

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, November 7, 1951.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir Walter Duncan) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

THREATENED CLOSE-DOWN OF INDUSTRY.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I ask leave to make a statement before asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I direct the Attorney-General's attention to a report which appeared in today's *Advertiser* under the heading "Grave Threat to Industries: Protest at Arms Plant Closing." The report states:—

A proposal to close Finsbury munitions plant in January because of cuts in Australia's allocation of copper was described yesterday by Adelaide industrialists as a grave threat to the State's metal and electrical industries.

Has the Minister's attention been drawn to projected action by the Commonwealth Government, and if so, does the Government propose to take any steps in order to alleviate the position in South Australia and thus prevent unemployment?

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL—I read the report, but I can give no further information at the moment. However, I will have inquiries made to see if some answer can be given.

WINE INDUSTRY STRIKE.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—In view of the protracted nature of the strike in the wine industry, which appears to be a strike against the Industrial Court, can the Attorney-General suggest anything which will bring the warring parties together in an endeavour to reach some amicable agreement?

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL—I do not know of any suggestion that I could possibly make in a matter like this. I think the facts are well known to the honourable member.

OFFENDERS PROBATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 17. Page 949.)

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL (Midland—Attorney-General)—I obtained the adjournment of this debate in order that I could read what had been said by the Leader of the Opposition. This is a simple measure and I am not sure

that it will do much good, but I can see what is desired, namely, that a bondsman should be informed if the police find there has been any breach of a bond. That is all the Bill provides. I was particularly interested in what the Leader of the Opposition said because I know the facts of the case to which he referred very well. I was anxious to make sure that there had been no suggestion that the person concerned had been badly treated. The honourable member was most careful not to make any observations of that description. I have no objections to the Bill.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE secured the adjournment of the debate.

HOUSING OF AGED PEOPLE.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH (Central No. 1)—I move:—

That in the opinion of this House, there are problems connected with old age which call urgently for solution, the most fundamental of which is housing, and that it is imperative that the South Australian Housing Trust, should immediately embark upon the construction of single unit homes either in their present group schemes or the establishment of a garden suburb in order to solve this urgent problem. I feel sure that the motion will receive full consideration by members. Many problems are connected with old age which call urgently for solution, the most important of which is the housing of old people. In the course of their Parliamentary duties members have, from time to time, had interviews with pensioner constituents seeking Parliamentary aid to enable them to secure a house. Unfortunately many people in the community look upon old age as something which should be despised, yet it is no respecter of persons. No matter what position a person may hold in the community, old age cannot be avoided; it is one of those things which Providence has ordained. The fact remains, however, that the older people in the community have rights in the same way as young people, and *vice versa*. The community cannot really help unless the rights of both sections are fully preserved, and they are permitted to enjoy them. I do not claim that the Housing Trust has neglected this section of the community, and I have not read anything in the Housing Trust's reports that it proposes to build homes for elderly people, notwithstanding that it is one of our most urgent problems. The trust, as the principal constructional home building authority in the State, should give some consideration to the elderly section of the community. I shall not

wearry members by enumerating the work that has been done by these elderly citizens, who have assisted in making available the economic standards which we enjoy today. Many of them are being kicked from pillar to post, hiring rooms here and there. The families of some will not care for them. In Western Australia and South Africa, and, I understand, in New Zealand, the problem is being grappled with on a proper basis. They have constructed or are in the process of constructing modern garden suburbs so that these older people instead of being separated after 40 or 50 years of married life can live the remainder of their days together. Often when old people are unable to get the accommodation they desire they go to the Old Folks' Home, leaving an area in which they have probably lived the whole of their life and being placed in new surroundings with no friends for company. The question I have raised is not a Party one, but a problem which can be approached on a humanitarian basis. I am not suggesting that the Government is responsible. The Housing Trust is the sole authority for the construction of homes for housing the people.

The Hon. F. T. Perry—Is it not instructed what it is to do?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—That is the first intimation that I have had that it is instructed. I was under the impression that it was free from instruction and that it refused to brook interference from any Government. As the trust is the only authority building homes, it is the only competent body to which requests can be made for accommodation. It is interesting to notice that in South Australia £4,000,000 a year is paid out in old age, widows, and children's pensions. In certain of the other States and in South Africa old people are engaged in useful work in group settlements. Many of the older people are quite sprightly and still have their full faculties. I hope the Council will carry the resolution, not as an instruction to the trust but as an expression of opinion that the older members of the community should receive the same consideration as the other sections I have mentioned.

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL secured the adjournment of the debate.

HOSPITALS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 6. Page 1092.)

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Central No. 1—Leader of the Opposition)—It is not often that the Attorney-General has the opportunity to explain the contents of the Appropriation Bill. I congratulate him on his performance yesterday in dealing with what must be considered one of the most important Budgets ever presented to our Parliament. It is pleasing to notice that on such an occasion as this there is almost a full House to take part in the debate and listen to any criticism that may be offered. I take this opportunity to extend a welcome home to three of our colleagues, Messrs. Cudmore, Perry, and Anthoney, who spent a considerable time overseas. I am sure we will profit from their experiences. Under the Bill more than £34,000,000 will be appropriated. Although estimated expenditure for the year is £42,000,000, a considerable part of that has already been spent. I am considerably concerned as to where we are going. On the one hand we are told we must produce more, whereas on the other we are threatened with a reduced wheat acreage because of insufficient price. The price of wheat for flour will be increased shortly and also the price of stock feed. This is likely to threaten the existence of the pig, poultry, and dairying industries. I understand that a new home consumption price will be fixed at 10s. a bushel on December 1. In Victoria yesterday the price of a 2 lb. loaf of bread was increased by 1½d. We are faced with the possibility of increased prices for many important items, and there is also the danger of a serious effect on industry because of a copper shortage. It was stated in the press recently that a plant producing sheet copper will be closed. Men engaged in that work will be compelled to find other employment. Men and women in the woollen industry have recently been retrenched. I mention these things because I am concerned about the future. What is the use of increasing wages to chase the cost of living? We must face the position. Under our present system the wage earner is worse off than he was four of five years ago. Prior to two recent Federal elections we were told value would be placed back in the pound, but the Australian public was misled on those occasions because the position is now much worse.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—Who said value would be placed back in the pound?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—The Prime Minister and his supporters.

The Hon. E. Anthony—He said value should be put back in the pound.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—He said value would be placed back in the pound and that the cost of living would be reduced. The honourable member will not deny also that he said there would be reduced taxation.

The Hon. E. Anthony—I am not disputing that.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Our present system of fixing prices should be altered. We must get together and seek a solution of the difficulties confronting us. Until such time as we are prepared to reasonably consider the problems we will get nowhere. Under the "C" series index system quite a number of commodities are not considered when cost of living adjustments are made.

The Hon. F. T. Perry—The "C" series is only a measuring stick.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—A number of articles, including fresh fruit, fish, ham and lamb are not considered, and the basic wage is therefore not a true reflex of the cost of living. The recent 11s. adjustment which became operative from the first pay in November was fixed on October 7, and a number of articles have since increased in price. Those increases will not be reflected until the first pay in February.

The Hon. E. Anthony—The 40-hour week was the tragedy of this country.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—When I was working 60 hours a week I was told that industry could not stand a reduction in the number of hours worked. I was told that when the 48-hour and 44-hour weeks were introduced but in spite of the 40-hour week profits are higher today than ever.

The Hon. F. T. Perry—Costs are higher too.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—We have to face this position as we cannot continue as we have. Nobody wants a depression. Our responsibility is to try to suggest a solution which will arrest the present upward trend. Ninety-nine per cent of the public are in a worse position today than ever before. Every time that an increase in wages has been granted by the Court on the application of trades organizations, people outside those movements have benefited accordingly. During this session we have been called upon to pass a number of Bills to increase the salaries of judges and civil servants. I do not think any sensible person wants the present state of affairs to continue. During the

first 12 months of the first World War the cost of living was increased by 28 per cent, but no wage earner received an extra penny a week in wages, and we have been chasing that 28 per cent ever since. In common with other legislators in the Commonwealth, members of this Parliament received a small increase in salary, but we are no better off than three months ago. The increased salary was for the purpose of meeting cost of living increases over a few years, but I find that the Taxation Department takes most of it. Despite that we are frequently asked for donations by sporting and other bodies. Are wage earners and all others outside not in a worse position than they were? In the interests of all concerned something has to be done to arrest the increase in the cost of living. On several occasions I have suggested that representatives of both sides should meet in conference, with a judge presiding, to see if something concrete could not be evolved. I do not suppose that much notice will be taken of my suggestions, but that does not prevent me from expressing a different point of view which, I consider, would be in the interests of the State.

Let members consider the position of the Harbors Board. The capital invested in its undertakings at June 30 was a little less than £9,000,000. It made a profit last financial year of more than £75,000, revenue exceeding £1,140,000, an increase of more than £90,000 over last year. Fifty-two per cent of the board's revenue came from wharfage charges. Notwithstanding all that has been said about the slow turn-round of shipping, the goods handled by Port Adelaide waterside workers over the wharves increased by 302,000 tons in 12 months. I have a high opinion of the work performed by waterside workers. Although there was an increase of 660,000 tons at outports, most of the increased tonnage came from Whyalla and Rapid Bay, the jetties at which places are privately owned.

The Hon. F. T. Perry—And mechanically handled too.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Exactly. No wharfage charges are made on goods over those jetties.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—Some shippers are using cargo sheds as warehouses.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—The return on capital invested was over 4 per cent, compared with about 5½ per cent last year. Notwithstanding the results achieved, only 14 out of the 89 ports and jetties in South Australia under the board's control operated at a profit.

I fear that a number of these outports have seen their best days. Another important question is that of water. The sum invested in our waterworks today totals more than £22,000,000. The deficit last year was £689,000, notwithstanding a surplus of £48,000 (less than half of the previous year's surplus) from Adelaide water district. Not many years ago the profit in the metropolitan area reached 10½ per cent.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—There couldn't have been much profit last year because little water was available.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Profits have been steadily falling in recent years. The time is not far distant when there will be no surplus and when we will be unable, under present conditions, to pay working expenses even in the metropolitan area.

The Hon. F. T. Perry—Haven't you heard of the recent departmental assessments.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Yes, my assessment was increased by 40 per cent and I am pleased to pay the increase because the department renders such an excellent service to the people who receive a cheap commodity. Working expenses for the year, including the cost of operating bores during water restrictions last year, totalled £47,000, nearly three times as much as in the previous year. I realize the value of country areas to South Australia. People in the metropolitan area must be prepared to make up any deficiency in order that country people can receive proper consideration. However, I object to the practice which applies to certain areas on the West Coast, which are more productive than any part of South Australia. I strongly criticise the Government for not taking action to correct the position. In the hundred of Shannon the best productive land is rated at only 4d. an acre and it is high time that something was said about the matter. I read in the press this week that estimated wheat yield in that locality was 13 bags to the acre and 17 bags of barley. Although the matter has previously been brought before the Government's notice it will not budge, but sits back and allows some of the wealthiest people in the State to reap an advantage by paying only 4d. an acre for water with a maximum of 7d., when people in the metropolitan area are called upon to meet increased charges. It is time the Government corrected this injustice to people in the metropolitan area. People most concerned on the West Coast say that it is not reasonable that they should be called upon to pay only 4d. an acre.

The Hon. R. R. Wilson—The district is only on the fringe of the area to which you are referring.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Country lands in the hundred of Shannon have a minimum rating of 4d. an acre. Every witness that appeared before the Public Works Committee admitted, without any hesitation, that the rate was absurdly low and said they were prepared to pay 7d.

The Hon. E. H. Edmonds—Did your committee recommend anything to straighten out the matter?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—It is a question of making recommendations to the Government, which should straighten out the matter.

The Hon. E. Anthony—Has the committee recommended any increase?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Yes, in some cases two and a half times the present rate. I know the position regarding the Tod River scheme and that the people there cannot afford to pay a seven-penny rate. The Government has been roundly condemned for allowing the present position to remain and I have been criticised for having advocated a revision of the rate. I do not care what people say. I want to do what I think is right. This is an avenue of revenue and something should be done. However, there could be an increase only as a result of an increase in the land tax assessment which, under the Waterworks Act, governs the rate for water supply purposes. The Public Works Committee in its report stated:—

The committee is of opinion that the time has arrived when the whole system of rating under the Waterworks Act should be revised. The range in valuations of land for assessment purposes should be more realistic, and a wider scale of rating applied accordingly.

I do not think it can be said I have indulged in any unfair criticism. I have submitted facts which cannot be denied.

I criticize the action of the Government, supported by its members in the Council, in imposing what is known as the winnings tax on racing bets. When the Bill was before the Council I said that although I was prepared to assist the Government I was not prepared to support it in its attempt to fleece the sporting public to the extent suggested. The amount collected by the State Treasury for seven months under this legislation amounted to £232,277, and in addition £81,846 was paid to the various racing clubs, making a total of £314,123. I ask members to read the Attorney-General's speech and ascertain what

the Government expects to get from this tax during the present financial year. If ever a tax could be called obnoxious it is this tax. I say to the Government, which is supposed to be an anti-gambling Government, "If you justify this kind of thing, a lottery is justified in South Australia." Those members who supported this legislation, but are opposed to a lottery, should reflect whether their action is consistent. It is a sectional tax. Some members say they are anti-gamblers and do not believe in lotteries or guessing the number of peas in a bottle, and yet they were prepared to support this legislation.

The Hon. R. R. Wilson—There do not seem to be many complaints from those who patronize racing.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—That is not the point. It is a question of principle. When this legislation was being discussed in Parliament no-one said that it was sinful or not to support it, but when a Bill dealing with coursing was being considered one noticed many strange faces in the gallery. Much depends on who introduces a Bill. It is all right for the Government to present a Bill which will result in its receiving £700,000 a year from the winnings tax, but when it comes to the other question I raised it is an entirely different matter. I am surprised that the Government is prepared to take this so-called tainted money, grabbing all it can get in an effort to balance the Budget.

I congratulate Mr. Rudall on what he has done as Minister of Education. A few years ago when it was suggested that £1,500,000 should be allocated to education some members, who are not here now, strongly objected to such a large amount being provided, but the sum now necessary for the purpose has reached £3,690,000. During the last 12 months the Public Works Standing Committee has recommended the erection or considered the erection of 18 schools, but it has been impossible for the Education Department to keep pace with the growing number of children. I sympathize with the Minister and his department in the task confronting them. I hope the Minister will not agree to preference being given to schools out of their order of urgency. The Government would be well advised to give priority to those recommended by the committee some months ago as being urgent. I do not know where the Minister expects to get his teaching staff, because many of the schools recommended will cater for large numbers of children. I do not know whether it is possible to obtain teachers from overseas.

The Hon. R. J. Rudall—We are trying constantly to get them.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—The Government owes a debt to private schools. It would be faced with much more expense if the State were called upon to pay for the education of all children. These private schools have spent considerable sums on school buildings and have to meet their own teaching staff expenses. I compliment those who have done so much for the education of the younger generation.

I should like some information from the Attorney-General regarding the powers of the Metropolitan Milk Board. I believe it is stronger than any trades organization I know. For very good reasons a man may want to change his milk vendor, but is not permitted to do so, and in effect the vendor says, "If you don't have me you will have no-one." I want to know whether they have any power to do that. If I want a certain milkman to call at my place, why should I be told I cannot have him? About three years ago Parliament established a superannuation fund for members which contained certain provisions which I considered unreasonable. A person must pay into the fund for six years before he is entitled to claim on it and therefore no member of this sitting Parliament can make any claim on the fund until the next Parliament is half way through its term. If I resign tomorrow, before becoming eligible for superannuation benefits, I must pay 3½ years' contributions. That was done by one member but he died shortly afterwards. Annual contributions are £59 a year and, although the fund has operated for only 2½ years, it has a credit of £25,000; expenditure last year was £918. Our fund should be operated on similar lines to the public service fund and it is time the Government reviewed the position. I hope members will consider the suggestions I have made, which I believe to be in the best interests of the State. I support the Bill.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY (Central No. 2)—This Bill is a statement of what the Government has done with money previously voted by Parliament and what it proposes to do with the money to be appropriated. The Bill is a glance at the past and a look into the future. In considering the future I am reminded of a story I heard whilst abroad. A man went to the Commons and listened to a debate on the economic situation for about an hour and then walked out. He was seen by a policeman climbing on to the ramparts overlooking the Thames with what the policeman thought to be some

malign purpose. The policeman grasped him and said, "Don't do it. Things might not be as bad as they appear. Come away and let us talk." The man replied, "Talk about what?" "The future," answered the policeman. Five minutes later they both climbed on to the ramps. I do not suggest that the situation is quite that bad, but I am concerned not only with the economic situation but with the situation generally. In this morning's press we read of the crisis facing the British Government, but how does it all arise? I have great faith in this country and have always believed that we should be able to live more cheaply than people in any other country. I was amazed when I read of the prices catalogued in press recently not for motor cars and luxuries, but for the simple commodities of life. It is time somebody did something about it, and all sides of the community should get together and settle this matter, which is of great importance.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—Isn't it the responsibility of the Government?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—Yes, and it is the responsibility of everyone, whether he is a farm or factory worker. Anyone who can make a contribution should do so. It may be a good thing for the Government to set up a committee presided over by a learned judge with representatives from all sections of the community to consider the matter. Years ago I thought I knew something about economics but there has been a complete change and the man who thought he knew something about them 20 years ago is living in the past and does not know what modern economics mean. The committee could not worsen our position and it would be a gesture that the Government is concerned with the trend of affairs.

The Hon. Sir Wallace Sandford—Why appoint a committee?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—It is always good to get an exchange of thought upon questions and to get down to fundamentals to see whether our problems can be solved. Years ago I risked my political career in championing the cause of arbitration in this State. I have always been a great supporter of arbitration but if asked my opinion of arbitration as we know it today I should have to say it was not a good thing. Some alteration to the Arbitration Act might be considered. I will never believe that the crisis we are facing, in common with other countries, is beyond the wit of man to resolve. We have experienced two wars which have cost the world and our empire millions of pounds and tens of thousands of lives and

the repercussions are being felt today, but we can do nothing about it. We are living under a social system and in a community which is man-created and we must try to unscramble this frightful omelette which is a difficult business. If we do not make a start we will never get to the end of it. Costs have doubled in the last four years. The dead weight debt to the ordinary taxpayer has increased by over £6,000,000 in the last couple of years. It is no use increasing wages because the worker knows that if he gets a rise tomorrow he will be as badly, if not worse off at the end of the week. Those this situation is hitting hard are the salaried and fixed wage men and the small or big man who has put his money into property and is dependent on rents. They are defenceless and can do nothing except complain. The manufacturer and business man can pass increases on but the fixed salaried man cannot. In many cases increases are fixed on the fluctuations in the basic wage and the price of commodities but not all people are affected. Quite a number do not come under that category—old age pensioners and superannuation receivers—but they have to face up to increased prices of commodities. This is the thirteenth Budget of our Premier and I congratulate him upon a fine record. I am sure that if he saw virtue in the suggestion to call a conference of those concerned to deal with this question he would do so. Somebody must make a move somewhere and the sooner it is done the quicker we will overcome our problems.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—We had greater problems during the war.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—I do not know that we had. I believe that the post-war inflationary problem is bigger as we cannot see daylight.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—Didn't the Menzies Government say it had a solution of this inflationary spiral?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—I refute that. The Prime Minister, in his election speeches, said he thought that value could be put back into the pound. I do not think he would have been foolish enough to say that he or his Government would put value back into the pound; that is beyond the power of any Government. The power of doing it lies with the people themselves. Everything depends upon effort. The Leader of the Opposition said he hoped that members who had been abroad would give us the benefit of their experience. I was a keen observer when I was away, reading and seeing a lot. I saw chimney

stacks on the continent smoking at 5 a.m., and a little later in England, with men working to the full limit of their productive capacity. The full production of goods from those factories is going on to the world's markets, which means that somebody will have to sit up and take notice, and Australia is one of the countries which must do so. European countries will be pushing their products on to the market so rapidly that we in Australia will have to get quickly to work in order to be in the running. It will not be a question of working 30, 40, or 44 hours a week; everybody will have to get on the waggon and do something.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—Why not say that to some of the employers?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—Some employers are fully awake to the position. I do not blame the workers entirely, as in many instances employers are just as much to blame. The more an employee receives the more he pays in taxation, and that is slowing up production. It is useless to expect men to work harder and receive less for their efforts. The problem confronts both employers and employees and it can only be solved by both sections getting together.

The Hon. F. T. Perry—Employers are only a small section of the community.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—Exactly, but they are a powerful section. However, they have an important duty in trying to compose their differences. What happens to industry when men go out on strike? They are immediately gobbled up by another industry. If employers were loyal to one another that would not happen.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—The employees cannot always be wrong.

The Hon. F. T. Perry—What about the wine industry strike?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—It is an illegal strike. All these things are doing terrific damage to the economy of this State. Man created the present position and only man can alter it, and it should not be beyond his capacity to do that. Another question is the rapidly rising burden of debt on the general taxpayers. I do not think that they realize how much the burden is growing. Loan undertakings return to the country 31 per cent of the money invested, which means that 69 per cent has to be carried by taxpayers as dead weight.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—It must be handed down to posterity.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—It will not be paid in our lifetime. Mr. Condon raised the question of water rating, which is not new. It is true that the profit on our metropolitan water system has gradually diminished and I agree that it will not be long before the department will show a loss on working expenses. Mr. Condon did not say anything about our railways.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—But the railways pay; it is the burden of interest charges that causes deficits.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—The sum of £32,000,000 is invested in the railways and the more freight and passengers carried the more the railways lose.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—What is the value of the undertaking and what are the interest payments each year?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—Interest payments are being met by the Treasury. I think we wiped off £3,000,000 this year to make the railways case look a little better. It is time that Parliament faced up to the position and asked country men, who have been enjoying great prosperity, to meet their ordinary commitments on the railways. I recall asking a traffic manager of the Railways Department which lines paid. He said "Only one," and that was the Broken Hill-Port Pirie line carrying valuable ore.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—Don't all countries look upon railways as developmental projects?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—Until the railways became nationalized in England they returned between 3 and 4 per cent to shareholders. They had to be efficient because of competition. Although nationalization might be good in theory it does not work, and never will. I travelled thousands of miles over the British railways last year and found that the tracks laid down by private enterprise were as good as ever, but what has happened to the rolling stock and the conditions of travel? The man who travels by rail knows that there is a tremendous difference since the lines were nationalized. What private enterprise would take over our railways with their liabilities?

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—You do not make any allowance for the fact that road transport greatly affects them.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—The railways cannot carry all the freight offering today.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—They cannot shift their tracks.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—If it were not for road hauliers, how would we get all our

goods carried? I do not think the railways should object to the hauliers, but should look on them more as a co-operative enterprise serving a most useful purpose.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—They do not have any interest burden to meet.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—The sooner we realize that the common haulier is a great help and an excellent ancillary to our transport system the better.

The Hon. R. R. Wilson—For a certain type of freight,

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—I am more convinced than ever, after having been abroad, that all traffic should be under one administration, and that a Traffic Commission should be appointed. The railways are having a tough time. They are held up for staff and the prices of their requirements have increased considerably. Despite the increase in the price of coal its quality has decreased. They are getting it all ways. I think every member has sympathy for them, but it is more than sympathy we want to balance the Budget. While in England and Scotland I made inquiries as to the availability of teachers and found that they also were short of staff. I was told that they could not possibly send any teachers out here, because if they wanted to carry out their scheme up to 1955 they would want thousands more. I am certain we will not get any from that source. I know that since he has been in office Mr. Rudall has done his best as regards accommodation for scholars. He must be at his wit's end as regards staffing, and that position will prevail for years to come. There should be concerted action by the people to get down to the question of economics in the interests of the State, in which we all have tremendous faith. The Auditor-General's annual report is a most useful document to be considered in conjunction with the Appropriation Bill. I can remember the time when in his annual report the Auditor-General made very drastic comments concerning Government departments. He is an independent officer and only Parliament can dismiss him. He is one of the few in that happy position. I should like to see his comments on the activities of some Government departments. The responsibilities of these departments are becoming so heavy that Parliament should set up a public accounts committee.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—What about the Auditor-General?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—Such a committee would be a most useful body. I understand

that other State Parliaments have one and the House of Commons thinks a great deal of its accounts committee.

The Hon. Sir Wallace Sandford—Would it save the State any money?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—It might. I have heard the honourable member say how pleased he was with the activities of the Public Works Standing Committee in saving Government money. This committee would serve a similar purpose.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—Why have two committees doing the same job?

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—The Public Works Standing Committee does not perform the same function. I hope all Governments in Australia will attempt to introduce the greatest economies possible. It is to be remembered that in a time of buoyancy it is not the function of Governments to spend money. That is usually left to private enterprise. It is when times are hard that Governments should come in and undertake public works. In Australia we are trying to do too much in too short a time. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Midland)—Before speaking on the details of the measure I take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Bevan on his election to the Chamber. As one of the newer members myself, I can realize just how he feels coming into the Council half-way through the session. I am sure he will feel the same as I felt and after he has been here a while I am sure he will receive help and co-operation from all members and will enjoy his experience here.

As regards the Budget, it seems there are one or two economic principles which will always remain. The experience of the years has not altered them, notwithstanding all the controls and all the means we have adopted to get over them. The first of these principles is the law of supply and demand. It appears that no matter how much we might try to control by subsidies, bounties, restrictions and other types of legislation, ultimately the price one can get for an article, if the seller, or the price one must pay for an article, if the buyer, is determined by supply and demand. It happens at present that there is a tremendous demand for goods but a limited supply. If we are to amend the situation it will not be by setting up committees and commissions to make inquiries. We know the facts already. The change will be brought about only by our trying to lessen

the demand on the one hand and increasing supplies on the other. We can lessen the demand by setting a personal example to others by not spending money on luxuries, and limiting our requirements of essential goods to a reasonable minimum. Those in receipt of excessive incomes and having money to spare would be well advised to put it away in the form of Commonwealth loans or some other security, and not to spend it foolishly on purchasing commodities they could easily do without for the time being. It behoves everyone to work a little harder. In this matter we can set a very good example by seeing that we keep ourselves occupied the whole of our time.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—How do you mean work a little harder?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—I can demonstrate that by giving an example. When I joined this Chamber three years ago I made a mental note that if I had the opportunity to attend a picture or play I fancied I would take an evening off, but since I have been a member I have not attended one of these entertainments. I have always found ample occupation associated with my own work and am doing more now than when I became a member. If that policy generally could be applied it would be a good thing. We should encourage people to work overtime and undertake more than one occupation if they desire. So long as we adopt the basis of trying to level everyone down to one standard instead of giving the right incentive to people to progress, so long will we be faced with the difficulties associated with an excess demand and a shortage of supplies.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—This condition could not apply in industry because the labour position is governed by the supply of raw materials.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—That argument is like the argument about which came first—the hen or the egg. I think that if we concentrate on production other difficulties will iron themselves out. The other principle I have in mind is that the governmental authority which has to spend the moneys should be the authority which collects those moneys. That aspect of our State finances disturbs me. I think it is wrong that most of our taxation should be collected by the Commonwealth Government and that the State should be the spending authority for that money. I feel that we lost part of a basic principle of democracy when our right to raise taxation

passed over to the Commonwealth sphere. It removes a sense of responsibility which I think we should have.

The Hon. R. J. Rudall—It was not passed over. They took it.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—I am sorry if I used that term. If there are any means whereby we can get it back again we should adopt them. The force of that argument is brought home to us when we realize that the Commonwealth grant to South Australia last year increased by £2,370,000. Just what will happen to the Commonwealth grant when prices decline and Commonwealth revenue is not so buoyant I do not know. It appears that as the Commonwealth's revenue declines so the State will find it difficult to get the necessary grant to balance its Budget. I can foresee difficulties in the future concerning our collections from taxation. In 1946 we collected £553,000 from succession duties and that increased to £996,000 in 1951. When we realize the increased value of estates we can appreciate where that amount comes from. If prices recede our revenue from that source will be affected. It is a question of basic principles and until we get back to those principles we will be faced with the difficulty of increasing costs and decreasing returns. I support the second reading.

The Hon. Sir WALLACE SANDFORD secured the adjournment of the debate.

EXCHANGE OF LAND: TOWN OF ALFORD.

Consideration of the following resolution transmitted from the House of Assembly:—

That it is desirable for the Minister of Education to make available and transfer the fee simple of allotments 11, 12, 13, 14, 35, and 36, town of Alford, containing $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres to Mr. A. B. Johns and for him on his part to make available and transfer to the Minister of Education the fee simple of allotments 9, 10, 15, 16, town of Alford, containing one (1) acre as shown on plan laid before Parliament on September 18, 1951.

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL (Midland—Attorney-General).—This exchange of land has been fully investigated by the Land Board which states that, from the point of view of the actual value on an open market divorced from considerations related to the Education Department's requirements, there is little to choose between the groups, the latter being slightly more valuable. Having regard to the department's requirements, the exchange is considerably to the department's advantage. The children are actually using allotments 9,

10, 15, and 16 for a playground. The headmaster stated when interviewed that it suits school purposes admirably in that the soil is free from stone and the situation permits of easy supervision of the children by him from the school premises. Allotments 11, 12, 13, 14, 35 and 36 do not offer these advantages. The portion of Second Street between the school and allotments 9 and 16 is unfenced and not used by vehicular traffic; consequently the children also play over this area. It may be possible to secure the closing of this portion of the street and thus effect a compact area for school purposes. The board values the land to be given in exchange at £18 and that to be obtained at £20. I move that the resolution be agreed to.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON (Northern)—Alford is situated between Kadina and Port Broughton. In many country towns land which was surveyed for blocks has been gradually transferred for other purposes. There is not much to be said regarding the matter and I hope the exchange will meet with the concurrence of the Council.

Resolution agreed to.

EXCHANGE OF LAND: TOWN OF MANNAHILL.

Consideration of the following resolution transmitted from the House of Assembly:—

That it is desirable for the Crown to transfer the fee simple of allotments 44 and 45, town of Mannahill, containing half an acre to Mrs. C. Davis and for her on her part to transfer to the Crown the fee simple of allotments 13 and 14, town of Mannahill, containing half an acre as shown on plan laid before Parliament on August 21, 1951.

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL—The school building on school reserve allotments 44 and 45 was destroyed by fire in 1949. In view of the exposed position of these allotments it is considered advisable to acquire allotments 13 and 14, a more sheltered locality, abutting the children's playground which in turn abuts the police station. This is advantageous in that during school holidays the property will be under the easy observation of the police officer. The question of exchange was fully investigated by the Land Board and a report submitted states that it is considered that it is advantageous to the Government. The board values the land to be given in exchange at £8 and that to be obtained at £12. Mrs. Davis has signified her agreement to the proposed exchange. I move that the resolution be agreed to.

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON (Northern)—This seeks to ratify an agreement entered into between the Education Department and Mrs. C. Davis for the transfer of land. I understand that a school has already been built on the land to be acquired, and I support the resolution.

Resolution agreed to.

EXCHANGE OF LAND: HUNDRED OF KENNION.

Consideration of the following resolution transmitted from the House of Assembly:—

That it is desirable for the Woods and Forests Department to make available and transfer to Mr. K. J. Stuckey the fee simple of sections 212 and 215, hundred of Kennion, portion of forest reserve containing 812½ acres and for him on his part to surrender to the Crown perpetual lease 4133 and part perpetual lease 12497, sections 25, 39, and 59, hundred of Kennion, containing 1,853 acres, as shown on plan laid before Parliament on June 27, 1951.

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL—The proposal provides for the Woods and Forests Department to make available and transfer to Mr. K. J. Stuckey the fee simple of section 212 and 215, portion of forest reserve containing 812½ acres which comprises mostly heath flat and is suitable for pasture development, but is of doubtful value for forest planting, and for him on his part to surrender to the Crown perpetual lease 4133 and part perpetual lease 12497, sections 25, 39, and 59, containing 1,853 acres comprising soil types suitable for the production of pine timbers. The question of exchange was fully investigated by the Land Board, which recommends the exchange. The board values the land to be given in exchange at £1 10s. an acre and the land to be obtained at 10s. an acre. Mr. Stuckey has agreed to the exchange and as he is to receive the fee simple of 812½ acres, whereas he is to surrender his interest only in the 1,853 acres, he has agreed to pay to the Crown £535 2s. 3d. as equality of exchange. I move that the resolution be agreed to.

The Hon. N. L. JUDE (Southern)—This is part of the Government's afforestation policy and as Mr. Stuckey is agreeable to the transfer and has paid a considerable sum to obtain freehold, I hope members will support the resolution.

Resolution agreed to.

EXCHANGE OF LAND: HUNDRED OF HALL.

Consideration of the following resolution transmitted from the House of Assembly:—

That it is desirable for the purpose of re-locating a section of the Port Wakefield-Saddleworth main road that the Crown transfer the fee simple of section 636, hundred of Hall (formerly school reserve Crown lands and closed road) containing $9\frac{1}{2}$ acres to Mr. W. P. McPharlin, and for him on his part to transfer to the Crown, the fee simple of portion of section 364, hundred of Hall, containing approximately $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres as shown on plan laid before Parliament on October 31, 1950.

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL—The proposal is for the purpose of re-locating a section of the Port Wakefield-Saddleworth main road and it is proposed that the Crown transfer the fee simple of section 636 containing $9\frac{1}{2}$ acres (formerly school reserve, Crown lands and closed road) to Mr. W. P. McPharlin and for him on his part to transfer to the Crown the fee simple of portion of section 364 containing approximately $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres. A report from the Surveyor-General indicates that there is no objection to the proposal. The question of exchange was fully investigated by the Land Board and a report submitted states that it is considered that Mr. McPharlin should pay the sum of £10 in cash to equalize such exchange. The board values the land to be given in exchange at £4 an acre and the land to be obtained from section 364 at £7 5s. an acre. Mr. McPharlin has signified his agreement to the proposed exchange and has agreed to pay the sum of £10. The district council of Balaklava has stated it is agreeable to the proposal. I move that the resolution be agreed to.

The Hon. A. J. MELROSE (Midland)—This exchange of land is obviously the result of an agreement between a local landowner and the Government in the public interest, and their decision requires the sanction of Parliament. It is perfectly obvious that we should not withhold our support of the resolution.

Resolution agreed to.

BUILDING MATERIALS ACT
AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 6. Page 1094.)

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Central No. 1—Leader of the Opposition)—It would be better to extend this legislation for a longer period than 12 months. It will be some time before control of building materials will be relaxed, because the position is no better today than

years ago. In the present circumstances this legislation is warranted. There are one or two proposed amendments which I shall refer to when in Committee. I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—"Control of use of essential building materials."

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—I move to insert the following new paragraph:—

(aa) by inserting after the word "squares" in subparagraph (a) of paragraph 1 of subsection (2) the words "if built within thirty miles from the General Post Office at Adelaide, and elsewhere fourteen squares."

The amendment will mean that a house up to 1,400 sq. ft. can be built without a permit in areas which are 30 miles or more from the Adelaide G.P.O. Perhaps all members do not appreciate the policy which lies behind the Act. We do not say that if certain conditions are complied with the Building Materials Office can issue a permit, but that persons shall not build a house under certain circumstances. The discretion as to who gets a permit and who does not lies entirely in the hands of the Building Materials Office. If it sees fit it can grant a permit to a single man, without dependants, for a house of 2,000 sq. ft., a very wide discretion. The Building Materials Office has exercised this discretion well in country districts and has been reasonable in most instances. Because of that there should not be a discretion, but a right, for people living in the country to build up to 1,400 sq. ft. without a permit. I have three classes of people in mind who I do not think would get a permit to build a house of 1,400 sq. ft. in country areas at present. The first are young married couples, without children, who desire to build a homestead on a farm or station property. At present they are told that 1,250 sq. ft. is the maximum that can be built unless they can produce evidence that an extra room is required for a maid or somebody else. A man who builds a house on a farm does so with the idea of its lasting him a lifetime, whereas a man in the metropolitan area can dispose of his house and later purchase another elsewhere.

The second class is the farmer who has lived on a farm all his life and wants to retire and live in a town. I have specific cases of farmers in the Maitland district who would normally retire to the township and build. Price is no bar in many instances, but as

they cannot get a permit they come to Adelaide and buy a larger house for £7,000 to £9,000, taking them away from the country and aggravating the housing position in the city. Frequently it becomes necessary, as people grow old, to have a trained nurse. They also desire to allow members of their family to stay at their house occasionally. The third group includes the young married man, without children. The building authorities will not allow him to erect a house of more than 1,250 sq. ft. Two or three years ago one young couple erected a house of this size, but now have three children and the home is inadequate. They have insufficient capital to purchase another and should be allowed to increase the size of the house to 1,400 sq. ft. This additional area would not mean a duplication of all parts of the house or any additional bathroom, kitchen, laundry or electrical fittings, but a little more flooring, ceiling and roofing would be required.

The Act provides that the external measurements of the foundations must be taken in considering the area of a house. A house of 14in. outside walls and 6in. divisional walls would have a considerably less area than is required as a living area. In other States houses of the area mentioned can be built. In Victoria the limit is 14 squares, plus 200 sq. ft. for a garage; in Western Australia, 15 squares; in Tasmania no control; in New South Wales the area was 12½ squares for brick and 12 squares for timber, but I understand that control has been removed; in Queensland the limit is 12½ squares above the Tropic of Capricorn and below that 15 squares. We should not lag behind other States in this direction. In country areas, once a house is built and the contractor leaves the job it is particularly difficult to get him to return with his men and materials to make additions. My amendment will not mean any draw off of labour from the metropolitan area. If the area of a non-permit house is increased to 1,400 sq. ft. a man who builds without a permit has no priority in securing controlled materials, but would have to use expensive and imported materials. My amendment will not affect the supply of controlled materials for which a priority order is required from the Building Materials Office. The proposed 30 mile limit is to preclude any "speculative" building in the metropolitan area.

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL (Attorney-General)—The honourable member's statement about the use of imported materials is incorrect. If a person builds a non-permit house he can

get essential materials in the same way as anybody else. The Act now provides that a person may, in certain circumstances, build a house without a permit, but the total area of a non-permit house is not to exceed 12½ squares. The amendment provides that, as regards a house built 30 miles or more from the General Post Office at Adelaide, the maximum area for non-permit houses will be 14 squares, leaving the present maximum of 12½ to apply within 30 miles of the metropolitan area. It is difficult to see why a distinction should be made between these two classes of housing, particularly as regards urban housing. There would seem to be no reason why a person building a non-permit house at, say, Mount Gambier should be permitted a greater use of building materials and labour than a house builder in the suburbs of Adelaide, or in a town within 30 miles of Adelaide. There is a shortage not only of materials but of labour, but from some remarks one would be led to believe that the shortage applied only to materials. When a house larger than 12½ squares is built not only are extra materials used, but also labour which could be employed elsewhere. At the beginning of his speech Mr. Rowe acknowledged that the Building Materials Office was doing a most excellent job, and where a case could be submitted for an extension beyond 12½ squares permission was granted. Therefore, a person is not necessarily limited to that area.

The Hon. C. D. Rowe—In none of the three cases I mentioned would 14 squares be granted.

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL—Consider one of the cases mentioned of a newly married couple. They might have three children in three years and another three children in the next three years. We might as well provide for a man to build a house big enough for his wife and for as many children as members might like to imagine. I ask members not to agree to the amendment. Permits have been granted liberally, and in actual practice it can almost be said that because of the shortage of materials and labour they have been granted too liberally.

The Hon. L. H. Densley—We are talking about non-permit homes.

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL—Under the amendment it is asked that a permit should not be necessary so long as a man lives more than 30 miles from the G.P.O. Directly we increased the area of non-permit houses many people would take advantage of the position and build a home of 14 squares instead of 12½. Every

time the size of the non-permit house is increased the number of homes which could be built in a year would be decreased. I suppose that members have seen the type of house of 12½ squares being built by the Housing Trust and the State Bank. It cannot be said that they are inadequate for the average person. A person can get a permit for a larger house if his circumstances justify it. I ask members to oppose the amendment.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Leader of the Opposition)—I think Mr. Rowe weakened his case when he said that the Building Materials Office had always been fair and reasonable in dealing with applications for houses of more than 12½ squares. Why differentiate between city and country people? I do not see why special consideration should be given to those living in the country. Members opposite did not adopt a similar attitude when the question of an extension of the Industrial Code was being considered. I oppose the amendment.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY—I support the amendment. Neither the Minister nor Mr. Condon adequately answered Mr. Rowe's contentions. Outside a limit of 30 miles from the G.P.O., there is a definite shortage of accommodation. The chief requests for these homes are from people who are going out on new areas and have one or two employees and may have to employ additional labour during certain times of the year and have to provide them with accommodation. Unless this accommodation can be provided the landowner will be unable to get labour. The Building Materials Office does not adequately provide for this class of housing. We are asking that the building of this type of home should be permitted with materials purchased without a priority. The Attorney-General said that if the additional size were permitted more materials and labour would be required. That contention is completely wrong. Under the Act a man can build a house of the regulation size and later build an outside room. To do so necessitates the erection of an extra wall and additional materials are required. In most instances a contractor from the city is engaged and that is extremely extravagant from the point of view of cost and labour. When a house is built on a farm it is built for life and consequently a large area is required. That in itself should be sufficient to justify this amendment. It is uneconomic to build a house of 12½ squares and then add to it, and it is unwise to limit the area to less than 14 squares in the country.

We could go on indefinitely limiting this and that and never get out of our difficulties. It is only by going forward to meet the position that we will overcome our problems. I support the amendment.

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—Mr. Densley's point merits sound consideration. A farmhouse is built for all time and if the owner moves the person taking over the property has a suitable house. The Attorney-General laboured the point that the amendment would occasion the use of a little extra materials here and there, but the same thing happens when additional rooms have to be built. The man who builds a house does not want to add a room each year as the law will permit. We have not stressed the importance of stone buildings. Mr. Rowe mentioned that the limitation of foundations curtailed the living area. People who live on broad acres need large rooms. The small kitchenette associated with Housing Trust homes in the metropolitan area would be totally inadequate for farms where a large kitchen is a necessity. The amendment is designed to deal with farm properties and will mean the provision of better homes on farms. I support the amendment.

The Hon. A. J. MELROSE—The objection to the 30 mile radius is not soundly founded because Mr. Rowe has not nailed his flag to that distance. He was merely emphasizing that there is a real difference between the requirements of metropolitan and country dwellers. Mr. Jude mentioned the obvious differences in kitchen space but there are wider essential differences. No one expects a visitor to a metropolitan home to stay for any time but in the country visitors have to be accommodated. Not every country dweller lives within 30 miles from the nearest centre; quite often they are 130 miles away. The time is not unripe for a bold experiment in housing. I do not know the policy of the Housing Trust concerning the country, but my impression is that houses are only being built where there is a waiting demand, usually in highly industrialized places which are really extensions of the principle of the metropolitan area. Unless we do something courageous we are not going to overcome our big problem of lack of food production. Economists, specialists and theorists have been prophesying that the world will eventually die of starvation. Every day the prices of fruit, vegetables and meat are increasing. One of the reasons for the lack of foodstuffs is the difficulties under which the rural population lives. If the Housing Trust erected houses in rural areas people would soon

accept them and go into rural occupations and assist in food production.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I oppose the amendment, which is too all-embracing; it will only be tinkering with the position. The extra space would mean only one more room. There would be more merit in the amendment if all controls were removed from country areas and materials to be used specified. Although the number of artisans in the building industry had increased by 3,417 since 1946 to January 11 last, the total is only 8,846, including 3,102 carpenters, 1,308 bricklayers, 609 plumbers, 732 painters, 1,669 builders' labourers and other labour 1,140. That is the sum total of the pool of building labour in the State, including all country areas. We have few good stonemasons in Australia today as young men in the depression years could not learn the trade. Some people would build outside a 30-mile radius on a "speculative" basis and thus create a bigger demand on the labour pool. I do not object to people building houses in the country and if the amendment is to provide the protection that is desired it should specify materials, such as local stone, lime concrete, lime mortar and imported flooring. I have the greatest respect for the Building Materials Office, but if we are to get anywhere in this matter we should establish a building advisory committee, as suggested by me. It has been said that the Building Materials Office does not take into consideration the thickness of stone walls, but I disagree.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE—The whole of our building restrictions and the matters contained in the Bill have arisen primarily from considerations of the building operations of the Housing Trust in the metropolitan area. We began by establishing the trust, which started the Government on its housing of the people, and when building materials became short during the war it was found necessary to impose certain controls. They have come before Parliament year after year from the Government department mainly concerned with building in the metropolitan area and have extended to certain large country towns, but nobody, as far as I know, considered the question of the building of houses on farms until Mr. Rowe brought it before us. Members should be indebted to him for having done so. I support his amendment. One of his strong points is that if a man builds a house on a property where he has to work and

live he cannot sell it and build another. In one breath the Minister said that a permit would probably be given where it was necessary to build a house of 14 squares, therefore, there was no need to have the provision. On the other hand he says that if we allow people in the country to build houses of 14 squares the number built will be automatically reduced. I think he is assuming that people who do not want 14 squares will always build up to that area because we give them the right to do so without a permit. The financial position and the ability to get a house built will have some control over it. The Government has said that we must have less centralization in the metropolitan area and with that I entirely agree. We are proposing to do something constructive in encouraging people to live in the country and not retire to the metropolitan area. Mr. Rowe has brought forward a constructive and useful suggestion and I support the amendment.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—I regret if I gave a wrong impression regarding the materials a man building a house without a permit can use. I thought I stated he would have to use imported materials or materials not controlled. While that may not be a strict statement of the law, in effect it is correct. As I understand the position, a man goes to the Building Materials Office and gets a priority for certain building materials. That priority is handed to the merchant and under section 8 no merchant can make any controlled material available to anyone else so long as he holds a priority order for that type of material. I think my statement in essence was correct—that a person without a permit would have to use imported or non-controlled materials. He could get controlled materials only when the merchant had satisfied all priority orders. If such orders were satisfied, there would be no objection to merchants disposing of surplus supplies to people without a permit. The Minister said that I had cut the ground from under my feet in saying that the administration of the Act by the Building Materials Office had been reasonable. I do not think the Minister's contention can be supported, because after saying that I went on to give three specific instances where, even under the present administration, no permit would be granted. The further point was raised that the amendment would make a distinction between city and country people. That contention has been answered to a degree by other speakers supporting the amendment. People in the country have to do without many amenities which are

available to those in the city. For instance, at Maitland where I live we have not a Government water supply, pay two or three times as much for electricity as those in the city, and also higher costs for telephone services. Greengroceries are delivered from Adelaide only once a week and therefore a home needs a larger storage area than one in the city. If that applies to a person living in a country township, the position is even more desperate for people living on farms some distance from the town. Because of such disadvantages suffered by country dwellers, they are entitled to some consideration in the matter now before us. It is absolutely necessary for any country home to have a verandah either on the northern side or on the side subject to the most severe weather. In arriving at the area of a home the Building Materials Office takes into account half the area of the verandah. That supports my argument that a larger area should be permitted for homes in the country. It has been suggested that to permit an increase to 14 squares would lead to a certain amount of speculative building. Under the Landlord and Tenant legislation a person can occupy only one house. Even if it were speculative building, it would result in more homes being provided. Because of increasing costs, I do not think many people would be interested in speculative building.

The Committee divided on the Hon. C. D. Rowe's amendment—

Ayes (7).—The Hons. C. R. Cudmore, L. H. Densley, N. L. Jude, A. J. Melrose, F. T. Perry, C. D. Rowe (teller), and Sir Wallace Sandford.

Noes (10).—The Hons. K. E. J. Bardolph, S. C. Bevan, J. L. S. Bice, F. J. Condon, J. L. Cowan, E. H. Edmonds, A. A. Hoare, W. W. Robinson, R. J. Rudall (teller), and R. R. Wilson.

Majority of 3 for the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE—I move to delete paragraph (d) which proposes at the end of subdivision (i.) of subparagraph (c) of paragraph I. of subsection (2) to add— and the said person has not, since the twenty-fourth day of January, 1946, constructed or caused to be constructed a dwellinghouse upon land in which he had a registered interest or beneficial interest at the time of the construction of the dwellinghouse.

The effect is that if a person had built a house since 1946 he could not build another. The idea is to prevent him from building a

home and selling it at a profit and then erecting another. Under this paragraph a person can build only one house. No doubt there have been cases where builders have accumulated material, built houses without permits on their own land and sold them. This paragraph, which will prevent their building other houses, is further control, and instead of helping will hinder the housing position. I see no point in it. We have sufficient control already and this is a prohibition of house building.

The Hon. N. L. Jude—It was not in the original Bill.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE—No, not as introduced in another place. We have restricted building materials so that they cannot be used for picture theatres or other buildings not dwellings, but this paragraph will not assist house building, which we desire. What is wrong with a person building a house and selling it for a profit? The more houses built the more people will be accommodated.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I oppose the amendment. The paragraph is designed to prevent people from making a racket of home building. Mr. Cudmore suggests it restricts the building of homes. Technically that may be right, but experience has shown that houses have been built, and because of the demand for homes, high purchase prices have been demanded. People are prepared to pay outrageous prices for the vacant possession of a house.

The Hon. N. L. Jude—They at least get a home.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—My friend has a weird way of salving his conscience. People build under the Act ostensibly for their own use, may reside in the house for a month, then resell at an enhanced price. If the paragraph is deleted it will permit people to exploit the present position. I do not say that applies to everybody. A person may build a home and sell it because he is transferred to another State; he returns and then has to build another home. With a continuity of work people have more money at their disposal and some should be protected from themselves. Most people only buy or build a home once and because of the urgent necessity of obtaining a home sometimes pay a high price. I know of a case where a person paid £3,700 for an incompleting house, on which a "stop" notice was served. It has been going to rack and ruin for the last nine months. His necessity for obtaining a home for his family and a widowed

mother was so great that he paid this price. The inclusion of this paragraph will stop that type of racket. The Bill, as it stands, should be accepted by members because it prevents exploitation arising from the present housing emergency.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY—Members seem to forget that the people they are castigating built all the houses before the establishment of the Housing Trust. What sin is it for a man to build a house and, if it is admired by somebody else, to sell it for a profit? Why should we not permit private enterprise? If the paragraph is passed no-one will be able to build a home for sale at all. I support the amendment.

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL—Members should be perfectly aware of what this proposal means. The relevant part of section 4 (2) of the Building Materials Act reads:—

It shall not be a contravention of this section if any essential building material is used for any of the following purposes:—1. The construction of any dwellinghouse where—the dwellinghouse is constructed at the cost of a person upon land in which that person has a beneficial interest and the dwellinghouse is constructed for occupation by that person as a permanent and principal place of residence.

This paragraph is designed to stop a person building a house ostensibly for his own use and occupation and because of the shortage selling it at a profit. He will not be able to build another house on the grounds he is going to

occupy it himself. At present he does not come within the provisions of the Act, and he can build a second house.

The Hon. E. Anthony—He is still building houses.

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL—Yes, and making a considerable profit. In these circumstances he should not be able to make a profit. He is actually taking advantage of the words in the Act “for occupation by that person as a permanent and principal place of residence.” Instead of it being his permanent place of residence, in practice it is purely a temporary residence and he has built it merely to make a profit.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—It becomes a business.

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL—Exactly.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—Don't you want businesses?

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL—In ordinary circumstances that is all right, but surely it is obvious that a man is taking advantage of the words in this section. Another house will be built and there are plenty of people wanting to build, but it will be built by someone who would not have to pay the cost at which he is selling his permanent residence.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.30 p.m. the Council adjourned until Thursday, November 8, at 2 p.m.