HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, October 12, 1967

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

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

Primary Producers Emergency Assistance,
Road Traffic Act Amendment (No. 2).

QUESTIONS

KINDERGARTEN RATING

Mr. HALL: I have received from a member of the committee of a kindergarten in a southern suburb a complaint that the land being held in readiness for the construction of the kindergarten is rated for water rating purposes by the Enginecring and Water Supply Department. The person points out the value of kindergartens to the newly developing communities and states that this rating appears to be an impost on the provision of these desirable facilities. Can the Minister of Works say whether, under the present Act, these rates can be remitted and, if they cannot be, whether his department intends to recommend that legislative action be taken so that rates will not be levied on facilities of this type?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: As I understand the position, wherever a charge is made to educate children a levy is made by the department for services supplied. I doubt that relief can be given, but I shall investigate the matter to ascertain the position.

CHOWILLA DAM

Mr. CURREN: As the River Murray Commission met in Albury early this week, has the Premier received a report from our representative on the commission? If he has, what is its nature and its likely effect on the construction of the Chowilla dam?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I have received a report, and it seems that certain entirely new factors have been disclosed in the preliminary studies now available to the commission. These show that works now being undertaken not only in Victoria but also extensively in New South Wales are likely to contribute highly saline water to the Murray River in such quantities as could be completely disastrous for South Australia. Representations have been made to the Government for a considerable period about the need to amend the River Murray Waters Agreement in relation to control of the discharge of saline water into the Murray River, and this matter has been discussed with the commission. However, until the recent meeting evidence had not been available (as it is now) of the extent to which this was likely to occur in areas over which, under the agreement, we have no control. Consequently, unless the agreement can be amended concerning the salinity of water provided to South Australia and the control of salinity elsewhere (although it is true that at Chowilla we can control the natural salinity in the area adequately, as indicated by the reports of our engineering consultants), if we are receiving not water of the normal quality but increasingly saline water from other States, Chowilla dam will become a dangerous salt trap for South Australia. Consultants, engaged urgently by the commission, flew over the Murray River yesterday prior to commencing a feasibility study, to estimate the cost to the commission before considering the whole salinity problem, so that they could recommend to the commission action on the control of salinity and possible amendments to the agreement to ensure that South Australia will be adequately protected. The South Australian commissioner has concurred in the urgent engagement of these consultants because, unless we can solve this problem, we cannot go ahead with the Chowilla project without danger to this State. I have a full report from our commissioner, which states:

The meeting of the River Murray Commission, Tuesday, October 10, 1967, was summarized in general terms by the Minister for National Development in his press release. The Minister is president of the commission. He did not in that press release, however, reveal the matters to which I have just referred. The report continues:

The meeting discussed at length two major problems concerning the future development of the Murray River. The need for better regulation of means of adequate storage is still the subject of detailed studies. The need for assurance of quality as well as quantity of water is increasingly gaining emphasis in the considerations of the commission. On the subject of quality, this season is emphasizing the now accepted fact that good water cannot be assured in the Murray River below Swan Hill unless positive action is taken and good regulation is practised. Emphasis has been given in recent months to the influence of the Victorian contribution to salinity out of Barr Creek and from the Sunraysia area. More recently suggestions have been made that other contamination may be coming from New South Wales out of the Wakool area. In South Australia, in spite of control of irrigation drainage, there is an unfortunate build-up of

salinity from ground water and evaporation as water moves downstream.

The question of salinity control is not within the terms of reference of the commission under the River Murray Waters Act. The commission does, however, recognize the importance of quality control, and there is complete unanimity between members for bringing the matter forward for serious discussion. This fact is endorsed by the engagement of the Australian consulting group of Gutteridge, Haskins and Davey, in association with Hunting Aerial Services Proprietary Limited of the United Kingdom, to study salinity problems over the whole river system and the development of recommendations for adequate control and operating procedures. This arrangement has committed each of the contributing Governments to considerable expenditure estimated in total this year at $100,000, but subject to a quotation yet to be received from the consultants. The salinity problem is regarded as of first priority by the commission. In the view of the South Australian commissioner, it is a matter that could lapse to one of less apparent urgency, should a run of better seasons follow the emergencies of this year. The great danger would then lie in the Chowilla project reaching achievement and irresponsible loading of the storage with saline water occurring by reason of lack of care in the other States. This could give a situation so grave in its implication that the South Australian commissioner has fully supported the view that a positive line of control must be developed along with planning of storages.

One of the factors that reduced the benefits of the Chowilla scheme as reported in the recent interim studies was palliative measures adopted to solve salinity problems upstream of Chowilla. This action stresses the need to consider the salinity factor with storage assessment.

Although this does not appear in the report, I point out that the salinity at Mildura has caused the Victorian Government to demand constant flushings to provide a base flow at Mildura, and this means that the benefits of a storage at Chowilla are reduced because the effect of increasing the base flow is to put water over the spillway at Chowilla. The report continues:

The studies covering quantity of supply and developmental works to give maximum benefits are estimated in Mr. Fairbairn's statement to require a further six months. This arose from the request of each of the three States to have a wide range of possible storage projects considered. The South Australian commissioner has joined into this by stressing the need to explore fully the maximum benefit to South Australia arising from each series of studies. While no alternative to Chowilla is visualized—

and I stress this—

as giving comparable benefits, it is necessary that each of the parties be fully convinced.

In these circumstances, it is clear that we cannot get an agreement concerning an alteration to the River Murray Waters Agreement until the report of these consultants, who commenced their work yesterday, has been completed, and on present indications their preliminary report to the commission will be ready in about six months' time. Obviously, if we are to achieve the benefits to South Australia anticipated from the Chowilla scheme, we must ensure that the quality of water coming into Chowilla, and into South Australia therefrom, will be of an adequate level and not of a level of salinity that will endanger South Australia. This can be achieved only by an alteration to the River Murray Waters Agreement, and we can get an alteration only after the report of the consultants has shown the means by which we can control the salinity of water entering this State. These factors were not made public by the Minister for National Development in the statement cited by the member for Flinders in the question that he asked me yesterday. On the report of the commissioner, I accept that we have to get this assurance, but the commissioner has discussed with the Government projected amendments to the River Murray Waters Agreement, to which apparently the commissioners of other States are by no means opposed and by which we will be assured of water of adequate quality. If we can ensure that under the agreement, then the Chowilla project is safe and, in those circumstances, its future can be assured.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Accepting, for the purposes of my question, that the facts are as stated by the Premier, I take it that it will be at least six months before the report of the consultants is available, after which there will be a period of negotiation leading up to agreement on some variation of the River Murray Waters Agreement between the Commonwealth and State Governments. Looking at this time frame, it appears that well over 12 months from now must elapse before the agreement can be altered and the alteration ratified by the States. I take it that thereafter the project itself may proceed if other conditions are as we hope they will be and nothing new comes up in the meantime. If this is so, I take it that it will probably be upwards of two years before work on the project can be recommenced. This is only a rough calculation that I made as the honourable gentleman was speaking but, if it is accurate, it means that the project will be delayed for a long time. Can the Premier therefore say whether or not my calculations are correct and, if they are,

when the dam will in fact be commenced and when it will be completed and ready to be used for storage?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: At the moment an estimate on that score could be only guesswork. Obviously, if we are to proceed (as I believe we will proceed) with Chowilla this will depend on a number of decisions by the River Murray Commission. There are many negotiations in relation to Chowilla that can proceed in the meantime before a meeting of the commission at present scheduled for next March. There have already been informal discussions about certain aspects of the amendment of the River Murray Waters Agreement in respect of which there seems to be considerable support from outside South Australia for the views of this State, and I see no reason why those negotiations cannot continue until the meeting takes place. In addition, there are certain aspects of tenders for Chowilla which, it seems to me, are also subject to negotiation. Part of the difficulty facing the commission regarding the tenders was that the dam had to be completed in a short period, and the contractor had to cover all conceivable contingencies. This was one of the major factors in increasing the tender costs way above the costs estimated on design by the designing engineers of this State. All these things are susceptible of negotiation prior to the meeting to be held in March.

I very much regret that the Commonwealth Government has taken the attitude that it has taken so consistently, that the representations made by this Government, and supported by the unanimous resolution of this House, that in the meantime the people of South Australia should be assured as to the future of water by all the contracting parties to the agreement, regardless of what may happen as a result of the decision of the commission, could not be acceded to. I do not consider that it is a reasonable reply either to this Government or to the members of this House to be told that their suggestion on this score is ludicrous, the term used by the Minister for National Development (Mr. Fairbairn). I very much regret that the Commonwealth Government has not been prepared to agree to that meeting.

Mr. Millhouse: That is, your December meeting?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: It was the meeting which we asked for before this and which, in my view, should take place not later than December. I shall still seek to have this meeting take place, because people who are coming to this State for the purpose of developing it ought to have assurances about the future and those assurances should not be related merely to some technical considerations about the future development of supplies to this State on the basis of salinity or the technical aspects of the construction of dams upon the Murray River. We should be assured that, whatever is the case, we will get the water to which we are entitled.

Mr. Millhouse: Hear! Hear!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I hope that the honourable member will use his good offices with his Party in Canberra, because to say that this State is playing politics on this issue is ridiculous. We are part of the Commonwealth and ought to be treated as such.

Mr. Rodda: We are a good part.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Yes; most people who live in this State will say that it is the best part, and I agree.

Mr. Millhouse: It is refreshing to hear you say that.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I am pleased that the honourable member agrees with me and, if he thinks it is refreshing, I am glad to join him in that refreshment. I hope the Commonwealth Government will take a more reasonable attitude on this matter. True, we must be adequately reinforced with the technical studies before the specific amendments to the River Murray Waters Agreement are made. I consider that the technical studies will show the needs of South Australia in this area, and I am certain from the report made to the Government by the commissioner that the needs of this State are appreciated by the other commissioners and that those commissioners are concerned to see, in the interests of their own States as well as South Australia, that salinity in the Murray River is properly coped with and that all States are supplied with that quantity of good water to which they are entitled under the agreement.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Can the Minister of Works say whether the flow of water coming down the Murray River at present is being diverted through Lake Victoria in order to reduce the high salinity by diluting the river water with water stored in Lake Victoria? If that is being done, will he say why the same conditions would not apply if work on the Chowilla dam was continued?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: I have nothing to add to what the Premier has said following the receipt of a report from the South Australian commissioner. It is obvious

from what the Premier has said that the many difficulties involved can be solved only by a proper and complete investigation, which is now taking place.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I listened carefully to the report read by the Premier, which yesterday he promised to get for me and which was today requested by the member for Chaffey. I have what I consider to be a helpful suggestion on the possible action to be taken by the Government. Obviously, the commission, at this stage, is actively devoting its energies to a proper investigation of the salinity problem. It seems that salinity, although closely related to the Chowilla project, is a separate problem that must be solved regardless of whether Chowilla proceeds or not, and it must be solved by the Victorian and South Australian Governments. As the Premier said, the contributions by Victoria to salinity problems in the Murray River concern us most.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: And New South Wales, according to this new information.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Representations were made to the Victorian Premier about the quality of water at Mildura and the need for a flow through Mildura, so the Victorian Government must realize the problem being created for people at Mildura and at Red Cliffs. I believe that we should assume that the salinity problem will be solved; if that is assumed, the Chowilla scheme is safe. Will the Premier consider whether it will be possible for the planning of Chowilla to continue whilst the salinity problem is being solved, because I believe that this problem must be, can be and will be solved?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Certainly, because this aspect has been ever present in Government thinking. Provided we get water of adequate quality there is no question that Chowilla is the only safe project to ensure for South Australia an adequate river water supply in dry years. My representations to the Commonwealth Government that we needed to have a meeting to assure South Australia of its water supply unfortunately met with Mr. Fairbairn's derision not only of the Government but of all members of this House, and I regret that that is the case. However, I think it is advisable that, rather than exchange views through the medium of the press in this State, we should get together on the matter as soon as possible. I regret that the Commonwealth Government was not prepared to accede to the request of members of this place.

Mr. Millhouse: Why don't you go to see him?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I shall. I believe it is vital that we get together and that, if we can talk personally about this matter, a number of problems, which seem to have become bogged down with public differences, will be solved. At any rate, if they are not solved, it will not be for the want of trying on our part. I believe all members of this place are concerned to see that we receive the necessary assurances on this score. I believe the River Murray Waters Agreement will have to be amended to ensure that, if saline water is placed in the river, sufficient dilution waters are provided to return the quality of water to its previous standard. This will be absolutely vital to the continuance of the agreement.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: I think a better solution is to prevent saline water getting in at all.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I agree but that, of course, may hinder certain projected schemes in New South Wales and Victoria, the Governments in those States having proceeded gaily with projects which by their very nature return highly saline waters to the Murray River or, at least, to its tributaries in areas where the commission has no specific control.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: They will have to dispose of it in another way.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I agree that we must have this matter sorted out but I entirely agree also that, given a solution to that problem, there is not the slightest reason why Chowilla should not proceed. I agree that this will require personal representations to the individual Ministers concerned. If they are not prepared to meet the Minister of Works and me at some specific place, we are prepared to see whether we cannot talk to them nevertheless, because it is vital that this matter be sorted out to South Australia's benefit.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I listened, with some concern, to the statement from the South Australian representative on the River Murray Commission that was read by the Premier this afternoon, and I very much regret that some aspects of that statement could not be debated. Is the Premier aware that the whole matter of salinity in the Murray River was discussed at length and was the subject of lengthy negotiations when the agreement about Chowilla was entered into? Mr. Beaney's statement would undoubtedly have been correct if it had been made before the signing of the agreement.

However, it is completely incorrect at present, and the agreement sets out specifically that South Australia shall get proper water: it is the first charge on the River Murray Commission in a time of restriction. The Premier will agree that a salinity problem does not arise when the water is flowing strongly and the salinity is being flushed out: salinity arises in time of restriction when there is not much flow in the river. The relevant clause of the River Murray Waters Agreement is clause 51 (4), which provides:

As soon as practicable after a period of restriction has been declared and from time to time during that period, the commission shall—

(*a*) determine the quantity of Murray water;

(*b*) determine the quantity of water which is to be allowed—

(i) for losses by evaporation, percolation and lockages other than losses under sub-paragraph (ii) of this paragraph, and

(ii) for losses by evaporation, percolation and lockages in the river from Lake Victoria outlet to the river mouth, but not including Lakes Alexandrina and Albert, and

(iii) for dilution within South Australia;

(*c*) having regard to its determinations under paragraphs (*a*) and (*b*) of this subclause, determine the quantity of water to be made available for use during each month by the contracting States.

The Premier will see from that provision that, at the insistence of South Australia, when the agreement regarding Chowilla was drawn up provision was made for the water to be diluted so as to bring it to a suitable standard in South Australia. That has to be done even before distribution to other States is dealt with: it is a first requirement. In those circumstances, does not the Premier think it is time South Australia took a much more determined stand regarding Chowilla dam?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The honourable member has obviously overlooked certain aspects of the statement I quoted, which pointed out that the commission had no control over tributaries. Even in times of good flow, we could be provided, on what is now proposed in Victoria and New South Wales, with highly saline water that could be concentrated in the Chowilla dam, and that could lead to grave consequences for South Australia, as Mr. Beaney has pointed out. This Government is determined to get the Chowilla dam, but it is not prepared to provide a situation in which South Australia is endangered. We are determined to see that South Australia gets water of good quality and in quantity, and that course has been pursued by our commissioner. If the member for Gumeracha or any other honourable member wants to consult me on the course to be taken by this State regarding Chowilla, I shall be happy to discuss the matter prior to my going, like Mahomet to the mountain, to those people who also have some influence on the course of events.

MURRAY RIVER SALINITY

Mr. HALL: In clause 51 of the River Murray Waters Agreement provision is made for the River Murray Commission, as soon as possible after declaring a period of restriction, to determine how much water will be allowed for dilution in South Australia. I understand from the Minister of Works that a restriction of 291,000 acre feet has been declared. Can the Minister say whether this figure includes the quantity for dilution of water in South Australia, or whether any quantity that may be declared by the commission to be used for dilution is additional?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: I think that the quantity is all inclusive, but it is desirable that we should have further water for diluting purposes. However, so that I may give the full facts, I will have an inquiry made.

Mr. CURREN: In yesterday's *Advertiser* under the heading "Murray Water Check", appears the following statement:

In a statement issued in Canberra, the Minister for National Development said the commission recognized the importance of exploring all likely measures to improve the water supply position. The Snowy Mountains Authority would be asked to assist.

Can the Minister say whether any action has been taken to improve the quality of the water in the Murray River by the release of water from storages under the control of the Snowy Mountains Authority or from other storages not under the control of the River Murray Commission?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: From the Eildon weir, 500 cusecs of water is being released.

Mr. Quirke: How often?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: It is a continual flow from the Murray River which can only be released at 500 cusecs. It has been released to relieve the plight of people in

certain irrigation settlements in Victoria: it has no application to anyone else. However, it must be acknowledged that this is being done and that it will afford some benefit to South Australia. I had a communication from the Director and Engineer-in-Chief this morning to the effect that these benefits cannot be measured, but that the Eildon water gives a high quality flow to dilute other more saline water. However, this arrangement has been made for the benefit of people in Victoria.

BLAIR ATHOL SCHOOL

Mr. COUMBE: Has the Minister of Education a reply to my recent question about the Blair Athol Primary School?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: Although consideration has been given to re-siting several of the timber classrooms near Regency Road to an area on the southern side of the solid-construction building, the falling enrolment and the availability of classrooms for primary grades in the solid-construction infants building makes the cost of transferring the rooms, which will be surplus within a year or so, unjustifiable. The infants school, as the honourable member knows, is on a separate site about 400 yards from the primary school. It is therefore proposed to leave two grade 3 classes in the solid-construction infants school building in 1968. Grade 3 children have occupied infants school rooms in a number of schools and no difficulties have been encountered. When this is done, it will not be necessary to use any of the timber rooms adjacent to Regency Road and they will then be available for transfer elsewhere.

BRIGHTON ROAD

Mr. HUDSON: Has the Minister representing the Minister of Roads a reply to my recent question about work currently being undertaken on Brighton Road?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: My colleague reports that the work currently in hand on Brighton Road north of the Hove railway crossing and extending to Dunrobin Road is expected to be completed during December. Work cannot commence on widening the railway crossing or widening the road south of the crossing to Stopford Road until after completion of land acquisition on the western side of Brighton Road. This land acquisition involves the relocation of a shop, and negotiations are both difficult and protracted. It is not possible at this stage to give any accurate estimate of when it will be completed.

MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: No doubt because of the bad condition of the main highway between Angaston and Mount Pleasant and because of the increasingly heavy traffic over it in recent years, sections of it have been reconstructed. Will the Minister of Lands ascertain from the Minister of Roads whether it is intended to complete the reconstruction of the remaining portion of this highway during the current year? If it is not, when will the reconstruction be completed?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will refer the matter to my colleague.

RISDON PARK SCHOOL

Mr. McKEE: Last month I received from the Minister of Education a letter informing me that he had asked the Public Buildings Department to consider improving the toilet facilities at the Risdon Park Primary School. Has he received a reply from the department?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: I do not know of a reply, but I will follow up the matter for the honourable member.

GOODWOOD ROAD INTERSECTION

Mr. LANGLEY: Recently work commenced on the widening of Goodwood Road, at the southern end of the Millswood subway, and this work necessitated land acquisition. These facilities will greatly assist pedestrians and provide a safer approach to the subway for motorists. Will the Minister of Lands ascertain from the Minister of Roads when the work will be completed and obtain information about the design of safety precautions for pedestrians?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Yes.

WALLAROO HOSPITAL

Mr. HUGHES: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent questions about additional work on the geriatric ward at the Wallaroo Hospital?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: Further to the information that I gave the honourable member in the House on September 26, a satisfactory offer for enclosing the verandahs of the geriatric ward has now been received by the department from Mr. R. J. Laver, of Kadina. An order will now be placed with Mr. Laver to enable the work to proceed.

MEATWORKS

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: A few days ago I asked the Minister of Agriculture about a private abattoir in my district being selected to pay a levy of ½c a pound on all meat

brought into the metropolitan area. The Minister declined to answer but suggested that I contact the company. I have done this and have ascertained the facts. I asked the Minister the reason for introducing this new principle, which had not been envisaged when the Act was amended to provide for the type of licence held by the company. Can the Minister now say what is the reason and whether the levy has been imposed, because last week the Minister said that the permit had not been signed?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: I think I should elaborate and give some of the history of the whole matter. As members know, killing works generally throughout Australia have had rather a lean period, mainly because of changed circumstances in connection with export and because there have been two or three dry seasons in New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia. There has been a change in the situation at the Gepps Cross abattoir, and difficulties have been experienced by the board in making ends meet. In fact, the board reported to me that, unless improvements were made, it would have to appeal to the Government for at least $500,000 in order to carry on.

Because of that, it was considered that an inquiry should be held into the reasons for this position and, at my request, the Public Service Commissioner instituted inquiries at the abattoir to find out what the problems were. One problem brought up was that at one time the Gepps Cross abattoir had a complete monopoly of the meat supply to the metropolitan area but that this position no longer applied. The member for Alexandra was Minister of Agriculture when legislation was introduced to provide for outside killing works to bring meat to the metropolitan area and he appointed a committee to investigate which companies should be permitted to do this. As a result, Metropolitan Wholesale Meat Company Limited (or Noarlunga Meat Limited, which is under the same control) was given a licence, but it was given on an annual basis.

I think there was much disagreement at the time about whether anyone should be able to bring meat to the metropolitan area. However, this action was taken. I have renewed the licence until this year, when I realized that the difficulties at the Gepps Cross abattoir were becoming more acute and that something should be done. As the honourable member has said in this House, it was proposed in the discussion that ensued that the amount of meat that the company could bring to the metropolitan area be reduced to half the former allowance. This proposal did not meet with the approval of the company, and fresh negotiations were conducted. Representatives of the company and I discussed the matter with the General Manager and the Chairman of the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs Board and, eventually, an amicable agreement was reached. To the best of my knowledge this position still applies. One aspect discussed was that shops in the metropolitan area, to which meat from the Gepps Cross abattoir and Noarlunga Meat Limited (as well as others who were licensed) was delivered, had to be inspected. These companies are receiving a real service and there is a need to inspect these shops.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: Is this purely an inspection fee?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: I should like to develop this reply in my own way. The amount was agreed in discussions with representatives of the company and the Abattoirs Board and me. When these gentlemen left my office after reaching agreement one of them said, "At least that is satisfactory, and I am pleased it is off my mind." I am sure that this matter had caused each of us concern. When the honourable member first asked a question on this matter, I said that I considered it was not proper for me to divulge the business dealings of this company, but that he should speak direct with its representatives. The only people with whom I had discussed the matter were at the meeting, and because the honourable member knew so much about it I thought that he had received information from the company. Therefore, I gave him a complete reply, but I was later informed that the company had been concerned about this because it had not approached the honourable member and it was concerned because he had raised the matter. I was surprised and disappointed that last Thursday the honourable member immediately telephoned the manager of this company after asking his question. On the telephone the honourable member said that the Minister had suggested to him that he should ring the company. However, the gist of what happened, as the manager of the company told my secretary at 2.30 p.m. that day, was that the honourable member rang him and asked whether he was completely satisfied, and the answer was that one was never completely satisfied when one had to pay something out,

but that there was no option. Later, the honourable member asked another question, to which I replied. On the Tuesday following the Monday holiday, I sent a letter to the company asking for its opinion on the present situation. An agreement has been drawn up by the Crown Solicitor, but I have asked him to wait until I receive a reply from the company setting out its reaction to the situation.

Mr. McANANEY: As I understand that this is the only State in which a charge for inspection of shops is included in the slaughtering fee, does the Minister consider that inspecting shops for cleanliness (which is a matter of public health) is the responsibility of people who are having stock slaughtered?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: Yes.

Mr. McANANEY: Can the Minister say whether any other agricultural industries under his control are levied in order to pay for shop inspections?

The Hon. G. A. BYWATERS: Not that I am aware of, but I shall see whether I can go right through the whole issue to satisfy the honourable member.

TEA TREE GULLY TANK

Mrs. BYRNE: In reply to a recent question I asked in the House, the Minister of Works referred to the Engineering and Water Supply Department's plans for improving the water supply in the Modbury, Tea Tree Gully and Yatala Vale areas. At the time, the Minister said, amongst other things, that a new 2,000,000-gallon water tank was to be built at Tea Tree Gully. Can the Minister say whether this tank is to be erected for the purpose of improving the water pressure in the area immediately above Haines Road?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: Although I do not recall the exact locality of the tank, I shall ascertain that information for the honourable member. The only purpose of the tank is to improve pressure and, from what I have seen of the plan, I think Haines Road will be affected by its construction.

MAGILL SCHOOL

Mrs. STEELE: Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked last week about extra classroom accommodation at the Magill Primary School?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: It is expected that the transfer of the additional land mentioned by the honourable member will be completed within the next few weeks. The Public Buildings Department reports that a start could be made on the erection of the additional dual classroom unit early next month and that it would then be available for occupation by the beginning of the 1968 school year. Every effort will be made to have the work carried out by this date.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT

Mr. QUIRKE: Has the Minister representing the Minister of Local Government a reply to the question I asked recently about the operation of section 530c of the Local Government Act?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The Minister of Local Government reports that section 530c of the Local Government Act does not dispense with the rights of ratepayers to demand a poll on any borrowing that a council may contract to carry out a sewerage effluent disposal scheme. Section 530c (10) provides that a council may borrow money for the work subject to the provisions of Part XXI of the Act. Part XXI contains provisions for ratepayers to demand a poll. The honourable member is probably referring to the effluent scheme proposed by the Corporation and District Council of Clare. In this case, the two councils proposed to combine in a joint scheme under the Local Government Act to carry out the work, which covers area in both councils. Under section 403 of the Act regarding joint schemes, either council being a constituent member of the scheme may borrow money without the necessity of complying with other provisions of the Act regarding loans. The proposed work, however, would be submitted to ratepayers concerned, and objections may be submitted to the councils, as provided by section 530c. The provisions concerning effluent disposal schemes are being considered by the Local Government Act Revision Committee.

RABBIT CONTROL

Mr. RODDA: I have been approached by landholders who live in the hundred of Woolumbool near the area known as the Kangoora reserve and who have expressed concern at the increasing numbers of rabbits, which are making inroads into surrounding properties. As rabbits cannot be poisoned on reserves by the application of the time-honoured 1080, will the Minister of Lands discuss this matter with the officers concerned and ascertain whether remedial action can be taken?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The honourable member will be aware of the programme for fire-breaking and vermin-proof fencing

of reserves throughout the State. He will also be aware that the National Parks Commission controls about 30 national parks, involving about 600,000 acres. This gives some indication of the extensive programme to be carried out by the commission, and unfortunately only limited finance is available to it. Tests were carried out recently in the hundred of Caroline by means of dropping from aircraft carrots that had been treated with 1080. This test was part of a scheme to control rabbits in forest areas. It was intended at that time to do trial work in the Canunda Wild Life Reserve by dropping from an aeroplane oats treated with 1080. To my knowledge, this work has not been carried out, but if such a scheme were successful it would facilitate the destruction of vermin in reserves.

Mr. Quirke: What else?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: To the best of our knowledge, oats treated with 1080 do not destroy bird life. According to Mr. Bromell, no positive proof exists that it destroys bird life or fowl life.

Mr. Quirke: Are you sure of that?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: It is open to debate.

The SPEAKER: Order! Because some important questions have been raised this afternoon I have not called the attention of honourable members to Standing Orders. Although I realize that there has been debate during other replies to questions and that I have allowed it, I cannot allow debate generally during Question Time.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I think the honourable member requested that I should confer with councils, but I should prefer the councils to write to me about this matter because I could then pass on the letters to the commissioners, who could investigate. It is amazing that, when the commission takes over, as a national park, an area that has been in a natural state hitherto, an immediate build-up of vermin takes place that did not appear to take place previously! When the Canunda reserve was declared, the council immediately wrote to the commission and to me complaining bitterly about a build-up of vermin in the area, and the situation had not changed in the slightest. That is the attitude sometimes taken. However, I realize that adjoining landholders can suffer as a result of a national park being declared. We are doing our best to contain the problem, and I hope that eventually we shall have full control of vermin and that we shall also be able to provide fences and fire breaks in national parks.

HAHNDORF SCHOOL

Mr. SHANNON: The Minister of Education will know that for some time negotiations have taken place regarding additional land for the Hahndorf Primary School. As I will visit the school in about 10 days, I shall be obliged if the Minister can supply me with the latest information regarding the investigation the department is conducting to secure this land, which is needed by the school.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: I shall be pleased to obtain the information for the honourable member.

FINANCIAL AGREEMENT

Mr. QUIRKE: As honourable members know, for many years now I have said that the Financial Agreement between the States and the Commonwealth is holding back the States, irrespective of the political brand of their Government. I understand that the States have now realized this. As I believe that a united front on the part of the States is the only way to bring about the change necessary in that agreement (which is at present hamstringing the progress of the States), can the Treasurer say whether any arrangements are presently being made by the States to present to the Commonwealth a united front divorced altogether from the shibboleths of Party politics?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: In February, 1966, the Commonwealth Government met with the States at the Premiers' Conference, and at that time, as a result of representations of all States, it invited the State Premiers to submit at the June Premiers' Conference representations for a basic amendment of the Financial Agreement between the States and the Commonwealth so that the financial relationships between the parties could be resolved. In consequence, all States (including South Australia) prepared submissions for the June Premiers' Conference. However, at that conference we were told we were allowed to make some preliminary statement, and were then asked to go into private conference with the Commonwealth Government concerning the work of the Loan Council. We then had an argument about the Loan works for Australia and the programme to be adopted by the Loan Council. It was a fairly bitter argument.

Mr. Millhouse: Were you the most bitter?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I was not the bitterest in it. The honourable member had better talk to Mr. Askin about the tone of that conference.

Mr. Millhouse: I agree.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The Commonwealth Government then told us that it would agree to a certain figure for Loan works on condition that the existing financial arrangement as to reimbursement from income tax would be maintained. It would not listen to a word of what had been put.

Mr. Quirke: It sounds like Sir Roland Wilson.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I do not think so, because he was not there.

Mr. Quirke: He would not need to be!

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not think there is any need to debate this.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: All States had been prepared to make submissions on a reasonable basis for a return to the States of an inbuilt expansion in revenue, such as is naturally available to the Commonwealth Government, which would cope with the natural expansion in the cost of State services and the expansion in the level of State services to cope with the increasing business, industry and population. The Commonwealth Government adamantly refused to listen to a word of it from any of us. As a result, and as the honourable member is aware, some fairly terse things have been said by all State Premiers. Those Premiers who are subject to the Commonwealth Grants Commission are not in such a drastic position as are the four remaining Premiers. South Australia is not now a claimant State on the Grants Commission. I have read to the House what Sir Henry Bolte said on this score, and what Mr. Askin said in his Budget speech a short time ago, which was equally rumbustious. Obviously, the States had to get together on this issue, and the first proposal as to how this should be done was put forward by Mr. Renshaw of New South Wales. He arranged with me and Labor leaders in the other States for a meeting in concert to formulate a proposal to be put forward by all on our side of politics to resolve this issue. That meeting will be held in this State on November 4 and 5. Sir Henry Bolte subsequently announced that he had induced the Prime Minister to meet with members of his own Party somewhere else, and today it is announced in the newspaper that a Premiers' Conference is to be called for next February. I have not received any news from the Prime Minister about this other than the statement in the newspaper. Indeed, this seems to be how I get the various pieces of information from the Commonwealth Government: that is how the Premiers have been treated for some time. Mr. Renshaw has specifically put forward the proposition that it will be vital, if the Commonwealth Government does not move in this area, that the States call another Constitutional Convention of the States and that all sides of politics within the States get together to preserve the rights of the people to the services which State Governments are responsible to provide.

Mr. Millhouse: I didn't think you believed in the States at all.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I believe that the way the Commonwealth Government is going at the moment will completely ruin the States.

Mr. Millhouse: I thought that was what you wanted in your Party's policy.

The SPEAKER: Order! Order! I have appealed to members and told them that Question Time is not the appropriate time for debate. I tried to close my eyes and ears earlier in the afternoon when the Chowilla dam was being discussed but I cannot permit interjections to continue.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: As Premier of this State, I am concerned to ensure that the people of this area of Australia receive the level of services to which they are entitled and which are at present provided by the States under the Commonwealth Constitution. If action by the Commonwealth Government under the Constitution deprives them of services of that level, I am prepared to fight to the last drop for the people of this State to get the things to which they are entitled. I am, therefore, entirely in accord with the move made by Mr. Renshaw. I have been happy to co-operate with him and to arrange the conference to be held here. I hope leaders of the Liberal Party, if they find that they cannot induce the Prime Minister and the Commonwealth Treasurer to mete out any better sort of treatment to the States than was evidenced at the Premiers' Conference and Loan Council meetings, will join with us in a Constitutional Convention of the States so that we can present a united front from all sides of politics to get for the people of the States of Australia the things to which they are entitled.

JUDICIAL DUTIES

Mr. MILLHOUSE: On Tuesday, the matter of the Local Court Judge was raised in this House, and the Premier replied, I think to me, that by today news would be given of further extensive duties that Judge Gillespie

would have to undertake. Since then I have inquired (deliberately, I may say), but have not been able to discover anything about additional duties. I take it that something must have transpired at Executive Council this morning, and I desire to ask the Premier whether I am correct in that surmise and whether he can now make an announcement about the additional duties the Local Court Judge is to undertake.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Two matters are involved: first, Judge Gillespie has been appointed to the drought relief committee that was established by legislation recently passed; and secondly, the Country and Suburban Courts Department will now be amalgamated with the Adelaide Local Court Department, and Judge Gillespie will be the head of the new department.

WOMEN'S PRISON

Mr. COUMBE: Has the Premier a reply to my question about the provision of a new women's prison?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Planning of this project has reached the stage where documents have been prepared ready for calling tenders. Consideration was given to this project when determining the building programme for 1967-68. However, due to the higher priorities allotted to other projects by the Comptroller of Prisons and other heads of departments, it was not possible to make provision on the 1967-68 Estimates for work to commence on the erection of the Women's Rehabilitation Centre this financial year. When work will proceed on the project depends on the future availability of funds and the priorities allotted to other projects on hand. However, the high priority that has now been given by the Comptroller of Prisons to the erection of the Northfield Women's Rehabilitation Centre will be considered when determining the building programme for 1968-69.

GAS

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: Has the Premier a reply to my question about the provision of a spur pipeline to supply natural gas to an important decentralized industry at Angaston, namely, the Brighton cement works?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: At this date, it is the intention of the Natural Gas Pipelines Authority that the spur line to Angaston should come into operation at the same time as the main line to the metropolitan area.

NURSES

Mr. HALL: Has the Minister of Social Welfare a reply to my question about the fees that nurses are charged in respect of lectures?

The Hon. FRANK WALSH: The Chief Secretary states that the appointment of medical practitioners by the Nurses Board of South Australia to give lectures to trainee nurses has been under consideration for some time. The older system has been for the Nurses Board to appoint lecturers at three major hospitals (the Royal Adelaide, Queen Elizabeth and Adelaide Children's Hospital) and for the other hospitals to send their trainees to one of these three hospitals. However, it has been found that the groups of trainees have been far too large for modern tutorial methods to apply. This, together with the systems of "block" teaching at such hospitals as the Adelaide Children's Hospital, has emphasized the need for alternative training programmes to be developed.

Being aware of the unsatisfactory aspects of mass teaching, the Nurses Board obtained approval to discontinue the present system of appointing lecturers. South Australia has been the last State to take this action. In all other States, the individual hospitals are responsible for appointing their own lecturers and for arranging their own lecture programme.

In South Australia, the country training schools have always made their own arrangements for the giving of lectures by medical practitioners, and it may be of interest to note that in the first examination conducted in August, 1967, a student nurse from Laura Hospital, which is not a Government-subsidized hospital, gained top marks out of 255 candidates in Part A of the examination, whilst in Part B, students from country subsidized hospitals filled the first four places out of 288 candidates.

When the decision was made for metropolitan hospitals to be responsible for their own lecture programmes, it was made quite clear to these hospitals that there would be no objection to the smaller training schools amalgamating for the purpose of arranging their programmes and, recently, the matrons and tutor sisters were invited to meet representatives of the Nurses Board to discuss this matter. No firm decisions were reached, but it is understood that the matrons will discuss this matter with their hospitals boards and it is likely that another meeting will be held on a date to be fixed.

With regard to the question of finance, it is pointed out that under the present system, the Nurses Board pays the medical practitioners $6.30 a lecture. At the same time, the hospitals are charged $1.50 or $1.75 (depending on the number of lectures in the course) for each student who attends a course of lectures. The total cost for each student nurse to attend the eight courses of lectures is $12.75. The only time that these charges have been varied is when the medical practitioners' lecture fees have been increased. It is now 12 years since these were last increased. Students' lecture fees have been raised only to levels sufficient to cover the cost of the medical practitioners' fees.

It is understood that some of the smaller hospitals pay the charges for students attending lectures. Under the new system this payment will be made direct to the lecturer instead of the Nurses Board. If the hospitals amalgamate for the purpose of medical practitioners' lectures, it is considered that the increase in expenditure as stated by the Leader will not be evident for the following reasons based on the 1966 figures:

(*a*) Number of students from the smaller hospitals who were charged for attending lectures 657

(*b*) Amount of fees received by Nurses Board $1,066.25

(*c*) Payment to lecturers at ruling rates $938.70

These figures are based on the holding each year of three courses of lectures in each of the following subjects: paediatrics, gynaecology, community health, diseases of the eye, anatomy and physiology, ear, nose and throat and two courses in each of surgical nursing and medical nursing.

It was suggested at the recent meeting with the matrons and tutor sisters, that only two courses in each subject be held. If this suggestion is adopted, the payment to the lecturers would then be $756.00 at ruling rates. It must be emphasized that the Nurses Board is firmly of the opinion that all trainee nurses should receive as much individual tuition as possible throughout their training course. It is believed that this can best be done by close relationships being developed between lecturers and students within their individual hospitals. To keep costs to a minimum however, it is appreciated that smaller hospitals may need to amalgamate their training programmes.

POLICE LECTURES

Mr. HUDSON: Has the Premier obtained from the Chief Secretary a reply to the question I asked on September 21 about the number of people who have been requested by the police to attend a lecture instead of being prosecuted?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Lectures for traffic offenders are held in the auditorium at Police Headquarters at intervals of about one week. Some lectures are also given at country centres. For the 12 months ended June 30, 1967, 47 lectures were conducted in Adelaide and 23 lectures were arranged at various country towns. In this same period the traffic adjudication section processed 77,954 files in which breaches of either the Road Traffic Act or the Motor Vehicles Act were revealed. Of this number, 57,424 offenders were recommended for prosecution, 9,139 for a written caution, and 11,391 were given the option of attending a lecture in lieu of prosecution. In other words about 25 per cent of those detected in offences were given the opportunity to be dealt with otherwise than by prosecution in the court. At June 30, 1967, about 2,000 people were still waiting to attend lectures.

HOMES ACT

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Has the Premier been able to ascertain whether it would be advisable to amend the sum guaranteed under the Homes Act, and has he information about the conditions under which loans are being made outside the provisions of this Act?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I am assured by the Savings Bank of South Australia that its net income standard in approving homes loans is no less favourable than formerly, having regard to changing levels of living costs and wages. Adjustments have been made from time to time as costs of living and wage levels have been raised, as the general endeavour is to ensure that the applicant, after meeting his housing loan obligations, has a reasonable minimum income left to meet his family's necessary living expenses. Increases in wage levels over the last 18 months have included a $2 increase in the basic wage in June, 1966, a margins increase in early 1967, and a further minimum wage increase of $1 in July, 1967. An adjustment was made by the bank in its income standard earlier this year of about $3 a week, and this was the first increase for several years.

I should very much like to be able to raise the loan limit under the Homes Act from

$7,000 to $8,000 as the honourable member suggests. However, I must bear in mind that whilst both the Savings Bank and the Government are providing for housing loans at a greater rate than formerly, and at a much greater rate than in other States, there are still heavy demands and considerable waiting lists. To lend each applicant $8,000 instead of $7000 would mean we could only satisfy seven-eighths of the number of applicants. However, I assure the honourable member that this matter is continuously under review, and an increase will be authorized as soon as funds and the unsatisfied waiting lists make this practicable.

PUBLIC SERVICE BILL

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY (Minister of Education) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to consolidate and amend the law relating to the Public Service and for other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It arises out of the development of the South Australian Public Service during the last half century. Although there had been a few pieces of legislation before 1874, mainly dealing with retirement from the Civil Service, the first Civil Service Act was passed in 1874. Various amendments and other special enactments followed from time to time until the basic Act on which our current practice is largely built was passed in 1916. This Act, No. 1259 of 1916, provided for the first time for a Public Service Commissioner, who commenced duty on January 1, 1917, just over 50 years ago. The 1916 Act also provided for a Public Service Reclassification Board, but it was an *ad hoc* tribunal and on completion of its function of classifying the service its charter expired.

The 1916 Act provided for the introduction of proper standards for admission to the Public Service, for promotions, on merit, on the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner, for compulsory retirement at age 70, and for recreation, sick, and long service leave. Although most of its provisions have been varied as to content by a multitude of amendments made since that date, it is still the 1916 Act that provides the framework for the administration of the Public Service today. The major variation to the 1916 Act was made in 1925 when provision was made for a continuing board, originally known as the Public Service Classification and Efficiency Board, later changed to the Public Service Board. The board at first consisted of the Public Service Commissioner *ex officio,* and the other two members were full-time public servants who were given this additional part-time function of members of the board. The original functions of the board were threefold:

(1) to classify the Public Service, that is, to fix salaries for all the permanent positions in the service;

(2) to hear appeals against recommendations for promotion made by the Public Service Commissioner; and

(3) to be responsible for the efficiency of the Public Service.

At this stage I think I should point out that the Public Service as defined by the then Public Service Act excluded such organizations as the Railways Department, the Police Force and the teaching staff of the Education Department, as well as certain other particular positions. This broad pattern has been maintained ever since and it is proposed to continue it in this Bill. In 1948 the Classification and Efficiency Board was replaced by a Public Service Board and simultaneously the Public Service Commissioner ceased to be *ex officio* Chairman of the board, but he was then, and has been continuously up to the present time, appointed by the Government of the day to be Chairman of the board. As one of the functions of the board was to hear appeals against recommendations for promotion made by the Public Service Commissioner, provision was made in 1948 that when the board was sitting in this appeal jurisdiction the Public Service Commissioner would be replaced on the board by a so-called "fourth member". This fourth member has acted as Chairman and has usually been a stipendiary magistrate, although this is not a statutory requirement. The other two part-time members of the board, with the fourth member, constituted the board for these appeals.

In 1916 when the first Public Service Commissioner was appointed the number of officers coming within the scope of the legislation was 1,631. As at June 30, 1967, the comparable figure was 8,686. It is not surprising therefore that in recent years a view has been strongly advanced that the existing system of a single full-time commissioner and a part-time board is inadequate to meet the demands and pressures of a large modern Public Service. This Government, soon after its election, indicated that it was prepared to introduce legislation to bring the administrative machinery of the Public Service up to date, and this Bill is the result of that undertaking. Although matters

are naturally included in the Bill which may be the subject of difference of opinion, I am sure that most of its provisions will be acceptable to the House as a whole. South Australia has always been well served by its Public Service and Governments of all political persuasion have gone on record on many occasions to pay tribute to the devotion and loyalty of civil servants. Those few actions which have occurred at rare intervals contrary to this general rule have only served to highlight the high standing in which the Public Service is justifiably held by Parliament and people alike. I again take this opportunity to pay tribute to the general efficiency of the Public Service and the unbiased manner in which the service as a whole, and heads of departments in particular, have sought to give full effect to the policy of the Government.

Because of the size of the Bill which is a consolidation of the existing legislation, I do not intend to analyse each clause in detail, but I should like first of all to emphasize the principal changes made by the Bill, apart from consolidation, and then to go into a little more detail regarding the principal divisions of the Bill. The first major change is that to which I have already referred, namely, the replacement of a single commissioner and part-time board by a full-time board of three commissioners. Since the part-time board was first established in 1926 the Public Service Association (which at that stage was the only major organization having a significant number of members in the Public Service) has had the right to nominate one of the members of the board. However, today there are several industrial organizations which have large numbers of members employed in the service, and the special position of the Public Service Association cannot, in the opinion of the Government, be maintained any longer. Consequently the Bill provides that each of the three commissioners shall be appointed by the Governor without any one of them specifically representing any group of employees. (It will be noted that as a transitional measure the existing Public Service Commissioner becomes Chairman of the new board.) In making this change the Government does not desire to imply any criticism of the way in which the Public Service Association has acted in the past, but merely points out that the changed circumstances today justify a different approach. It will be seen later that some of the functions previously discharged by the board will go to separate tribunals and on these tribunals provision is made for representation by any organization recognized as having a significant number of members in the Public Service.

The full-time board is necessary because of the growth of the service, and as a consequence the demands made on the two part-time members have made it hard for them not to neglect their ordinary Public Service appointments, and have required them to devote much of their private time to board business. Also the many important decisions required in the day-to-day administration of the service are such that it is unfair to expect a single Commissioner to carry the burden of these decisions alone. A full-time board of three has existed in the Commonwealth, New South Wales and Victorian Public Services for many years, and a similar arrangement is being considered in the other States.

Because of the growth of the service and consequential large number of appointments and promotions necessary, the time of Ministers and of Executive Council has been taken up to a great extent dealing with what are, as far as the Government is concerned, routine matters. Accordingly, the Bill proposes to place on the board the responsibility for some of these matters which hitherto have required attention by Ministers. (It had been intended to place on the board the responsibility for making the actual appointments apart from very senior appointments but, as the Constitution still contains a provision that these appointments shall be made by the Governor in Executive Council, it is not possible to incorporate this provision in the Public Service Act at this stage). Nevertheless, the many base-grade formal appointments, totalling about 2,000 during 1966, will in future be handled by the board. The Government will keep control of the size of the service and general policy matters by means of its control over the Estimates and by the retention to it of the responsibility for authorizing the creation of new positions in departments.

As the Public Service Board will be taking over the responsibility of recommending officers for promotion, it will no longer be appropriate for the board to hear appeals against such recommendations. Accordingly a separate Appointments Appeal Committee of three persons is proposed, consisting of a special magistrate as Chairman, and an officer appointed by the Governor. The third member of the committee will be selected from a panel by the appellant. The members of this panel will be nominated by the recognized organizations and it is expected that normally an

appellant will select from the panel the nominee of his particular union. The committee, so constituted, clearly has all the attributes of independence so necessary in these matters.

A somewhat similar tribunal is provided to hear disciplinary matters. Although the conduct of the Public Service as a whole is of a very high standard, there are the occasional disciplinary matters which must be attended to. Minor offences will be dealt with by the head of the department but his powers of punishment are restricted to an admonition. The more serious charges will be dealt with by the board with a right of appeal from the board's decision to a disciplinary tribunal. This tribunal will consist of a judge or special magistrate as Chairman, an officer appointed by the Government from some department other than that in which the offending officer is employed, and a third person selected by the offending officer from a panel. This panel will consist of persons nominated by the recognized organizations already referred to.

The present Act recognizes only the Public Service Association and the anomaly exists that an officer who is not a member of the Public Service Association cannot be represented in any proceedings concerning his employment by an officer of his own union. The Bill proposes to change this so that any organization registered in the Industrial Court that has a significant number of members employed in the Public Service may apply to the board and become a recognized organization. All such organizations will have the right to make nominations to the Appointments Appeal Committee and to the disciplinary tribunal and be heard generally on matters affecting their members.

The Bill gives effect to the Government's election promise that it would increase the recreation leave eligibility of public servants from three weeks to four weeks, and as previously announced it provides that eligibility for leave at the rate of four weeks each year will commence to accrue as from January 1, 1968. Although no change has been made in the basic eligibility for sick leave, which is 12 working days for each year of service, the Bill proposes to abolish the arbitrary limitations on the way in which this may accumulate, and to remove the ceiling of 160 working days on accumulation. As this leave is only available in cases of sickness supported by medical certificates, the Government believes that there is no logic in the existing limitations.

Similarly the rate of earning of long service leave has not been altered. The qualifying period remains at 10 years of continuous service which gives an eligibility of 90 days' leave on full pay and a further nine days for each additional year of service. This basis has been in operation for over 20 years. However, the Government believes that there are occasions when an officer's service is terminated for reasons substantially beyond his own control before he has completed the 10-year qualifying period and that it would be reasonable to grant pro rata leave in such cases, provided that he has completed at least five years of service.

To accord with the alterations made to the Superannuation Act earlier this year, provision is made for persons to retire voluntarily at the age of 60 years (55 for females) if they so desire, but the compulsory retiring age remains at 65 years for males and 60 years for females. It is unlikely that this provision will be availed of to any great extent in the next few years but, as more officers take advantage of the opportunity to contribute for a superannuation pension at the earlier age, then it is logical that the Public Service Act should recognize this trend.

No reference is made in the Bill to the question of employment of married women. The Government does not consider that marriage of itself should have any bearing on the rights of a woman to continue in her employment so long as she is capable of performing her duties efficiently. Consistent with the modern practice and as a natural corollary of the transfer of functions to the board, provision has been made for the board to delegate its powers in appropriate circumstances. This provision has been in the existing Act for the past 40 years and there is no evidence that it has been misused; on the contrary, its judicious use has been effective in speeding up administrative proceedings. Similarly, a permanent head may delegate certain of his powers to a subordinate officer. Such delegations will however require the approval of the board.

Because of their special status it has been deemed appropriate to exclude permanent heads of departments from the normal promotion appeal system, and provision has been made accordingly. The Government desires to acknowledge the assistance given by interested organizations in deciding the content of the Bill. The Public Service Association, as the organization most affected, devoted much time and thought to the problems associated with the Bill, and the Government has been happy to have the advice of this and other groups whose members work under the provisions of

the Public Service Act. Although it was not to be expected that the Bill would give effect to all of their suggestions, the Government has willingly acceded to many of the proposals made by the bodies concerned. I am sure that the Bill represents a significant step forward in the administration of the South Australian Public Service, and I commend it to members.

It will be necessary to make certain consequential amendments to the Public Service Arbitration Act and a Bill to amend that Act will be introduced shortly. I turn now to a more detailed expansion of the principal divisions of the Bill. Because of its size I do not intend to deal with each clause separately. This measure deals with three fairly distinct classes of person: First, there are those who are permanent officers of the Public Service, and here it represents the substance of their terms and conditions of employment. Secondly, there are those who for one reason or another cannot be, or do not wish to be, permanently appointed as officers in the Public Service who are in the Bill referred to as temporary officers. The terms and conditions of employment of these persons are fixed partly by the application of portions of this Bill to their employment and partly by determination of the board. This flexibility is necessary to encompass the substantially varying conditions under which these people are employed. Thirdly, there are those who are employed in the service of the State otherwise than under this Bill, but in relation to certain aspects of whose employment, *e.g.*, leave and retirement, the provisions of this Bill are or may be applied.

The Bill is divided into five Parts:

Part I—Preliminary: This Part is generally formal but at clause 8 contains a definition of the Public Service which follows the definition in the former Act.

Part II—The Public Service Board: This Part provides for the appointment by the Governor of a full time board of three commissioners of whom one is nominated by the Governor as chairman, and provides for the powers and functions of the board. Clause 16 gives the commissioners security of tenure during their term of office; they are substantially removable only on an address from the Parliament.

Part III—The Public Service: This Part, which consists of 10 Divisions, relates to the organization and structure of the Public Service.

Division 1 reiterates in somewhat more detail the principles enunciated by section 25 of the former Act, *i.e.*, that the creation and abolition of departments is essentially an administrative act. This re-affirms a principle which seems necessary and logical since the whole organization and structure of the Public Service is inextricably connected with the departmental system of organization. Adherence to this principle does not, of course, preclude persons not subject to the proposed Act being employed by departments. At clause 26 provision is made to vest the powers and functions of a permanent head who, under the Bill, must be an officer, in any person not being an officer who, for administrative purposes, is required to be head of a department, *e.g.*, the Chairman of the Public Service Board and the Auditor-General.

Division 2 provides for the Governor to create and abolish offices by proclamation and thus assures the control of the executive government over the size of the Public Service since the number of offices created at any given time is basic to the size of the service. Division 3 generally deals with salaries and allowances and distinguishes between permanent heads whose salaries are fixed by the Governor and all other officers whose salaries are fixed by the board. Division 4 deals with first appointment of officers to the service as distinct from the appointment of officers to vacant offices. The period of probation required to be served by a newly appointed officer may be extended for any period not exceeding two years. The provisions of the former Act, relating to appointment without probation are followed again in this Division.

Division 5 provides for the filling of vacant offices and in line with former practice does not apply the appeal system to the filling of the offices of permanent heads. In relation to the remaining offices in the Public Service, it does provide an appeal system but differs from the previous Act in that all officers who applied for appointment may appeal, the grounds of appeal being efficiency as defined in clause 47 (3) of the Bill, seniority no longer being an element in the appeal. This definition of efficiency includes, in certain cases, not only aptitude for the position which is applied for, but also aptitude for further promotion. The Appointments Appeal Committee constituted by clause 50 provides for a chairman who shall be a Special Magistrate and one member appointed by the Governor and one member drawn from a panel nominated by the recognized industrial associations. The function of the Appointments Appeal Committee is to consider appeals against nominations for appointment by the board.

Division 6 relates to disciplinary offences and has been redrafted, having regard to an opinion on the operation of the former disciplinary provisions given by the Crown Solicitor. The offences are somewhat the same but the procedure has been rendered more orderly; briefly, the procedure now provided for is that—

(*a*) an officer is charged by the permanent head or his delegate or, in the case of an alleged offence by a permanent head, by the Minister; and in appropriate cases the permanent head (or Minister) may admonish the officer;

(*b*) the permanent head (or Minister) is also empowered to accept a plea of guilty, dismiss the charge or refer the matter to the board;

(*c*) the board may hear the charge and impose all or any of the punishments provided by clause 64, subject to the approval of the Governor in the case of certain punishments involving dismissal;

(*d*) there is then a general right of appeal to a tribunal consisting of a chairman (who shall be a special magistrate or judge), an officer appointed by the Governor, and an officer selected by the appellant from a panel nominated by recognized (industrial) organizations.

Division 7 provides for, in effect, retrenchment of officers when the amount of work has for any reason diminished. In addition, certain powers to recommend to the Governor compulsory transfer or retirement are vested in the board in cases where for any reason an officer has become inefficient. Division 8 relates to the grant of the four types of leave of absence available to officers: (*a*) annual recreation leave; (*b*) sick leave; (*c*) long service leave; and (*d*) special leave. The principal changes which have been affected by the present Bill are the increase of annual recreation leave entitlement from three weeks to four weeks per annum with effect from January 1, 1968, and the consequent provision that "grace days", *i.e.*, certain holidays that were taken during the Christmas period, will count as recreation leave. The method of granting leave has been clarified and in fact follows the administrative procedure adopted in relation to the grant of leave over a very considerable period.

The provisions proposed in relation to sick, long service and special leave are, in general, unchanged. However, the limitation on the accumulation of sick leave has been eliminated, and provisions relating to the grant of long leave pro rata after five years' service have now been included. Division 9 relates to arrangements which may be entered into between the Governor and the Governor-General of the Commonwealth in relation to the performance of Commonwealth functions by State officers and vice versa. Division 10 relates to the retirement of officers and differs somewhat from the current Act. It provides a right to retire at any time after age 60 years and provides that an officer must retire at 65 or at the latest 66. For female officers the corresponding ages are 55 years, 60 years and 61 years. Part IV relates to temporary officers and generally redrafts and sets out in some more detail the existing provisions relating to temporary officers.

Part V relates to a number of miscellaneous matters which could perhaps best be dealt with specifically. Clause 115 preserves the operation of the War Service (Preference in Employment) Act, 1943. Clause 116 relates to recognition of certain registered industrial organizations as recognized associations for the purposes of this Act. This provision is related to the forming of panels provided for by clauses 51 and 69 of this Act. Clauses 117, 118, 119 and 120 substantially re-enact provisions which existed in the former Act.

Clause 121 is a new provision which requires an officer to disclose the fact of his bankruptcy to the board. This replaces a provision under the previous Act (section 63), which provided for the disciplining of an officer whose bankruptcy was in issue unless that officer satisfied the authorities that he had not been guilty of "fraud, dishonourable conduct or extravagance". This disciplinary aspect is now covered by Division 6 of Part III, so provision is made here merely for reporting the fact of bankruptcy to the board. Subclause (2) is a new provision which seems desirable.

Clauses 122, 123, 124, 125 and 126 substantially re-enact provisions that occurred in the previous Act. Clause 127 applies the portion of Division 8 of Part III, the Division relating to long service leave, to certain persons in the employ of the State otherwise than as officers. This parallels a provision in the former Act to the same effect. Clause 128 permits the retirement provisions contained in clauses 107 and 108 to be applied by proclamation to persons otherwise employed in the service of the State. Clause 129 permits the Minister of Education and the Railways

Commissioner to employ over-age persons as temporary officers. This parallels a provision in the previous Act. Clause 130 gives power to the authority responsible for fixing salaries of persons employed in the State, otherwise than in the Public Service, to vary those salaries retrospectively. This clause again parallels a provision of the former Act. Clause 131 is a general regulation-making power, and clause 132 is a general financial provision.

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER secured the adjournment of the debate.

BARLEY MARKETING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2)

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

STAMP DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (ORIENTAL FRUIT MOTH CONTROL, RED SCALE CONTROL AND SAN JOSE SCALE CONTROL) BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

CROWN LANDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL (LEASES)

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

INDUSTRIAL CODE BILL

In Committee.

Clauses 3 and 4 passed.

Clause 5—"Interpretation."

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I move:

To insert the following definition:

> "agriculture" (without limiting its ordinary meaning) includes horticulture, viticulture, and the use of land for any purpose of husbandry, including the keeping or breeding of livestock, poultry or bees, and the growth of trees, plants, fruit, vegetables and the like:

This amendment restores to the definitions section a definition of "agriculture" which is in the current Act and which makes possible the exclusion of the agricultural industry from the ambit of the Code. The reasons for the amendment were made clear during the second reading debate. The agricultural industry and those employed in it would lose from the extension of the Code to cover them. My concern regarding the employee is that there is a tendency for the minimum to become the maximum and for an award made by the court to tend to be the standard set for remuneration for employees in agriculture. The employees in that industry for many years have been enjoying better wages and conditions than are likely to be provided by an award, and that position will probably continue. That is proved by information I have obtained from Victoria.

As the Bill stands, the employer will be involved in many procedures and will be hindered. Even if he pays his employee 50 per cent more than the award rate, he will still have to comply with all the provisions regarding the keeping of records. Thus he will not be able to enjoy the flexibility in his working relationship with his employee that he now enjoys, and this will be a factor in depressing the wage of the employee. Although the amendment does not eliminate agriculture from the scope of the award, it is necessary that the definition be included.

Mr. McANANEY: An agricultural worker should not be deprived of the opportunity to join a union, but I oppose the principle of compulsion. Because of changing conditions it is unnecessary to set up a complex award system, because it is not practicable. At present, about 8,000 agricultural workers are employed, but this number will decline. Generally, they are the sons of farmers. I do not think many agricultural workers will join a union: they are independent and have a close relationship with their present employers. If the clause to which I object were removed I would vote against this amendment but, until I receive that assurance, I shall support the amendment.

Mr. RODDA: I am concerned that the Government has deleted this definition. Because of mutual arrangements between the employer and the employee in rural industries much harmony exists between them at present, with resulting benefits to the State. Property owners are prepared to pay farm employees more than the award rates.

Mr. SHANNON: Anyone who has had experience of activities on the land knows that it is customary for employees in the agricultural industry to receive all sorts of side benefit and incentive, such as a share of the proceeds of a crop. That applies particularly to the dairying industry, in respect of which it is difficult to set a flat rate for an employee, because it is largely a matter of give and take

between employer and employee. Indeed that may well apply to the whole of the agricultural industry, and to fix a set wage for employees may do them a disservice. I think that the amendment moved by the member for Flinders is appropriate and in the best interests of those at present employed in agricultural pursuits. Bringing these people under the control of the Industrial Commission will not benefit them.

Mr. BROOMHILL: I oppose the amendment which, although at first glance appears to be generous, really deletes all reference in the Industrial Code to agricultural occupations. It seems that the Opposition is trying to re-insert in the new Code provisions that have existed in the present Code since 1920.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: That's exactly what I intend.

Mr. BROOMHILL: The Government wishes to bring up to date conditions that were established in 1920. Although in the past the Federal Pastoral Industry Award has not applied to certain agricultural employees, the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, after hearing the arguments of both employers and employees, recently decided that it was opportune to extend the award to all employees. Those at present excluded from the provisions of the Industrial Code include all market garden employees, persons working in the Botanic Garden, and the employees of city and local councils who work as gardeners. Although it is true that in most cases, by agreement between the unions representing these people and the councils concerned, award rates have been established, legally these people are not entitled to those rates. At this time no award covers people employed in a market garden. The member for Stirling said that "only" 8,000 farm workers were excluded from coverage by an award, but I believe that is a large number of people.

Members opposite have said that their main objection is that employers in these fields are so generous that an award can only reduce the standard enjoyed by employees. However, the court would fix a minimum rate, which would only be a guide to the rate that should apply. Therefore, the generous people to whom members opposite have referred would be the type of people who would pay more than the minimum rate.

Mr. Quirke: How many of these downtrodden people have sought the relief you are proposing?

Mr. BROOMHILL: I am informed by the Australian Workers Union (which is responsible in this field) that many people have sought relief and protection because of difficulties they have encountered as a result of their employment. The member for Stirling has said that his only objection to these employees being covered is that a provision concerning preference is being included. To help him, I will read clause 76 of the Pastoral Award which, under the heading "Preference", provides:

> In the States of New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania subject to the provisions of the Re-establishment and Employment Act, 1945, as between members of the Australian Workers Union and other persons offering or desiring service or employment at the same time, preference shall be given to such members, other things being equal.

I am certain the honourable member is aware that this provision has created no difficulties in other States, and it would create no difficulties here. As the amendment incorporates a provision that has operated since 1920, members opposite should seriously consider applying 1967 standards in this direction.

Mr. McKEE: The member for Onkaparinga and others have said that all types of privilege are available to agricultural workers and that such workers would be worse off if an award were made. Surely members opposite are not trying to kid us that they are interested in protecting these people. I was an organizer for the A.W.U. for some years before becoming a member of Parliament.

Mr. Freebairn: How many years?

Mr. McKEE: For four or five years. I travelled throughout the State fairly frequently and I do not think a week (and on some occasions even a day) passed without my receiving some approach from a person employed on a farm. At the time I was with the A.W.U., employers with 2,000 or fewer sheep were excluded from the Commonwealth award. However, recently Commissioner Donovan has included those employers, too. If the Commonwealth has seen fit to do this, surely members opposite must agree that a good reason exists for it. At present the A.W.U. cannot approach people employed in market gardens. The amendment would exclude people in other fields, too. However, the Commonwealth award would override the provision included in the amendment in relation to the keeping and breeding of livestock. The point is that if the amendment is carried the unions will be unable to approach employees working in the categories mentioned because they will be excluded. Although there are many generous employers on farms, as in all types

of industry, some will take an opportunity to exploit workers.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The honourable member did not state the position accurately. He said that the A.W.U. could not approach employees working in market gardens. However, the A.W.U. tried to have market garden employees covered but it could not produce anyone who wanted to join the union. Those people preferred to enjoy better conditions and more freedom outside the union. It was said that the preference provision did not apply to the Botanic Garden and that is true. However, when I was a Minister I saw one of the worst cases of victimization that I have ever seen in this country, and it involved an employee at the Botanic Garden who would not join a union.

Mr. McKee: They probably refused to work with him, and rightly so.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: They tried to enforce—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member will resume his seat. I point out that, on this clause, the Committee cannot discuss the subsequent clause dealing with preference to unionists. The member for Stirling made a brief reference to the matter, saying whether he supported this amendment could or would be determined by what happened regarding a subsequent clause, but he did not discuss the merits of the subsequent clause. The member for Gumeracha is not in order in discussing at length what happened regarding preference to unionists, compulsory unionism, or something like that. The question before the Committee is the insertion of certain words, as moved by the member for Flinders.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Members opposite brought this issue into the debate.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member will resume his seat. A Government member did not introduce this issue. It was introduced by the member for Stirling and, although I have allowed an illustration, I shall not allow a full-scale debate on it. The member for Gumeracha, too, may give an illustration (and he has given one) but it now seems that he intends to develop a full-scale debate on compulsory unionism or preference to unionists, whereas I am pointing out that that would not be in order.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Members opposite have said that employees would not be worse off if this provision were inserted. The member for West Torrens has said that the generous employer would not take away the generous conditions being given, and he seems to cast a slur in respect of those conditions. However, they are generous in comparison with award conditions. If these employees join a union and become dominated by that union, in addition to paying substantial amounts to enable organizers to go around the country these employees will be worse off. Under the Code at present, no employer can victimize a person who desires to join a union.

There is no need for this legislation. What is worrying Government members is that 8,000 workers in the primary industries are not paying union levies and, thus, are not making a contribution to the Labor Party, which will want all the contributions it can get, and a bit more. The Labor Party is spending money putting out propaganda to delude the people into thinking that they are getting something they did not get before, but the people are already aware of that, and they do not like what they are getting.

Not even one industrial worker has asked me for this particular provision, and I have been associated with such workers for 35 years. It is fundamental that an Act of Parliament must set out to be remedial, but that is often lost sight of in this Parliament. In this Bill an attempt is made to take freedom from the individual. We know that after one award is made applications to have that award made a common rule usually follow. Sometimes the union organizer promises redress of wrongs reported to him, provided that he gets a percentage because the worker is not a member of the union. That happens, but I do not believe in it. I support this justified amendment.

Mr. HURST: Why does the member for Gumeracha hide behind an Act that does not give workers the right to appear before a court to obtain a proper award? The Commonwealth award does not cover some agricultural workers, but the trade union movement, by its efforts, will ultimately have these workers included, unless this legislation is passed. Opposition members should allow the Industrial Commission in this State to deal with this matter, and not make their supporters travel to Sydney to answer a summons for an offence against the Commonwealth Act. Perhaps in a few years the Opposition will ask for similar legislation to be introduced. If Opposition members are sincere in their belief that agricultural workers do not want to join a union, why do they obstruct a Bill that will give these workers the opportunity to ask the Industrial Commission for an award? The system of

arbitration has been overwhelmingly endorsed by the people of Australia.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: Why don't you accept the determination of arbitration and abide by it?

Mr. HURST: The trade union movement should have the same rights as employers, but Opposition members do not have the backbone to allow the position to be determined by the Industrial Commission. They will not allow agricultural workers the opportunity to avail themselves of a system that has been approved throughout Australia. I oppose the amendment, because it is unjust to a section of the community.

Mr. QUIRKE: Does the Government want the sort of coercive action that is today operating in Broken Hill?

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: The member for Port Pirie said yesterday that if a person did not join a union he deserved to starve.

Mr. QUIRKE: The Barrier Industrial Council is ordering people to sack married women and to employ single girls.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member is not in order in pursuing that line of argument.

Mr. QUIRKE: Perhaps I am not, Mr. Chairman, but I thank you for the courtesy of allowing me to say what I have said. I do not desire a repetition, in relation to rural workers, of the state of affairs to which I have referred.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member is not in order in pursuing that line of argument. He must speak to the clause and the amendment moved by the member for Flinders.

Mr. QUIRKE: The member for Flinders, in seeking to include in the Bill what was previously not in it, is trying to protect people from the actions that I have enumerated, and I concur in his expressions of opinion.

Mr. NANKIVELL: I could count on the fingers of one hand the number of rural workers in any particular area of my district, for few people come within this category except perhaps farmers' sons, who may be listed in this category simply because they can be classified in no other way. The number of rural workers has waned considerably because of the high degree of mechanization that is taking place in country areas. People now employed in the country as rural workers are handling expensive machinery and being paid accordingly. As farming is a seasonal occupation, and as it is necessary at certain times of the year to work around the clock, hours of employment cannot be prescribed. A fortune will have to be spent in trying to organize isolated groups of people, and yet we shall be required to keep employees' time sheets, etc., which are to be subjected to the scrutiny of organizers, some of whom are not too polite. Why should we be subjected to this? I am not happy with what the Government intends in this regard, and I support the amendment.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I would not have risen to speak but for a reference that has been made to a statement that I was alleged to have made yesterday to the effect that I disapproved of trade unionists. That is not so: my remarks were directed at trade union officials. Under the Marxist-Leninist creed—

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member must direct his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I was merely replying to an interjection that was made yesterday.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member is out of order in replying to interjections.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: The member for West Torrens, when speaking to this clause, made out a strong case for South Australia to embrace the Commonwealth award. The Vernon report states at page 133:

State Parliaments can instruct the State tribunals to include specified provisions in their awards, and the New South Wales Parliament has required the tribunals in that State to incorporate in their awards provisions relating to such matters as the standard hours of work, the automatic adjustment of the basic wage, long service leave and equal pay for equal work. The Queensland and Western Australian authorities also have continued to adjust their basic wages for changes in the cost of living, and State awards in Victoria and Tasmania at certain times after 1953 included adjustment provisions. Indeed, since 1953 only the South Australian authorities have consistently applied Commonwealth basic wage decisions.

The member for West Torrens, in a few minutes, made out a case for the situation that now exists. He is only concerned with his future in the trade union movement. Earlier I tried to elicit from members opposite to which particular trade union agricultural workers should belong. The group of Socialists in the Chamber sat mute and, after I repeated my question, they still sat mute.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope they will remain mute now because, in doing so, they are obeying Standing Orders.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I was trying to obtain information.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member is out of order in seeking information by way of interjections.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: You are a very good Chairman, Sir.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not see how the honourable member is directing his remarks to the amendment.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: The member for West Torrens said that the annual fee of the A.W.U. was about $20 a year, which seemed to me to be excessive.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member is not in order in going that far. I have allowed discussion, for I believe that some honourable members who have supported this definition going into the Bill because its omission would involve them in employing unionists are entitled to say so, but those members cannot develop their argument to deal with the general subject of preference to unionists at this stage. They may do so on a subsequent clause. The honourable member is carrying this debate too far.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I am sorry if I have transgressed beyond the limit that you, Sir, consider that the amendment covers. I was making a few observations in reply to cases put up by members opposite on this clause.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the honourable member suggesting that I allowed discussion that was not in order?

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Not at all, Sir. In your wisdom you allowed members opposite to amplify their arguments on this point.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not consider they were out of order, nor do I consider that Opposition members were out of order. The honourable member is not in order in challenging what the Chair has ruled; he must direct his remarks to the clause.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I shall endeavour to be more specific and to debate the clause. I am interested in hearing any interjection from the member for Port Pirie—

The CHAIRMAN: I have already informed the honourable member that he should not be interested in interjections: he must speak to the question before the Chair.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I appreciate your support, Mr. Chairman. The member for Albert referred to farmers' sons and others being described as agricultural workers and farm labourers on the electoral roll. All agricultural workers that I know, without exception, are loyal members of the Liberal and Country League. It seems to me that it would be unjust to include them in any award whereby they would be forced to become members of the Australian Labor Party and to support it financially, while not supporting its views.

The CHAIRMAN: I have advised the honourable member several times that he is not speaking to the clause. If he continues in this vein, I shall have to warn him.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Then I will conclude my remarks.

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS (Minister of Works): Not one member opposite has shown that, where similar provisions have operated, any difficulties have occurred. The Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission is not restricted in any way in making an award for an agricultural worker, and Commonwealth awards in the pastoral and fruitgrowing industries apply in South Australia. Also, in all other States the State industrial tribunal has the authority to make awards for agricultural workers.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: In Queensland?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: I said it applied to all States. There seems to be no reason why the South Australian Industrial Commission alone in Australia should be prohibited from making an award on such terms and conditions as it considers to be fair and reasonable for persons engaged in agricultural work. If agricultural employees are as well paid as we have heard, employers of that labour can have no fear regarding the making of an award. No case has been put for accepting the amendment. It has been said that agricultural practices have changed considerably over the years and, if ever conditions applied which meant that agricultural workers should not have the right to apply for an award, those conditions have long since changed. I ask the Committee to reject the amendment.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Minister has raised two new matters. First, he has said that all other States have similar provisions. Does he mean that agricultural workers in South Australia, who have not been subject to those provisions, have been worse off than those in other States? Agricultural workers in this State have the remedy in their own hands: all they have to do is apply to join a union. If they have the necessary numbers, they can apply to the Commonwealth court to come under an A.W.U. award. However, he does not want them to do that. Under State awards, common rules are made too frequently and people who have not been concerned in the matter originally in dispute

and have not been represented before the tribunal become involved without having any knowledge that they are involved. A Commonwealth award already covers a large section of our agricultural industries, and the Commonwealth tribunal has rights in relation to a dispute that extends beyond the borders of one State. A union with members in two States may apply to the Commonwealth tribunal for an award, and agricultural workers in other States do not want to be covered by State awards. If we do not carry this amendment, two tribunals will be able to make an award for the same industry, an industry that has been singularly free from industrial or political unrest. Indeed, the industry, under present conditions, is expanding, as is shown by the markets that have been obtained for glasshouse production and for celery. So, why must we suddenly change this position? This is not the first time that this legislation has been before the House. The late Hon. R. S. Richards moved amendments, but on every occasion they were rejected. Finally, just prior to an election, he held a big meeting in my district and invited agricultural workers to come along. At the meeting he told them why I had opposed the legislation. At the election soon after the meeting I received the biggest majority I ever had. The Labor Party is trying to force this on the worker. I support the amendment.

The Committee divided on the amendment:

Ayes (15)—Messrs. Bockelberg, Coumbe, Ferguson, Freebairn, Hall, McAnaney, Millhouse, Nankivell, and Pearson (teller), Sir Thomas Playford, Messrs. Quirke, Rodda, and Shannon, Mrs. Steele, and Mr. Teusner.

Noes (17)—Messrs. Broomhill and Burdon, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Bywaters, Casey, Clark, Corcoran, Dunstan, Hudson, Hughes, Hurst, Hutchens (teller), Jennings, Langley, Loveday, McKee, and Walsh.

Pairs—Ayes—Messrs. Heaslip and Stott. Noes—Messrs. Curren and Ryan.

Majority of 2 for the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.37 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, October 17, at 2 p.m.