

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, November 27, 1968

The SPEAKER (Hon. T. C. Stott) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS

WHEAT

Mr. HUGHES: The following article appears in this morning's *Advertiser* under the heading "Pirie to get Priority Wheat Exports":

An assurance was given to a meeting of 180 grain growers at Gladstone last night that South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited was giving priority to Port Pirie for the export of wheat from the port's 3,300,000-bushel silo, which was filled last week. The assurance came from the zone director of the co-operative (Mr. Venning, M.P.) who is also the Liberal and Country Party member for Rocky River in the House of Assembly . . . Mr. Venning said a coastal freighter, the North Esk, would be diverted to the Port Pirie-Tasmania service in a fortnight and carry 40,000 bushels on a 10-day turn-around between ports. On December 13 an overseas freighter was due at Port Pirie to load on 350,000 bushels of wheat, but no further ships were listed although top priority would be given to Port Pirie.

If the present weather holds, the silos at Wallaroo will be filled in less than a fortnight. As the member for Rocky River has set himself up as the spokesman for the co-operative, even though he is only the zone director, and as his zone includes my district, will he make representations to the co-operative to have made available at Wallaroo a priority of shipping arrangements similar to that which exists at Port Pirie to relieve the situation that will occur at Wallaroo?

Mr. VENNING: I welcome the question, and my answer to it will be rather lengthy. The honourable member must recall that, at the commencement of the harvest deliveries, the Port Pirie Division had a carry-over of 1,900,000 bushels of wheat from the previous season, whereas there was little carry-over in the Wallaroo Division. Of course, this was unfortunate. The honourable member will also recall that some time ago in this House I asked for the heat to be taken off the situation that had been created by Sir Thomas Playford, when he was a member of this place and when drought conditions existed, in asking that sufficient grain be held in country storages to offset the drought situation. When I asked that question the drought had finished and the State was about to experience a bountiful year.

I wanted the heat to be taken off the Wheat Board and the Barley Board so that grain could be removed from these country storages. The honourable member will know that, in the meantime, the grain has been moved out of country storages to the terminal. As I have said, at the start of this year's harvest about two-thirds of the storage of the Port Pirie terminal was filled with wheat from the previous season. In connection with the rationalization, as the honourable member knows, we are endeavouring to arrange for all growers, during the harvest period (which is between, say, now and the end of January), to be able to get 75 per cent of their grain into bulk storage. In order to do this, it seems that in most places in the various zones and divisions throughout the State the co-operative could have taken, in bulk, about 80 per cent of the estimated deliveries of growers. However, the figure for the Port Pirie Division is about 50 per cent. On a State-wide basis, it was considered that it would be fair to take 75 per cent of the estimated deliveries. Therefore, to make the position for Port Pirie parallel to that in other divisions, the co-operative's recommendations to the Wheat Board would be that sufficient shipping be allocated to Port Pirie to bring the Port Pirie Division into line, in this case, with the Wallaroo Division. I make perfectly clear that the co-operative does not necessarily arrange shipping. The Wheat Board arranges all shipping, although sometimes it asks the co-operative to recommend where ships should be directed and, for those reasons, the co-operative would give some priority to Port Pirie in order to bring that division into line with other parts of the State. May I also say that the report is not correct. When I addressed a meeting at Gladstone a couple of nights ago, I said that this ship would be calling at Port Pirie every 10 days, and the figure I quoted was 1,700 tons of wheat, not bushels. The bushel figure in the report is incorrect. The correct figure is more like 60,000 bushels of grain.

GRAPES

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: Will the Minister of Lands ask the Minister of Agriculture whether the investigation into prices to be paid for 1969 vintage grapes has been completed and, if it has, when it is intended to make available the list of prices to be paid?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: Yes.

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: Has the Minister of Lands obtained from the Minister

of Agriculture a reply to my question of November 12 about the mechanical harvesting of grapes?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The Minister of Agriculture reports:

The principle of the mechanical harvester for grapes was developed by research workers at the University of California, Davis. This machine operates on the principle of an impactor arm which strikes upwards against the trellis wires. A patent was taken up by the Upright Company, San Francisco, which has now made four commercial machines each able to harvest grapes at the rate of about 2 acres an hour. In 1967, 30 acres was harvested mechanically and in 1968 the area rose to 3,000 acres. The machine requires a special trellis, a 3ft. wide T-trellis about 4ft. 6in. off the ground. The Agriculture Department in South Australia has been foremost in Australia in its grape-vine pruning training research and has been recommending a high T-trellis for some 25 years now. Vines trained to this recommendation can be fairly readily converted to the mechanical harvesting trellis. However, the limitations to the mechanical harvesting of grapes are as follows:

1. the need for this high T-trellis.
2. the need to rod prune the vines.
3. the limitations of the efficiency of bunch removal according to variety; and
4. the cost of the machine.

The Principal Horticultural Research Officer in the department (Mr. M. B. Spurling) investigated mechanical harvesting of grapes at the University of California earlier this year and, as a result of this investigation, blocks of representative varieties of vines at the Loxton Research Centre have been converted to the mechanical harvesting trellis. These research blocks were high-lighted at the annual field day of the centre in October. These trials will study the best method of converting present trellises, the implications of rod-pruning varieties normally spur pruned and the economics of mechanical harvesting.

A machine from the Upright Company would cost about \$30,000 and finance is not available for such a purchase. One machine could harvest about 1,500 acres a season. However, subject to finance being found, it is planned to have built a small experimental harvester, using the impactor principle, so that the efficiency of harvesting of the varieties grown here can be assessed. On present indications the loss of fruit (*i.e.*, fruit not removed) by mechanical harvesting as compared with hand harvesting would equal the cost of hand harvesting in value. However, the problems of labour supply and labour management may make the idea of mechanization more attractive and alter these economies in time.

WHYALLA RESERVE

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: The Northern Naturalists Society is interested in a fauna and flora reserve on the Cowell road, opposite the Whyalla Airport. Apparently, this area

has been inspected by the Whyalla Town Planning Committee. Mr. Hart (Director of Planning) attended the inspection, and I think Mr. Lothian (Director of the Botanic Garden Department) has also looked at it. The area seems to be suitable for dedication as a fauna and flora reserve. It is 761ft. deep and two miles to four miles long. I understand that, since the first move was made, timber has been cut from the area, hundreds of tons of top soil has been removed, and some people in Whyalla are dumping rubbish on the area. Will the Minister of Lands find out whether declaration of the area as a reserve can be completed and whether the request that has already been made to the Lands Department to provide protection for this area can be made effective in order to prevent further despoliation of the area?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: This matter is new to me, but I will make urgent inquiries and give the honourable member a reply as soon as possible.

ORANGE JUICE

Mr. ARNOLD: Has the Premier a reply to my question about the brix standard of orange juice?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I wrote to the Commonwealth Minister for Health concerning the question asked by the honourable member about the health standard or brix content in relation to health requirements, and I received the following reply from Dr. Forbes:

The General Manager of Berri Fruit Juices Co-operative Limited did present a case to me in relation to the brix standard for the oranges processed by his company. The approach to me, however, was not made in my capacity as Minister of Health, but as a South Australian Commonwealth Minister and in relation to sales tax. You will see, therefore, that any decision in this matter is one for the Commissioner of Taxation. On my advice, the company is discussing the matter with officers of the Taxation Department. I have offered to provide any assistance I can if these discussions do not culminate in a conclusion which is satisfactory to the company.

MANNUM HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. WARDLE: Has the Minister of Education a reply to my recent question about the sign for the Mannum High School?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: The new secondary school at Mannum was let as a contract for a new area school. As a result of negotiations with the local people, it has been decided to separate the present area school into a high school and primary school as from the beginning of 1969. The new

secondary school will, therefore, become the accommodation for the Mannum High School. A request has been sent to the Public Buildings Department asking that the wording on the sign referred to by the honourable member be changed to read "Mannum High School".

MINES DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

Mr. LANGLEY: It has been brought to my notice this week that four workmen employed in the Mines Department have received dismissal notices, caused, I believe, by the lack of outside work of the department. As this incident will be a saddening blow to the wives and families of these employees at Christmas time, and as retrenching may continue in other departments, will the Premier obtain from the Minister of Mines a report, and also ask him to consider reinstating these employees in other Government departments, as we were given to understand that the Government would not consider retrenching employees in any department?

Mr. Lawn: It is going to start in the Highways Department now.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Despite the rude remark of the member for Adelaide, I shall be pleased to obtain a report for the member for Unley.

ROAD CONTRACTS

Mr. VIRGO: Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked on November 12 about the letting of private contracts by the Highways Department, to the detriment of its employees?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The Highways Department has been asked to investigate and report on ways and means of using private contractors on road construction. It is part of normal Government operations to use frequently outside contractors on construction work, a situation which also applied during the term of the previous Government. A state of greater overall efficiency in use of machines can be created by using outside contractors and their equipment particularly as the department's activities expand through natural increase in expenditure. In this context to use both private and departmental facilities, and thus contain the size of the department's equipment and forces, must result in greater overall efficiency. No suggestion is made of looking after "the shareholders of private enterprise", nor is it intended to retrench employees of the department.

BUILDING STANDARDS

Mr. EVANS: Has the Minister of Housing a reply to my recent question about the standard of building in Housing Trust houses?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I have obtained the following report from the Housing Trust:

The Housing Trust does comply with the Building Act, and originally took the stand that this was all it should recognize; however it later agreed to satisfy the requirements of the major long-term lending institutions, as laid down in a document called *Acceptable Standards of Construction*. All contracts let after the lending institutions issued their *Acceptable Standards of Construction* comply with the requirements, but the banks are still not obliged to lend on any house built by the trust, or by any other builder for that matter. It is possible that some houses still under construction may not fully comply with the latest requirements of the lending institutions because contracts were let for these houses before the introduction of the *Acceptable Standards*. The lending institutions are aware of these houses. The trust does provide damp-proof courses in brick-veneer construction, thus complying with the Building Act and *Acceptable Standards*. The lending institutions in their latest edition of *Acceptable Standards* require studs, in external or internal timber framing walls to be as follows: karri, oregon, cypress, Canada or radiata pine—4in. x 1½in. at 24in. centres.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. RYAN: On several occasions I have sought information from the Premier concerning the position and salary of Mr. A. M. Ramsay as Director of Industrial Promotion. On the last occasion, I asked a question on notice, and received from the Premier the reply that "Mr. Ramsay will be occupied full time on industrial promotion and housing development duties, both of which are interrelated". The Premier added: "The salary for the Director of Industrial Promotion in the Industrial Development Branch is under consideration." Will the Premier say whether the salary for Mr. Ramsay as Director of Industrial Promotion has yet been determined, and will this salary be additional to the one he receives as General Manager of the Housing Trust? Further, will Mr. Ramsay be continuing as full-time General Manager of the trust, combining that work with the other full-time duties to which the Premier has referred?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I must admit quite frankly that, although I see Mr. Ramsay nearly every morning of the week, I have neglected to ask him whether his salary has finally been arrived at.

Mr. Ryan: Haven't you asked him?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: He ought to know; he would be a good enough source.

Mr. Lawn: So should the Treasurer know.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: Do you mean to say that you don't know?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Yes. What an incredible show from the Opposition. The last question I was asked on this matter related to whether or not Mr. Ramsay's salary had been fixed; I said it was in train, or something of that nature, and I have not yet checked to see whether or not it has been fixed.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: How could it be fixed without your Cabinet deciding it?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The Leader gets terse about a normal delay. However, the department has been busier in promoting South Australian industry than it has been in worrying about its officers' salaries, and it has been more successful than it was during the three years when the Leader and his Party were in office.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I must ask honourable members to restrain themselves. The Premier has been asked a question, and he should be allowed to reply.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: It is a proper concern that has been shown by the Opposition and I will busy myself, now that I have been prompted, to see that the salary is fixed at the earliest opportunity. Of course, it will be retrospective, so that Mr. Ramsay will not lose anything. I will bring forward the information for the honourable member when it is available. Regarding whether or not he will continue as General Manager of the Housing Trust, the answer is "Yes, he will", and his salary will be additional to the salary he is paid as General Manager of the trust.

MERRITON CROSSING

Mr. VENNING: Has the Attorney-General, representing the Minister of Roads and Transport, a reply to my question of November 6 concerning flashing lights for the Merriton railway crossing?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: My colleague reports that it is true that the Highways Department is at present widening the highway, and experience has shown that this generally leads to higher vehicular speeds. However, observance of the "stop" signs at present in existence at this crossing, as well as normal care by the motorist, should not

result in there being any undue hazard at this particular point. No action is contemplated this financial year to install flashing lights. However, the matter will be reconsidered by the inter-departmental committee that investigates priorities for automatic protection at level crossings when the priorities for 1969-70 are being assessed.

BREAK OF GAUGE

Mr. CASEY: Has the Premier a reply to my question of November 14 about the European invention to enable trains to switch from one gauge to another gauge?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The Railways Commissioner states:

With regard to equipment reported to permit the dual gauge operation of trains between Spain and France, various references have appeared in the technical press regarding a competition sponsored by the International Union of Railways for the best design of a passenger-carrying bogie with axles of adjustable gauge. Although the article in the *News* indicates that such equipment is now operating, no description of the actual equipment has as yet been received. However, in the *Railways Gazette* of June 21, 1968, a description was provided of equipment operating between Germany and Russia. This equipment is massive in construction, would be extremely costly to manufacture, would necessitate either complete conversion to disc brakes or to automatic or manual adjustment of brake beams, and it could not be applied to existing bogies. It is hoped that additional information will come forward, but at this point of time I would be very cautious as to its efficiency and economy.

ROAD WIDTHS

Mr. EDWARDS: Has the Attorney-General, representing the Minister of Roads and Transport, an answer to my question of November 19 about the width of new roads?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: The Minister of Roads and Transport reports that there are many miles of three-chain road reserves throughout the State, but reserves five chains in width, if they do exist, would constitute only a relatively small length of the total surveyed roads. New hundreds are being surveyed only in isolated cases and, therefore, there are few new roads being opened in rural areas. Reserves one chain in width are generally satisfactory for local roads serving farms, but even this width is a minimum and should preferably be 1½ chains. For main and arterial roads a minimum of two chains is required, and preferably three chains in certain locations. The reason for

this is the necessity to accommodate earth-works, drainage, tree-planting, preservation of roadside vegetation and public utilities within the reserve.

BLUE LAKE EXPRESS

Mr. RODDA: Has the Attorney-General, representing the Minister of Roads and Transport, a reply to my question of October 16 about the South-Eastern rail service?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: The Minister of Roads and Transport states that a modern air-conditioned sleeping car costs about \$190,000. The possibility of providing such a car on the Mount Gambier night service depends on the availability of Loan funds in the light of overall priorities and an economic level of patronage. There is a possibility, not yet confirmed, that a set of air-conditioned railcars might eventually become available for a sit-up service on the Blue Lake. Of course, during school holidays and other peak periods it will be necessary on most lines to augment the air-conditioned services with some older type stock. However, any expenditure on stand-by air-conditioned stock for this purpose would be entirely unjustified.

PORT WAKEFIELD CROSSING

Mr. FERGUSON: Has the Attorney-General, representing the Minister of Roads and Transport, a reply to my question of November 6 about the installation of traffic lights at the Port Wakefield railway crossing?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: The Minister of Roads and Transport states that the Port Wakefield crossing is one of those on the list to be considered by the inter-departmental committee that recommends the priorities for automatic warning installations. This crossing, together with others, will be considered when plans for the 1969-70 financial year are being formulated.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CIRCULAR

The SPEAKER: I refer to the question asked by the member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) about a letter intended to be sent to ratepayers by the Local Government Association of South Australia Incorporated. I have received a reply, dated Tuesday, November 26, 1968, to a letter I sent to the association. It is addressed to me as Speaker of the House of Assembly and states:

I acknowledge receipt of your communication of November 22, 1968. I am directed to advise you that the Legislative Standing Committee of the Local Government Association

took the action of advising members of Parliament relating to the higher rate of duty prescribed in the Stamp Duties Act Amendment Bill, as it affects local government. The standing committee was genuinely concerned with the effect on councils of the proposed legislation. As an association we appreciate that, as Speaker of the House of Assembly, you confirm our right to express our views to members of Parliament. We regret that the proposed form of letter to ratepayers could be misleading so far as members of the House of Assembly are concerned. You have our assurance that the proposed letter to ratepayers, if necessary, will be amended to give effect to the matter mentioned in your letter.

The letter is signed by E. H. Smith, Secretary, Local Government Association of South Australia Incorporated.

SPARE PARTS

Mr. EDWARDS: Has the Treasurer obtained from the Prices Commissioner a reply to the question I asked recently about spare parts for agricultural machinery?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The Prices Commissioner has reported that few complaints have been received in the past concerning non-availability of spare parts. In one or two cases parts have been unobtainable because of the obsolescence of the unit. Generally speaking, the industry is highly competitive and fully aware of the necessity to give effective after-sales service. In a high percentage of cases, urgently required parts can be supplied to country dealers within 24 to 48 hours. The large harvest expected this year has led to an increased demand for machinery spare parts and, although large stocks are available now, it is possible that some items might be difficult to obtain before the end of the season. There are some cases where highly priced machines have been imported and sold in very limited numbers and complete stocks of replacement parts are not held. It is usual in these instances for the distributor to carry a reasonably comprehensive range of the spare parts most likely to be required, with the risk of some delay in importing those parts not stocked. It is considered that most buyers, when purchasing, would be aware of the need to ascertain the degree of after sales services available. The honourable member referred to me privately one or two specific matters on which I have information. As he did not ask about these matters in the House, I think he would prefer my giving him details privately.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT: HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT

The SPEAKER: I have received the following letter, dated November 27, 1968, from the Leader of the Opposition:

On the meeting of the House this afternoon, I propose to move that the House at its rising do adjourn until 2 o'clock on Friday, November 29, for the purpose of debating a matter of urgency, namely, the policy statements by the Minister of Roads and Transport in favour of reductions in Highways Department staff and the greater employment of private contractors; the matters surrounding the assessment of highways costs through the use of time cards; the matters which have arisen in relation to the efficiency of the operations of the Highways Department in leaving departmental equipment idle while private contractors are being employed; and the efficiency of operation of the Highways Department in repairing and servicing its own equipment. In my view and in the view of those who support me in this motion, it is urgent that these matters be debated immediately in an endeavour to secure the widest possible investigation by the Auditor-General of the efficiency of the Highways Department, both existing and potential, and a proper assessment of the relative roles of the Highways Department and private contractors.

Does any honourable member support the proposed motion?

Several members having risen:

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Leader of the Opposition): I move:

That the House at its rising do adjourn until 2 o'clock on Friday, November 29, 1968, for the purpose of debating matters of urgency, namely, the operations of the Highways Department and the employment of private contractors. We have seen, in the last few days, a typical difference in statements issued by various members of the Government. We have had from the Minister of Roads and Transport (Hon. C. M. Hill) a series of doctrinaire statements outlining his proposals for reducing the activities of the Highways Department in favour of the activity of non-government contractors. The Minister has clearly based his decisions and announcements to the public in this matter upon a view that it is preferable for the public of South Australia to have undertakings in highways pursued by private enterprise, rather than by the Highways Department. In other words, the Minister is taking the attitude that, despite the advantages that accrue to the public through the use of Highways Department funds, through lower costs and bulk purchases and through the economies of scale in the operations of that department, the department's work will

be scaled down in favour of what, on any basis of efficient operation, ought to be more expensive operations by private contractors.

As I have said, this view is hopelessly doctrinaire. The attitude of members on this side on this matter has always been clear: we see no particular magic about any form of ownership of enterprise. Our concern is merely that the public is adequately served. It must be clear that very real advantages accrue to the public of South Australia through the use of Highways Department funds in the department's operations, because the department does not pay Commonwealth taxes on many items of its operations, on the purchase of its equipment, and the like, and it ought to be able to achieve real economies of costs through economies of scale operation. Further, because of the bulk nature of its work, the department ought to be able to achieve economies of cost by purchasing in bulk.

What I have said does not mean that private enterprise should not sometimes be engaged in operations in highways in South Australia. Indeed, under our Government, as has been said this afternoon in reply to a question, private contractors were so engaged, because it was the attitude of members who are now on this side that, where an operation could be performed by an organization that had facilities which were not available in the Highways Department and the provision of which would commit us to expenditure on work that, in the future, might be uneconomic because of building up a force that we did not need in the meantime, we should employ private contractors. This was always the attitude of our Government. We considered that, where it was of advantage to Government to employ people outside to undertake work in circumstances where they could spread their costs adequately and where the Government's undertaking the work would mean the building up of staff that could not be economically employed in the long term, we should employ the private contractors.

I remember calling for submissions from consultants about a water survey in South Australia and being roundly condemned by members of the Opposition at that time for having presumed to call on private contractors, even though those contractors could have spread their costs on a world-wide basis instead of concentrating their specialist staff in South Australia. Our Government was condemned for not proceeding to do the work through the Engineering and Water Supply

Department. What an extraordinary attitude that was!

Mr. Corcoran: It's the opposite now. They said previously that we should build the department up.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Exactly. The Minister of Roads and Transport is saying that the department should be scaled down, because he has said clearly that he intends to extend the work of private contractors. He is on record as having said that publicly.

Mr. Clark: Both inside and outside Parliament.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Yes. He has said that he does not intend to make wholesale retrenchments, but he does not say that there will not be any retrenchments. Further, he has said that the reduction of work in the department will be coped with by wastage and the non-replacement of present staff. That statement cannot mean other than the reduction of employment in the Highways Department of present staff. When the Minister has been challenged publicly about that statement, his reply has been not that that is not the case (because he has not said it is not the case) but Opposition members are socialistic and are attacking him on that ground, whilst he is a believer in private enterprise. It is of a piece with what he said to the deputation of South Australian railway workers after he had initiated cuts in railway services in this State. When it was put to him that service to the public must be maintained and that there was a public duty, his reply, as recorded in the transcript of proceedings of the deputation, was that he represented private enterprise in the Government.

It is all very well for the Premier to say something completely different from what his Minister says. We are used to that. This Government seems to be following a course in which the Premier says one thing and his Ministers say another, and the public is expected to believe whichever they like. Persons who would follow the Premier's point of view could say that they support the Government because the Premier said something, and the persons who accepted the other point of view could say that they supported the Government because the Premier did not manage to prevail over the remainder of his Ministers.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: We saw an example of that on your side last night.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I do not know what the Attorney wants now, but if he wants us to vote against the third reading of the poor persons legal assistance legislation, he went

the right way about it last evening and he is doing better about it now. I do not know whether he comes here to persuade honourable members to vote for his measures, or to provoke them to vote against the measures. It is all very well for the Premier to produce statements such as the one he produced this afternoon, in which he states:

A state of greater overall efficiency in use of machines can be created by using outside contractors and their equipment, particularly as the department's activities expand through natural increase in expenditure. In this context to use both private and departmental facilities, and thus contain the size of the department's equipment and force, must result in greater overall efficiency.

As I have said, we on this side do not object to the use of private contractors when such use gives the greatest service to the public, but that is different from what the Minister of Roads and Transport has said. He has said that there will be no reductions in the department's staff. Now, how can we have developing in South Australia a position in which the Highways Department, according to proposals now put before the public by the Government, will spend vastly increased sums on road construction while the size of the department is to be reduced? Let us examine the Minister's excuse for his attitude. I remind the House that I am speaking of what the Minister has said, not of the glosses which the Premier has produced here and which do not tie in with what his Minister has said on television, in the press, and in another place. It is clear that the Minister has said that it is cheaper to use outside organizations for the things on which the Highways Department has previously been working as a department. The Minister has let contracts outside the department for the laying of hot pavement; and he has let contracts outside the department for repairing departmental equipment. He has done this, not as we did to councils in order to ensure that their investment (supported from public funds in South Australia) was fully used, so that at no time would they have to face the fact that they were over-capitalized, but so that the fullest use would be made of the build-up of council equipment in relation to the department's equipment. He has let contracts to people other than those who have the use of governmental equipment. It is clear that equipment has been repaired outside the department, despite the extensive facilities and equipment available within the department. It is clear that, although advantages in carrying out that work

should exist within the department, the Minister says that to carry it out within the department is more costly. If it is more costly there must be some reason why it is, because it should be cheaper.

What system of costing is being used in the department that could show that the work of the department in the repair of its own equipment is more costly than repairs done outside the department? How can that happen, in view of the cost advantages clearly evident to the Government? Here again, evidence has been produced from workers themselves at Northfield of administrative procedures which are apparently being used to justify the allegation of greater cost on the part of the department than on the part of outside organizations, even though the department has extensive equipment and facilities. On Monday the member for Glenelg produced evidence of alteration in procedures within the department which would alter the way in which costs were assessed in the department. Instead of the Minister having an immediate investigation made, his reply was typical: he made a personal attack on the member for Glenelg. We have come to know this from the Minister: he did it when in Opposition and he does it now.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: He has plenty of provocation from the member for Glenelg.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I will deal with the provocation of the Minister because I was going to say much about it, and if the Minister of Lands will listen I will tell him. When the Minister was an opponent, the most bitter opponent in this Parliament, of the Planning and Development Act he made a series of allegations about the people who are now officers of the department that he administers and said, in relation to planning and the Act of which he is now in charge under the direction of the Premier, that this would give great facilities for corruption and graft on the part of planners. That was the sort of attack that he made on the principles of planning, about which he is now supposed to be responsible in this State, although we do not see much evidence of production in the area of planning.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: You are straying a little from the motion.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: This was evidence of such an attack, because the Minister, instead of replying adequately to the member for Glenelg on the subject involved, admitted that there had been an incident at Northfield in relation to the alteration of time

cards. He admitted that was the case, but then he said that it had not been done by Ministerial direction and that the member for Glenelg had raised the matter because he intended to be the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. That is the sort of thing that comes from this Minister: not something involved with the department, not a clear reply about the matter, and not an undertaking properly to investigate, but a personal attack on the member for Glenelg, an attack that was completely unjustified. Every member on this side knows the loyalty of the member for Glenelg to this Party and to its officers, and none more than the Deputy Leader of the Labor Party himself.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: You will have to talk a long time to convince me of that.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: If the Attorney-General wants to hear the Deputy Leader of the Labor Party on this score this afternoon, he will be able to do so.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: I shall be glad to.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: We shall be happy to oblige.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: Which deputy?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: This is the sort of snide, hypocritical, low, base type of attitude shown by Government members, because they cannot reply to the politics in this matter. They are getting down to the gutter now. Why does the Minister produce an allegation of this kind when he knows that it is utterly baseless? The member for Light had it printed in his local newspaper, but when the Deputy Leader of the Labor Party and other members of this Party replied to it the local newspaper did not print the replies.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: I don't know about that.

Mr. Corcoran: Do you think I'll lose my job?

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: I think you are in danger of it.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader is making the speech.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: It shows how much notice should be taken of this Government when it cannot produce a reply to the allegations made on this side about its administration. The Minister then said, having had the Commissioner of Highways announce that, if anyone had done the things to which the member for Glenelg had referred, he would be instantly dismissed, that

he would be happy to order an investigation by the Auditor-General of the allegations of the member for Glenelg, provided that the member for Glenelg gave the information that would cause their dismissal. I do not know what he thinks he is selling to us or to the public on that score, but the member for Glenelg will not reveal the names of people who would then be subject to dismissal under this threat, and in that view he has the support of every member on this side. Certainly we want an investigation by the Auditor-General, but that can be obtained and can occur without the member for Glenelg's obtaining the dismissal of members of the Highways Department staff.

No reason exists why the thing cannot go ahead now and why time cards at the Northfield Depot cannot be looked at. There is no reason why a request cannot be made to the Auditor-General to ask why an instruction has gone out that the cards have to be filled in pencil and not in permanent form: that instruction has been issued and the Government knows it. I believe that the Government has to account for the way the Minister is acting in this matter, because what the Minister is doing here is of a piece with what he has been doing in other departments. His statement to the deputation to him on railway matters is clearly a statement of policy on his part, and the gloss that the Premier has sought to put on his statements denying a reduction of staff in his departments will not wash with the Labor Party or with the public. If this is the way the Minister is acting, either the Premier has to demand that the Minister's statements tally with the statements made by the Premier, or else the Minister must go. But, if the Minister persists with the statements which he constantly makes (that he is going to scale down his departments in favour of private interests, even though those departments, built up not only by us but by the Liberal Government when it was previously in office, in giving service to the public ought to be maintained for the service of the public), he must account to Parliament for them, and his colleagues must do the same. It is time the Premier faced the fact that it is useless his coming to this House and saying one thing about the principles of his Government on this or other scores, as so often happens, and his Ministers saying something different. Either this Government convinces the public that it knows where it is going and

that it is united on the proposals that it puts before the public, or it is overdue in getting out.

Mr. HUDSON (Glenelg): Desiring to clear up a matter immediately, I have one point of criticism of the Leader of the Opposition and of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition; that is, that their titles are wrong: the Leader of the Opposition ought to be the Premier of South Australia and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition ought to be the Deputy Premier. Let me make it clear that those are the two top positions in South Australian Government, and they ought to be occupied by the two most able men in this Parliament, namely, the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader. The Minister of Roads and Transport in his public statement in the *Advertiser* on November 25 said:

The Government will not consider any programme to increase the use of private contractors for road construction which would result in wholesale retrenchment of Highways Department staff.

I emphasize the word "wholesale". The Minister did not imply in that statement that there would not be any retrenchment: he simply said there was to be no wholesale retrenchment of Highways Department staff. The report also states:

Mr. Hill said that, while an increase in private contract work would in due course result in less departmental staff being engaged in road construction, no staffing difficulties were envisaged. The alteration to staff requirements would be taken care of in normal wastage.

The statement makes it clear, first, that there is to be a reduction in Highways Department staff and, secondly, that this is not going to take place through wholesale retrenchment but, in the main, through normal wastage (through staff who resign not being replaced); and yet the position taken by the Premier yesterday in this House was that there was no significant change in staff. The Premier said yesterday:

I reiterate that there is no intention to run down the Highways Department, to annihilate it, or to introduce any policy that will harm its present operation.

The Premier had earlier indicated that, in the expanding road programme, the extra work to be done would be done partly by private contractors and that, therefore, the Highways Department would have to take up the extra part of the work. The implication in the Premier's statement yesterday was that the Highways Department itself would be required to do more work and not less work, and

yet the Minister has made it crystal clear that he believes private contractors are more efficient and that the departmental staff should be reduced, so that not only all of the extra work to be done in the forthcoming years should be done by private contractors but some of the work that is now done by the department should also be done by private contractors. There is a clear conflict of opinion, or of statement, anyway (because I do not know whether the Premier has really thought about this matter to form an opinion), and this conflict needs to be cleared up.

I am sure members on this side agree with me that the Minister of Roads and Transport has to be brought into line on this matter: If his statement is not a matter of Government policy, then the Minister should be told so and we should be so informed. The Premier should make it clear not only to Parliament but to the public of South Australia just what is the real position. The Minister's answer yesterday made it clear that the department at least knew of one incident at Northfield in which time cards had been subject to alteration. The time cards for the motor repair shop apparently reveal idle or lost time to the extent of more than 700 hours. Perhaps, if the cards are not accurately recorded, the idle time is greater than that. Surely it is a matter of supreme importance that this should be thoroughly investigated by the Auditor-General to discover whether or not the time cards as they exist are an accurate reflection of the work that is done.

It is urgent that the department's own records should show accurately the relative costs of the Highways Department for doing a job. How on earth can we effectively determine whether it is cheaper to employ private contractors, including contractors for particular purposes, unless we have accurate records? Why is it that an instruction has been issued for time cards to be filled in in pencil? And why is it that, when workers fill in their time cards with biro, their cards are given back to them and they are told to do them again on a new time card and to use pencil? The men employed at Northfield believe time cards are altered and that these time cards do not give an accurate reflection of the costs of doing jobs, and they believe there are serious inefficiencies within the administration of the department.

It is the Labor Party on this matter which is adopting a practical commonsense approach and it is the Minister and his Government

who are being doctrinaire (that is, if the Government supports what he is saying). The Minister on television last night accused us of being just a mob of Socialists. We have made it clear (and it was made clear to the men on Monday at Northfield) that where the carrying out of a particular job required extra equipment and labour, for which permanent work could not be found, then it was appropriate to use private contractors. The Leader made that crystal clear and quoted a number of instances where we in Government had done just that. We have also made it crystal clear that the department needs efficiency organized because it is operating on a large scale, because its fuel comes as part of the Government fuel contract (and therefore is obtained more cheaply than that obtained by private contractors), and because all of its transport equipment is obtained without the payment of sales tax, whereas private contractors must pay sales tax. Except on road construction equipment, the Highways Department should be able to do the job more cheaply, so long as it can organize the full use of its equipment and labour. If the Minister says that, so far as the ordinary worker of the department is concerned, private enterprise can do it more cheaply, he should look into the efficiency of the organization in his own department and we should have a full investigation by the Auditor-General of the whole organization of the Highways Department to see that the efficiency that can be achieved is achieved.

Mr. McAnaney: Why didn't your Government do it last year?

Mr. HUDSON: The reply given by the Premier today makes it clear that the present Minister has asked the Highways Department to investigate and report on ways and means of using private contractors on road construction. There is no case for using private contractors on road construction if it involves leaving the department's existing equipment idle, and that is a perfectly obvious point. It may be that, for some particular job for which new equipment must be purchased, it can be demonstrated that because permanent employment is not available for that equipment the work should be contracted out, but it can in no circumstances be demonstrated that, even though that be the case, where the department already has equipment it is cheaper to use a private contractor and leave the department's equipment idle. Replies given to my questions yesterday indicate that departmental equipment has been left idle.

Mr. McAnaney: Your Government did that.

Mr. HUDSON: Departmental equipment has been left idle. A rock-crushing machine has been waiting to be repaired for a considerable time, and this is admitted. I now have questions on notice asking for specific details of how much has been paid out to private contractors to hire another rock-crushing machine while this one is waiting around for someone to make the decision to repair it. How long will this go on? If my accusation of idle time and of incorrect records being shown in the time cards did not have some substance to it, why is it that yesterday three mechanics were transferred from the motor repair shop to the tractor repair shop?

Mr. Virgo: That was only a coincidence, they would say.

Mr. HUDSON: That means that the department has now decided (and it so happens it decided yesterday) that there was not enough work at the motor repair shop for three mechanics and they were transferred yesterday to the tractor repair shop. The time of three mechanics equals 120 hours a week.

Mr. Virgo: There's skulduggery somewhere.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: The major repairs had been sent out.

Mr. HUDSON: Why is it the case that regarding motor repairs and truck repairs it often takes up to eight weeks or more before approval can be gained by the men on the job to do the repair work, so that the motor repair shop is cluttered up with trucks and other vehicles awaiting repair. It is a much larger establishment than the normal private establishment and, according to the information which I have and which I repeated in front of the men last Monday, the only comment I received when I said that a wait of about eight weeks had to be experienced before approval could be gained was when someone said, "Eight weeks or more." What sort of set-up is it (and this is the Minister's own department) where no repair work can be undertaken until the job is estimated? That is fair enough. Approval of the estimates has to be obtained, but approval often takes weeks and weeks, and, in the meantime, the truck or vehicle is waiting around with nothing happening to it.

Furthermore, once a decision has been made to approve repair work on a vehicle, only then can spare parts be ordered. Why is it that, when spare parts are ordered (even the most minor parts that could be purchased by going around to a dealer a few streets away) the men sometimes have to wait for two weeks before they get them? Surely the Minister

has a responsibility to see that his own department is organized efficiently. Only when he has it organized efficiently can he make statements about the relative costs of his department's doing the work as against private enterprise. The Minister has a responsibility to the public and to Parliament.

Mr. McAnaney: What were the conditions when he took over?

Mr. HUDSON: The honourable member admits that these conditions exist. Does he agree there is foundation for the criticisms that have been made? If he agrees that there are these foundations, he will support the Opposition's argument for a full investigation by the Auditor-General so that this whole matter can be brought into the open. Why should the department's skilled labour be made to look silly because it cannot get the approval to do work and because it has to wait around, as no-one can organize the provision of the requisite spare parts? Why should it take nine months for someone to make up his mind whether or not to repair a rock-crushing machine? What pressure has been brought to bear on the Minister by outside interests to give them special treatment by way of private contracts? What pressure has been brought to bear on the Minister in this direction?

Many representations have been made to the Minister about these matters. What about the position of local councils which, for years, have relied on Highways Department work to fully use their own equipment? This practice has often enabled the local councils to carry out jobs in their own area on behalf of the department and to be paid for the jobs by the department to use their equipment fully and to provide people living in the area with roads and services earlier than would otherwise have been the case. Why is the Minister, who is also the Minister of Local Government, so interested in the welfare of private contractors and not so interested, apparently, in the economic running of local councils and the economy of ensuring full use of local councils' equipment?

Mr. McAnaney: What did the Minister of Local Government do for councils when your Party was in Government?

Mr. HUDSON: We made a point all through the period of the previous Government to see to it that work was allocated to local councils to enable them to use their equipment fully and to achieve proper economies of operation. I am informed by a local council in my district that it is able to—

Mr. McAnaney: Now, now!

Mr. HUDSON: The member for Stirling has not even heard what I am about to say, so he would not have a clue on it. I have been informed by a local council in my district that, because it is able to use all its equipment fully by having Highways Department work let out to it, not only is it able to carry out roadworks in its area earlier than would otherwise have been the case but it is able to do this much more cheaply than if it were done by a private contractor, and this is ascertained by calling tenders. The council can prove from its own records that it is cheaper for it to do the work than to employ a private contractor—and one would expect it to be cheaper because of the greater use of equipment and because the council gets its equipment on interest-free loans. This is a public utility which gives a service to the public. That is the prime consideration. I have been challenged by the Minister to name names and to give information after the Highways Commissioner has said that, if he found anyone had been doing this, that employee would be dismissed instantly. There is enough information in what has already been told to the House by the Attorney-General, representing the Minister of Roads and Transport, about the use of these time cards, about their importance in assessing costs, about the bitumen tankers lying idle, about the bitumen-tanker drivers being employed doing other jobs throughout the depot, and about rock crushing machines and so on to justify a full investigation into all these matters.

Any information that I have had has come from more than one source. I have cross-checked my information against other sources; I have not used one or two items of information that I have been unable to cross-check. When this information was given out by me in front of 300 employees at the Northfield depot on Monday, there was not one dispute about it; no-one came up to me or to anyone else and said that what I was saying was wrong or that I had the wrong end of the stick. In fact, the only sounds heard were sounds of agreement. I believe that what I have said about these matters is correct. If the Minister wants to issue challenges, I shall be happy to debate with him on television all the issues involved; if that is what he would like, I shall be happy to go along with him. Let us do that and then let the people decide whether or not there should be a full investigation.

What we want is a full and wide investigation by the Auditor-General to check on all these matters and make recommendations to the Government about any necessary reorganization in the Highways Department so that it can achieve the cheapest possible cost of operation and so that it can fulfil the role it should be playing in the overall development of roads throughout the State, a role which, because of the needs of all sections of the community and because of the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study recommendations, will become an ever-increasing role. The State simply cannot afford to have a Minister with the attitude of the current Minister, whose main desire apparently is to preside over the restriction of the activities of his own department. That course can lead only to disaster for this State.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart): In supporting the motion, I want to explain at the outset that I am not laying charges against anyone. However, I express the desire of many people in local government that the Highways Department should be maintained in its present capacity to operate efficiently and cheaply and to construct main highways throughout the State in the way to which we have been accustomed. We would view with grave concern any suggestion that the work of this department should be scaled down. I know that the Premier has assured us that the work will not be scaled down, but we are concerned that Ministers supporting the Premier have, on the other hand, issued instructions that the possibility of letting out more work by private contract, not only in the metropolitan area but throughout the State, should be investigated.

I wish to speak about that part of the instruction in particular. District councils and corporations have been encouraged to build up their own roadmaking equipment, and this has been of tremendous advantage to the councils as well as to the districts they serve. Roadmaking machinery is specialized; if it is available in any area it can render magnificent service to every organization in that area requiring this type of work. For instance, I know that the building up of roadmaking equipment in the little municipality with which I am associated has been of such tremendous importance to the area that I cannot think of any organization there that has not at some time called on the use of that equipment to improve grounds or other facilities that those clubs may have. One could not expect that

a similar service could be given to such an extent by private contractors; in fact, people would not ask for it. In council areas this plant has been purchased on the understanding that it will be kept operating through grants from the Highways Department. If from time to time there has been a suggestion that those grants from the department should be withdrawn, held up or in any way reduced, immediately there has been a demand from councils and deputations and representations have been made in this place that the work should be enabled to continue. The councils view with concern any suggestion that their equipment could be left idle while private contractors were engaged on the work.

In co-operation with the Highways Department, councils have responded magnificently in carrying out the construction of some of our main highways. I believe it is true to say that the Eyre Highway has been built almost exclusively by councils in co-operation with the Highways Department. That has been good work, this policy having been good for the State and for the councils. It would be a disservice to the community if this policy were not continued and if there were any interference with the programme drawn up and followed in connection with this work. Because we know that representations have been made by people who want to pick the eyes out of the work to increase the content of private enterprise work in roadmaking, we fear that this could well be at the expense of local government. If that were allowed to happen, I know there would be strong resentment in many places, although maybe not all. Roadmaking can no longer be done by anyone who has some earth-moving equipment: it is a specialized job.

Not only must we have regard to the initial cost: I suggest that the costliest roadmaking work in which the State can engage is work that is done cheaply and has to be done again. There are instances of such unsatisfactory work being carried out (and understandably so) by people who have not had experience in roadmaking but who have merely had experience in earth-moving and that type of thing. However, roadmaking equipment is specialized, the actual work being skilled as well as specialized. No longer can we pick people up off the street or from a farm and immediately turn them into good roadmakers, because that is impossible. For that reason I would view with great concern any suggestion that the department built up

to perform this specialized work should be hampered in its operation, particularly when we are looking for expansion and know that there must be expansion in roadmaking throughout the State. I urge that, as a matter of urgency, the desirability of the policy announced by the Minister should be inquired into, as should the allegations which have been made and which are correct, apparently, if we take notice of no statements other than those by the Minister in reply to questions and at other times during the controversy. I support the motion and hope that something concrete will result from it.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY (Whyalla): I support the motion and, as one who has been interested in roadwork for many years, I am greatly concerned at the policy announced by the present Minister of Roads and Transport and at the conflicting statements that have been made by that Minister and the Premier. Obviously, much more roadmaking will be carried out in South Australia in the next 10 years, and the number of motor vehicles using our roads will increase greatly. Therefore, surely roadmaking must be of the highest standard and surely we must have a responsible road authority on which we can rely.

Everyone to whom I have spoken who has travelled in other States or outside Australia has commended our Highways Department on the standard of work done in recent years. As the member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) has said, this is highly skilled and professional work in these days. The Minister's statements that private contractors should take over more of the department's work are amazing, having regard to the obvious advantage that the Highways Department has in costs and scale of operation. We know that the Highways Department has many advantages, such as those involved in the cost of oil, fuel supplies, and machines, as well as in discount and Commonwealth taxation. If internal administration or efficiency in the department needs examination, the Minister should be considering that, not speaking of handing of work to private contractors.

It is interesting that, despite the adherence of the Liberal Party to private enterprise through the years and despite that, but for the last three years, that Party has been in office in this State for about 30 years, during that time the Highways Department has become a very big organization. That growth proves conclusively that Liberal Governments,

which profess to believe in private enterprise, recognize the advantages of a fully-equipped and competent Highways Department. In that period those Governments did not believe in the superiority of private contractors in efficient roadmaking. Otherwise, they would not have so built up the department. The Minister's statements about his support of private enterprise show that he lays emphasis on a doctrinaire approach, not on efficiency, because if he had regard to efficiency he would be considering any aspects in which the department might not be at the highest efficiency and would be taking remedial steps. Further, he would not be making such statements as he has been making.

As the Leader has said, private contractors have a place in roadmaking, in those spheres where the department, at a given time, has not the equipment or manpower to do a job. In those circumstances, it is obviously advisable to bring in a private contractor, particularly if the type of work in hand is not of a continuing nature. Private persons can always be called on to do those jobs, but the way in which they operate, involving movement around the State, and the size of their operations compared with those of the Highways Department, as well as their disadvantages in securing requirements, indicate that, in general, they cannot possibly come up to the Highways Department in cost matters.

I have served in local government for 20 years and in that time Whyalla has been, and still is, a city expanding quickly and requiring much roadwork. The experience of the local authority in Whyalla is that it can do its work with its own equipment much better and much more cheaply than private enterprise could do it. I am concerned about the impact of the Minister's doctrinaire sentiments and policy on council roadmaking operations. As has been said, councils in South Australia have been pleased at the grants they have received, but they are concerned lest those grants should be reduced. It is a great advantage to every council that is big enough to have its own modern roadmaking machinery. If that machinery is handled properly, not only can the council do work more cheaply, but it can also do a better job under better supervision. Further, it can do the work when the time is right, and this is important in roadmaking, because a private contractor is not always able to do the work when the weather is suitable. A council can ensure that the job is of much better quality.

Mr. Riches: That's very important.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: Yes. I emphasize the statement by the member for Stuart that possession by a council of modern roadmaking machinery is valuable not only because the council can do its own roadwork more efficiently and more cheaply but also because almost every organization in the council area benefits from using that machinery at either low cost or no cost. Members who have been associated with local government know that in thousands of instances council machinery is made available to sporting and other organizations if a competent operator is provided. The council has no objection as long as the machine is looked after and the driver is competent, and as a result the work is done at virtually no cost to the organization. This is an important matter in the country. If this doctrinaire approach of fostering private contractors in roadmaking continues, obviously, councils will find it hard to keep their machinery fully employed. The member for Stuart said that the Highways Department had requested councils to do much of its work. Unless councils have that additional work in their area, probably, in many cases, they will not be able to keep their equipment fully employed. It is essential with roadmaking in this State there should be complete co-ordination between the Highways Department and councils so that this most expensive machinery can be fully employed, thus giving constant and full employment to the men who drive the machines and who are local residents in those areas.

These things hinge on the attitude of the Minister and, obviously, he has made it plain in more directions than one that he is more concerned about the doctrinaire approach of the Liberal Party concerning private enterprise than he is with the overall efficiency and the social welfare of the State, particularly in respect of roadmaking. The Attorney-General may shake his head, but I speak from 20 years' experience in local government and I know what I am talking about.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: I totally disagree.

Mr. Clark: That means you are wrong.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: The usual intolerance of the member for Gawler.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Gawler is not taking part in this debate. The honourable member for Whyalla.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: We have the Minister saying that there will be no wholesale retrenchments. Of course, that is a term that

requires definition. What does he mean by "wholesale"? After all, "wholesale" usually means "complete" or "the lot". He can get rid of half the operations of the Highways Department but still say that he is not embarking on wholesale retrenchments. It is a serious situation when a Minister is not prepared to be more definitive about his statements on retrenchments in the Highways Department. It is time that we knew where the Government stood on this important issue, and once again I emphasize the fact that, despite its long term in office before we came into office three years ago, the Liberal Party built up this huge department during the period of 30 years, despite its adherence to the support of private enterprise.

The Liberal Party must have been convinced over that period that this was the correct thing to do. Then why did it reverse this decision? Let us have a clear reply to that question, particularly in view of the great increase in roadworks that must take place and of the acknowledged efficiency of the department in every aspect of roadmaking. This department has received the admiration of people everywhere for the quality of its work and, surely, that is what we want today: high quality roads to meet the needs of the great congestion of motor vehicle traffic that is coming on to our roads. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

The Hon. R. S. HALL (Premier): I am rather surprised that so many of the Leader's supporters supported him on this motion because, after all, it is only an exercise in political vilification. Some of the statements made today confirm this. The Leader and the member for Glenelg were not fishing in troubled waters: they were creating troubled waters when they went to the meeting which was reported in the newspaper and to which they have referred. How did this matter start? Was it a look at the efficiency of a department or a look at a decision of the Government? Of course it wasn't: it was a move to get rid of the Government. That statement has been made today. The report, quoting the resolution that was passed at the meeting, states:

That all State Government workers should recognize the action of the Minister as an attack on their future security and to do all in their power to remove him and the L.C.L. Government from power.

I know that Opposition members are pursuing that policy, and that is the correct policy for an Opposition to adopt, but let them be frank. This whole exercise is political and a frantic attempt to regain the political initiative in

South Australia that has been taken from members opposite. The Leader said today that it was about time that the Government got out. All this motion is concerned with is politics. When the member for Glenelg started to speak, he said that the Government should be out of office. He was pretty honest in his approach, because he went straight into the politics of the matter, and it was for political reasons that he visited the workshops. This is only a political exercise to regain the initiative, but at least he has been honest about it.

Mr. Hudson: Answer the facts.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The member for Glenelg talks about facts. He has something to answer himself, because he has changed course three times in three days.

Mr. Hudson: That is not so.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The honourable member made the allegation on television, when referring to the idle equipment (as he called it) and other things. This meant that labour normally associated with departmental equipment was also being left idle and that lost hours were being concealed.

Mr. Hudson: They are being concealed. Why not look at the time cards.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: If the word "concealed" does not have the connotation of "deliberate", what connotation does it have? In the House yesterday the honourable member said:

It is simply not true that I made the allegation that alterations in time cards had occurred deliberately under the instructions of any officer at Walkerville, for example, or of the Minister.

Mr. Hudson: I was answering a question on television.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Has the honourable member retracted what he is alleged to have said? This proves his political intent, yet today he has referred to my accusations! Today they are my accusations! However, on Monday he alleged on a television programme that lost hours were being concealed.

Mr. Hudson: Quote the full text of the television interview.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Whatever the honourable member said then, he has now changed his ground.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: Why don't you read the rest of it?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Today, the member for Glenelg said that it was taking too long to set up these jobs, at least eight weeks. He will not have to go many series of eight weeks in retrospect before he reaches the

period of the previous Administration. If it takes people nine months to make up their minds, I point out that we have been in office just over seven months. Now, it is all coming out.

Mr. Hudson: You admit it?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: It is now revealed that the honourable member's accusations go back to the time of his own Government.

Mr. Jennings: Have you made up your mind yet?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The Leader clearly implied that private enterprise was not as efficient as Government enterprise.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: I didn't say that.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The Leader cannot deny that that was implied by every Opposition member who spoke today.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: What nonsense: you don't listen.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Speakers have given reasons why Government departments are more efficient than private enterprise: they do not pay taxes and they buy in bulk. If the inference is clearly that private enterprise is not efficient, there is nothing in the honourable member's first argument. For many years the Government has relied on private enterprise, and it is all very well for the member for Whyalla to say that people can always be called on. That is nonsense and more doctrinaire than the attitude of which he has been accusing the Government. Is this the attitude of the Socialists when in power? Will they suddenly call on private enterprise to fill the gaps? Is that all they want of private enterprise? We know that if private enterprise is to be strong, it must have jobs to pursue persistently. Many notable jobs are being and have been carried out by private enterprise, and jobs are still pending.

We recall the Blanchetown bridge, in respect of which the economies that were effected in construction resulted from the suggestion of an interested contractor. There is also the Morphett Street bridge (both bridges come under the Highways Department but were constructed by private firms), the new Government office building and the Royal Adelaide Hospital, etc. One can read down the list of successful constructors of Government works. The Opposition's criterion is apparently that, as long as we have a continuous number of Government jobs, they should be undertaken by Government construction teams. Does the Opposition want us to believe that all these works should be undertaken by Government construction? Let members opposite

answer that and see what the employees in private firms will think about their policy. Members opposite are taking a narrow view of this.

The Opposition said that private enterprise can always be called on to fill in the gaps. I suppose that everything built for the Government must be undertaken by Government construction. If this is not the policy, let the Opposition say so. Having referred to just a few of the many large successful works carried out by contractors in recent years, I now refer to the possible investigation for which members opposite have asked. The Government is the first institution in South Australia desiring efficiency in Government works and, if something is wrong, we wish to see what it is. Good heavens, do we wish to bring about a situation that will add to Government costs? Ministers' statements of policy are made for the benefit of taxpayers in the community; they are designed to achieve efficiency, and there is no other motive. I have said in the House that if Government construction can do a job more cheaply it obviously should do so. We have to get the best we can out of the moneys raised for Government use.

I asked the Minister of Roads and Transport about the time card alteration referred to by the member for Glenelg as relating to "hours concealed". The Minister said there had been some difficulty regarding a group of hours (it might have extended to several hundred hours; I do not know as yet), but apparently it was off-time which should have been charged to machine repair but which has not been so charged. As I understand it, if the books are put right the costs of machine repair will increase. Of course, the honourable member's intervention will make the comparison between private repair work and Government repair work less attractive for the latter, and this is the result of the intervention. As I have clearly said, such things as half an hour off for a mechanic while awaiting a part that may be coming from a city warehouse, instead of being booked to a machine, has been booked to an unproductive line.

I understand now that the proper procedure is that it should be booked against the machine and, if that is so, it will mean greater repair costs concerning the machine. But it means nothing concerning efficiency in the department. It is no reflection on any workman or any person who is given a direction; it is something which has occurred but which is in line with what takes place in the department. As I

understand it, the intervention and the alteration will mean a higher repair cost for the machine involved. The Government is naturally keen to have this matter cleared up, and the Minister of Roads and Transport has already spoken to the Auditor-General who will examine the matter as soon as he can. Whether or not the Auditor General, who will obviously make recommendations on the matter, looks at the wider aspect, I do not know. I draw the Opposition's attention to the Auditor-General's remarks in a particularly interesting paragraph on page 2 of his report for the year ended June 30, 1968, as follows:

In some departments in recent years more work has been done by private contract than previously. I consider that, as works can often be carried out more economically by this means than by day labour and provided that there is adequate control, still more work should be done by contract.

If the Auditor-General extends his inquiries at the request of members opposite and recommends that the Minister's investigations (because that is what they are at present) should be aided by a recommendation from him to the effect that a large-scale switch from Government operation to private operation be instituted, I wonder what members opposite will say!

The Hon. B. H. Teusner: They'll want to sack the Auditor-General.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I suppose that will be the next move. But what will members opposite say?

Mr. Lawn: It's a pity you can't be sacked.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: It is all right for the honourable member to get down to that argument, but we are dealing with an important matter. The Opposition has raised an important issue, and the Government wishes to get to the bottom of it. We do not want any inefficiency or any slur to be cast on workmen, supervisors, directors, or Ministers. We want the matter out in the open. The Auditor-General will examine closely all these matters, and the Government will obviously take note of what he says. I do not hear much from the Opposition on that point.

Mr. Corcoran: Well, sit down and you will.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I believe the Parliamentary machine should work properly and, if questions are asked here, the Government will certainly examine them. I reiterate that we have nothing to hide and, if we have inherited something from the previous Government and if something is not quite right, we will tell the Opposition about it; we will

not be backward in letting it know. The Leader in his letter to the Speaker today raised four main issues, namely, reductions in staff, time cards, idle equipment, and repair and servicing. There will not be retrenchments of staff in the Highways Department. I say that quite clearly, so that there shall be no misunderstanding and no fear among employees in the department that they will be retrenched.

Regarding the time cards, I have already given the brief explanation that I have been able to get from the Minister in the short time I have been able to talk to him about the matter. There is no reflection on anyone. This is simply a practice that has grown up and, if it is altered, it could increase the actual costs shown against the repair of machines. Regarding idle equipment, the member for Glenelg yesterday received an answer that I thought was very complete. No member can complain that the Minister of Roads and Transport has failed to reply in full. The reply regarding idle equipment states:

Idle plant at Northfield depot: There is always a certain number of machines of varying types retained for emergencies, replacements and awaiting repairs.

That is a normal procedure at any organization such as the Highways Department. My reply continues:

Sellick Hill: The equipment being hired on these works is heavy bulldozers. The department has two such machines, these being engaged full time on the South-Eastern Freeway. In addition, certain drilling equipment, which the department does not possess, is being hired.

Is that a reasonable answer or not? My reply continues:

Rock-crushing machine: The department has two such units, one of which is undergoing extensive repairs and the other is being used concurrently with the hired machine.

The honourable member raised this subject yesterday, yet he has raised this issue again today. As I said earlier, the Opposition is creating the troubled waters, not fishing in them. The Opposition is creating fear in the minds of Highways Department employees simply so it can vilify the Minister—and the Leader, when he was Minister in charge of town planning, was notorious for his attacks on the present Minister of Roads and Transport. If a vacancy occurs in Cabinet or if Cabinet is enlarged I hope to appoint a member of Parliament who has the qualities of the Minister of Roads and Transport. I do not care for the Leader's snide remarks about the

Minister's character. I support the Minister's work and character unreservedly.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: You don't both say the same things, though.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The Leader is concerned that there are divergent views, but there were none when he was Premier, because he was almost the law.

Mr. Langley: What about Sir Thomas Playford?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I have confidence in the Ministers who run their departments, and the Minister of Roads and Transport runs his department well on behalf of the public of South Australia.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R. S. HALL: As far as the Government is concerned in relation to private enterprise, it does not hide its policy.

Members interjecting:

Mr. Hudson: We are practical people on this side.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Members opposite have been very revealing in their remarks in this debate, but I consider that some of the remarks made today were an attack on private enterprise as such.

Mr. Corcoran: Drive!

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Members opposite do not like it when they are told a few facts of life. The Leader's move today is ineffectual window dressing in an attempt to regain the political initiative he has lost forever.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE (Attorney-General): A debate on a matter such as this illustrates more than anything else the divergent approaches of the two sides of this House: on this side we support private enterprise because we—

At 4 o'clock, the bells having been rung:

The SPEAKER: Call on the business of the day.

HARBORS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. J. W. H. CUMBE (Minister of Marine) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Harbors Act, 1936-1967. Read a first time.

The Hon. J. W. H. CUMBE: I move: *That this Bill be now read a second time.* It makes a number of miscellaneous amendments to the Harbors Act, 1936-1967. The Act was extensively amended in 1966 when

the Harbors Board was abolished, but unfortunately several errors were then made. Most of the provisions of this Bill are designed to correct those errors. There are, however, two amendments of substance. The first of these arises in consequence of the construction of the jetty at Glenelg. Under the present provisions of the Act, any such structure would be vested in the Minister and he has no statutory power to transfer it to any other body, however desirable that might be. In fact, in the case of the Glenelg jetty, the present proposals are that the jetty should be vested in the council for the district, and consequently the Bill inserts a provision in the Act enabling the Minister to make such transfer. The second amendment of substance is the repeal of section 166 of the principal Act. This provision prevents goods from being shipped or unshipped on a Sunday unless a permit is granted. Permits are invariably granted for this purpose whenever they are sought, and the section therefore merely creates administrative difficulties without achieving any positive purpose. The Bill also makes a few amendments that are consequential upon the provisions of the Marine Act Amendment Bill at present before Parliament.

The provisions of the Bill are as follows: Clause 1 is merely formal. Clauses 2 to 5 make drafting amendments to the principal Act. Clause 6 amends section 45 of the principal Act by inserting a subsection empowering the Minister to vest jetties, piers, wharves and certain other structures in a council. Clauses 7 to 9 make drafting amendments to the principal Act. Clause 10 re-enacts section 72 of the principal Act. This re-enactment is also necessary for drafting reasons. Clauses 11 to 17 make drafting amendments to the principal Act. Clauses 18 and 19 re-enact section 114 and section 116 (1) of the principal Act respectively. This re-enactment is consequential on the Marine Act Amendment Bill at present before Parliament. Section 116 is also amended by striking out the outdated subsection (3).

Clause 20 re-enacts section 117 of the principal Act. This re-enactment is also necessary for drafting reasons. Clause 21 re-enacts section 121 (2) of the principal Act. This amendment is also consequential on the Marine Act Amendment Bill. Clauses 22 to 25 make drafting amendments to the principal Act. Clause 26 repeals section 166 of the principal Act. This is the section that requires the grant of a permit when goods are to be shipped or unshipped on a Sunday. Clause

27 makes a drafting amendment to the principal Act. Clause 28 makes decimal currency amendments to the principal Act.

Mr. RYAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

PARKIN CONGREGATIONAL MISSION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED BILL.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE (Attorney-General) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to vary a certain deed of trust relating to the Parkin Congregational Mission of South Australia Incorporated; to repeal the Parkin Congregational Mission of South Australia Act, 1961; and for other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to bring the trusts upon which the Parkin mission is established up to date. The Bill may fairly be said to reflect the growth of ecumenism amongst the Christian churches. The mission was established by an indenture dated September 14, 1887, by William Parkin who settled land in Rundle Street on certain trusts providing (*inter alia*) for the payment of annuities to poor God-fearing widows and the appointment of missionaries to travel in the less settled districts of South Australia and in the Northern Territory. The indenture contained a preliminary trust for the life of William Parkin who died on May 31, 1889, and provided for the sum of £500 to be raised and paid out of rents and profits to each of the great nephews of William Parkin, when each attained the age of 21 years. These specific trusts have been discharged leaving the charitable trusts established under the deed.

The indenture has been amended a number of times, several times by virtue of powers of alteration contained therein and once by Act of Parliament. The present position is that the trusts of the mission no longer conform with modern requirements. The governors desire to bring the trusts up to date and have been advised that the best and safest means of doing this would be by Act of Parliament. The main purposes of the alteration to the deed made by the Bill are as follows:

- (a) to authorize participation in missionary work in the Northern Territory;
- (b) give legal authority for participation of the mission in activities conducted jointly with other denominations;
- (c) to change the emphasis of the trusts from missionary work in remote places geographically to missionary

work amongst particular sociological groups;

- (d) to authorize the employment as missionaries of specialized workers such as social workers; and

- (e) generally to widen the purposes for which the income of the mission may be applied.

The provisions of the Bill are as follows: Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 repeals the Act passed in 1961 amending the deed of settlement. Clause 3 is an interpretation provision.

Clause 4 amends the deed of settlement by substituting for the recitals and provisions thereof the provisions contained in the schedule to the Bill. This clause also contains saving provisions preserving vested rights and validating certain action which has been taken under the Bill without direct authority. Clause 5 provides for the payment of costs out of the funds of the mission.

The schedule contains the provisions that are to be inserted in the deed, and those provisions are as follows: Clause 1 deals with the arrangement of the deed. Clause 2 deals with interpretation. Perhaps the most important definition is that of "the mission territory" which is defined as meaning the State of South Australia, the Northern Territory and any other area that is declared by resolution of the electors to be mission territory. Thus the area in which the mission is to operate is defined. Clause 3 prescribes the qualifications of the electors. Clause 4 provides for the manner in which a meeting of the electors is to be convened. Clause 5 provides for the procedure to be followed at a meeting of the electors.

Clause 6 deals with the qualifications and duties of the governors. They are the trustees of the funds of the mission. The clause provides that there shall be seven governors of whom three are to be ordained ministers of the Congregational denomination, and four lay persons of the Congregational denomination. Clause 7 provides for the election of governors. Clause 8 deals with casual vacancies occurring in the office of the governors. Clause 9 prescribes the times at which the governors shall meet for the discharge of business and provides for the manner in which a meeting of the governors is to be convened. Clause 10 prescribes the quorum at a meeting of the governors.

Clause 11 deals with the office of president and the duties and authorities appertaining to that office. Clause 12 enables the governors to appoint committees to which they may

delegate their powers or functions under the deed. Clause 13 establishes a procedure by which the governors may pass a resolution without actually meeting. Clause 14 empowers the governors to appoint a secretary and treasurer to the mission. Clause 15 provides that each governor shall be entitled to a sum that is, in the opinion of the governors, as nearly as possible equal or equivalent in value to the sum of 10s. 6d. on June 30, 1926, for each meeting of the governors attended by him.

Clause 16 requires the governors to present a report and balance sheet to the Council of the Congregational Union of South Australia Incorporated. Clause 17 deals with the common seal of the mission and how its use is to be attested. Clause 18 empowers the governors to invest the funds of the mission and sets out a number of authorized investments. They are empowered to realize and re-invest those funds. Clause 19 establishes a trust for widows who subscribe to and practise the Christian religion and are in indigent circumstances. Twenty such widows are, on or about Christmas Day in each year, to be paid out of the income of the mission an annuity of not less than \$20. Clause 20 establishes a trust whereunder the governors are empowered to apply any remaining income towards the advancement of the Christian religion in the mission territory. It sets out a number of specific purposes to which the income may be applied.

Clause 21 provides that the receipt by the secretary or other proper officer of any body to which a payment is made under the deed shall be sufficient discharge to the governors, and that they shall not be bound to see to the application of the money. Clause 22 empowers the governors to accumulate income not immediately required for the purposes of the deed. Clause 23 enables the governors to appoint missionaries and to fix the terms and conditions of their employment. Missionaries may be appointed to perform any of the functions set out in subclause (3) of that clause. Clause 24 provides for alteration to the trust deed. However, no alteration is to be made altering the character of the mission as a religious and charitable institution, or authorizing the application of income except for the purpose of providing annuities for widows who subscribe to and practise the Christian religion, and are in indigent circumstances, or for the advancement of the Christian religion.

Clause 25 provides that the governors may make rules for the purposes of the deed. Clause 26 invests the governors with certain

general powers that they will require for the purposes of the deed. Clause 27 is a saving provision providing that procedural errors by the secretary or any other person convening a meeting or the non-receipt of any notice by any person shall not invalidate any proceedings under the deed.

Members may think that this would more properly have been a private Bill and dealt with accordingly. I have to report to the House that, soon after the Government came into office, I was approached by various officers of the Congregational Union and requested to introduce the Bill on behalf of the union. I replied, in the name of the Government, that we should be happy to do that provided that no controversy surrounded the matter, and I have had the assurance of the union that no controversy does surround the matter, as far as the union knows. I point out to members that, in any case, as this is a hybrid Bill, in conformity with Standing Orders it must be referred to a Select Committee as soon as it has passed the second reading. I think that is a safeguard against any untoward aspect of it.

Mr. FREEBAIRN (Light): I support the second reading. On behalf of the Congregational community of South Australia, I thank the Government and the Attorney-General for their generosity in allowing the Bill to be introduced in Parliament as a Government measure. As the Minister has said, the object of this Bill is to bring the Parkin Congregational Mission Trust more into line with present-day requirements. The Minister has given information about the Hon. William Parkin, and perhaps, for the interest of members, I should give a little more detail about that gentleman, because I think he has made an extremely fine contribution to South Australia.

William Parkin was an Englishman. He was born in 1801 and came to South Australia in 1839, when the colony was young. He went farming in the early days at Willunga, and had mixed fortunes. Then he took on a mixed business in Hindley Street and, like most business men, he prospered. The area where his business was is now occupied by Miller Anderson. He then bettered himself by going to Rundle Street, where his business flourished. His premises are now owned by the Myer Emporium, and only in recent years did that firm finally buy out William Parkin's trust interest in that property.

Regarding the change that this Bill makes to the Parkin Trust, I attended the annual conference of the Congregational Union, when

the proposed change to the constitution was passed unanimously by the electors entitled to vote. Only a mild criticism was raised in that, perhaps, the legislation was being pushed through too quickly. However, the support of the conference for the change was unanimous. As the Minister has said, the purpose of the trust set up by the Hon. William Parkin was to provide assistance for missionary work of the Congregational Union in areas where church membership alone was not sufficient to maintain these endeavours. One of the principal areas in which the Congregational Union has been extremely active is the Northern Territory. When the Parkin Trust was established, the Northern Territory was part of South Australia, but there is now no provision in the trust deed for the trust's funds to be expended outside South Australia.

Therefore, part of the legislation before us will allow the Congregational Union, through the Parkin Trust, to maintain the denomination's interest in the ecumenical work at Darwin and Alice Springs. As the Minister has said, the Bill will allow a change in the approach to missionary work. Today the emphasis is away from the formal worship approach and is rather more on a sociological basis. The trust will be able to employ social workers to continue the interests of the community. To stress the relative importance of the Bill, I understand the funds of the trust to be more than \$1,000,000, and the revenue yield from it is about \$60,000 a year, which is a large sum that goes towards maintenance of the Congregational Union's missionary endeavours. I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time and referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Hon. Robin Millhouse, Messrs. Freebairn, Langley, Riches and Wardle; the committee to have power to send for persons, papers and records, and to adjourn from place to place; the committee to report on December 12.

STANDING ORDERS

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE (Attorney-General): I move:

That the report of the Standing Orders Committee, 1968, be adopted.

This is the report that I tabled yesterday. It states:

1. Members' dress in the Chamber:

- (1) In pursuance of an undertaking given by the Speaker in the House on October 22, 1968, the Standing Orders Committee considered the question of members' dress in the Chamber.

- (2) Your committee considers that under the Speaker's general authority to maintain order in the House, he should also be the initial arbiter as to dress, his opinion being subject, of course, to the superior wisdom of the House.

- (3) Your committee recommends:

- (a) that a Standing Order to regulate members' dress is not desirable; and
- (b) that as a general rule, the conventional dress for male members, which includes the wearing of a coat, shirt, tie and long trousers in the Chamber, should be retained.

2. Questions on notice:

Your committee recommends that:

- (1) Standing Order No. 128 be repealed and the following new Standing Order No. 128 substituted therefor:

128. Period for questions without notice. Unless otherwise ordered, the period allowed for asking questions without notice shall not exceed two hours on the first day of a session and, on other days, shall cease at 4 o'clock.

- (2) New Standing Order 130A be enacted as follows:

130A. Disposal of questions on notice. Questions on notice shall be disposed of before other business on the Notice Paper is proceeded with.

You will remember, Mr. Speaker, that a few weeks ago you undertook in this place to refer to the Standing Orders Committee the question of members' dress in the Chamber. This followed a series of questions, I think, by certain members, and the committee has now reported. It is this report, together with a report on another matter, that I have moved should be adopted. Perhaps I should read the relevant parts of the report, because I must say that, in my view, one of the morning papers circulating in Adelaide, and the Australian Broadcasting Commission, dropped the ball in their references this morning to the report before us. The relevant part dealing with this matter is as follows:

Your committee considers that under the Speaker's general authority to maintain order in the House, he should also be the initial arbiter as to dress, his opinion being subject, of course, to the superior wisdom of the House.

In other words, the committee considers that in this as in every other matter pertaining to the affairs of this place, you, as Speaker, are the initial arbiter and you can be overruled only by a vote of the House. It is to you that we look to set and rule upon the standards for dress and other matters. The precise recommendation of the committee is:

(a) that a Standing Order to regulate members' dress is not desirable.

Frankly, the committee considered this matter at some length and concluded that it was impossible to lay down in a Standing Order what should be the standard of members' dress. Dress changes in accordance with fashion. In fact, fashion is constantly changing. We have both men and women members, and it would not be possible to lay down a standard that would be in accordance with fashion, custom and good taste for more than a short time. It is undesirable that we should, in this place, have to observe some set standard of dress that is out of conformity with that adopted in the general community. The first recommendation is that there should not be a specific Standing Order on this matter, because it is impossible to frame one satisfactorily. It is on the second point that I think the *Advertiser* and the A.B.C. (I do not know about any of the other organs of news propagation) were rather in error this morning in their interpretation of the recommendation, which is as follows:

That as a general rule—

that is the phrase to which I particularly draw the attention of honourable members—the conventional dress for male members, which includes the wearing of a coat, shirt, tie and long trousers in the Chamber, should be retained.

The phrase "as a general rule" immediately imports the certainty of exceptions in certain circumstances. The Standing Orders Committee has framed its recommendation for that purpose so that, in certain circumstances, there can be exceptions to the general rule. Members may ask, "In what circumstances can the general rule be varied?" I speak for myself, and other members of the committee may speak, too, about what I consider are exceptional circumstances. Normally, I have always worn conventional dress into this Chamber and have not thought of doing otherwise. Some time ago I was reported as saying that, if you, Mr. Speaker, gave permission for the wearing of shorts, in some circumstances I would wear them in this House. I would not consider wearing them unless the weather was extremely hot and I had previously asked you, Sir, informally whether, in your opinion, the climatic conditions were such that would warrant a departure from the general rule.

Mr. Clark: You mean that if the weather forecast indicated a temperature in the 90's

you would ring the Speaker and ask him whether you could wear shorts?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: Substantially, yes.

Mr. Clark: That's absurd.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I do not agree. It is a matter of courtesy that one should check with the Speaker. Every member would acknowledge the correctness of the second paragraph of this report, stating that the Speaker was the initial arbiter of these things.

Mr. Corcoran: Do we?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I do.

Mr. Corcoran: We will speak for ourselves.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: This report was agreed to with one dissentient voice, that of the member for Stuart. The members for Adelaide and Chaffey and I supported this report.

Mr. Lawn: I don't altogether agree with everything you say.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: The official minute shows that the member for Adelaide supported this. It would be a matter of courtesy to check with the Speaker whether circumstances would warrant a departure from the general rule as to dress. For that reason, I intend to follow this course if the report is adopted. The implication behind the recommendation is that, in certain circumstances, there could be a change from the general standard of dress in this place. This is an important recommendation made by a majority of three to one, with the Chairman not voting. There has been an intense interest shown outside the House in this matter. People living in my district have told me that they are waiting to see what the House of Assembly will do, because they will regard its action as a lead.

Mr. Broomhill: Are you suggesting that this proposal would give a lead to others?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I believe it will be a sensible lead to the community. The other matter reported upon is the question of replying to a question on notice. At present Standing Orders provide that questions on notice must be replied to before the business of the day is called on at 4 o'clock. During this session, in particular, Question Time has normally lasted until 4 o'clock, which has meant that the Government has had to move to allow questions on notice to be replied to after the 4 o'clock bell has rung. The recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee is that the Standing Orders should

be altered to provide that, in substance, questions on notice should be replied to before the business of the day is proceeded with. It is proposed that Standing Order 128 be repealed and the following new Standing Order 128 be substituted:

Period for questions without notice: Unless otherwise ordered, the period allowed for asking questions without notice shall not exceed two hours on the first day of a session and, on other days, shall cease at 4 o'clock.

Also, a new Standing Order 130A is to be included, as follows:

Disposal of questions on notice: Questions on Notice shall be disposed of before other business on the Notice Paper is proceeded with. That is the recommendation of a majority of members of the Standing Orders Committee, and the minutes of the meeting show that I dissented from that recommendation. The other matter discussed was the question of time limits on speeches and it was decided by a majority (I think of three to two, the chairman having a casting vote) not to make any recommendation on this subject at present. I voted against any time limits on speeches, substantially because I believe that, although we have had some irritating examples of long speeches this session, there is no justification in a House of this size to impose time limits. When, as seems likely, the House is enlarged to 47 members, the matter will have to be re-examined.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Leader of the Opposition): I move:

After "1968" to insert "except paragraphs (2) and (3)(b) of clause 1 thereof".

The honourable Attorney-General has said that this is a departure from previous procedure. I must say that the wording of the report of the committee seems to be obscure. First, the report says that the committee considers that under the Speaker's general authority to maintain order in the House he should also be the initial arbiter as to dress, his opinion being subject, of course, to the superior wisdom of the House. True, under Standing Order 176 you, Sir, have general authority to maintain order, but that means you are an arbiter as to order and not an arbiter, yourself, as to standards of dress unless that dress is disorderly. To say that you are initial arbiter as to dress other than in the matter of its being orderly or not is, I think, a departure from existing practice and the existing Standing Orders. There is no necessity for a motion of this kind, and if we are simply to pass a resolution which says you are official arbiter as to dress, given the things you said

on the occasion when I initially asked you about this matter, then frankly your arbitration on dress in this House is not accepted by honourable members generally.

I do not say that members of this House should be confined to the antediluvian and subfusc. This is the twentieth century, and I am happy to see people who are prepared to dress on occasions as though they are living (and indeed they are) in a hot climate and not as though the only way they should behave is as if they were denizens of some of the colder climates of Europe and committed to the forms of dress, behaviour and intake of food which seem to be the general pattern there. We should, at any rate as human beings, be able to adapt ourselves to the country around us in this way and to take a few lessons from the original inhabitants of Australia who have adapted extremely well.

Mr. Virgo: Are you suggesting that we adapt ourselves to that extent?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: No, but at any rate I think we can achieve a reasonable compromise. I do not agree that as a general rule the conventional dress for male members, including the wearing of a "coat, shirt, tie and long trousers" in the Chamber should be retained. I think there are other modes of dress which are decent, formal, reasonable and not disorderly in any way and which could be adopted here. If a member of this House chooses to put on a Nehru jacket, I do not see why he should be expelled from this House if he is not wearing a tie. It is extraordinary to me that the Minister of Education (Mrs. Steele) and the member for Barossa (Mrs. Byrne) can come in here looking cool and comfortable yet well clad and sensibly dressed and with open neck garments, even though the space may be bedecked with pearls, which the rest of us would not require.

Mr. Ferguson: Why don't you come in likewise?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: While I do not intend to have my nether garments in similar fashion, I do not see in the least why we should not come in wearing an open neck garment. If it is decent for women, I do not see why it is indecent for men. I think it is about time the place grew up. I do not see any likelihood that members will enter this Chamber in disorderly fashion or offend against decency in entering the House. After all, all members in this place have to account to their constituents for their behaviour and, if their constituents find their public behaviour is unsatisfactory, those constituents are likely to

take electoral action about it, and that is the thing that is likely to put some sort of brake, naturally enough, on members' fashions. What is more, of course, members who are elected to this House, after all, have been elected to a public position, because they are able to convince the majority of people in their community that they are prepared to act reasonably and responsibly, and so I see no reason why a particular limitation should be put on members in this way.

The Attorney-General says this is not a limitation but that it is a departure from a convention, because exceptions are established, and the exception apparently is that, despite what you have told the House previously, Mr. Speaker, about your views on what should always be the case in relation to members, and despite the fact that we have a hot climate, since this Chamber itself is air-conditioned then no-one should come in here other than in what is expressed by this resolution as a general rule. The Attorney-General says that, despite the statement which you have made publicly in this House, he thinks this resolution means that he can telephone you on a hot morning and say, in effect, "Listen, boss, it is hot this morning; do you reckon we could wear shorts?", and then it will be up to you, Mr. Speaker, to decide whether this is an exceptional case.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: And subject to the decision of the House.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The Speaker can then make a ruling in this House and, in order to get around that, it would require a resolution of the House to set aside a ruling of the Speaker. The Attorney-General knows that even when members on the Government side disagree with the Speaker they are reluctant to pass a resolution of that kind because, in effect, it is a vote of no confidence in the Speaker and an attempt to disagree to his ruling. Why cannot we leave it as the matter stands? The Standing Order provides that the Speaker has the duty of maintaining order in the House, and then it is up to honourable members to exercise proper discretion as members in the way that they dress and enter the House. The only way in which the Speaker can then make any ruling on the matter is if that dress is plainly disorderly: not that it may be different from something which the Speaker would choose to adopt himself but that it is something which disturbs the order of the House. That should normally be the position which members should maintain. That is the right to indi-

duality which has been maintained previously in British Parliamentary institutions, and I do not see why we should not maintain it here. I go along with the draft which was presented to the committee and which I am informed is public property, a draft prepared by the Clerk which states:

It would appear that no previous Speaker in South Australia has publicly pronounced upon this subject. As in the House of Commons, dress seems to have been left in the past to the discretion of individual members, a discretion which has been exercised with consistently good taste and so as to preserve a visible dignity in the Chamber. Your committee expresses no opinion on what should be the precise form of dress in the Chamber for members, male or female. However, in the current context, your committee feels it ought to indicate to the House that members of the committee are divided in their personal views as to whether the wearing of shorts in the Chamber measures up to the criteria of appropriate dress—

that is, obviously that the majority of the committee thought it was measuring up to the criteria of appropriate dress—

having regard to the fact that the Chamber, kept at a temperature of 70 degrees in summer, is comfortably cool. Your committee affirms that members' dress in the Chamber ought to be at the discretion of members, but that such discretion should be exercised with propriety and so as not to detract from the dignity of the House. Your committee feels that it is wise that such discretion should be so subject to qualifications of propriety and dignity, for if discretion were absolute, there would be no enforceable sanction against a member appearing in the Chamber dressed, say, in trunks only, or in less.

I do not think it is likely that any member would come in in that condition—it might create a certain amount of disorder if he did.

Mr. Clark: It would not suit some of us.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I agree with that. The report continues:

The committee considers that under the Speaker's general authority to maintain order in the House (S.O. 176), he ought to be the initial arbiter as to whether there is any abuse of the discretion as to dress—

the initial arbiter not as to dress but as to whether there is any abuse of discretion under Standing Order 176.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: There is no difference.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Of course there is a difference. The report continues: . . . his opinion being subject, of course, to the superior wisdom of the House—

as it always is. If my amendment is carried the effect will be to maintain exactly the suggestion put forward in the draft report,

that is, there should be no Standing Order as to dress. The only Standing Order that will affect the situation is Standing Order 176. Mr. Speaker, you would rule if there were any breach of order by a member in the way in which he entered the House in dress or in any other fashion, and if you ruled that a member were disorderly, of course the House would vote on it if the member did not accept your ruling.

I do not consider there should be anything apart from that. It should be left there, and I certainly do not agree that we should lay down a general rule such as this with exceptions that require that we must ring you as to whether we are exercising our discretion correctly on the day in question according to some forecast by someone. I do not think that is satisfactory or that it will preserve the rights of this House, and I hope that the House will accept my amendment.

Mr. CORCORAN (Millicent): I heartily endorse the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition and support the amendment he has moved. Obviously, the report we are considering and the committee's recommendation one might think to be the work of super conformists. Indeed, I understand this is the case to a certain extent, bearing in mind the make-up of the committee. The member for Adelaide is extremely conservative in his dress—no-one has convinced him that he should wear single-breasted suits, and he still wears double-breasted suits. When I see this sort of thing I can understand why there would be an objection to members being able to freely decide for themselves whether or not they are sensibly dressed in the House. The Attorney-General has said that the people of the State, and the people in his district in particular, are looking for a lead in this direction, and that, if you, Mr. Speaker, deem it necessary under the committee's recommendation you will create a precedent by giving permission to a member that will no doubt be followed throughout the State. I cannot hold with this view, because there are many sensible people in the State who, when climatic conditions are such that shorts are desirable, wear them, who look well in them, and who must feel more comfortable in them than they would in suits.

Mr. Lawn: Banks, business houses.

Mr. CORCORAN: Yes, and I suppose that some of the most conservative organizations in the State recognize that this is desirable, but there are still some organizations in the State which are extremely conservative and

which might see fit to alter their dress rules if we gave a lead. I suggest that the recommendation, as the Leader implied, is an insult to the intelligence of members of this House and to the discretion they are capable of exercising. Indeed, I do not think there is any member who would not use good sense with regard to dress. I think this matter should be left to members' discretion and should not be made your responsibility, Mr. Speaker. You have nothing to guide you, because the committee has said there is no necessity for a Standing Order. If I were in your position, Mr. Speaker, I would not want to have the responsibility of deciding whether or not to grant or refuse a request. I do not think you should be asked to do this. I agree with the Leader that you are responsible for maintaining order in the House and, if there is something you consider incorrect, you have a perfect right to draw this to the attention of the member and of the House. Paragraph 1 (2) states:

Your committee considers that under the Speaker's general authority to maintain order in the House, he should also be the initial arbiter as to dress.

Your authority to maintain order in this House is based on Standing Orders and, if you move to bring someone to order, you have to act on a Standing Order. Yet, here the committee is asking you to do something without any basis of authority. I do not think this is necessary. I am satisfied that members not only now but in the future will use their discretion and good sense in regard to dress, and I do not think they should have to contact you, Mr. Speaker, each morning or whenever they desire to wear shorts or alter the conventional dress and ask, cap in hand, "Can I please wear shorts this morning?"

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: Don't exaggerate.

Mr. CORCORAN: I am not exaggerating. In fact, the Attorney-General gave an example and said that if the temperatures were going to be high, it was only courtesy to ring the Speaker and say, "Can I wear shorts today?" Why ring the Speaker if one is not going to ask permission to do this?

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: Because he is the Speaker of the House.

Mr. CORCORAN: Surely, if a member is going to ring the Speaker he is asking the Speaker's permission and nothing else. Why should we have to do this in regard to dress? I think that it is ridiculous and that it is an insult to the intelligence of members of

this House. I am surprised to think that my friend the member for Adelaide was a party to such a recommendation. However, I am sure he will have some explanation for the House that will cause us to understand why he was led into this.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: That's an insult to your own member.

Mr. CORCORAN: I am talking to him, not to the Attorney-General: I was talking to the butcher not the block. I endorse the Leader's remarks and I hope that the House will agree in all seriousness to the amendment the Leader has moved, because I believe that it is not only in the interests of members but also in your interest, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. ARNOLD (Chaffey): Lengthy consideration was given this matter by the committee, and I assure the member for Millicent that the member for Adelaide made a worthy contribution to the committee's findings. I can see little point in the Speaker and officers of this House continuing to wear traditional dress if members are at liberty to dress as they like.

Mr. Corcoran: Do you really think they would do that?

Mr. ARNOLD: Why does the court maintain its standard of dress?

Mr. Corcoran: We are not the court.

Mr. ARNOLD: Yes, but why does it maintain that standard?

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: Why does it?

Mr. ARNOLD: It does so to maintain a certain dignity.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: Does that affect justice? That only relates to the frame of mind.

Mr. ARNOLD: What the honourable member says about the frame of mind is a good point.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: Some people who belong to a certain race wear white to a funeral because they believe in it.

Mr. ARNOLD: The committee has recommended that, generally, the conventional dress should be retained. This mode of dress has been passed down to us over the years, and I do not think the weather has changed in the last 100 or 200 years. I feel no discomfort whatever when I wear a suit in this Chamber. Although I probably wear shorts as much as any member, there are places where I wear a suit. I think it is undesirable to wear casual dress on formal occasions and, as I have said, there is no discomfort in wearing a suit in this Chamber.

Mr. Corcoran: Do you ring up anyone if you want to wear shorts to the city?

Mr. ARNOLD: Honourable members will have an opportunity to discuss this matter. I wholeheartedly support the recommendations of the committee, which did not treat this matter lightly but considered it carefully before making its recommendation. I oppose the amendment.

Mr. CLARK (Gawler): I will be mercifully brief on this matter. However, I want to draw to the attention of members some of the disabilities that could occur if the motion is supported. I support the amendment. I do not oppose members' wearing shorts. When I am at home I wear them most of the time but, bearing in mind my figure, my sense of decency would stop me from wearing shorts in this Chamber. Possibly it would be completely correct for the Attorney-General, with his sylph-like figure, to wear shorts here. Although I wear shorts at home for comfort, frankly I probably look horrible in them. If it were not for the respect I have for the Standing Orders Committee, I would be inclined to say that this recommendation was silly, but it will suffice to say that it is not very sensible.

I want to give you, Mr. Speaker, some idea of what might happen in your household in the hot weather. The possibility is that you could receive 38 telephone calls on a hot morning from members seeking to change their normal mode of dress for the day. Perhaps we could cut down this number to 36, because I think the two female members would be capable of making up their own minds on what to wear, without telephoning you. If you, Sir, consider that 36 members could telephone you wanting to know details of what they should wear, I believe you can see that it would take more time in the morning than you could adequately afford for you to deal with this matter. Some members would have to telephone you the evening before, when they would not know whether or not the next day would be hot. When a member telephoned you, you would first picture his figure and, knowing your good sense and tact, I know that in the case of a chap like me you would endeavour to persuade him not to wear shorts in here in any circumstances. In the case of fellows like the Attorney-General, the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition (and I do not want other members to feel hurt if I miss them out) and other members, you might consider that they have figures that would be suited by this type of clothing, but that would not be the end of the matter.

If you were to do the job properly, you would have to inquire as to the type of shorts they intended to wear. Anyone who has seen shorts knows there are many types, such as bombay bloomers, bermuda shorts and so on. You would have to know whether a member intended to wear long shorts, short shorts or very short shorts. You would have to know whether the shorts would be coloured or striped, and on every occasion the burden would be on you to make up your mind: you would have to decide whether red, white and blue shorts were suitable for the member for Eyre.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: The Attorney-General would wear red, white and blue shorts.

Mr. CLARK: The matter would not even finish there. If you, Sir, were to be the arbiter on the type of dress, you would have to consider also the type of shirt to be worn with the shorts. Anyone who has been to the beach or to a cricket match on a warm day knows that there are many types and colours of shirts. You would want to know whether the member concerned was intending to wear a white shirt, hawaiian shirt or one of the other types of shirt dearly loved by some people.

Mr. Hudson: Don't you think the Speaker would need to assess members' bicep muscles?

Mr. CLARK: Knowing that you, Sir, are a stickler for going into detail, I realize that you might look at matters such as that. While you were dealing with one member on all these matters, 36 other members would be trying to telephone you to make similar inquiries. I further suggest that, as members would be wanting to wear casual clothes, you would have to consider the type of shoes they might wear. You would have to consider whether the shoes would match the shirt and shorts. Anyone who walks down the street knows there are many and varied types of shoes these days. When the shoes had been decided on, as members sit down in this place and show their socks, you would have to deal with that matter, too. After you had decided all those things, I suggest that the thought might occur to you to consider what type of hairstyle would suit the type of clothes to be worn by a member. In my case, that would not be difficult. I mention these matters jocularly to show that I consider what has been placed before us is not common sense. I suggest that the suitability of our dress should be left to the good sense of members. From what I know of them, they have a certain amount of common sense, if some have

nothing else. I support the amendment and oppose the motion.

Mr. McANANEY (Stirling): I oppose the amendment and I do not really support the motion. We have air-conditioning and we hope that it will be extended to the upper region of the building. Regardless of the time of year, the same clothes can be worn with comfort. I have not an overcoat: as a member of Parliament, I cannot afford one, but I do not feel uncomfortable without it even in the winter. Perhaps I am old fashioned, but I was travelling through Europe, wearing shorts, when the Leader of the Opposition was in napkins, or perhaps knickerbockers, and I found that people dressed according to the circumstances. When I was working physically on one hot day, I had to dive into a muddy creek to conceal my sex when some woman came nearby. Although wearing a collar was uncomfortable for me some years ago, I have become accustomed to wearing one and have not suffered discomfort. I do not think we should change merely because this is a modern age. In the tropics, whether the weather is wet or dry, the temperature is uniform during the day. Why should we not do what is sensible? When we are doing physical work we can remove as much clothing as we like, provided there are not too many visitors around.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide): Because of the Attorney's claim that I supported the committee's recommendation, and because of the remarks of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I think I should tell members of the position in which I found myself on this matter. The committee met twice, both occasions being a Thursday morning, at a time when it was, apparently, known to the Chairman of the committee but not to the other members of it that the member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) could not be present. Consequently, on each occasion, those present at the start of the meeting were the Attorney-General, you, Mr. Speaker, the member for Chaffey (Mr. Arnold), and me. The member for Stuart came in about 40 minutes later. It seems (and I have found this out only a short time ago) that every Thursday morning, at the time set for the meetings of the committee, the member for Stuart performs duties on behalf of his constituents, and he has told me that he told you, Mr. Speaker, that he would be unable to attend at that time. Immediately we met last Thursday morning, I moved clause 1 of the committee's report, and then paragraph 3 (a), as follows:

Your committee recommends that a Standing Order to regulate members' dress is not desirable.

I also moved acceptance of paragraph (4) of the Clerk's report, which is as follows:

Your committee affirms that members' dress in the Chamber ought to be at the discretion of members but that such discretion should be exercised with propriety so as not to detract from the dignity of the House.

My motion was not seconded, but it is practically word for word with the amendment that has been moved by the Leader this afternoon. The discussion then centred on a suggestion by the Attorney-General and I think that, in deference to you, Mr. Speaker, I should say that you were not pleased about having thrust upon you the responsibility of being the arbiter on members' dress. You did not wish that and the result was support from three members, including me finally. Therefore, even if you, Mr. Speaker, and the member for Stuart when he arrived, voted against the motion, it would still have been carried, despite your wishes in the matter.

Mr. Corcoran: You were the villain in the piece, then.

Mr. LAWN: Well, unconsciously I was placed in the position I have described. Following a lengthy discussion on the Attorney-General's suggestion, we were getting around to the present recommendation of the committee when the member for Stuart arrived, having completed his business, and made exactly the same suggestion as had been contained in the motion that I moved just after 9.30 a.m. I told the member for Stuart that and that I had not been able to get a seconder for my motion and had committed myself to going along with the Attorney-General's suggestion. That explains that the suggestion was at least a break through. Irrespective of the words used, it was (and is) the intention or wish of the Standing Orders Committee that members, in hot weather, may wear shorts. That is, in essence, what we are suggesting.

Mr. Broomhill: You'll agree that the committee's recommendation doesn't say that, won't you?

Mr. LAWN: I have said that, irrespective of the words in the recommendation, the committee intended to recommend to the House that members should have the right to wear shorts and to discard coats and ties, although we did not lay down particularly what must be worn. Members of the committee thought that we should be able to shed much of what we wear today. I think the Attorney-General will agree with that statement. It was

suggested that members should contact the Speaker before wearing shorts in the Chamber.

Mr. Riches: There is nothing in the report about consulting the Speaker.

Mr. LAWN: This was a suggestion by a member of the committee, but nothing was included in the recommendation.

Mr. Riches: The Attorney-General expressed his opinion that it would be an act of courtesy. The committee did not decide on it.

Mr. LAWN: That is correct. I have explained my attitude and the reason why the member for Stuart and I did not move on lines similar to this amendment. Through no fault of his, the member for Stuart was not present when I wanted a seconder for my motion. Most members of the Standing Orders Committee wish to get away, in some circumstances, from the conventional dress. In view of this discussion, perhaps we should agree to the Leader's amendment. Had the member for Stuart been present before 9.35 on the morning of the meeting the decision of the committee would have been made on the casting vote of the Chairman. Now, we are in exactly the same position. It seems that a decision will have to be made on the casting vote of the Speaker, and I am sure that he does not desire that responsibility. I hope that Government members will persuade the Attorney-General to allow the amendment to be carried unanimously by the House.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart): An explanation is due from me concerning my vote at the Standing Orders Committee meeting and my attendance at that meeting. I was asked whether I could be present on a Thursday morning and I explained that, because I had to do a broadcast, I would be a few minutes late. I did not ask for the meeting to be postponed to suit my convenience, and the meeting was called after I had been consulted in the first place. This matter has been discussed at two meetings, and my attitude has been that we should treat members of this Parliament as adults and leave the decision on dress to them. Other Parliaments have not had to determine how its members should dress, and I see no need for a Standing Order or any direction to be given to members about dress, provided that order is maintained. I thought a draft had been drawn up which set out that position, and I indicated my support for it. However, the discussion had taken place and a compromise reached when I arrived at the meeting, and it was read to me. I expressed my opinion and I registered my objection to it. Nothing

in the recommendation favours or opposes the wearing of shorts, and nothing in it refers to members consulting the Speaker on what should be worn. That is a suggestion of the way the recommendation may operate, but it was not carried by the committee.

As the member for Adelaide said, the Chairman of the committee considered that these decisions should not be for him to make. I sincerely hope that this matter will not be decided on Party lines, because the Speaker would be placed in an awkward position. It would be wrong to alter a Standing Order on the casting vote of the Speaker, and I hope that he will not be placed in that position. The House of Commons, and every other Parliament about which I know, has not had to draw up rules about how members should dress. Members are answerable to the Speaker for good order and conduct in the Chamber and to their constituents for the way they conduct themselves inside and outside Parliament. I believe they should be trusted with the decision on how they should dress when coming into this Chamber. The committee was unanimous that there was no need to alter Standing Orders, and I think there is no need for an expression of opinion of the House, as it was written in the recommendation that was brought down. The first draft explains that there was division on the Standing Orders Committee and that, because of that, it was thought that members' dress in the Chamber ought to be at their discretion but that such discretion should be exercised with propriety and so as not to detract from the dignity of the House. I do not believe any member of the Chamber would so clothe himself as to detract from the dignity of the House; if he did he would have to answer to his constituents and to the public generally, and I think that is sufficient restraint.

I hope the House will adopt the recommendation concerning the answering of questions on notice, for this will retain the general practice that has worked well over many years. Although the recommendation does not stipulate it, custom has laid down that questions on notice are answered only on Tuesdays. However, if answers were not given to questions on notice at the conclusion of Question Time, they would have to be given at the end of the business of the day. I am convinced that the time when we have been accustomed to receiving our answers to questions on notice is a much better time than at the conclusion of the business of the day.

I think that was envisaged when the Standing Orders were drawn up in the first instance, because they now lay down that questions on notice shall be placed at the head of the Notice Paper, and I think the purpose of insisting on that is that they must be the first matters dealt with.

I do not think the House has been inconvenienced by the practice that has been followed; indeed, I think the answering of questions on notice saves time; much more time is taken up by members who ask questions and then perhaps a week later ask the same question in order to obtain the reply. If the question is put on notice in the first place, explanations are avoided, and the answer is given after the question has been fully considered. I think the practice of obtaining information by putting questions on notice should be encouraged, and experience has proved that answering them as a first item of business on the one day of the week has not inconvenienced the House but has assisted in its smooth running. I think the recommendation is a good one, and I hope the House endorses it.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE (Attorney-General): I hope the House will not accept the Leader's amendment. I am disappointed that the member for Adelaide, who supported the report which was brought into the House without any of the reservations that he now has (certainly without making them clear to the other members of the committee), is not now going to support the report. I think every member knows the member for Adelaide well enough to know that he is never talked into doing anything against his will, and he was not on this occasion. I am rather surprised now that he is not going to support a recommendation which previously he supported quite freely and openly, but that is his own business, and, of course, he has to answer to his own conscience for what he does. This report is, I believe, a significant departure from the present practice in this House: it means that we accept that in certain circumstances there can be an exception to the general rule which is always applied, namely, that members should wear long trousers. This is, I think, as far as we should go. I am quite firmly and openly of the opinion that if the climatic conditions were appropriate you, Mr. Speaker, would allow members to wear shorts in this place, and that there should not be a continued ban on their wearing in certain circumstances. I have made my own position quite clear on that in

the past; I hope it will occur, but I believe the motion before us, to which the Leader has moved an amendment, is a satisfactory and sensible compromise.

The Leader read out the report prepared by the Clerk which showed there was difference of opinion in the committee on this matter, and members will know where I stood. I am in favour of the wearing of shorts in certain circumstances, but I am also in favour now of standing by the recommendation in the report of the committee, and I intend to do that, because I believe it expressed the view of the majority of the committee. As I say, I believe it is a sensible compromise. I therefore ask members not to support the amendment.

The SPEAKER: Before putting the question I think that, as so many questions have been asked about this matter, I should make my position perfectly clear. What honourable members have said is practically correct, but they have missed one vital point: when the committee met, I recommended that "(a) that a Standing Order to regulate members' dress is not desirable; and (b) that the conventional dress for male members, which includes the wearing of a coat, shirt, tie and long trousers in the Chamber, should be retained". Honourable members will see that the words "as a general rule" were not included in paragraph (b). That motion was then moved by the member for Chaffey (Mr. Arnold); he could not get a seconder, the debate went on, as the member for Adelaide has said, and we considered this general aspect. The arguments then revolved around the question whether we should insert "as a general rule". An argument ensued, and I said I would not like to be the arbiter, and my view has not been altered. I am the Chairman of the committee, and the majority of the committee rules. That is where the matter stood; it has come before members, and the question now before the House is that the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted.

The House divided on the amendment:

Ayes (18)—Messrs. Broomhill and Burdon, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Casey, Clark, Corcoran, Dunstan (teller), Hudson, Hughes, Hurst, Jennings, Langley, Lawn, Loveday, McKee, Riches, Ryan, and Virgo.

Noes (18)—Messrs. Allen, Arnold, Brookman, Coumbe, Edwards, Ferguson, Freebairn, Giles, Hall, McAnaney, Millhouse (teller), Nankivell, Pearson, and Rodda, Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Teusner, Venning, and Wardle.

Pair—Aye—Mr. Hutchens. No—Mr. Evans.

The SPEAKER: There are 18 Ayes and 18 Noes. There being an equality of votes, I give my casting vote in favour of the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived; motion carried.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE moved:

That the alteration to the Standing Orders as adopted by this House be laid before the Governor by the Speaker for approval pursuant to section 55 of the Constitution Act, 1934-1965.

Motion carried.

POOR PERSONS LEGAL ASSISTANCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. R. S. HALL (Premier): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

From time to time children attending school are found to be infested with head lice. When this is brought to the attention of the parents, and their co-operation is obtained, the problem can be resolved effectively. However, in a few, though significant number of cases, parents, either through ignorance or disinterest, are unwilling to co-operate with the authorities, thus causing unnecessary discomfort to the children and exposing other children to the risk of infestation. One of the objects of this Bill is, therefore, to provide an appropriate sanction in relation to these recalcitrant parents. At the same time opportunity has been taken to effect some other amendments to the principle Act.

Clauses 1 and 2 of the Bill are formal and clause 3 makes certain consequential amendments to the arrangement of the principal Act. Clause 4 amends the definition section of the principal Act by making it clear that the expression "vermin" includes lice and fleas, the scientific descriptions of which are set out in the amendment. Clause 5 makes an amendment consequential on the amendments effected by the Bill to the part heading to Part IX. Clause 6 repeals and re-enacts section 131 (1) in substantially the same form, but gives the local board of health the power to deal with vermin infested premises and articles in the same way as it can at present deal with premises harbouring persons suspected to be suffering from an infectious disease. In addition, the local board is empowered to act on the report of one of its inspectors. The amendment to subsection (2) is consequential on the re-enacted subsection (1).

Clause 7 is a new provision based on section 134 of the principal Act (the present provision relating to persons suffering from infectious diseases) and deals with persons who are infested with vermin, it being aimed at encouraging infested persons to seek appropriate treatment as quickly as possible. Clauses 8 and 9 are consequential on the amendment proposed in clause 7. Clause 10 is self-explanatory and attempts to ensure that a vermin infested child will be appropriately treated and will not become a source of infestation in others. Clause 11 is intended to resolve a doubt that could arise in connection with the location in the Part of the principal Act, dealing with infectious diseases, of sections 146 and 146a which deal with hospitals and rest homes. A view could be taken that these sections were limited to hospitals and rest homes accepting only infectious diseases cases. Since this was clearly not the intention of the principal Act, the amendment should make this clear by placing these sections in a separate part of the Act.

Clause 12 amends section 146 of the principal Act by providing that the fee for a licence for a hospital or rest home will be fixed by regulation. Previously the fee that could be charged by the local board (that is, \$4) was set out in this section. The present fee, which was fixed in 1936, does not now cover the expenses of the local board in making the inspections which are a pre-requisite for the granting of the licence. It is felt that the fixing of the fee by regulation will provide for some flexibility in this matter. In addition, certain citations in this section of the principal Act have been brought up to date. Clause 13 makes similar amendments to section 146a of the principal Act which deals with the licensing of rest homes and, in addition, excludes from the definition of rest home "psychiatric rehabilitation hostels" established under the Mental Health Act. This amendment seems desirable since there have been doubts expressed whether such establishments are, on a strict construction of the section, outside the definition.

Clauses 14, 15 and 16 deal with developments in the control of tuberculosis. As honourable members are aware, considerable success has been achieved in the control of this disease since the late 1940's but they may not be aware that this State has for many years been regarded as something of a leader in the field. As evidence of this it was possible some time ago to close down one of our establishments (the Bedford Park Sanatorium),

and it is hoped to be able to close the Morris Hospital soon leaving the care of sufferers to private institutions, which of course enjoy a substantial measure of indirect Commonwealth support. However, some minor amendments to Part IVa of the Act, which deals with tuberculosis, will be required. The provisions affected are those dealing with the happily rare cases where some compulsion is necessary to ensure that tuberculosis sufferers, in an infectious condition and who provide a risk of infection to others, are properly cared for.

Clauses 14 and 15 amend the definition of institution, in relation to which an order for confinement may be made, since upon the closure of the Morris Hospital there will be no establishment in this State which will, strictly speaking, fall within that definition. Clause 16 will permit any patient confined by order of the court in the Morris Hospital to be transferred to some other institution for the balance of the period authorized by the court. Clause 17 is consequential on the amendments made by clauses 12 and 13.

Mr. BROOMHILL secured the adjournment of the debate.

REGISTRATION OF DOGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE (Attorney-General): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its main object is to equate the fees charged for the registration of bitches, which have been spayed, with those charged in respect of the registration of male dogs. It is thought that it is reasonable that persons who have gone to the expense of having their animals attended to in this way should be relieved of the additional charge of 50c applied in relation to the registration of bitches. At the same time opportunity has been taken to effect a general revision of the Act and of making decimal currency amendments.

Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 makes a decimal currency amendment. Clause 3 at paragraph (a) removes the necessity for a receipt under the Act to be in the form of the Third Schedule. This will enable councils to adopt the form of receipt most suitable for their accounting procedures and will further ensure that all receipt books or forms do not become obsolete on any change of the scale of fees. It is, perhaps, to be regretted that the need for receipts to be issued (except on demand) could not be removed altogether,

to accord with modern business practice, but since a receipt under this Act at section 30 (3) is clear evidence that the dog is registered it is felt that provision for their compulsory issue should be retained. This clause also effects a decimal currency amendment.

Cluses 4 to 7 make decimal currency amendments. Clause 8 strikes out section 16 (1) of the principal Act which was first enacted in 1887 and which casts a duty on the registrar to cause inquiries to be made on all premises within his district as to the presence of unlicensed dogs. Compliance with this provision is simply not practical and the provision should not properly remain in the Act. Cluses 9 to 17 make decimal currency amendments. Clause 18 repeals section 36 of the principal Act relating to the keeping of up to two unregistered dogs by full-blood Aborigines, the operation of which has now expired. Clause 19 makes a decimal currency amendment.

Clause 20 amends the First Schedule to the principal Act consequent on the proposal to reduce the fee for the registration of spayed bitches by 50c. Clause 21 strikes out and re-inserts the Second Schedule to the principal Act which relates to fees for registration, reduces the fee payable in respect of spayed bitches and, in addition, increases the period of grace before an increased registration fee becomes payable from 31 to 60 days. Clause 22 strikes out the Third Schedule and is consequential on the amendment proposed by clause 3. Clause 24 makes certain decimal currency amendments to the Fifth Schedule.

Mr. CASEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

CROWN LANDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 26. Page 2745.)

Mr. CASEY (Frome): I support the Bill, with the exception of one clause. This is one of the most important measures dealing with this matter that have ever come before the House. Ever since the inception of this Parliament there has always been on the Statute Book a restriction on the alienation of certain types of lease land. The clause that I oppose absolutely releases from any restriction whatever the 20,000,000 acres of perpetual lease land that is now current in this State. Members opposite should carefully consider how this Bill will affect their districts.

In any country some farmers are unable to produce enough to maintain the minimum standards set by society. However, the characteristics of these farmers may be different from country to country at any point of time and they may be different from one period to another in the same country. I refer specifically to this State, because there have been times here when one branch of agriculture has differed in this respect markedly from another. The fact that the amount of production of such farmers is chronically below standard means that they are likely to face more severe restraints than do other small-scale producers. In any event it seems clear that a different set of policy measures is required to increase their contribution to this State's economic development. This is the crux of the problem concerning agriculture in this country at present.

We cannot set down one type of policy that will cover all types of agriculture, but this is basically what is being done in this Bill. The Government apparently believes that lifting these restrictions on perpetual lease land will solve the problems of agriculture in this State, but I do not think it will. We must look more deeply at the situation before we start doing this type of thing. This is why I warn members opposite that they should look closely at this Bill before they decide that it will benefit farmers in their areas.

I do not believe for one moment that this measure will meet the need for more efficient farms, in the true sense of the word "efficient". The member for Chaffey (Mr. Arnold) said that a farmer must have more land to become more efficient, but this is not an accurate statement. A farmer could become very efficient on a particular block—to the extent that he could not become more efficient—but the farm might still not be an economic proposition. Consequently, the member's statement is not correct. I do not think any member believes that the majority of primary producers in this State are on the bread line and that they are working at a loss, because, if farmers were in this kind of situation, there would be a mass exodus from the land.

Mr. Giles: The only reason they do not move is that they cannot sell their properties.

Mr. CASEY: They do not sell their properties because they cannot get the prices they want. All these things must be considered. Basically, we cannot say that the majority of primary producers in this State are on the bread line. I realize that their cost of production has increased, that their sales have decreased and that, consequently, incomes

from all types of primary production in this State have declined over the last 10 years. In connection with lifting restrictions on perpetual lease land, whom does the Government think this applies to? What type of primary production will be benefited?

The woolgrower is vitally concerned in this matter because he does sow crops in certain districts; he does not sow crops every year but he does sow oat crops for feed every year and other crops in good seasons. He sometimes puts in a sizeable acreage of wheat to get a quick return. Some woolgrowers, even in the pastoral areas, have grown considerable quantities of grain over the years, but they are in a different category because they must obtain permission from the Pastoral Board to do this. Wheat farms, mixed farms, citrus orchards, stone fruit orchards, vineyards, sheep studs, cattle studs, pig farms and dairy farms: all these operations must be considered. How will the lifting of the restrictions affect primary producers involved in these forms of production?

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

Mr. CASEY: Before the dinner adjournment I said that the Minister, in his second reading explanation, had not explained to the House the type of farming that would benefit from the Government's policy of lifting all restrictions on perpetual leases, as provided for in the clause to which I object. I think that is the crux of the problem. The member for Albert (Mr. Nankivell) said in his speech:

I think we will have to look closely at the provisions relating to introducing acreage restrictions and heed the remarks of the Chairman of the Wheat Board (Dr. Callaghan), who said that farmers would have to be more realistic in their approach to this particular problem.

Of course, he was referring to the fact that in future a restriction could be placed on the number of acres sown, particularly to wheat. If such a restriction is imposed (and we do not know whether it will be), much of this land that will be available for acquisition by wheat farmers will not necessarily be used for the specific purpose of wheat growing. I consider that this is one of the problems facing the wheat industry today.

Strangely enough, although other members who have spoken have not said whether they think the acreages of certain types of farm could be increased, I think it possible that the Minister was referring to the wheat-farming industry and was saying that these farms should be increased in area. If that

is the Government's policy, I ask the Minister to consider what the member for Albert has said, because that honourable member made a good point and one to which I would have referred if he had not dealt with it. This is one of the problems that will confront the wheat industry if in future the Commonwealth Government says that the amount of wheat sown on certain farms is to be restricted. How would such restrictions affect South Australia? The scheme would be a Commonwealth one. It would be interesting to know whether the type, the protein value, and the quality of wheat grown in South Australia are similar to those characteristics of wheat grown in other States. Similar restrictions have been imposed in other parts of the world, particularly in the United States of America, and, if the Commonwealth Government imposes them, what will be the situation of the South Australian wheat farmer?

Mr. Nankivell: He'll have to diversify his production.

Mr. CASEY: I do not think the Government considered such problems as this before including clause 8, which completely eliminates restrictions on perpetual leases. The member for Albert referred to certain problems in his district. I do not know enough about the South-East to contradict him, but I hope that members who speak will deal with areas with which they are familiar. I do not agree with his argument about the farmer with two sons who had 1,000 acres on perpetual lease but, under the capital restriction, was prevented from taking up more perpetual lease land. When the boys turned 18 he could have taken more land in their name, and it is at this stage of their development that they would know whether or not they wanted to go on the land. If permission were granted to allow land to be taken in the boys' names when they were younger some problems could arise, because they might not want to go on the land.

Mr. Nankivell: Whatever they put into it becomes a gift.

Mr. CASEY: This is possible, but it is difficult to say how much land is necessary from which to earn a reasonable income on which to raise a family. So many factors affect this situation that no person can be sure how much land is required, although in certain areas this would be known. This is one aspect that the Government has not considered: there are so many types of primary production in this State that they cannot be placed in one basket, mixed up, and a certain

result obtained. That is why I am critical of the restrictions being lifted. I live in a marginal area, which in the late 1800's was recognized as a wheatgrowing district. When people ventured out of the agricultural areas and disregarded Goyder's rainfall line, more hundreds had to be constituted so that the people could take up this land and farm cereals. From experience it was discovered that this was the wrong policy. I remember reading an apt caption, "The ghost of Goyder looks down on us". Most of this land, which is outside Goyder's rainfall line, is not a safe area for cereal growing and is regarded as being marginal land.

Further north, west, or east of these areas are the pastoral areas. No restrictions apply to the land that a person can hold under a pastoral lease, but under the Soil Conservation Act, at certain times depending on the season, the number of sheep that can be carried is restricted by the Pastoral Board. So they are restricted in that way. However, the pastoral people can come into the marginal areas and buy up \$36,000 worth of perpetual lease land. It seems to me that one fault with our land policy in this State is that we are discriminating against people on the land. There have been many occasions when people living in the marginal areas could have done with a little more land, because those areas have a low rainfall compared with the areas inside Goyder's line of rainfall. It would have been of great benefit to them but, unfortunately, the pastoral people came in and bought up certain tracts of land. They were in the happy position of being able to outbid some of the small landholders in the marginal areas.

These have been some of the problems we have had in the past, and we shall have them more so in the future when these restrictions are lifted. The bigger farmer and the bigger landowner will get still bigger. Costs will increase—make no mistake about that; they will not decrease. They have not decreased since the war and are not likely to unless we have a serious depression, which of course we do not want to happen. It is common sense and simple economics that, once we put this land on the open market, the person with the most money will be able to purchase it. This has happened on dozens of occasions that I know of, even under the present scheme, when small freehold blocks have come on to the market. I can tell the Minister that people in the marginal areas who have contacted me in the last fortnight, particularly in my area, are most concerned that

these restrictions will be lifted. I am speaking now not of other parts of the State but of the area with which I am familiar. I tell the Minister for his own information that I have been contacted from time to time by people who are concerned about the lifting of these perpetual lease restrictions, for this will affect substantially the people living in the marginal areas.

I suggest to the Government that, rather than lift the restrictions on perpetual lease, it carry out a survey of the whole State and, if the survey proves successful, I shall be the first to support it; but, because of the climatic conditions and topographical features that go to make up the agricultural areas, and particularly because we have such a diversification of primary industries, we should really look at this before we introduce this sweeping change by this Bill.

Mr. Nankivell: What would a survey do?

Mr. CASEY: I maintain that, in the interests of all those people who obtain their income from the land, a complete study of the existing pattern of agricultural income in this State should be carried out by officers of the Agriculture and Lands Departments. I do not see anything wrong with that at all. This type of thing is carried out in New Zealand right from the word "go". Officers of the Agriculture Department go into various areas and carry out exhaustive tests in this regard before people are allowed to take up land. That is of great benefit to the people who eventually take up the land, because they know exactly on what type of farm they will be involved.

Mr. Nankivell: Where are the areas that can be taken up in South Australia?

Mr. CASEY: The areas do not have to be taken up immediately; this can be done with existing areas. We heard earlier today that farms on Yorke Peninsula are not doing as well as they might be doing. It is up to the department to find out whether the size of farms should be increased. I am referring to land held on perpetual lease which members opposite say should be made available on the open market with no restrictions whatever. I do not know exactly how perpetual lease land is scattered throughout the State, and I do not think anyone else knows. I have never seen a map illustrating the areas of freehold land and perpetual lease land, although I know that, as in the case of perpetual lease land, freehold land exists in places all over the State, but there is no set pattern as to where these two types of land start and finish. I suggest that certain degrees of

specialization should be recommended by the department and the personnel carrying out the study. As I said, this has already occurred in New Zealand, and there is no reason why it cannot occur in this State.

Mr. Ferguson: What sets the pattern of freehold land?

Mr. CASEY: I would say it relates to the amount of money one has in the bank, or the amount one is prepared to spend. I also think that other factors should be considered in a survey of this nature, namely, how farmers would react to a change in their agricultural policy or in the pattern of agriculture in which they have been engaged. We have often been warned by the Commonwealth Treasurer that the pattern of agriculture in this country must change. Honourable members must realize that this could easily happen within the foreseeable future, and this is another factor to consider.

Mr. Edwards: He recommends bigger holdings.

Mr. CASEY: Yes, in certain fields of agriculture. That is why the Government has suggested, particularly in the dairying industry, that holdings be enlarged, but whether that is applicable to the cereal-growing areas in this State is a matter to be considered in conjunction with an economic survey. This survey would take the form not necessarily of looking only at perpetual lease land but of looking at the State as a whole and, if desirable, of considering the acquisition of land. If the Commonwealth Government introduces restrictions on the quantity of wheat produced in this country, I do not know what will happen, and I do not think members opposite know, either. I am sure that many farmers in the State who are cultivating land for some form of agriculture require more land, and I have no hesitation in saying that. However, many areas can be used today only because they have been protected by the limitation placed on perpetual leases. If the restrictions are lifted to the extent provided in the Bill, people will eventually be forced off the land, particularly in the lower rainfall areas. I do not think anyone can disagree with that. I have seen it happen time and time again: people in the marginal areas of the State, where the average rainfall is lower than about 12in., have attempted to acquire more land on the open market only to find that someone with more money than they have has acquired the land. This problem stems from the fact that those with the capital can acquire the land.

In some cases the land acquired is freehold land and in others it is land held under perpetual lease.

Mr. Nankivell: That is happening now.

Mr. CASEY: Yes, but it will happen more in the future because people with large holdings, particularly on the fringe of marginal areas, go into the marginal areas and buy land. In some cases, they do not require the land but buy it only to keep other people off it.

Mr. Nankivell: Are you suggesting that we should increase the limitations?

Mr. CASEY: No, but I suggest that it is foolish to lift restrictions *holus bolus* at this stage; I should like to see them lifted slightly as has been done in the past. There is no reason at all why that could not be done, and I think it would be in the interests of people who are unable to buy land freehold. In some cases, although not all, freehold land is dearer than land held under perpetual lease. Strangely enough, much land in marginal areas, whether under perpetual lease or freehold, brings the same price. One of the problems in acquiring land under perpetual lease is that banks are reluctant to lend even a few measly dollars on it because they cannot hold titles to the deed.

Mr. Corcoran: That's only an excuse.

Mr. CASEY: I think so, too, for I see no reason at all why the banks should not advance money on any type of land. I believe it is a pity that the State ever sold the freehold to land: all land should have been Crown land from the start.

Mr. Nankivell: You should go back to the time of the South Australian Company and see how that was formed; then you would realize that what you suggest could never have been.

Mr. CASEY: We are about 150 years too late for that. At this stage I do not want to see the remaining 20,000,000 acres acquired and taken over by people who do not necessarily need the land.

Mr. Evans: The Bill does not say that we are going to allow them to acquire it.

Mr. CASEY: Under this Bill the Minister will have the last say on whether a certain person can have land. I have much respect for the Minister of Lands, but I do not think he is so good that he can take this matter on his shoulders and determine just who shall and who shall not have land: it is asking too much of any man. Consequently, a matter of this sort should be covered by an Act of Parliament.

I would hate to have to decide whether someone should have a certain amount of land, because a person responsible for such a decision would be subject to so many pressures. We must remember that the world we are living in today is made up of pressure groups. I do not think any Minister should be placed in the position that the Minister of Lands will be in if the Bill is passed. This would not be fair to the community as a whole.

We should protect the land in this State by an Act of Parliament and not leave it to the jurisdiction of one man. The Minister could decide to go against the decisions of any board: he need not be swayed by anyone and he could make up his own mind in his own good time. This important measure should be given much consideration by members opposite and, in particular, by members concerned with the future of this State and with the people who will remain on the land, particularly in areas that have a low rainfall. In 20, 30 or 50 years, if this Bill is passed, we will see a marked depletion in the number of active farmers, and I refer specifically to those in areas outside Goyder's rainfall line.

The writing is in the wall: if we want to maintain country communities we must give every protection to the landholders in those areas. It stands to reason that, if there is no limitation whatever, there is nothing to stop people from coming in and buying land: it is as simple as that. Many people living in pastoral areas are in a better financial position than are people living in the marginal areas. The member for Chaffey (Mr. Arnold) said that people are not putting money into land today because they do not get the return from it that they can get from common stock. I remind the honourable member that this is so and that this has been the trend since the Second World War. Of course, the tide could turn and many people might then prefer to put their money into land rather than into common stock. That is because investment in land involves less risk than does investment in common stock. The share market in the last six months or eight months has been going up and down like a yo-yo and many people who have invested in the stock market now wish they had never heard of it. I do not say that people will not invest in land, because land is one of the best investments one can make. This is all bound up with the business of people who are interested in investing money. That is why we have what are known as North Terrace farmers (doctors and lawyers who invest in land), and there will be

no restrictions on these people. They will invest in all areas, including the District of Albert. The member for Albert has said that a small farmer could not buy a particular block of land because, although he had full value under the restrictions, investment companies could take up the block. Under this Bill the same position will apply, and the farmer probably will not be able to get the land, anyway, because investment companies will outbid him on the market. If the restrictions are lifted, he is being given the opportunity to acquire more land, but the North Terrace farmer is not being eliminated.

Mr. Nankivell: On your theory, the big man will become bigger.

Mr. CASEY: The honourable member has missed my point. My argument is that, if there is not a restriction on the area of leasehold land that can be held, the big landholders will take over and within 50 years a skeleton force will hold land outside Goyder's line of rainfall.

Mr. Nankivell: But you said the big chap would get bigger. Your argument won't stand up.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Frome.

Mr. CASEY: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We all realize that today farming should be done on a bigger scale than is the case. If the member for Albert stops laughing and joking about my statements, he may be able to understand me. Members opposite have often said that farmers must have more land if their farms are to become more economic. All I have said is that farms will have to be bigger, and that is exactly the same thing. This applies to certain aspects of agriculture, but not to all. The member for Albert probably thinks in terms of grazing or cereal growing. I wonder whether he has thought of citrus growing, grapegrowing, or apple and pear growing. Members opposite think on a narrow line, but we must consider the whole State.

Mr. Corcoran: The member for Chaffey would know what's happened at Renmark.

Mr. Evans: Even now a citrus orchard of 3,000 acres would be a big one.

Mr. CASEY: Obviously, the ordinary person would not have enough money to purchase a property of that size. The whole matter is based on the value of land, and it is useless acquiring a large area that is not required.

Mr. Nankivell: You say that people are keeping it out of production?

Mr. CASEY: That is so.

Mr. Corcoran: People are sitting on freehold land that they cannot use, and the member for Albert knows it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. CASEY: I cannot understand why Government members are concentrating on one or two types of agriculture: that is, cereal growing and wool or fat lamb production.

Mr. Nankivell: Or on the dairy farmer, the citrus grower, and others.

Mr. CASEY: Every aspect of agriculture must be considered. We could argue about what size a living area should be, but no-one can determine what is a suitable income for so many different people. The land belongs to everyone and should not remain in the hands of a few, but under this Bill that will happen. Once limitations are lifted it will be a matter of first come first served, and the man who can afford it will get the land. Surely Government members must realize that that is what will happen. I am concerned about people living in marginal areas, because they have a difficult task. They must have a large area, because of the lack of rain and because of the many problems that beset them, such as plagues of grasshoppers. Rainfall is the main consideration, but many other aspects should be considered. Obviously, the Government has not considered them, as is shown by its policy. It has considered one or two facets only of agriculture in this State, and has then agreed that people must have more land, so more must be opened up.

The Government has not considered the problems that affect different areas. The West Coast has many problems, but they are different from those in other parts of the State. The northern areas have problems different from those in the Mid North; the problems in the Mid North are different from those in the South-East; and there are differences between the Lower South-East and the Upper South-East. Unless the Government reverses its policy on the lifting of restrictions on perpetual leases, fewer people will be living on the land in future than there are at present, which will be detrimental to the State. I will not support clause 8 but will support the rest of the Bill because it has merit. As indicated by previous speakers, it will give some security to people who want to build permanent buildings in isolated areas where they had no protection before. This Bill will give them this security.

Mr. McANANEY (Stirling): I support this Bill.

Mr. McKee: Why?

Mr. McANANEY: If the honourable member is patient, he will hear my reasons. The main thing to be considered is that at present leasehold land has several disadvantages compared with freehold land, one being that some leasehold land is held on a revaluation lease.

Mr. Corcoran: But people can convert it at any time they want to, and they do not pay land tax.

Mr. McANANEY: I intended to purchase some land three or four years ago, during the first year of the Labor Government, but it had such a ridiculous valuation that it was not possible to buy it economically.

Mr. Corcoran: You cannot blame the Labor Party for that.

Mr. McANANEY: I do not blame it, but this happened during the term of the Labor Government. After the Labor Party had fixed the price for the land, it was about three times the capitalization of the rental value. I am not blaming the Labor Party. The honourable member does not know what a fact is; that is why he got into so much trouble when his Party was in office. Leasehold land has certain liabilities, one being that it is subject to revaluation and another being that it has a nominal rental. Another liability is that leasehold land cannot be aggregated if it is thought necessary to do so to make it into an economic unit. The valuation of unimproved land is uneven throughout the State. There is a set amount of land that a person can have. He can own properties of different value in various parts of South Australia, but the value is determined by human beings so, as all human beings err, differences in valuation occur. As a responsible Parliament, we must decide, if we are to lift these acreage restrictions on the property that anyone can possess, whether this will mean the aggregation of land. If it did, I think I would vote against it, but I do not think that is the position because we have not seen big aggregations of freehold properties. Some of the smaller properties have become bigger but many of the bigger ones have become smaller. Some big properties have been held by families since the beginning of South Australia, and in the last two or three years many of them have been cut up and have gone into different holdings.

Mr. McKee: Do you agree with that; is that a good thing?

Mr. McANANEY: If this restriction is lifted, there will not be an aggregation of properties. We could see the situation of the big properties being headed by a board

of directors, with a manager sitting in an office determining the policy of a particular farm, although I do not think that will be the economic unit of the future. It may occur with large-scale wheat farming, when a large labour force is required only perhaps twice a year, but with a large team of men working on a farm under, say, an Australian Workers Union award, working on overtime rates over the weekend—

Mr. Corcoran: The farmers will go broke.

Mr. McANANEY: The honourable member is resorting to his usual rantings.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is out of order in replying to them.

Mr. McANANEY: The farms employing so many men under award conditions, etc., will not be able to compete with the family-size units.

Mr. Corcoran: Where you can employ your sons for nothing.

Mr. McANANEY: If the family farm (say, a two-man holding) is to survive, it must be run as a small company, although a provision now exists that Crown land cannot be allocated to proprietary companies. However, a farm run by two or three men, with \$150,000 or \$200,000 involved, must be run as a company. The people working such a farm are on wages and take out a superannuation policy exactly as though they were working for a city firm.

Mr. Corcoran: They are evading tax.

Mr. McANANEY: They are not evading tax. The procedure has the same basis as that of a business in the city, and in this way one is not paying so much in succession duties. Under the present conditions of primary producers, with rising costs, etc., not much of a \$150,000 property will be left after one-third of that sum has been paid away by each of several generations. The member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Burdon) said that fewer people would be working in the country, but that will not apply to the big farms. If some farms become big organizations, they will employ more people a unit of production than will be required to produce the same amount on a family farm. This is the most economical size to manage. The smaller farmers are the most valuable from the community viewpoint, but they are having a pretty difficult time at the moment.

As I said during the debate on the Wheat Industry Stabilization Bill last week, many people are prepared to take jobs to try to secure the finance necessary to buy a small property of their own, but they cannot secure finance at a reasonable rate of interest. Under

the dairying industry stabilization scheme, \$20,000,000 will be made available so that bigger holdings can be obtained. A similar scheme would help the people to whom I have referred to obtain medium-term loans at a reasonable rate of interest (say 6 per cent) so that they would be able to buy land. If they were good farmers, were suited to the job, and were prepared to save a little to pay off their mortgages, their farms would grow to an economic size. That is the way that we should develop our farming community.

Another group that has developed in the community comprises doctors, other professional people around Adelaide and business people who have money available and who buy up land. They do not live on it themselves but they can receive taxation advantages not available to small farmers. If these people buy a block of land, develop it and put a house on it for an employee, they can obtain indirectly a \$2,000 or \$3,000 subsidy from the Commonwealth Government to pay for the building of the house. Also, they can deduct electricity charges, etc., for income tax purposes. This sort of thing is loaded against the small man, and he is the one who should be encouraged to own land. Therefore, a change in the Commonwealth Government's policy is needed so that a person going out on his own will not be at a disadvantage when compared with an absentee land owner.

If these restrictions are lifted, provided the smaller farmer can obtain finance, I cannot see how large aggregation of property will occur. If a man wants to buy a small property he can go to the Commonwealth Development Bank and borrow more money than he wants if he intends to develop the land, but not much land is available to develop now, most of what is available being already developed. However, small farmers cannot obtain finance to purchase developed farms at a reasonable rate. At times they buy properties and borrow money from the Development Bank for a term of three or four years. If they get into trouble they go to a finance company and finish up paying 14 per cent interest on it. Many such people could be successful farmers if they could obtain finance at reasonable rates and enjoy the same concessions as are given to absentee landowners.

Perhaps the solution to the possible aggregation of land problem would be a return to the original intention of land tax. In two States land tax on land used for primary production has now been lifted and, as soon as the finances of this State pick up, perhaps it would be a

good thing if land tax on a living area or on a two-man property were eliminated. On the large holdings, there could be a sliding scale of land tax, and this would serve the original purpose of land tax by preventing the large aggregation of property. I believe this would be in the interests of South Australia as a whole.

I support the Bill, for I cannot see that its provisions will do any harm to the community. If there is greater freedom in respect of buying and selling properties, if primary producers form themselves into companies, and if costs do not increase to the extent that the primary producer cannot exist, there will be no harm in passing this Bill.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY (Whyalla): I support this very interesting Bill, except for the proposal to remove the limitations. I was interested to hear the member for Stirling admit that we might have to do something to stop further aggregation. He suggested the elimination of land tax on those holdings that constituted a reasonable and satisfactory area (I presume from an economic viewpoint). He further suggested that there could then be a sliding scale of land tax to discourage those people who wished to hold an excessive area, from an economic viewpoint. This suggestion is quite contrary to what the Minister said when he advanced his reasons for removing the limitations. The Minister said:

It is considered that the high prices which prevail do not encourage undue aggregation as in general the productive capacity of the land makes it increasingly difficult to obtain a reasonable return upon the capital investment involved.

His argument throughout is that the elimination of restrictions will not be serious and will not lead to undue aggregation, because the high price of land, whether it be freehold or leasehold, will discourage undue aggregation. I cannot but think that this is rather a fond hope. Sometimes these questions are looked at rather too much from the short-term viewpoint: we are apt to forget the long-term lessons of history on the price of land. It is axiomatic that land is a particularly good investment and that it has been such an investment for as long as one can remember, simply because there is a limited amount of land, whilst the population is always increasing. Therefore, the demand for land must increase and, consequently, it must cause increased prices.

In addition, we have experienced considerable inflation for as long as any of us can remember. This inflation is likely to continue, because the capitalist system itself has within it the

seeds of inflation. If members opposite care to think about this deeply, they will realize that my statement is correct. Whilst there may be some price stability at present, because farmers are finding it difficult to make an economic success of their farms, this may be only temporary. I cannot accept the reasoning that the price of land is likely to remain at its present level. All the chances are, from the lessons of history, that it will increase. It has always increased in the past, except for short periods of economic depression, after which it has always recovered and gone on increasing. Therefore, I do not accept the argument that the present price of land is such that it discourages persons from buying more and that this will prevent aggregation. I do not consider it a sound economic argument. Nothing in history supports it and, although it may prevail for a few years, it will not prevail for long. The Minister, in his second reading explanation, said:

Limitations have existed in the Act from its very early days and in times of easy availability of land, it has been considered desirable to take measures to ensure that undue aggregation of land holdings did not take place. This policy was sound from sociological as well as economic considerations as it would be against the interests of a community, particularly a community which draws much of its strength from rural activities, to allow the control of land to become or remain in the hands of relatively few people.

Those arguments that were good when steps were taken to prevent aggregation are just as sound today. It is interesting to hear members opposite, many of whom are farmers, supporting a policy that must mean a diminution in the number of people on the land and must reduce the population in country areas and the facilities available there. It must destroy largely the value of lives in the country. In other words, those members are sacrificing the lives of people who will come after them so far as the value of life in the country is concerned. I do not think the Government recognizes the merit of what I am saying, because, by its action, it must make living in the country a more isolated living than it has ever been before. This is inevitable. Already there are tendencies, consequent on the use of bigger machines and the engagement of less labour, to reduce the population in the countryside.

Statistics show the steady decline of country population, and this Bill will accelerate that rate of decline. The value of living and the good things in life will be sacrificed to economics. When you spoke in the debate,

Mr. Acting Speaker, you stressed the economic aspect and said it was vital that farms be enlarged so that farmers could get an economic return, and I should be the last to deny the merit of your argument, given the present economic circumstances. Whilst you, Mr. Acting Speaker, and other members of the Government may regard the Bill as a policy of hope, I consider it a policy of despair, in the face of the financial pressures bearing down on the man on the land. The member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Burdon) gave an interesting and well-reasoned speech, in which he compared the value to the farmer of freehold land with that of leasehold land. He said that his views were not likely to be accepted by Government members, who were enmeshed in the capital idea of freehold land, having been encouraged by financiers who like to hold mortgages returning high rates of interest and who often foreclose in time of depression and benefit thereby.

Of course, some farmers look for the unearned increment on their farms when they sell them. Their crowning glory when their work of making a profit from farming is completed is to get off the land with a large unearned increment arising from the increase in population and the fact that the total area of land is static.

Mr. Corcoran: Liberal Governments have admitted that unearned increments were there and that is why they imposed succession duties.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: Exactly. This is another stage in the progression. Opposition members advanced the argument that there was no real reason to eliminate all the restrictions in one fell swoop, but the member for Albert told us that such a policy would lead to several instances where large areas would have to be enlarged in order to make them economic. So what! This was the only argument advanced why the restrictions should not be kept on and then examined from time to time to see whether they should be lifted in any way to meet the needs of farmers and their economic circumstances. Surely this would be better policy than to eliminate completely these restrictions on what is a large area.

The Minister admitted that, whilst 16,000,000 acres is held in fee simple, 20,000,000 acres is still held under Crown perpetual leasehold, and surely this position is worth defending, at any rate until such time as the necessary adjustments have to be made to meet the economic position. Why give the whole game away? If members consider this logically

they must admit that, sociologically and in the interests of the community in all ways, it is bad for large aggregations to take place. Obviously, if these aggregations are allowed, as they will be if the limitations are lifted, large companies will turn their interests to acquiring large areas; they will work the areas with a minimum of labour; they will rationalize farming; they will eliminate fences as much as possible; they will get the largest machines available; and there will be the smallest number of people possible working the largest areas.

Mr. Burdon: That has happened in North America already.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: This is the result of this policy and is something that we must stave off until it becomes inevitable, if it becomes inevitable. Many other things can be done to assist farmers if they are willing to be assisted, but they are not prepared to accept radical reforms in finance; they prop up the conservative policies and the wishes of the financiers who batten on them. We on this side do not expect the farmers in the Government today to change their views overnight on this question, because all their lives they have been brought up to believe in the other attitude, which is inimical to their real interests. If farmers had not had to find large sums or borrow large sums and pay high interest rates on what they borrowed in order to acquire freehold land, they would have had much more capital to develop their farms, work them more economically, and lay them out better. They would have been able to devote far more finance to the latest methods and to obtaining a greater output; instead, so much of their capital and effort has been used in paying high rates of interest to financiers who love to see this system continued for their own profit.

Mr. McKee: And on land they're not working, in some instances.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: The interesting thing is that although so many farmers today are experiencing economic difficulties, the price of land has not been reduced, and it still fetches the high prices. The Minister has admitted that the price of leasehold land is virtually as high as that of freehold land. There are other reasons for this, but despite the present economic position the price of land has not fallen concurrently with the situation. It keeps up. The financiers want to see it keep up because it means more avenues for investment, more borrowers and more lucrative rates of interest coming in.

So the whole system is perpetuated, not for the real benefit of the man who works on the land but merely to use him as a source of investment for other people.

It amazes me to see farmers supporting the measure to this extent when they know that the good things in the rural life depend so much on the number of people engaged in it. Social life in the country must eventually disappear with greater aggregation; there is no alternative. Surely this is not living—not good living, at any rate. This is just an existence, working in order to try to meet an economic situation that has virtually been imposed on people because they have accepted the propositions. Some farmers acquire land because they like to feel they are the owners of large properties and not because they really want them to make a decent living. That cannot be denied by anyone who has lived in the country. I do not say it is general, but there is a hunger for land among some people who are never satisfied unless they can buy up what they feel is a good paddock next door, whether or not they need it. You, Mr. Acting Speaker, know that is true.

I am not denying there are areas that need increasing. I hope no member opposite will get up and say that I do not acknowledge that situation, but we should be prepared to lift restrictions gradually as the necessity arises and not in this one fell swoop that will give rise to all these things I have mentioned at a faster rate than is necessary. In any case, how can we forecast precisely what will happen in the next decade or two? In fact, the way things are shaping there could be some economic impasse for the whole nation that would cause many of these things to be examined in a totally different light, and people would have to face up to radical reforms in some directions. In fact, the whole trend of society throughout the world is towards a situation where the conservative people of this world will have to change their minds about a whole host of things unless they are prepared to see the whole world go up in smoke if they fight them. That is what it amounts to.

Mr. Freebairn: What is your definition of a conservative?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: A person who refuses to adjust his ideas and attitudes to changes in this world. That is so obvious that surely it should not need to be emphasized. I think that is a fair answer. I hope members will realize that I am not being unduly critical of this proposition. I am saying that I

acknowledge the economic position of many farmers and that some of them need more land, but this is not the way to go about it. We should hold as tight a control as possible over this situation. As there are these city people (they have been referred to as the doctors, the dentists and what have you) many of whom invest their money in order to avoid taxation, surely the man on the land who is a farmer in the true sense of the word should be right behind having a Bill in this House to impose these restrictions. I think that such a Bill would receive the support of all members on this side.

Mr. Corcoran: Do you really think so?

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: No, it would be interfering with the liberty of the individual, I suppose, despite the bad effects of what is happening. We heard complaints from one member that the genuine farmer was unable to get more land, whereas these people were able to obtain it without any trouble. If that is the situation, there is no reason why this House should not stop it, although whether or not any measure we introduce gets through the other place is another matter. However, the fact remains that if this is wrong why should not we stop it? But, no, it goes against the Conservative grain. The fact of the matter is that the things which farmers wish to remedy go against the Conservative grain in almost every direction. Certain members are not prepared to face up to these unpleasant facts and to reverse their lifelong attitude—and that would be difficult, I admit.

Mr. Corcoran: The Conservatives were not the architects of orderly marketing, and so forth.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: Bearing in mind all of the things that have been said about decentralization in this House over the years, I point out that this Bill is completely contrary to the principles of decentralization.

Mr. Edwards: I don't agree.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: The member for Eyre may not; he has the opportunity to get up and say how my logic is wrong on the question of aggregation and on the question of the price of land and the history of the whole matter and, if he can deny history, he is pretty good.

Mr. Jennings: That's a good argument when he says he does not agree.

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: He does not like to face facts and will not agree with me, but I cannot do anything about that. I think I have canvassed the general situation well enough and that there is no point in repeating

oneself unduly on the matter. However, I should now like to say something about the provision in this Bill for a more secure form of tenure for relatively isolated business and residential development in outback areas which can at present be provided only by annual licence. This is a good part of the Bill and will be of great value to a number of places in my district at least, particularly Coober Pedy and Andamooka, which were settled by people engaged in opal mining. There has never been proper tenure which would enable people to erect dwellings and now, of course, businesses, in view of the great development that is taking place on both these opal fields. Coober Pedy has now many tourists passing through it, and this has led to the enlargement of accommodation premises and certain businesses. It is most essential that this step regarding tenure be taken in order to provide better facilities for the people in these places.

The value to the State of these two new places is considerable: in fact, on a conservative estimate the export value of what they are producing has certainly exceeded \$7,000,000 in the last two years. It is not always appreciated that these two places are the world's largest producers of opal, the other fields in Australia being negligible, and I am sure that Coober Pedy and Andamooka will continue in production at this rate for a long time. There is much ground yet to be explored, and I believe it will be of great assistance to the people in these two areas to give them better arrangements in respect of the business buildings they wish to erect, and to create proper tenure arrangements in the future.

I support the Bill but for the clause to which I have referred, and I hope that members opposite will consider what I have said in this regard, because I do not believe that there is any real need at this moment to open the door wide and to let the horse completely out of the stable. We can open the door a little at a time if it becomes necessary and see what develops, because there is no reason why we should accelerate these adverse factors in so far as the effect on the countryside is concerned.

Mr. EDWARDS (Eyre): In supporting this Bill I think the Minister has gone a long way towards clarifying the situation in introducing this Bill, which relates to land tenure. Many farmers on Eyre Peninsula who own just over 4,000 acres are, under the present Act, almost unable to sell their properties because of the size of their holdings.

Mr. Corcoran: Why not?

Mr. EDWARDS: In other cases there are properties that adjoin one another. People own just over 4,000 acres and are almost unable to sell their properties because, in some cases, the properties are 200 acres over. What is to be done with the 200 acres, as the farm alongside has the same acreage, and that farmer cannot buy the extra 200 acres?

Mr. Corcoran: You suggest he should have 8,000 acres?

Mr. EDWARDS: If honourable members will be patient I will put my case and then they can pick it to pieces afterwards. In my area there is another type of land. In several cases in up to 8,000 acres only 2,500 acres is suitable for cultivation. Under the present land tenure, if this land had to be cut in half, because of the sandhills and the way they run through the country, it would be impossible to make two living areas, because, although half of the area could be suitable for grazing, some of it is too stony and it would be a most difficult job to fence across the top of that country. Therefore, if this country were split into two areas it would not make a working piece of land for either of the persons silly enough to take up the two areas. In most cases this stony country is almost too difficult to fence.

There are other leases that include up to 9,000 acres, but it would be impossible to get two areas out of these that would be workable units. In this type of country, the sandhills run lengthwise across the area and if they were split not enough workable land would be left in either area to make it a workable unit. It would be silly for anyone to take up land in these circumstances because, after a few years, the land would have to be given back to the Crown. Therefore, we might just as well leave these areas as they are at present.

Further west in my area in the lower rainfall area, because of the low rainfall 8,000 to 14,000 acres (and in some cases 20,000 acres) is necessary to make a workable living area. With areas such as the one we are now considering, if one has this area of land, with sheep and a reasonable amount of plant, one can put in a sufficiently large crop to make it a reasonable proposition, and this is what these people are doing. I know quite a few farmers in this area who are making a living from 10,000 or 12,000 acres. However, it would be useless to cut up these blocks, because they would then become unworkable. We must bear in mind the nature of the land in a given area.

I agree with the Minister's stand on this Bill. I agree, too, with the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry (Mr. Anthony), who said at the last Royal Show that farm units would have to be increased in size to make them more workable. There are several farms of this nature on the West Coast at present, and we do not want to see them cut up, because they are at present workable units: it would be suicide to make them smaller. I do not agree with the statement of the member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Burdon) that we will have less people in the country. If we give the people on Eyre Peninsula better television and radio reception, better roads and better schools we will soon see many more people there. A few farmers on the West Coast advertised after the harvest last year for men to work on their farms. The men who applied for the jobs asked: "Does a school bus pass your property? To what level can students go at the local school? Do you have 240v. light and power? What is your television reception like?"

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. Nankivell): Order! There is too much audible conversation.

Mr. EDWARDS: If the applicants for these jobs are told that these facilities are not available, they are just not interested in the jobs.

Members interjecting:

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order.

Mr. EDWARDS: In these circumstances we get only the poorer type of farmhand, but if we had a few more amenities we could get better men. On many farms rents over the last three years have been far too high to make the farms workable propositions. The farmers need a longer period of cheaper rent. The younger men who are taking up these high-rent blocks need more time to develop them before they are charged the higher rent. I hope the Minister can bring leasehold country more into line with freehold country, so that when one approaches his banker for more capital to do more clearing he will have a case the banker will listen to. We must face the facts. We only have to consider our dairying industry to realize how small holdings affect people in this industry. The dairy farmers have not sufficient land to make their farms pay, for many small holdings are not workable units.

A similar position is arising in the Lower North and Mid North, where small farmers are gradually being forced off the land by

high cost of production and increased overhead costs. This also applies to poultry farmers, and to small vine and orange growers along the Murray River. I point out to members opposite that today farming is becoming extremely scientific and, regardless of the amount of land held, a farmer will not be successful unless he farms scientifically. Regarding some of the high-rent blocks on Eyre Peninsula, with rentals of \$1,000 a year and more, farmers who pay this rent for 30 years will have paid for the blocks but will still have to continue paying this exorbitant rent.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. Nankivell): Order! There is no reference in the Bill to this matter, and I ask the honourable member to return to the Bill.

Mr. EDWARDS: I am just making a comparison with the Bill. Regarding the statement by the member for Frome (Mr. Casey) about the lifting of restrictions on leasehold holdings, I wish to give an example of what the Director of Lands will do. He will say to the Minister of Lands at the time, "Sir, Mr. Jones has enough land now and I certainly will not recommend this transfer in any circumstances." I am sure that the Minister will listen to the advice of his Director, who has complete information at his fingertips and is able to help the Minister.

Mr. Corcoran: The Land Board, not the Director of Lands, advises the Minister on these matters.

Mr. EDWARDS: I think both come into it.

Mr. Corcoran: They do, too, I agree.

Mr. EDWARDS: As I understand the position, in terms of the provisions of this Bill, the Minister of Lands will not recommend a transfer to a landholder who already holds what is, in the Minister's opinion, sufficient land. I repeat that I hope that the Minister will have power to tell a man who has too much land and is not making the best use of it that he must either use the land or lease a portion of it to someone who will use it.

Many farms in the Lower North and Mid North are far too small by today's standards to be workable units, but it will be costly to make them profitable working units because of today's high prices. I point out to members opposite that it was the high prices received for land north of Adelaide at Salisbury and Elizabeth a few years ago that has played a big part in causing today's high land prices. The farmers who moved from these areas went to the north, south, east and west and bought land at unheard-of prices. Consequently,

farmers then shifted from those areas further north, south, east, and west, and this movement was one of the causes of today's high price of land.

I know this fact only too well, because of the number of farmers coming to Eyre Peninsula at present who have pushed the land prices higher and out of all proportion. Let us hope that the problem will be solved by this Bill, as there is not much land left to be sold under these conditions. Replying to the member for Whyalla, I point out to him that farming in Australia is nothing like farming in America, because under our conditions we have to run sheep as well as grow wheat in order to make the properties workable units. It is usually far more economic to work a large piece of farm machinery than it is to work a smaller unit. According to Opposition members, the farmer is greedy and never satisfied, but I am sure that they realize that that statement is not true, except for a few extreme instances. I am sure this Bill will remove the anomalies applying to Coober Pedy and Andamooka, and that the people there will be able to obtain land and build a house without having just an annual lease. I support the Bill.

Mr. EVANS (Onkaparinga): I, too, support the Bill. I have never been happy with the process that has been going on, but no suitable alternative has been available and none has been suggested tonight. Obviously, the small man is being forced out of business because the man with bigger interests is taking over. This occurs not only in the farming industry but also in other fields and, unfortunately, it seems to be inevitable. I cannot see how this process can be stopped, and the small farmer, particularly those in my district, would be better off if he and his wife obtained a job, with the wife receiving equal pay, and sold out and moved into the city area.

This situation has not been created by the present legislation, but it may help it to continue. The high costs and high wages that have occurred in this country are the main causes of the situation. I do not disagree with those conditions, because I accept them, but costs have increased in such a way that we cannot compete with other countries. Opposition members have said that in the next few years the number of people living in country areas will decrease. Personally, I cannot see many people staying in the country unless they can obtain a big enough area to operate and make into an economic unit that would be a paying proposition. If

they cannot receive a fair return on their property, they are better off moving to the city and living in the suburbs where perhaps they can enjoy some of the pleasures they could not enjoy in the country. A member opposite said that in 50 years' time there will be very few people in the country areas, and percentage-wise I think that may be true. However, if any person can tell me what will be an economic farm or how many farmers there will be in 50 years' time, I should like to live until then to prove him wrong. Nobody here can predict what the position will be 50 years hence.

This is the only move possible. There has been no other sensible suggestion with any chance of success. It has been said that many of us on this side have a conservative outlook on life and that we could not and would not change our opinions. We could say a similar thing about those people with a socialistic outlook on life, for I am sure it would be just as difficult for them to change their opinions. I am not asking them to change their opinions if that is their attitude. I support the Bill.

Mr. FREEBAIRN (Light): I do not want to talk about Socialism now as I have been invited to do. However, I do want to make one or two observations on the Bill. We all like to think of Australians as being close to the land, perhaps a nation of small farmers. In fact, most of us in society like to boast that we have some connection with the land. Everybody in our society at least has friends on the land or one or two generations back had some association with the land. Then, speaking sociologically, it is said that the small farmers are disappearing from the agricultural scene and farms are becoming larger, but it is a fact of economic existence that the farms of South Australia must become larger in order that farmers can compete on world markets with their produce when our domestic cost structure is based on the continually rising costs of raw materials and other factors. It is impossible to prevent the farms in South Australia from becoming larger when our present domestic cost arrangement continues to work like this. It was only a few days ago that Mr. McMahon, the Commonwealth Treasurer, made it clear that it was almost impossible to alter the present wage structure in Australia to provide any relationship between wage sanity in this country and the ability of our export earners to keep down their costs to a certain level.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: Would not aggregation lead to an increase in the production of wheat?

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Aggregation, of itself, will not increase production, but the increased technical efficiency that goes with aggregation could well increase production. That is a little different. If farms are to become more efficient they must become larger and the small farmer that we like to think about must disappear into the folk lore of our colonial culture.

I was not in the Chamber to hear the whole of the speech made by the member for Frome but I did hear most of the speech made by the member for Millicent. I congratulate both members on the vast amount of work they did in preparing their speeches. I also wish to congratulate my colleague the member for Albert on the fine speech he made in this debate. I think that in the speeches of members opposite there was more, shall I say, ideological emotion than there was reason. I believe that the member for Millicent, in his own heart, acknowledges that if farms are to become increasingly efficient—

Mr. Corcoran: You're assuming—

Mr. FREEBAIRN: No, I am not assuming. The member for Millicent is a practical man and he understands farmers and agriculture, because he lives in a rural district. He knows that if farms are to become increasingly efficient they must increase in size. The member for Frome also knows that, because he wrote a letter, which was published in the *Northern Argus* on November 20, in connection with the Australian wheat industry, and he indicated that he had recently added to the size of his farming property. Of course, a practical man, as is the member for Frome, would do this only if it were going to increase his farming efficiency. I think that we have there a practical example of the need for farms to become larger. The member for Frome is a practical farmer and understands farming perhaps better than do most members on the other side, and we see a letter from him indicating that he has increased the size of his farming property. He is indicating to the world that he thinks he can do better by having a larger farm.

Mr. Rodda: Is he blowing his bags?

Mr. FREEBAIRN: No, he is a realist, as is the member for Millicent, and he knows that he can increase his efficiency. I think that is a pretty good answer to some of the ideological emotionalism that we have heard from members opposite in this debate.

Mr. Corcoran: What on earth are you talking about?

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I am referring to a subject on which I am at least as well versed as are members opposite. I am talking about ideological emotionalism.

Mr. Corcoran: You're talking rubbish and you know it.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I am not going to cross swords; I am trying to make an objective speech. I think the member for Millicent is trying to provoke me a little, but he is not going to succeed. I wish to comment on one or two remarks made by my friend the member for Whyalla (Hon. R. R. Loveday), who made a passing reference to the fact that much Crown land in post-war years (I think he said) had been bought up by city business men and dentists, doctors and other professional men with large incomes. These business and professional men have made a fine contribution to the development of agriculture in South Australia.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: The member for Albert didn't seem to think so.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Yes he did. Much of the Upper South-East has been developed by these business and professional men with high incomes, because it is only the man with a large amount of capital behind him who can afford to develop that sort of country.

Mr. Corcoran: It was found that a good deal of speculation was taking place, too.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: That could well be: possibly some areas in the Upper South-East are held by speculators. If members reflect on the enormous amount of development that has taken place in the last 20 years, they will agree, if they are honest, that the moneyed people have done a good job in South Australia. I do not want to mention names, but everyone in this House knows the enormous contribution these people have made, and arguments about the undesirability of men with capital buying rural land are specious and hollow.

Mr. Edwards: What about the member for Mount Gambier?

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I do not think he really thought about what he was saying, because some of his remarks will be published in the South-East press and will be damaging to the member for Millicent. I think the member for Mount Gambier was speaking in terms of perhaps 50 years ago, and in very theoretical terms indeed. He does not believe in freehold land at all. That is not a good thing to say in the South-East. The member for

Millicent knows that many landowners in that area, some of whom perhaps voted for him at the last election, will not be pleased that a senior member of the Opposition has said that he does not believe in freehold land and that all land should be leasehold because, if all land were leasehold, no farmer's estates would be liable for probate.

Members interjecting:

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I am trying hard to refrain from attacking the member for Millicent. He is so vulnerable that it would be in his interests to keep quiet.

Mr. Corcoran: You attack me.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I will refrain. If we all adopted the conservative thinking of members opposite, an enormous industrial organization such as General Motors-Holden's would be only a little blacksmith's shop. That is the way the Australian Labor Party thinks. Its members cannot think in terms of economy of scale, and the member for Millicent knows that is true. We would have no development if we could not have economy of scale, as the member for Whyalla knows very well.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: I don't know anything of the sort.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Of course the honourable member does. I do not intend to speak any longer on the Bill except to say that I indicate my general support for it and congratulate the Minister of Lands on introducing it. I believe it will be in the interests of agriculture in South Australia and thereby in the true interests of South Australia.

Mr. GILES (Gumeracha): I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill. During the course of the debate, two things have worried me greatly. First, the member for Mount Gambier suggested that the policy of his Party was to make all land in South Australia leasehold. He developed this theme along the lines suggested by Mr. Justice Else-Mitchell in an article that I believe was circulated to all members some time ago. I cannot think of a worse situation for South Australia than that suggested by the honourable member. The suggestion is that a man would rent a property for his lifetime, that on his death it would automatically revert back to the State, and that the only payment he would receive for the property would be for improvements. I do not know how a person would receive the payments, how they would be valued or who would pay them. This suggestion absolutely shocks me because, if any system like that were ever developed, it would take away every bit of initiative a farmer could have.

Mr. Corcoran: Absolute nonsense!

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: Nonsense!

Mr. GILES: When honourable members say that, it is obvious that they have not given much thought to the matter. When a man develops a farm, he does so to perpetuate his memory in a good property. If he does not have the possibility of passing on this property to his son, what incentive has he to improve the place?

Mr. Corcoran: What are you talking about?

Mr. GILES: I am talking about the suggestion that all land should revert to leasehold, and that is what Opposition members have talked about in this debate. Last evening the member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Burdon) said:

The removal of these restrictions will react against country people in this way: with aggregation allowed, wealthy people will purchase properties and those who cannot afford them will go without, meaning that fewer people will live in the country. The people who leave the country will naturally go to the city. This type of thing has happened in the United States of America and Canada where aggregation has taken place.

I will now quote a few figures from the 1967 Victorian report on decentralization. Let us consider the United States of America and Canada where, according to the honourable member, aggregation has taken place. In the U.S.A. 28 per cent of the population live in centres with more than 100,000 people. In Canada 23 per cent of the population live in such centres. And the honourable member talks about aggregation in these countries! In Australia 59 per cent of the population live in centres with more than 100,000 people. Consequently, I do not think that the argument concerning aggregation in the U.S.A. and Canada holds any water at all. Quoting from "Perpetual Leasehold or Freehold", the member for Mount Gambier also said:

The freehold method is having an injurious effect in bidding up the price of land to an extent which tends to restrict the proportion of people able to undertake land purchase and effective use.

Many people have said that land under leasehold and land under freehold bring exactly the same prices. I believe that instances of prices an acre were mentioned. The restriction on the 16,000,000 acres of freehold land in South Australia is nil: a farmer can buy as much of it as he wishes. If the removal of the restriction on leasehold land is going to cause aggregation, why have we not had aggregation of these 16,000,000 acres of land,

if its price is the same? So, the argument does not hold water.

Mr. Corcoran: You made a point there!

Mr. GILES: The honourable member is most gracious in saying so. Aggregation of land for economic purposes reaches a stage where the most economic unit today is worked by a family unit. This was borne out by an interjection from an Opposition member, who said that farmers' sons possibly worked for a lower wage. This could well be so, but the fact that a family is interested in a property means that it will work more conscientiously and economically. A family looks after the machinery better and works longer hours.

The fact that in the past few years several big properties in South Australia have been sold because they are not economic units leads to the argument that, when the restriction is removed from leasehold land, there will not be a vast accumulation of this land. Some properties that were over 100 years old were sold recently because they were too big to be economic propositions. The argument advanced by the member for Frome (Mr. Casey) that land will be accumulated when this restriction is removed is false, because the many properties in South Australia that are now for sale would have been snapped up if there was a desire to aggregate. In the area between Springton and Victor Harbour, according to a recent report, one property in three is for sale, and many properties in the South-East are on the market. The *Stock Journal* shows the large number of properties for sale. If accumulation of land was going on, these properties would have been snapped up so that big farms could be made bigger.

Only yesterday a news report from Western Australia was that more than 100 sheep stations in that State were for sale, whereas the normal number of stations on the market was 50. Again, that proves that aggregation is not taking place. The argument developed by the member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Burdon) on Mr. Justice Else-Mitchell's theory is far from workable. I should like to know at what stage a farmer leaves his property. According to the report by the judge, when a farmer dies his property reverts to the Crown. Does the farmer stay on the farm until he is 85, when he cannot walk around, and farm uneconomically?

Mr. Burdon: The land reverts to the Crown when he retires, which may be when he is 55 years old.

Mr. GILES: I consider the suggestion to be poor. I do not agree with the principle that all land should revert to perpetual leasehold. I have little more to say, except to commend the Minister of Lands on introducing the measure. The Minister and the members of the Land Board, in their wisdom, will be able to control any excessive aggregation that tends to take place, because they will have power to refuse to grant a lease. I do not consider the measure to be a backward step. The difference between unimproved land values in various parts of South Australia makes difficult the fixing of a set figure to restrict the area of leasehold land that a farmer may hold. I support the Bill.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart): I take my stand with the member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Burdon) and voice my disagreement with some of the forthright statements that have been made by Government members, particularly by the member for Gumeracha (Mr. Giles). He said that he was shocked at the suggestion that land should be leasehold, and he could not understand how anyone would be prepared to develop land fully under lease conditions. He then referred to America and Canada. When I was in New York one of the most impressive places I saw was the Rockefeller Centre. Possibly the honourable member will know that this consists of 11 buildings with about 12½ miles of shops, a radio and music centre and the Time and Life Building, but what surprised me was that I was told that in the year 2,000 all this property would go to the Columbia University. That centre would not be more than 30 years old, so the people of America were not frightened to develop land under lease conditions.

South Australia owes much to those who have developed our pastoral areas, and great development is taking place in these areas under pastoral leases for 42 years with the right of review of rentals every 21 years. Strange to say, although banks and financial institutions do not like lending money to build houses on perpetual lease land in country towns, there has never been any hesitation about lending money on pastoral leases. The tenure of the lease is not as important as Government members would have us believe. We cannot look far enough into the future to give away the people's birthright in freehold as freely as some would wish to do. If one reads the first edition of the first paper printed in Adelaide, a copy of which is in the library, one can see how land was given away in the square mile of the city of Adelaide. One

could ask how some of these assets that are already in occupation came to be in occupation, and what peculiar right the people born here have to land that has been held for them by people who gave their blood overseas. A principle is involved in this matter: it is not outdated, but is a principle that is much alive in overseas countries at present. I will not reiterate what has been said, but there has been much substance in speeches of Opposition members, and I take my stand with that of the member for Mount Gambier.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Lands): I appreciate the attention given to this Bill by members on both sides. Any evil or disadvantage that has occurred in our Crown lands legislation has arisen under the existing system. So it is not right to blame any amendment in this Bill for past evils. It does not follow that an amendment designed to improve the Act compounds past evils.

My second point is that some members have adopted a too excitable approach to the matter. I do not dispute that the member for Frome (Mr. Casey) spoke moderately but he seemed to be looking for more trouble than there was. He said that if we lifted the restrictions we would force people off the land. That will not happen: no-one will be forced off the land. All that will happen is that there may be a wider range of buyers available to buy land. That is not forcing a person off the land if he has more people offering to buy his property. There is no harm in it; the farmers themselves would not object to it.

It was said by another speaker that this is the wrong time to lift the restrictions. The member for Whyalla (Hon. R. R. Loveday) made a similar comment, saying "I think the position we have got should be defended until we have to abandon it", or words to that effect. Some members think we are trying to resist some inevitable trend, but we have to face the situation as it now is. Farming conditions today have changed greatly from what they were even two decades ago, and no less a person than the Minister for Primary Industry supports what I say. He has been quoted here tonight and, when he said we must look to larger holdings, that was not disputed.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: We did not deny that.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: No. I made the point that some members believe that this trend is inevitable but that this is not the time to do anything about it. All we are doing is removing a limitation that in

some respects retards the development of farm land. Many in our farming communities have the capacity and the finance to develop undeveloped or under-developed land. Then there was much talk of freehold as against perpetual lease. If this Bill does anything, it does not encourage freeholding. I like the idea of freeholding, and so do other members on this side, just as members opposite do not like that idea. However, this Bill will not encourage freeholding. In fact, many people think, "I will not bother to freehold", and they are people who perhaps thought they would like to freehold.

It has been said that the country community may be deleteriously affected if this Bill is passed. What a country community needs most is prosperous industry, primary or secondary. It is advantageous to secure secondary industry (if that is possible) as well as primary industry, although we know they both are difficult to obtain. However, in order to prosper, a country community must have healthy and prosperous industry. This Bill seeks to ensure that there will in fact be healthy and prosperous farming and that the country people will not suffer. I often wonder why we ignore the available resources and knowledge that exists in our community today: many good and experienced farmers can find the necessary finance to develop fully the land that is available.

There is not a great area of undeveloped land in South Australia by comparison with other States; indeed, I think we are closer to the full development of our potential than is any other State, and that is a tremendous tribute to our farmers. I do not believe that the farmers with small properties have anything whatever to fear; on the contrary, they will gain by this legislation. However, we acknowledge that in modern times small farming is much more difficult than it once was: whereas it was once possible to go out with a stout heart and good physique and establish a livelihood on the land, that is almost impossible now unless one has resource to finance, and has considerable ability and a certain amount of luck. I think that if this Bill is accepted the primary industries of the State will benefit thereby and that the deleterious effects about which we have been warned will not be realized. I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Lands) moved:

That it be an instruction to the Committee of the whole House on the Bill that it have

power to consider a new clause relating to the Eleventh Schedule in the Crown Lands Act, 1929-1967.

Motion carried.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 7 passed.

Clause 8—"Repeal of s. 31 of principal Act."

Mr. CORCORAN: This clause contains the first of a series of provisions that will result in the deletion of the limitation under the legislation. The Opposition has made out a case for the retention of this limitation whereas the Government has maintained it is necessary to remove it. This provision has been in the Act almost since its inception. It was deemed necessary to include it in the Act even though 7,000,000 acres or 8,000,000 acres of land was freehold. The main reason given originally for this provision was that it would prevent undue aggregation. It has been said that the trend in agriculture today requires larger holdings and, mainly, the Opposition agrees that this is so. However, the limitations can be adjusted to meet this trend. I do not know what ramifications can flow from the removal of this limitation, and I do not believe that Government members know, either. Therefore, I ask the Government to take a more cautious point of view. In view of the present trend in agriculture, I would not have been surprised had the Government introduced a Bill to alter the limitation. Although we have no control over 16,000,000 acres in the agricultural areas, we should have some control over the remaining 20,000,000 acres under perpetual lease.

I do not believe that the benefits that members opposite say will accrue to farmers as a result of the removal of the limitation will in fact accrue to them. Members opposite have continually referred to small farmers, but surely we are concerned with farmers generally. Money will dictate what will happen in the future. If the limitation were fair and reasonable, farmers would not be inhibited in relation to the land they required. Our approach is a cautious one but, on the other hand, the Government has said, "The section may be inhibiting certain things, so let us throw it out." The Opposition opposes this clause because it is not satisfied with the reasons put forward for repealing the section. Members opposite know that, if satisfactory reasons are put forward, we will listen to them. If the Opposition does not have its way in respect of this clause, there will be no point in moving the consequential amendments that have been foreshadowed. I oppose the clause.

Mr. CASEY: I support the Deputy Leader and point out to the Minister that many people in the marginal areas, particularly in the North, are greatly concerned indeed that the Government has taken this step. I cannot understand why the Government is so adamant in its approach to this matter. I am not speaking for other parts of the State and, if reasons are advanced why certain other parts require the lifting of these restrictions, I may be prepared to go along with the move. However, I must bear in mind the views of the people who have spoken to me in the last fortnight. These people aired strong views on this matter: they said that, if this move was carried out, it would not be long before they would have to leave the areas in which they were living.

I believe that the Government has not considered every aspect of the effect of this move. Since the principal Act was enacted 70 or 80 years ago, there has been no problem in respect of lifting limitations on land, and I do not see any reason why the previous situation should not continue. This is not the time for this move.

I make that plea to the Minister, who ought to know the position, because he has an interest in land in the pastoral areas. We are concerned about the people in the marginal areas. We do not object to people coming in and taking up land, but I think there is a limit to the amount that should be granted in those areas, when many of those to whom such land is made available hold hundreds of thousands of square miles in outside pastoral areas where there are no restrictions. If the people in the marginal areas are not protected, country areas will be depleted in fewer than 50 years. The member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Evans) is smiling, but I assure him that I can take him to areas where he would be violently accosted by people if they knew that he had voted for this measure. This measure affects the future livelihood of those people, who will have no alternative but to leave the country areas and come to the city.

Mr. HUDSON: I am disturbed because the Government is flying in the face of the traditions of the State, most of which were developed on the principle that the small landholder or farmer should be encouraged, not only from the point of view of the economics of agricultural production but also from the point of view of the social and community life that would develop in small farming communities. During the years of development of the agricultural areas of the State, the intention was to

encourage the settlement of small farmers, to prevent the undue aggregation of landholdings, and to encourage the development of closely knit farming communities, and that has been largely achieved. In the last 50 years, there has been some erosion of the values and aims of the early settlers. Rural population has declined, and every member has commented adversely on this, particularly on its effect on the traditional agricultural areas. Yet, this Bill must do more to relatively depopulate agricultural areas than has anything else in South Australia's history.

The member for Yorke Peninsula (Mr. Ferguson) is looking at me intently. His district comprises mainly small farming units, compared with the size of units in New South Wales and Victoria, and the population of areas in his district have been either static or declining for many years.

Mr. Ferguson: It has an undeveloped area, too.

Mr. HUDSON: Yes, I agree that further development is possible in the southern end of the peninsula. The honourable member must have thought about the future of his district if encouragement should be given by Government policy to the aggregation of properties.

Mr. Ferguson: Prices of land helped to stop that.

Mr. HUDSON: The consequence of removing the limitation will make prices much less a bar than they have been in the past. I should have thought that the members for Burra, Rocky River, Light, and Gouger, all representing areas that have exhibited declining rural populations, especially in the Premier's area—

Mr. Giles: Where do you get your figures about the declining population?

Mr. HUDSON: The electoral enrolment figures over the last 20 years for Yorke Peninsula, Burra, Rocky River and Light, and the rural areas of Gouger, indicate a declining population, because each of those districts now has 6,000 or fewer electors. In the 1956 redistribution they had 7,000. The population has been expanding in the last 20 years in the South-East, the River districts and the West Coast. The District of Stirling has expanded probably because of the development of Victor Harbour and of the additional development of tourism. Government members seem to have accepted the fact that the establishment of closely knit rural communities is a thing of the past, and that we can forget the expansion of population in the developing rural areas of

the State, because, in future, there will be larger holdings, a declining population, and a tendency for greater absentee ownership of farm holdings.

Mr. Edwards: You are not a farmer and you don't know what you're talking about.

Mr. HUDSON: I can probably tell the honourable member much more about the historical development of South Australia and of the farming areas of the State, the way these have developed and the controversies that have surrounded the development of agricultural areas, than he would have ever known. Just because someone is not a farmer it does not mean that he knows nothing about the existing problems. We are told by the Minister that the original limitations of the Act applied in order to prevent undue aggregation. Apparently, because this objective has been attained, we need not worry any more about it: we can just have open slather, let it all go and not worry about the probability of undue aggregation. Surely there is a case, if ever there was one, for proceeding with care. The Minister also had this to say:

In considering any application to transfer I believe that it would be appropriate to prevent subdivisions which seek to create holdings which are uneconomically small or undue aggregation of land in an undeveloped state. This is what the limitation of the use of perpetual leasehold land has been designed to do over the years. In relation to perpetual leasehold land, the Minister at present would refuse a subdivision that would create uneconomically small areas. In his second reading explanation, the Minister effectively tells us that the limitations that have been imposed have achieved desirable objectives and then, in one of the best *non sequiturs* we have heard from a Minister of this Government (and we have had a few) we get this paragraph:

In reviewing the limitations in the Act, consideration has been given whether some variation in the present level should be made or whether, under existing conditions, the limitations serve a useful purpose at all.

Then follows this sentence:

It is concluded that they no longer do so. No argument or reason is given. The Minister queries whether the limitations serve a useful purpose at all, and then it is concluded that they no longer do so. Then we are told later that the limitation has achieved an effective purpose. What land in the developed area of the State has been held out of production?

Mr. Nankivell: Quite a lot of Crown land has been.

Mr. HUDSON: Surely, if we are talking about Crown land in areas yet to be developed and in areas where the size of the holding needs to be larger, there is need for amendment of the Act to provide for special limitations or no limitations at all. The previous Minister of Lands did exactly this in counties Chandos and Buckingham, and there is no reason why this should not recur. I have heard the member for Albert talk about the difficulties of establishing on the land; he has given me lectures on the problems associated with getting sufficient capital to establish oneself on the land. He agrees with me that there are considerable difficulties in finding capital. He will not tell me that this will make matters any easier or that this will not cause the price of perpetual leasehold land to rise. If it was up to the freehold price at present, the problem of freeholding perpetual leasehold land, even under the current Government's policy, surely would not be so difficult a problem from a financial angle.

Mr. Nankivell: If the price was up to freehold, you would have more equity to borrow on.

Mr. HUDSON: No member on the Government side, including the Minister, has yet established to the satisfaction of any member that this measure will not lead to significant rises in the price of Crown land which will make it even more difficult in future for the smaller person to establish himself as a farmer. If this is the case, surely Government members must be questioning the decision they have made in relation to this Bill. They will be setting themselves up as the representative not of the small farmer (which is the role they have claimed for themselves in the past) but of the person who has a large interest in the farming community. They will have established by this a complete break with the traditions of South Australia and the traditional way in which agriculture development, in particular, has been encouraged. They will have established a complete break with the whole set of social values which led to the peculiar system adopted in South Australia for settlement (a system about which we have always in the past been keen to boast).

Mr. Corcoran: It has been upheld proudly.

Mr. HUDSON: That is right, and people have pointed to South Australia as an example of a community where, despite the fact that the amount of good agricultural land has been limited compared with the whole area of the State, we have been successful in establishing

a farming community which allowed social cohesion, a character of its own, and a continuity that was important to the development of this State.

Mr. Rodda: And too many members of Parliament of their own, too!

Mr. HUDSON: Obviously, there have been too many members of Parliament for too long, because certain people have now got themselves into such a state of dotage that they cannot see the wood for the trees any more.

Mr. Nankivell: You are presumptuous in your suggestion; you are not going to break up this continuity of the way of life.

Mr. HUDSON: I should think that over a period of two generations that is what would be broken up. The honourable member is prepared to accept this, to do nothing about it and regard it as inevitable.

Mr. Nankivell: You are pushing up the costs.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections. The member for Glenelg.

Mr. HUDSON: I think the argument that has developed at this stage across the Chamber indicates that, while Government members have given some thought to this problem, they have not thought it through properly.

The Hon. R. R. Loveday: This Bill is a policy of despair.

Mr. HUDSON: I think so. I do not think this will provide the people concerned with any substantial benefit. I think the only immediate impact of the Bill will be to raise the price of perpetual leasehold land relative to freehold land, and there may be a slight reduction in the price of freehold land as a consequence. To the extent that larger companies and even foreign concerns see the opportunity to establish themselves and develop large holdings in the traditional agricultural areas of the State and proceed to do so, there will be a further pushing up in the price. The problems of getting a satisfactory rate of return on the existing capital value of farming land will not be any easier. The only joy that will come the way of a member such as the member for Albert will be when he sells out and comes to live in the city, when he takes his capital appreciation and enjoys it for the rest of his life.

This sort of thing will happen to an increasing extent to people who are currently established in the farming community. Can the member for Albert really convince us that this change will make it any easier for him to establish his sons on the land? I believe that about the only reasonable argument in favour of this

change is that in some areas the removal of this limitation altogether will mean slightly greater flexibility in switching between wool and wheat production. No member opposite can claim that aggregation, possibly of an excessive kind, will not come about as a result of the removal of the limitation.

Mr. Corcoran: They do not know what will happen.

Mr. HUDSON: True, and when the horse has bolted and Hooker-Rex Proprietary Limited invests all over the agricultural areas of the State—

Mr. Nankivell: They won't come here.

Mr. HUDSON: Why not?

Mr. Nankivell: They want development and we haven't got it here.

Mr. HUDSON: The honourable member knows that, regarding agriculture and pastoral development—

Mr. Nankivell: It is too late for Hookers.

Mr. HUDSON: We will see. I should think that the big investment companies can come in, in the way of development, wherever there are opportunities for capital expenditure which will be tax deductible and which, at the same time, will raise the improved value of the land. If there is a sufficient increase in the improved value of the land as a result of substantial capital expenditure, the large investment companies will find that this is a feasible proposition for them, and more and more businessmen will be interested in this kind of investment.

The question at issue is whether this sort of thing will occur. The current tax laws certainly encourage this, where developmental expenditure can take place. The member for Albert tried to make the point that, in relation to certain agricultural areas, the limitation that exists means that they are undeveloped. He

cannot have it both ways. Members opposite should at least sleep on this matter and give it second thoughts. We should hear from them a substantial reason why this limitation is arduous and arguments why the effects we have predicted will not come about.

The Committee divided on the clause:

Ayes (18)—Messrs. Allen, Arnold, Brookman (teller), Coumbe, Edwards, Ferguson, Freebairn, Giles, Hall, McAnaney, Millhouse, Nankivell, Pearson, Rodda, and Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Stott, Venning, and Wardle.

Noes (18)—Messrs. Broomhill, Burdon, and Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Casey, Clark, Corcoran (teller), Dunstan, Hudson, Hughes, Hurst, Jennings, Langley, Lawn, Loveday, McKee, Riches, Ryan, and Virgo.

Pair—Aye—Mr. Evans. No—Mr. Hutchens.

The CHAIRMAN: There are 18 Ayes and 18 Noes. Since there is an equality of votes, I give my vote in favour of the Ayes. The question therefore passes in the affirmative.

Clause thus passed.

Clauses 9 to 56 passed.

New clause 4a—"Governor's powers."

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Lands): I move to insert the following new clause:

4a. Section 5 of the principal Act is amended by striking out paragraph (j).

This is a consequential amendment removing a superfluous provision regarding the Governor's powers.

New clause inserted.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10.36 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, November 28, at 2 p.m.