

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, July 29, 1953.

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

QUESTION.**SITTINGS OF THE COUNCIL.**

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY—What is the Government's intention with regard to the future sittings of the Council?

The Hon. A. L. McEWIN—It seems that the Address in Reply debate will conclude during this afternoon, in which case it is hoped to be able to present the Address to His Excellency today. As the Address in Reply debate in another place is continuing it is proposed that the Council, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday, August 18.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply.

(Continued from July 28. Page 164.)

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON (Northern)—I join with other speakers in expression of loyalty to and admiration for Her Most Gracious Majesty, the Queen. We trust she will be spared for many years to rule over us, and I am sure the people of this State are looking forward to her visit, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, early next year. I also convey my welcome to His Excellency Sir Robert and Lady George. We trust their stay will be pleasant and profitable to them as well as to South Australia. The Governor's Speech was a statement of consolidation rather than of expansion. He spoke of the near completion of such public works as the Port Augusta power station and remarked on its potentialities for supplying the State with much-needed power for the expansion of our industries and for people throughout the State. The long haulage of Leigh Creek coal to the metropolitan area will be saved, as the coal will be used to generate power at Port Augusta. The railway trucks now being used to cart the coal to Adelaide will be released for other useful purposes. Like Mr. Wilson, I express my pleasure that the Uley-Wanilla pipeline project has been almost completed. It runs up the eastern coast of Eyre Peninsula and serves Tumby Bay, Cleve, and other towns. Later, it will be taken to Cowell. People in those districts appreciate the Government's efforts to supply them with water.

The residents of Cleve and Cowell have shown their civic-mindedness in planting and maintaining shrubs and trees in their streets. For many years they have watered them from their own tanks, so the new pipeline will be a great relief for them. In addition, farmers and graziers will be able to carry more stock.

The progress made on the sulphuric acid plant at Port Pirie and the mining of pyrites at Nairne is most gratifying. Superphosphate shortages during the last few years have curtailed production, and the low-grade superphosphate we have been getting has been difficult to put through seeding machines. The developments now taking place are in the hands of two of the most efficient firms in the Commonwealth, namely, the Broken Hill Pty. Company Ltd. and Broken Hill Associated Smelters Ltd. We hope that the cost of the product will be reduced and that adequate supplies will be made available for the development of this country. Superphosphate is essential for the development and maintenance of our agricultural areas, but its present price is so high that it greatly adds to the cost of the development of pasture lands; in fact, in some cases it is uneconomical to develop them. South Australians appreciate the way in which the Government is controlling the finances of the State. It has enabled the continuation of important public works and has maintained a high scale of employment. We were all pleased to welcome the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition on their return and I believe their trip abroad will prove of value to them and to the State. I pay a tribute to the manner in which the Chief Secretary has conducted the affairs of State during the Premier's absence. I commend his attitude at the Loan Council meeting when he took the stand that it was inadvisable to clamour for such large loan allocations as was done by the majority of the States. He performed all his duties in the thorough manner we have always expected from him.

Much criticism has been levelled against the wheat industry and as an ex-grower I feel it incumbent upon me to reply on its behalf. I am proud to have been associated with it. People are always keen to grow something: it may be a flower in the front garden or a vegetable in the kitchen garden, but their aim is to produce an article as perfect as possible. The wheatgrower has been brought up in that environment and has developed a character not in accord with the criticism that has been levelled at him. There has been a suggestion

of a go-slow policy—that the primary producer has not been pulling his weight. The over-all production of cereals last year was 66,442,000 bushels grown on 2,850,000 acres with an average rainfall of 15.19in. The previous record was 55,094,000 bushels grown on 3,587,000 acres with a rainfall of 16.11in. With almost an inch less rainfall the production has increased by over 20 per cent on a decreased acreage. That has been brought about by a better system of land husbandry. Through the efforts of the Agricultural Department and others, primary producers have learned to appreciate soil husbandry and are producing more through a proper utilization of the soil. Mr. Condon said he would prefer to get 15 bushels per acre off 2,000,000 acres than 28 bushels per acre off 1,000,000 acres, but if the cost of production is considered the same return would result. By keeping 1,000,000 acres out of production it is possible to build up the soil by sowing a crop of peas or running sheep. It makes it better for future sowings and provides for greater production. Mr. Condon, however, would be quite satisfied to go to the additional expense of working 2,000,000 acres to get the same return. The Scullin Government in 1931 had a similar outlook when it granted a bounty of 3s. an acre as an encouragement to farmers to work greater areas. During the following autumn one farmer who was asked the return per acre from his crop stated that he was not concerned with that so much as with the bounty. In some of the outlying areas, where wheat is no longer grown, farmers put in crops in order to reap the benefit of that bounty.

Mr. Condon referred at length to the milling industry and I believe all members sympathize with that industry if the picture is as black as he painted it. That is not the only industry which is suffering hardship. Last year, according to statistics, there was a return to this State of nearly £1,000,000 from the processing of milk products and about £4,500,000 to the Commonwealth, but that industry has ceased operations.

The Hon. E. Anthony—What has happened to it?

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON—The competition from overseas has put it out of business. It costs too much to produce under our conditions.

The Hon. E. Anthony—Another instance of pricing ourselves out of industry.

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON—We are arriving at the stage when it will be impossible to compete with overseas markets in some industries.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan—Hasn't the local consumption of butter and cheese decreased?

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON—The production of butter has decreased by 10 per cent. Mr. Condon referred to the high return of 33,000,000 bushels for this year and unemployment in one of our important industries—flour milling. In reply to Mr. Anthony, who inquired what the reason was, he said "Lack of export and greed." I first read that in the newspaper, but could not believe that that remark had been made. However, on checking with *Hansard* I found that it was correct, and I am now quoting from his speech:—

It is a one-way traffic by certain interests which always want to send the manufactured article abroad instead of giving some preference to a South Australian industry.

I take it that he was incorrectly reported there as I think he must have meant "wheat" instead of "manufactured article." He continued, "What assistance have I got from country representatives on behalf of the flour milling industry? The largest crop of wheat we had for years has been exported." That is not quite correct because we still have considerable quantities in South Australia and, indeed, some of the previous year's wheat. Mr. Condon continued, "That is detrimental not only to the milling industry, but to the pig, poultry, and dairy industries." Mr. Edmonds then interjected, "Can't millers purchase all the wheat they want?" to which Mr. Condon replied, "No, because it is controlled by the Australian Wheat Board." Mr. Cudmore then interjected, "Do you like those boards?" and Mr. Condon said, "I will not be supporting these boards, but my friend and his colleagues will."

I admit that I am supporting the present Australian Wheat Board. The position is that wheat is made available to the milling industry for export flour at the same price as is obtained for export wheat because it is being milled for profit, but in South Australia the Prices Branch has fixed the price of bran and pollard at £20 7s. 6d. a ton. Canada has fixed the price at £25 a ton so you will see that that is the reason why we are not getting sales of flour overseas. Canada is gaining the markets of the world and cashing in on our control of bran and pollard. Two research stations in Victoria have gone into the question of feeding poultry and they say that oats

are more economical for the production of eggs than wheat. I suggest that people who endeavour to curtail the price of bran to support these industries are not only affecting the milling industry but are not giving any great advantage to the poultry industry or the growers of oats.

Regarding criticism of the Australian Wheat Board may I be permitted to recount a little of its history. The first board was appointed under National Security Regulations in 1939, the year in which World War II. commenced, by the Menzies Government and its personnel included Mr. Harold Darling and Mr. Gatehouse who was the mill owners' representative. In answer to an interjection by Mr. Cudmore, "Don't you appreciate that board?" Mr. Condon said he did and he thought Mr. Harold Darling had perhaps greater knowledge of wheat marketing than anybody in the State and he suggested that it was perhaps a Liberal Government which had disbanded that Wheat Board in favour of another which succeeded it. In fact, in 1942 that board was disbanded by the then Curtin Government and another appointed in its place consisting of Sir Ian McPherson and seven so-called farmers' representatives. Wheat growers believed that they were representatives of the then Government, for one of them had to purchase land in order to qualify himself as a wheatgrower. During the term of that Wheat Board some things were done of which growers were very critical; wheat was made available at concession prices to other industries; the Queensland people had wheat made available at a favourable price while they sold their maize on the world's markets at high prices. I could go on at some length concerning the sale of wheat to New Zealand at 5s. 9d. a bushel which the taxpayers of the Commonwealth had to make good to wheat-growers to the tune of about £7,500,000 to £8,000,000. Two years later another election by the growers took place and the Government, in order to secure the return of their nominees, altered the system of voting from preferential to first past the post, and because these men, having held office for one and a half to two years, were better known they were returned with two exceptions. Mr. (later Sir) John Teasdale of Western Australia and Mr. Deane of Queensland were elected and those two, particularly Mr. Teasdale, exposed the then Wheat Board to the farmers and eventually, on assumption of office again by the Menzies Government, the personnel of the Wheat Board

was altered and instead of Mr. Everett of Victoria being elected chairman Sir John Teasdale was chosen. Since then we had no reason to cavill at the board's actions because Sir John Teasdale has, perhaps, as great a knowledge of wheat marketing as anybody in Australia. I am mentioning this in reply to criticism which has been levelled against the board and I trust that when the growers are called upon to vote on this matter the present system of marketing will be retained. A Chamber of Commerce conference was held recently in Adelaide, and the press reported that one speaker said we should get back into the open market for marketing our wheat. That evening I met this man at a dinner and asked him why he favoured such a plan and whether he thought it could be financed. A ship's cargo of wheat is worth about £300,000 now, but when the merchants were operating previously it was worth about £30,000, and I doubted whether the merchants would be prepared to finance wheat marketing again. I feel sure the majority of merchants are not anxious to get back into the business owing to the great risks they would have to take. The international wheat merchants are only in the business for the profits that they can make. The local merchants did a good job and made only a reasonable profit. I asked this man what knowledge he had of open marketing and he said he was a printer in Sydney and that his main aim in advocating this scheme was to get cheaper wheat.

It is gratifying to know that railway finances are improving. I think it was suggested in this debate that the loss on the railways this year would be about £3,000,000, but I understand from reliable sources it will be about £4,500,000. Bad as that figure may be, it represents a reduction of about £1,000,000 on last year's losses. This has been brought about in some measure by the introduction of diesel electric locomotives. The saving on the operation of a pair of diesel locomotives, compared with the cost of running a steam locomotive, between Adelaide and Tailem Bend, is about £1,000 a month. In addition, the return trip is completed in seven hours 20 minutes, about a working day for the crew, whereas the steam locomotive takes eight to nine hours. Further, the necessary servicing of the steam locomotive takes about three hours, and provision has to be made for the crew to work at double time rates on the return trip, or they have to be returned to their homes. The daily mileage given by diesels is 300 per cent greater than that of

the steam locomotives because it takes far less time to service them and they can pull much heavier loads. With the advent of diesel locomotives the railways can handle all the freight and passengers offering. In order to get goods back on the railways we should reduce our freight rates, thereby encouraging people to use the railways more. Those who frequently travel throughout the State often see produce being carted by motor lorry, but the trains are there to render that service with a crew of three. Large tonnages can be handled by the railways compared with motor lorries. The railways could handle much more freight without additional staff and train crews. Any losses as a result of a reduction of freight rates would be offset by the greater quantity of goods carried. I have done much travelling on the southern line to Naracoorte and have noticed that when a train passes through a small station there are four or five men servicing it, such as a stationmaster, goods clerk, and porters. If the tonnages carried were doubled those men could still service the trains.

His Excellency's Speech stated that the Road Traffic Act would be amended this session. I appreciate the way in which the *Advertiser* and the *News* bring the subject of road courtesy before the public. This has improved the standard of courtesy and driving on our roads. I regret the question of the speed limit has been prejudiced before being debated in Parliament. I noticed in the *Advertiser* that the State Traffic Committee and the Police Department recommend that a change is not necessary, but when we realize that one of the main causes of accidents is speed it seems essential that something should be done to reduce the toll of the road. During the last 22 years 412,089 people have been killed in road accidents in Australia, practically the population of the metropolitan area.

The Hon. Sir Wallace Sandford—The legislation will be aimed at improving the position.

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON—We should debate this question with an open mind. When the speed limit was discussed in this Chamber in November, 1951, the State Traffic Committee recommended a limit of 30 miles an hour, which is the limit throughout Australia, except in South Australia and Victoria. Only Victoria has a lower speed limit, namely, 25 miles an hour on some of its congested roads.

The Hon. N. L. Jude—The South Australian accident figures are better than those of other States.

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON—When the Bill is introduced I intend to get the relevant figures and debate the subject at some length. I tried to get them from the State Traffic Committee and the National Safety Council on the Thursday before the question was considered by them, but I was told they were not available. A motor car travelling at 30 miles an hour in the metropolitan area would take 20 minutes to cover 10 miles, but if travelling at 35 miles an hour, provided it had an uninterrupted run, it would take 17½ minutes. The saving would be only 2½ minutes, but when travelling at the higher speed the driver would have less time to judge his distances and the danger of accidents would be greater. When considering the speed limit we should remember that people other than motorists use the roads. Pedestrians have an equal right when they are crossing the road. A car travelling at 30 miles an hour covers 10 chains in a quarter of a minute, so women pushing perambulators, the infirm and aged, and children have a very short time in which to get across the road. The Governor's Speech mentioned amendments to the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act. I welcome this because a wrong spirit is growing up in Australia with regard to the rights of landlords and tenants. Many tenants feel they have more right to properties than the owners. Three years ago people I know purchased a house in which they desired to live. They asked the tenants to vacate and said that if they could not get another house they would even be prepared to exchange with them the house in which they were residing. The matter went before the court, which held that as the tenant was in indifferent health he had more right to the property than the owner. An Englishman's home is his castle and it is time people were enabled to purchase homes for their own occupation without waiting five years to obtain possession.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan—What about the tenants who will be put out in the streets?

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON—The man to whom I refer offered alternative accommodation and it would not have inflicted hardship upon the tenant. The Act provides for consideration of relative hardships but in this case the Court ruled that the owner could not obtain an order. I approached the member for the district in which this house was situated and sought his co-operation in getting accommodation for the tenants but he refused to assist me because he thought they were well catered for. I pay a tribute to the Agriculture Department

and express pleasure at the restoration to health of Sir George Jenkins. In His Excellency's speech mention was made of the reorganization of the livestock branch of the department to provide a complete service in animal husbandry. It is also interesting to note that a soil erosion board has been set up in the West Broughton district to deal with soil and sand erosion. In conclusion I suggest that we look ahead and ask ourselves, "What can I do to help the progress of this State"? It has become the fashion for people to ask "What can the Government do for me"? If we approach our problems in an endeavour to overcome them the future of this State will be bright.

The Hon. A. A. HOARE (Central No. 1)—I support the motion and hope that the Government's plans may prove of benefit to the State. Seemingly all members who have spoken are hopeful of improved conditions. Mr. Wilson referred to the truce in Korea and the return of peace. There should never be any necessity for war. Wars are of no value to any nation and no matter which side wins nations are indebted and manpower is lost. The Korean war is one of the worst I have ever known. In the *Advertiser* of June 18 the story is related of a South Australian priest who was a prisoner of war and who, with other prisoners, was forced to make a nine mile march. The prisoners had been ill-treated and ill-fed and were not in condition to march and as they fainted along the way they were shot by the officer in charge. Such barbarity is worse than the law of the jungle, where some chance exists. The devil and imps of hell would not be guilty of such monstrosity as has been adopted by the Communists. It disgusted the priest. The Prince of Peace was born about 2,000 years ago and people looked forward to the end of wars. The first war of which we have any knowledge occurred 6,000 years ago in the times of Moses and wars have been intermittent ever since. They could easily be avoided if an international court of arbitration was established to which those with disputes could go. The Prince of Peace preached "Peace on earth, goodwill toward men." That glorious message has been buried beneath the ruins of war. The Korean war lasted three years but I never discovered its cause. Most wars result from some hungry nation desiring more territory. It doesn't matter that men will be killed so long as greed is satisfied. Christ chose simple fishermen as His disciples. He told them He

would make them "fishers of men." He was a working man and toiled at His father's bench as a carpenter and He told His disciples to go into the world and preach the Gospel of Peace. They did so but the message has not been heeded because the world is far worse now than it was in His day.

The Hon. Sir Wallace Sandford—Can you prove that?

The Hon. A. A. HOARE—Yes. What has become of the Sabbath Day? The "Great Social Reformer," as Christ is called by some, said that we should keep the Sabbath Day holy. The Sabbath Day no longer exists and Continental Sunday has replaced it. Sixty years ago people would not read a newspaper on Sunday because they thought it wrong. They were good folk who set an example which has been cast aside by later generations. I have asked leaders of religious organizations whether they think the world is any better than it was and they all agree it is worse. I often wonder whether ministers of the Gospel preach what they want to preach. I do not think they always do and I can cite three instances from men I know and have questioned. I asked one minister why he left Western Australia. He said that he used to preach the Gospel of Christ without fear or trembling at one of the big churches in Western Australia. Two of the moneyed men of the church told him that if he continued preaching it he would not be wanted. He replied that he would continue to preach that Gospel but it was not long before he came to Adelaide. He was punished because he considered he was preaching the Gospel as he thought it ought to be preached. I know of another, not 60 miles from here, who was seemingly a very staunch Labor supporter and on one or two occasions he spoke a bit too strongly. My brother asked me what I thought about it and I said that I did not think it would be too long before the pooh-bahs of the church saw that he was moved because they were very conservative. My prophesy proved correct. The third man was at Yongala and afterwards at Broken Hill. There he could preach as perhaps he could not in other parts without getting into trouble. Subsequently he was transferred to a hills circuit, but was soon shifted again to Port Adelaide. I visited him there and asked him whether it was true, as I had been told, that he had been transferred to Port Adelaide because one prominent member of his church at Stirling had threatened to withdraw his £50 contribution from the church if he was not. He replied that it was true

and I have often wondered since then whether men can really preach the Gospel as they wish to preach it. As their bread and butter depends upon it seemingly they cannot.

A grocer living near me, a very religious man, became ill and after he had recovered I was told that he contemplated opening a ham and beef shop. I told his brother that unless he was prepared to trade on the Sabbath he had better keep his money in the bank for he would be certain to fail. I ascertained subsequently that he had been forced to break his principles and open on the Sabbath or he would have gone under. What I am endeavouring to show is that people can only live as others allow them.

I listened with some interest to Mr. Anthony when he spoke about price control. I do not know whom he blames for the Commonwealth relinquishing price control, but I wish to quote this extract from the *Age* of June 25, 1953, as follows:—

Senator McLeay would have it believed that high costs are killing Australian industry and unless we can solve the problem all of us are in serious trouble. Prices could have been kept much lower if the Commonwealth Government had retained control. While Commonwealth control remained the price level and the economy of Australia had been kept the most stable in the world, but since control went to the States there have been increased prices. The *Age* is not a Labor paper nor is that the statement of a Labor supporter, so seemingly when the Commonwealth lost control of prices traders did as they liked. The basic wage has reached £11 11s. a week in South Australia, but if we do not control prices £20 a week will not suffice and so we will continue to be in the same mess. How can we control wages if we do not control prices? One is linked with the other and they cannot be separated. Rising prices reduce the purchasing power of the people and this in turn leads to lower demand and reduced production. I remember that in the last depression Otto Niemeyer was sent out to tell the Australian people that they had to reduce wages, old age pensions and everything else by 12½ per cent. This man had previously dictated to the British Government—I think the then MacDonald Labor Government—in the same way and then he came to Australia and told Mr. Scullin that he must reduce everything by 12½ per cent. Then followed what was termed the Premiers' Plan and I got myself disliked because I was against it. I remember meeting Mr. Lionel Hill, an ex-Premier of South Australia, who was a professed Labor man, on the Melbourne Express when I was returning from Canberra.

He said, "You will be sorry for not supporting the Premier's Plan. In three months Australia will not know itself. Everybody will be employed and the country will be flourishing." I replied, "I will not support the Premier's plan because it will not do what you pretend it will. There will be thousands more unemployed. The warehouses will be full but the people will have no purchasing power." I told him he was taking his politics from the *Advertiser* office. One of our most important aims should be to keep our people in employment. A huge army of unemployed means no demand for goods. I support Mr. Condon's advocacy of gristing our wheat and exporting it as flour. If the wheat is gristed in Australia it keeps men employed here and thus assists the circulation of money.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—Unfortunately, we do not get any support from the Liberal Party.

The Hon. A. A. HOARE—But we should. Many nations badly need flour, and we would not do them any injustice by gristing our wheat for them. Mr. Robinson said railway finances were improving, but two years ago we subsidized our railways by £220,000 for the benefit of the wheat and wool industries in the form of cheaper freight rates, yet those commodities were at their highest prices on record. The Opposition forced the Government to withdraw that subsidy, yet the honourable member now suggests freight rates should be reduced. I cannot follow his argument. He wants cheaper freight rates, but he also wants the railways to pay their way. I agreed with Mr. Edmond's statement that thousands of acres of scrub land on Eyre Peninsula could be put into production. Many nations need food, and possibly in the future more will be needed in Australia. All our agricultural and pastoral country should be put to its fullest use. Farmers are now getting better prices for their wheat and I hope they will increase production as much as possible.

The Hon. A. L. McEWIN (Chief Secretary)—I am pleased to associate myself with the remarks of other speakers. The Address in Reply has special significance on this occasion, firstly because, after a period of about 50 years, we again have a Queen to reign over us. I therefore wholeheartedly support paragraph 2 of the Address, which re-affirms our steadfast and affectionate loyalty to Her Majesty. The Queen, as a mother, brings to her reign at an early age those family qualities which have been the basis of British tradition throughout the centuries. We all look forward to her visit and hope that nothing

will occur this time to interfere with the arrangements that are already well advanced.

The other special significance of the Address is that the Opening Speech was delivered by our new Governor, Sir Robert George. I join with other members in welcoming both him and Lady George and in the confidence expressed that they will be a great success amongst the people of South Australia. They have already given evidence of their friendliness and interest in the affairs of the State. I am pleased to find you again, Mr. President, presiding over this Council. It would indeed seem strange if we did not have you sitting in your important place. I congratulate the mover and seconder of the motion, Messrs. Jude and Anthoney, both of whom excelled themselves, as has every other member who has spoken. The debate has been of high quality. I also pay a tribute to the Leader of the Opposition, who always provides us with entertaining discussion and gives us something to think over.

I carefully followed the debate, and it seemed that the predominant topics were production, markets, prices, transport and taxation, all matters which have an important bearing on the economy of this State. That indicated that members realize we are facing changed conditions in trade and commerce. These problems will call for leadership from both the Government and Parliament. We have experienced the effect of the usual inflationary trend which history shows follows all wars, but it now seems that production in other countries is overtaking world demands. Consequently, we find ourselves meeting competition in the sale of our produce. We are entering a field of economics more exacting than that experienced in the last decade. If we are to hold our place in the world markets and hope to retain the same margins of profit to which we have become accustomed, then "increased efficiency" must be the watchword of industry, whether it be primary or secondary. There is no escape from that truism. We have not only enjoyed a period of record prices but have experienced an almost continuous period of record seasons. The question is whether we can expect such conditions to continue. We need only refer to history to remind ourselves that we live in a dry country with occasional good seasons. We have had an abnormal run of good seasons. We have to face the possibility that future marketing of produce will become more difficult and it will not matter whether we have fixed, payable prices if we do not have the produce.

Easy conditions do not provide incentives for increased efficiency and neither does high taxation.

The time is opportune for individuals to examine the position and realize that it is a wise policy to do a little salting down in prosperous periods such as we have enjoyed. I am convinced that the future prosperity of our country will depend in the main not upon the actions of government but upon the individual efforts of the people. We are predominantly the same stock as that which developed this country and achieved so much in the past. When we remember this as a small community which, before any other State, built roads and telegraph lines to obtain communication with the outer world, we can surely have no doubt about the quality of our stock. I believe that any challenge we may have to meet will be met with that same spirit of enterprise which was displayed by our forefathers. The thought and consideration evident in the remarks of the honourable members is indicative of the thoughts common to all good-thinking Australians.

In conclusion I thank all members for their kindly remarks about me. I assure them that the mutual consideration of all members of Parliament and the general public was responsible for any satisfaction I may have given during the Premier's absence. My appreciation also extends to the dispassionate manner in which members have addressed themselves to this debate.

Motion for adoption of the Address in Reply carried.

The PRESIDENT—His Excellency the Governor having fixed 4.30 p.m. as the time for receiving the Address in Reply, I ask the mover and seconder and other members to accompany me to Government House to present it.

At 4.25 p.m. the President and honourable members proceeded to Government House. They returned at 4.45 p.m.

The PRESIDENT—I have to report that, accompanied by honourable members, I attended at Government House and there presented to His Excellency the Address in Reply that was adopted by the Legislative Council today. His Excellency was pleased to make the following reply:—

I thank you for your Address in Reply to the speech with which I opened Parliament on June 25.

I join with you in the re-affirmation of your steadfast and affectionate loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen and in your prayer that

Her Majesty's reign may be one of happiness, peace, unity and prosperity throughout the British Commonwealth of Nations.

I am well assured that Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh will receive a most affectionate and spontaneous welcome in South Australia.

I am confident that you will give full and careful attention to all matters placed before you, and I pray that God's blessing may crown your labours.

ADJOURNMENT OF COUNCIL: FLOUR MILLING INDUSTRY.

The Hon. A. L. McEWIN (Chief Secretary) moved that the Council at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, August 18.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Leader of the Opposition)—As I will not have an opportunity to make any further protest and as there is no information available regarding the wheat position, I must take this opportunity to discuss further the important subject of the flour milling industry. Very little assistance seems to be available from Government supporters for this industry and it is my duty again to warn members that the industry faces unemployment. In the *Advertiser* today it is stated that the growers have been offered very significant guarantees; in effect, that the internal price of wheat will not fall below cost of production if the international agreement price falls below it, but that if the cost of production moves up the internal price of wheat will move up also. I am not opposed to guarantees but I want to know what guarantee of security is to be given to employees in the milling industry. During the Address in Reply debate I was asked by Mr. Edmonds what my solution was and I offer it now because we will not have another opportunity for some time to discuss it. The taxpayers will be called upon to make up any deficiency if the price of wheat falls below 15s. a bushel and, while they should be willing to meet the position in order to encourage the farming community to increase their acreage, I want to know what is being done for the manufacturing side.

The Hon. E. A. Anthoney—That is not likely to happen in the next fortnight, is it?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—The Government will prepare a Bill but nobody knows now what its fate will be and I want to make suggestions to the Government in order at least that the mill employees may be protected and that it will not be all one-way traffic. If the taxpayers of South Australia are called upon to make up any deficiency there ought to be protection for other people vitally concerned.

According to the press the wheatgrowers will have the first say, but I have learned from other sources that the Bill will be introduced into Parliament first and that the growers will be given the opportunity to decide what they want. This means that Parliament will grant a section of the community the right to say what it wants. In other words, the procedure as agreed upon by the Agricultural Council means that Parliament is to be asked not to pass the legislation until a handful of people are consulted as to their wishes. The wheat-growers will be asked to say whether they want the stabilization plan or not. They, therefore, become a dictatorial body which will tell Parliament that it must accept the proposed legislation. I am reminded, Sir, of a statement you made when Leader of the Opposition, namely, "a referendum is a sheet anchor for shufflers."

Now what are the proposals? A majority of the States have agreed on certain action, but there must be unanimity between all the States before any legislation can be passed. I cannot obtain any information from the Government and must seek it from the press. May I say most respectfully that no member should be placed in this position; that is belittling Parliament and I offer my strongest objection to this procedure. The plan provides for the continuance of stabilization for five years and for a home consumption price of 15s. a bushel for wheat for both human consumption and stock feed. The proposal includes a proviso that if export parity falls below 15s. a bushel the local selling price will be export parity with a floor price of cost of production.

The Hon. E. A. Anthoney—We have none of these things before us now.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—You are not likely to have them unless you make your own investigations.

The Hon. E. A. Anthoney—When the Bill comes before us is the time for that.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Then it will be too late. My whole point is that we will be compelled to agree to legislation without any right to alter it; we had that before and we will again, and I want to impress upon the Government that it should not be one-way traffic and employees in the milling industry should be considered. I refer again to what I said last week, namely, that the mills at Port Adelaide and Balaklava will close—and I could give the date. I, therefore, say deliberately that we are faced with unemployment in an industry that has been second to none in the Commonwealth.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—But you have not given us any concrete suggestions as to what should be put in the Bill.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—I shall endeavour to do so. A further clause in the proposal provides for a cost of production price of 15s. a bushel for a five-year period. The new price is expected to be about 12s. 6d. to 12s. 8d. a bushel, but Commonwealth representatives stressed a 15s. flat rate. My solution is that the Australian Wheat Board in negotiations with foreign countries should insist that a certain proportion of flour should be taken with wheat.

The Hon. E. H. Edmonds—What if the customer is not prepared to accept those terms?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Not one member of this Council, apart from my own Labor supporters, has been prepared to support the milling industry and I am compelled to say that members of the Liberal Party are supporting a Government that was prepared to give a free gift of 45,000 tons of wheat to the value of £2,000,000 to Pakistan and not one of them, although representing constituencies in which there are 22 flour mills, has been prepared to support my agitation to help the milling industry.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan—Could the Wheat Board have sent flour just as well?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—It could have kept the mills going by insisting on a certain proportion of flour being accepted. I make no secret of the fact that I shall inform those concerned at Murray Bridge, Loxton, Mount Gambier, Strathalbyn, Mannum, Laura, Jamestown, Moonta, Balaklava, and other places.

The Hon. F. T. Perry—Is flour produced by those mills exported?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Yes. This is a more serious matter than members seem to realize.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—Is there any restriction on the supplies of wheat to mills?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—The matter is dealt with by the Australian Wheat Board. Mr. Cudmore will bear me out when I say that I have previously criticized the Curtin Government, not the Menzies Government, for removing men like Mr. Harold Darling and Mr. Cameron from the board. It was not in the interests of the industry that such experienced men should be removed. The man referred to earlier today was placed on the board years afterwards. I respect those men

who did so much for the industry. At one time the board consisted of 11 members; now it has 13. Every bushel of wheat must be purchased from the board, which is under the administrative control of the Commonwealth Minister for Agriculture. It sells all the wheat, and it will not reduce the price until after someone else has done so.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—Do you say that the millers should get their requirements at a lower price?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—No. The consumer has been paying only 11s. 11d. a bushel as the home consumption price. Under the new scheme he will pay 15s. I believe the actual price will be below that, and that the taxpayers will be asked to make up the deficiency. I am not opposed to the deficiency being made up, but I want to know what the other people will get out of it. It is said that the 2 lb. loaf of bread will cost an extra 1½d., but I believe it will be 2d. It takes 47 bushels of wheat to make a ton of flour, and an extra 3s. 1d. will be paid for each bushel of wheat. I do not object to all this, but if only wheat is sent overseas, and no flour, unemployment will occur in the industry. I have not received any consideration from Government members in this matter and I am disappointed. I thought that country members would have helped me because most of our flour is manufactured in the country, and if the mills are closed country people will be affected. The Balaklava mill was idle for 11 years and then as a result of activities by both sides it started again. Its pay sheets totalled £650 per week, but the mill is now on one shift and it will soon close. On principle we must support country districts.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—Can flour be sold overseas, as well as wheat?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—That is a matter for the Australian Wheat Board, which is doing its best, but the Commonwealth Government said "We will make good fellows of ourselves and make a gift of 45,000 tons of wheat to Pakistan." If the Government had any sympathy for the Australian workers it would have made a gift of some flour instead of all wheat. The industry is now in the worst position it has been in for many years, and if nothing is done to improve things there will not be the present supply of flour, bran and pollard. It cannot be available if the mills are not in production. I want the Government to use its influence with the Commonwealth Government and the Australian

Wheat Board, and stress the fact that the industry is facing unemployment, and to get it to avoid a repetition of previous happenings. I want a reasonable proportion of the wheat grown in Australia to be manufactured into flour so as to provide employment.

The Hon. A. L. McEWIN (Chief Secretary) Briefly, I think the basis of the problem mentioned by the honourable member is related to economics. As to whether purchasers desire wheat or flour is something which they will decide. Today I said that we are facing a new set of conditions and the sooner we realize it and not try to mislead ourselves that we are able to dictate to other countries, and realize the fundamentals of the problem the better. Members will have an opportunity to express their views on this subject when legislation is introduced later in the session. I suggest that the honourable member did not do justice to the subject because he tried to make it a political issue. He suggested that something was being forced on South Australia and other States by a minority vote, and that the only people unconcerned about the position of the flour mills, or any other industry for that matter, was a Liberal Government. I point out that at the Agricultural Council meeting there was only one Liberal vote. All the others were Labor votes.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—I am not concerned about that.

The Hon. A. L. McEWIN—The honourable member was concerned a little while ago when he suggested that this scheme was forced on us. I remind him that it was a Labor vote which helped to have the scheme adopted. One of those Labor voters voted against the scheme previously but on this occasion he came back apologetically and supported it. Another Labor voter said he would recommend the scheme to his Government because at the time he did not have the necessary permission to accept it. Mr. Condon spoke about the price of bread, but a Government of the same political complexion as the honourable member was not concerned about costs when it lifted the lid off potatoes and let prices go anywhere. We all have a responsibility and the sooner we realize it the better. The decision of the Agricultural Council was the result of a predominantly Labor vote and I suggest that the honourable member would have done better if he had left politics out of this discussion. The decision of the Agricultural Council means that legislation will be placed before the various State Parliaments, and it will be seen then whether members of the same political complexion as Mr. Condon agree with his views and support the legislation.

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.13 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, August 18, at 2 p.m.