minimum sum to be provided by the Commonwealth.

Clause passed.

Clause 4 passed.

Clause 5—"Power to make advances."

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I move:

In subclause (1) to strike out "upon the advice and recommendation of the Minister of Agriculture".

After consideration, it was decided that it would be difficult for two Ministers to be involved in administering this measure.

Although the Minister of Agriculture played a prominent part in formulating this legislation, it was found that the necessary machinery did not exist in his department. However, in administering this measure, I shall have the benefit of the experience and knowledge of officers of the Agriculture Department.

Amendment carried.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I move:

In subclause (1) (a) to strike out "as may be approved by the Minister of Lands on the advice of the Minister of Agriculture".

This is consequential on the previous amendment.

Amendment carried.

The Hon. T. C. STOTT: I move:

In subclause (1) (b) after "water" second occurring to insert "or for any other purpose deemed necessary by the Minister for the purposes of this Act".

This subclause refers not to advances but to payments towards the cost of fodder or water for starving stock. I believe that this provision should be wider. The Minister has already received petitions from many share farmers in Waikerie, Lowbank and Lower Moorook, and out towards Paringa, Wunkar and Maggea, asking for immediate assistance. Many of these share farmers will need some other form of assistance to enable them to carry on, for they have no security, no land, and very little plant to be able to pledge in order to get an advance.

In reply to a question the other day the Minister said that these share farmers might be able to apply for urgent relief under the unemployment social benefits scheme. However, this form of relief may not meet all their requirements. I realize that the ability to make direct grants will depend on the amount of additional assistance we receive from the Commonwealth Government. However, I want the Minister to have power to make a straightout grant.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: This widens the provision somewhat. However, as it will still be in the hands of the Minister to decide whether or not a grant should be made, I cannot see any objection to it.

Amendment carried.

The Hon. T. C. STOTT: I move:

In subclause (2) to insert the following new paragraph:

(a1) Any payments made in accordance with paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of this section shall not bear interest on such advance.

This amendment is designed to ensure that payments will not bear interest.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: There is no mention of interest on payments: the interest mentioned is only on advances, which are a different thing and for different purposes.

The Hon. T. C. STOTT: I accept the Minister's assurance on that matter and, in view of that, I seek leave to withdraw my amendment.

Leave granted; amendment withdrawn.

The Hon. T. C. STOTT: I move:

In subclause (2) (b) after "circumstances" to strike out "solely or substantially" and insert "mainly".

Originally I intended to move simply to strike out "solely or substantially", but on reflection I realized that was going a little too far. It would be extremely difficult for the Minister to be able to satisfy himself that a person was in necessitous circumstances "solely or substantially" because of the effect of drought, fire, flood, frost, or any of the other things specified. On the other hand, I think it is reasonable that the Minister should be satisfied that the necessitous circumstances arose "mainly" through one or other of those things.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The amendment the honourable member had on the file sought to delete the words "solely or substantially", and this would have meant that no qualification whatever existed and the farmer would have been in a worse position than the position in which he was as the clause stood. However, the honourable member has now moved to insert the word "mainly". As I think this is a case of Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee, I have no objection.

Amendment carried.

The Hon. T. C. STOTT: I move:

In subclause (2) (b) to strike out "that the primary producer has no other source of funds available to him for that purpose".

The clause as it stands provides that, to qualify, a primary producer must have no other source of funds available to him. I should like the Minister to clarify this point. Many farmers in my district are practically up to the limit in overdrafts that their banks will allow. I believe this provision would be better if the words I have moved to strike out were struck out.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I do not want to accept this amendment because, if the words were deleted, a primary producer who had some funds could transfer them to his wife's bank account and then claim he was in

trouble financially. We would not be able to check to see whether his wife or anyone else had funds available that he could use. Therefore, the words must be retained in order to prevent that. As the provision stands, it does not mean that the primary producer will have to comb the length and breadth of the State seeking funds. I should think that, if the bank with which a primary producer traded refused to advance money, and his wife, for instance, had no funds that he could use, these would be sufficient grounds for an advance to be made if he qualified in the other respects.

The Hon. T. C. STOTT: I accept the Minister's explanation and I seek leave to withdraw my amendment.

Leave granted; amendment withdrawn.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I move:

In subclause (2) (e) before "Where" to insert "Without in any way affecting the rights of the Minister under any security given for an advance under this Act".

This amendment protects the Minister where security is involved.

Amendment carried.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I move:

To insert the following new subclause:

(4) A person who has received any payment, or the benefit of any payment, referred to in paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of this section shall, at the request in writing of the Minister of Lands, pay to the Minister the whole amount or such part of such payment as the Minister may specify in his request and, if such person fails to pay the same to the Minister within the time allowed by the Minister, the Minister may recover the same from that person as a debt in any court of competent jurisdiction.

It simply allows the Minister to seek recovery of payment, if he so desires, on the terms and conditions he set out before a payment is made. We believe this provision is necessary to clarify the position.

Amendment carried.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: Regarding the payments that can be made in relation to cost of transport, will the Railways Department be reimbursed or will the cost come from the fund?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: A payment would have to be made to the Railways Department from the fund; I believe this happens now. Although it might be merely a paper transaction, the cost would have to be paid from the fund.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: This could be a substantial proportion of the fund.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: That could be so. It is hard to visualize what will happen because we do not know what demand will be made on the fund. If a person wanted a load of hay, the payment could be made and the conditions of the payment could be sorted out later.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I realize that the Railways Department cannot forget about the cost. Under certain conditions if it continued in this way the cost of rail freight could be a heavy drain upon this fund. Has the Government considered ways of either building up the fund from other sources or lightening the load on it? Excluding any possible reimbursement from the Commonwealth, the total provided for is just over \$300,000, but much of this could be spent on rail freight. We do not want to dissipate the fund in this way.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I support what the honourable member has said, but for another reason entirely. On some occasions when the Commonwealth Government has granted the State relief for drought or other natural calamities (which this Bill covers) it has specified that any money made available shall not go to the State Government. If any money was to go to the State Government from this fund, the Commonwealth would probably not be prepared to make a grant. The Minister should look at this again.

The Hon. T. C. STOTT: The point taken by honourable members is a good one but I notice that clause 3 (c) provides:

Such other moneys as may be provided by Parliament for the purpose of giving financial assistance

That would cover the position.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Provision is made for moneys that may be provided by Parliament. At this stage, we do not know what specific steps can be taken but the provision is there if we have to act.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The fund can easily be dissipated by payments to Government departments for freight costs. As the member for Gumeracha has said, this will certainly be specifically excluded from

any form of grant from the Commonwealth. Is the Government prepared for the fund to be used in this way without any reimbursement to it for rail freight charges? I do not want to know the sum involved but can the Minister tell me his intention?

The Hon. J. D. Corcoran: I cannot say at this stage.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I want to know whether it is intended that this fund shall be reimbursed for the cost of rail freight. It has been pointed out that the necessary provision is in the Bill, but will it be used? The Minister says he cannot say at this stage. I am not complaining about that, but will the Minister consider this and reply later?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: At this stage I cannot say what my intention is. We do not know whether the fund will build up, but it stands to reason that, if the fund was getting hit, we would have to build it up; and provision to do that is in the Bill. Surely that is a decision to be taken at the time rather than that I should forecast now what it will be.

Clause as amended passed.

Clauses 6 to 9 passed.

New clause 10—"Regulations."

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I move to insert the following new clause:

10. (1) The Governor may make regulations prescribing and providing for such matters as are necessary to be prescribed or provided for to give effect to or to facilitate the operation of this Act, including penalties not exceeding, in each case, fifty dollars for the breach of any regulation.

(2) Any such regulation may be of general or special application or may be made to meet a particular case or particular cases.

This is self-explanatory. It gives the Government the power to regulate in order to administer the Act.

New clause inserted.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.24 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, October 3, at 2 p.m.