

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Thursday, November 18, 1954.

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

QUESTIONS.**ELECTORAL DIVISIONS.**

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH.—An article appeared on the front page of last night's *News* under the caption "Mr. Playford at the Crossroads." This was a most commendable article in connection with the gerrymander that the Government proposes to inflict on the people of this State in the realignment of electorates. Will the Chief Secretary ask the Premier to withdraw the Bill in order to recast it on democratic lines and following the traditions of the founders of representative Government in this State?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN.—If the honourable member read the most excellent statement by the Premier that appeared in another section of the press this morning I think he would have obtained the answer to his question. I have no intention of asking the Premier to alter his views.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONTROL OF RENTS) ACT.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE.—Can the Chief Secretary inform me whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce legislation this session in connection with the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act, and if so, will he use his best endeavours to see that it is introduced in sufficient time for all those concerned—

The PRESIDENT.—Order! The honourable member may ask his question but must not argue it without the permission of the House.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE.—Then I ask it is the intention of the Government to introduce legislation this session in connection with the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN.—If the honourable member asks his question next Tuesday I will have the information for him. I have reasons for making this request.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 18. Page 1370.)

The Hon. Sir WALLACE SANDFORD (Central No. 2)—In rising to support the second

reading I would like to take this opportunity of congratulating the Hon. Mr. Jude on the manner in which he explained the measure to this Chamber. We have frequently referred to the fact that he has so recently assumed the responsibilities of Ministerial office, but we fully expected him to rise to the occasion and we were very pleased indeed at his debut. The speeches made by Mr. Condon and Mr. Perry were of interest to members, as was shown by the rapt interest of their audience. The Bill authorizes an expenditure of £40,525,326 which, together with an amount of £12,456,674 already appropriated by special legislation, makes a total of £52,982,000 which is estimated to be total payments for the year ending June 30 next. As the Minister pointed out, the Treasurer has budgeted for a deficit of £1,933,000, which will be financed from the accumulated surpluses amounting to £2,154,000. There is more than enough available for this purpose, for in fact there will be a favourable balance of £221,000 which will be taken into account by the Commonwealth Grants Commission in making grants for the year.

As members remember, the Commission has recently been sitting here. From time to time we have referred to it and its effect upon this State and its finances. As members are also aware the Grants Commission, which publishes a report once every 12 months, has recently issued its twenty-first report. I think members will have received copies, but as the reports have been issued comparatively recently possibly many of them have not had an opportunity to give the subject the interest that it deserves, particularly from the angle of South Australia. Some critics of the legislation that brought the Grants Commission into being take the view that there is an implied mendicancy in this matter and overlook the fact that of the component parts of which Federation consists it is the financial position which holds it together. That is to say, they need not feel ashamed; they do not have to go to the Federal Government in a beg-pardon spirit, but to assert their rights in a federation where they are equal partners. From time to time, as I have been pleased to note, the Grants Commission repeats certain provisions of the legislation and the Constitution which bind us all. For instance:—

15. Section 96 of the Constitution provides that "during a period of 10 years after the establishment of the Commonwealth and thereafter until the Parliament otherwise provides, the Parliament may grant financial assistance to any State on such terms and conditions as the Parliament thinks fit."

The Commission was brought into being in 1933 and in its third report finally rejected compensation for disabilities arising from Federation. It was found after two or three years' experience that it did not seem to make the progress that was expected by the more enthusiastic and possibly the more impetuous members, and the Commission chose instead the principle of financial need. This is expressed in the following terms:—

16. . . . special grants are justified when a State through financial stress from any cause is unable efficiently to discharge its functions as a member of the Federation, and should be determined by the amount of help found necessary to make it possible for that State by reasonable effort to function at a standard not appreciably below that of the other States.

17. Since then, this principle has remained unaltered as the basis on which the Commission's recommendations have been made; but from time to time methods of applying the principle have had to be adapted to changing circumstances.

The Hon. F. T. Perry—Has the Commission the right to make its own charter?

The Hon. Sir WALLACE SANDFORD—No. It is bound by the Constitution, but section 96 gives it power to make recommendations. It cannot pay out any money but it makes recommendations to Parliament which determines whether the amounts asked for are reasonable, and in all the years that have rolled over our heads since the beginning of Federation Parliament has always seemed to act most fairly, and with little criticism afterwards. The Commission travels from State to State each year and visits particularly the States which have made claims for financial assistance.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan—It does actually instruct the States to introduce certain legislation.

The Hon. Sir WALLACE SANDFORD—It makes recommendations to them and I have no doubt the States listen to them, but I have not before heard the word "instruct"; the happier word might be "suggested." Recently a change was made in the set-up by which payments are made to the States because they emphasized the difficulty of specifying a precise amount as the State's claim for financial assistance by way of special grant for 1954-55, the point being that there must be a certain amount of guesswork. Particularly in a country such as Australia, and especially in a State that has such variable seasons and depends so directly upon primary production as we did until quite recently. Primary production was the sheet anchor to which we were chained, but in the last few years we have made tremendous

bounds forward in secondary production as well. However, we still largely depend on primary production, and if we get many weeks of dry weather and adverse climatic conditions at certain times of the year trade lags very rapidly in secondary commodities. Also, therefore, as it became increasingly evident that climatic conditions were having a very direct bearing on the cash values of the year's effort the Commission suggested making payments in two parts. The first part is, as it were, something on account and the second part is calculated some months later when the results of the season can be calculated with a greater degree of accuracy. That seems to work fairly satisfactorily. Appendix 14 of the Commission's report indicates that a considerable amount is involved in special grants. South Australia has received by way of special grants under section 96 of the Commonwealth Constitution since the inception of the Grants Commission in 1933 a total of £47,590,000—a fine cement for keeping the bricks of the Commonwealth stuck together.

For the year ended June 30, 1954, receipts are shown as £52,376,000 and expenditure £50,566,000, a surplus of £1,810,000; receipts exceeded the Budget estimate by £1,021,000, and payments fell short of the estimate by £779,000. That is a very happy position for any Treasurer. For the year now embarked upon receipts on Consolidated Revenue Account are estimated at a little more than £51,000,000, which is about £1,330,000 less than the actual receipts last year. This reduction is explained by a substantially lower special grant from the Commonwealth Government. I draw attention to the fact that the Treasurer, when speaking to the Budget, said that it was a source of gratification to him to note the improvement in railway operations. He said that railway receipts were estimated at £13,100,000, which is nearly £300,000 more than last year, and it is to be hoped that the increase in operating efficiency which has been reported will continue. The items on pages 2 and 3 of the Bill total more than £40,000,000. The great increase in production in South Australia, both primary and secondary, has gained the admiration of all other parts of the Commonwealth, but no matter how strong the State or a community is financially, unless we keep a continuous eye on expenditure, and at the same time do all we can to stimulate production, we cannot succeed. I support the Bill.

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS (Northern)—In this Bill members are provided with a summary of governmental expenditure for the current financial year. Details can be found in the

table of estimated expenditure before us. That expenditure follows the pattern which has persisted for many years. The total amount set down reveals an increase over the previous year's allocation. When I was elected to the Council in 1944 the Appropriation Bill submitted was for an expenditure of £11,612,822, and this included nearly £5,500,000 for the railways. The only other item which reached seven figures was for education—approximately £1,250,000. In 1949 the total of the appropriation had doubled and in this Bill we find the amount has more than doubled again. It is interesting to make some comparison between some of the figures of today and the amounts provided under similar headings 10 years ago. Obviously, every item shows an increase, the outstanding ones being those providing for social services such as education, health and hospital requirements. The former has increased from £1,250,000 in 1944 to almost £5,000,000 in this Bill. The relevant figures for hospital expenditure are from £673,000 to well over £3,000,000, and so the story goes on. In 1944 a little over £5,500,000 was provided for the railways, and the amount for this year is approximately £14,500,000. Another interesting feature is that with one or two minor exceptions the items enumerated in 1944 are identical with those in the Bill now before us, circumstances which to some degree at least rather display the idea that there has been a tendency towards the setting up of various boards associated with governmental activity, and this is sometimes subjected to comment and complaint. The matters that I have indicated have arisen from many contributory causes, and because Parliamentary and governmental activities are greater today than at any time in the State's history.

Further comparisons serve to indicate the State's economic advancement and development over the past decade, and the advancement and development resulting from commendable efforts by all sections of the community. Governmental enterprise and encouragement have resulted in important industrial development over the past decade and this has no doubt in turn been influenced by a degree of industrial co-operation between employer and employee in dealing with matters of mutual concern and interest. The increase in the State's population and the subsequent addition to the labour force available has no doubt enabled governmental and private enterprise to be stepped up in construction and in production. A rather extraordinary run of favourable seasonal conditions, coupled with an all time record for primary production, has

enabled those engaged in this most important branch of our national economy to strengthen and solidify their position and to a great degree overtake the lag that was inevitably associated with the war years and the period of depression that preceded them. It is well that the last mentioned circumstances should be kept in mind.

It must not be overlooked that while prices for all cereals, wool and stock have been abnormally high for the period under review, there is definitely another side to the picture. There is the lag that occurred in those periods because of the circumstances that I have mentioned, the period when labour and materials were practically unprocurable, and one result was that structural depreciation and depreciation of stock and plant had to be made good when conditions became more favourable. This was made good, although at a considerable advance in price, when conditions became more favourable. Essential commodities such as machinery and equipment and all important items in rural production, such as cornsacks, superphosphate and many other essentials appearing on the rural producer's budget, all contributed to a much higher cost scale. Last but by no means least labour costs have taken a big slice out of the high prices received, with taxation taking the major portion of what remained. I mention these things because of a tendency on the part of some people to reach an incorrect conclusion regarding the position of those engaged in primary production. There appears to be an opinion abroad that, because of the comparatively high prices prevailing, the wool and cereal growers are living in the lap of luxury and are a fair source from which to secure additional revenue in order that other sections may have some relief.

There are 79 items in this Bill all of which, directly or indirectly, affect all sections of the community, and one could very easily find good reason for expressing some opinion in regard to all of them. Needless to say I have no intention of doing that, but I will content myself with a few general observations on one or two matters only because I feel that the departments entrusted with the administration of the expenditure listed in the Bill are fully appraised of their responsibilities and endeavour to render to the community fair and faithful service in their respective spheres of activity. I could point out to the Minister dozens of cases where further water reticulation is desirable in the northern district and where improved rail facilities are needed. I would have no difficulty in naming hospitals

where good use could be made of allocations in addition to those provided for in the Bill. I could present the Minister of Roads with a list of much needed construction that would absorb the major portion of the sum available for the whole of the State. I feel, however, that such matters are best dealt with by direct representation at a more appropriate time, and also that the presentation of this Budget indicates that in general terms funds available have been allocated and that so far as members' demands and requirements are concerned, representations made over the period when allocations were being reviewed have received due consideration.

I will now make passing reference to one or two matters of specific interest which obviously concern my district. It is difficult for members to point out any particular locality or town that should have precedence over some other town or district, but with all due regard to that aspect I wish to direct attention to the need for hurrying along the much promised development of harbour facilities in the town of Port Lincoln. This town is the capital of that vast area lying to the west of Spencer Gulf. It is rapidly developing and presents many potentialities and it will in time become one of the most important country towns in this State. It is some years since the proposal for increased and improved harbour facilities was first brought under notice and considered, and I understand that for some time it has been under consideration by the Public Works Standing Committee. People are inclined to wax a bit weary at being put off for too long. We know certain inquiries have to be made and investigations carried out, but I point out the need for hastening this project if it is possible to do so.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—What about bulk handling?

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS—I was just going to mention that very important matter. It seems that because of the peculiar geographical factors on Eyre Peninsula and the railway serving it this area most needs this important branch of our primary production. I hope that the improvement of harbour facilities in conjunction with the provision of bulk handling facilities will be hurried along and given some priority. Another matter to which I desire to direct attention is harbour improvements in the port of Thevenard. That is an important shipping centre at which overseas ships are loaded and in years gone by they took away a considerable portion of the harvest of the western part of the Peninsula. This

port should come into the general set-up of bulk handling of wheat. It is uneconomic for wheat to be hauled over 300 miles to Port Lincoln when similar facilities could be installed at Thevenard, a few miles away.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—Why is bagged wheat taken to Port Lincoln today?

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS—I have often asked myself that question, and the authority to which I would refer the honourable member is the Harbors Board. We often see things happen that cause us to question the wisdom of them. For instance, during the last part of last year's harvest wheat was shipped from Cowell to Wallaroo in ketches and then taken by road transport to assist in loading a ship at Ardrossan. To the ordinary man in the street, without any knowledge of the inner workings, that sort of thing requires a good deal of explanation. One explanation is that after all ships are sometimes dependent on the people who provide the transport. I remember, when I was more actively engaged in wheat production, a fleet of between 14 to 20 ketches was more or less operating in competition for the trade. In consequence the hirer or the people who had the freight to offer had the opportunity of competition and therefore could dictate some of the terms of the contracts they entered into. Now, however, with restriction on shipping the shipowners can say where they will go and what they will do. I have been informed from a reliable source that the present ketch owners are not prepared to lift wheat from the eastern ports of Eyre Peninsula and to convey it around through the Althorpes to St. Vincent Gulf. They are prepared to follow the course I previously mentioned, namely, take it to Wallaroo, and the added expense has to be borne by the whole of the wheatgrowers. I cannot give any information as to why this is the case but I presume there is a very good reason for it.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—Giving one port bulk handling and closing others will not help.

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS—The honourable member may be right. Whether we will ever have a complete system of bulk handling is in the lap of the gods. I appreciate the difficulties in this State arising from having so many minor shipping ports. In some of the other States that disability does not exist to the same degree, and where they can concentrate on the major ports and reduce the rail haulage it materially alters the position. As to how many ports are likely to have bulk handling the honourable member may have a better idea than I have because he is a member of the Public

Works Committee which is entrusted with the investigation of every aspect of this project.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—With a harvest of possibly only 20,000,000 bushels this year there is not much volume to spread over six or seven ports.

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS—The honourable member probably has more information on the subject than I have and therefore I am not putting my opinion against his. I am merely setting out the position as I see it. What happens in the future depends on circumstances which cannot be foreseen and in respect of which there can only be a good deal of guess-work at the moment.

In regard to railway matters on Eyre Peninsula, there has been, admittedly, some improvement in track conditions and train accommodation, but there is ample room for more. I have persistently advocated an alteration of policy in regard to passenger traffic. There was a time when there was only one regular passenger service a week right through to Thevenard. There were two other regular services by railcar as far as Minnipa and, urged on by both those particularly interested, I consistently advocated the extension of at least one of those services to Thevenard. The reply I usually received was that the statistics of passengers carried and business offering did not indicate that it would be an economic proposition. I took the view, on the other hand, that the railways should follow the line usually adopted in private business. That is to say, if they wanted the trade they had to go out and look for it. In pursuance of that idea I suggested at different times that if a trial were made for a period the department would be able to gauge whether the people were prepared to take advantage of the better facilities offered. As I said, there has been some improvement, but there is still a good deal of room for more, particularly when we hear of the better facilities in the shape of diesel engines and modern railcars that are being brought into service in other divisions. We want similar facilities extended to Eyre Peninsula.

More adequate provision for fishing boats should be made at Thevenard. Fishing is quite an important industry and one which is being furthered by the efforts of the people to help themselves by establishing co-operatives. They are deserving of better harbour facilities, for in the last day or two we have again read of the way in which inclement weather could so easily have been responsible for considerable damage to many of the fishing boats at Cape

Thevenard. Individually, I suppose, a fishing boat does not represent very great value in pounds, shillings and pence, but to the person who owns and operates it it is a means of livelihood. These fishermen usually put their all into the purchase of the boat and its equipment, and they are worthy of help. I sincerely trust that the department will give more consideration to this question.

I do not propose to go further into the details of the items of expenditure set out before us, but in conclusion I want to commend the Government for the courage and enterprise it has displayed in continuing the progressive policy which aims to provide for the people of South Australia the means whereby they may have full advantage of social security, and every opportunity for full enjoyment of happy and healthier lives. I support the second reading.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Midland)—I have read the whole of the financial statement delivered by the Treasurer in another place on October 21 and have perused the appendices, and I am sorry that greater publicity is not given to that statement. I think the publication of the whole of it in our daily press would be of advantage to all members of the community and would give them, in a relatively small space, a detailed knowledge of the way in which the finances of this State are managed, that is not readily available to them at present.

The Hon. F. T. Perry—Hear, hear!

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—It is a very concise, yet complete statement of the financial position, and if it had appeared on the front page of our afternoon newspaper instead of some of the matter which has appeared in the last day or two the community would have been much better served. I draw attention to the Treasurer's remarks at the top of page 7 of the statement (*Hansard*, page 1117) as follows:—

When we look back a period of 20 years we cannot fail to be impressed with the amazing change in the industry, attitude, and outlook in South Australia. South Australia had, for many years, been regarded as a poor State, dependant for the maintenance of frugal standards of social services and struggling industry upon assistance from the more prosperous and populous States. It suffered more severely from variations in economic activity and from seasonal variations than did other States. The State was losing population to other States and seemed faced with a future as dismal as its recent past. There was even evidence of defeatism, particularly so far as industrial expansion was concerned. All the new developments seemed to go elsewhere, and even some old established industries contemplated transfer.

The transformation over the past 16 years or so has been extraordinary. South Australia has a value of production per head in primary and secondary industries together actually greater than any other State, and has a net income per head practically equal to that of Victoria and above every other State. Both public and privately-financed development in South Australia has, for years, been the most extensive and best sustained in Australia. The preliminary figures from the census taken on June 30 last show a striking reflection of the change in the State's outlook. Over the seven years from the previous census the population increased by 23½ per cent, as compared with 18½ per cent for Australia as a whole. The State, so far from losing population to other States, has attracted a disproportionately high number of overseas migrants, together with a steady inflow of people from other States. The census of June 30 last shows that we had received an additional population of about 23,000 from other States which had previously not even been recorded.

That places in a nutshell the development that has gone on in this State over the last 20 years. It is a very creditable record indeed, and I feel that it is the sort of information which the public ought to know. However, it does seem unfortunate that, because of the progress we have made and because we have achieved surpluses in our Budgets for the last four years totalling £2,154,000, we are to have the grant which we received under section 96 of the Commonwealth Constitution reduced by £2,250,000. That matter is also referred to in the Treasurer's statement as follows:—

My one serious complaint in this connection, and it is not a complaint against the Commonwealth Grants Commission or its methods, is that the State finances seemed to be precluded from additional benefit arising out of the greatly improved state of our economy. We can be assured of a balanced budget so long as we budget for both revenues and expenditures upon a basis reasonably comparable with other States. But we are not permitted a better result. If, for any reason, we should become entitled to increased tax reimbursement payments, the grant recommended by the Grants Commission correspondingly reduces.

That puts the finger on the point of the proper criticism which can be made concerning uniform taxation. The more efficient we are in the management of our State affairs and the greater the surplus we are able to obtain, so the amount we receive from the Commonwealth is reduced. It means that our efficiency is tied to the efficiency which can be obtained in some of the other States. In view of the ability we have shown in the last 20 years in getting our house in order and managing our affairs properly and efficiently, it seems wrong that that principle should be applied.

It is, of course, associated with the idea that the body which collects the money should be the body which has the spending of it. The sooner we can get back to that basis with our State income the better for all concerned, particularly for South Australia when we are facing what I believe is a very satisfactory future.

One or two items in the Budget are deserving of special mention. It is gratifying to me that railway revenue increased during the year and that the assistance from the Treasury to that department can be reduced by about £800,000. In that connection I am pleased that the Government is contemplating providing a rail service for country passengers which would be a vast improvement on that which has existed for many years. I suggest to the Minister of Railways that in the near future when the new railcars are introduced on country lines some publicity would not be out of place. For instance, I believe many people would travel from Yorke Peninsula to the city and use this service if the advantage and the comfort which it is anticipated it will provide were brought to their notice. If circulars were sent to the various municipal bodies on the Peninsula and to responsible citizens drawing attention to the improved service I think it would have the effect of greatly increasing the number of passengers who travel by rail. It is one way by which we could help our railway finances, if not to a major extent, certainly to an appreciable extent.

It is interesting to note that the revenue from succession duties last year exceeded the estimated amount by £393,000. The reason given was that there was an unusually large number of individual benefits of more than £10,000. I believe that the real reason is that values are very high. My experience is that the values being adopted for Federal estate duty and State succession duty purposes are rather too high. I do not suggest that they are above the actual market values, but they have been kept on too high a plane. In many instances a very real hardship is being imposed on farming estates when they are faced with a large assessment of succession duty. The assessment is made on the values ruling today, and when it is necessary to go to a bank or some other financial institution to secure the necessary advance to raise the amount required for succession duty, it takes into account the likely future wheat and barley prices, and sometimes this creates great difficulty. I hope the time will come when we can reduce succession duties,

because it is putting a tax on capital itself and is creating a degree of hardship which should not exist.

I consider that the Treasurer's financial statement is the most concise and complete statement of State finances which could be obtained, and therefore hope that the press, and particularly the country press, will publish it in detail. It would be well worth-while and would achieve what, after all, should be the object of governments—that is to see that the people know as much as possible of the details in connection with the public management of their affairs. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

The Hon. E. ANTHONY secured the adjournment of the debate.

METROPOLITAN AND EXPORT ABATTOIRS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

In Committee.

(Continued from November 16. Page 1315.)

Clause 2. "Members of Board," which the Hon. W. W. Robinson had moved to amend as follows:—

In paragraph (a) to delete "the Stockowners' Association of South Australia" and to insert the following new paragraph:—

(a1) One shall be a person who in the Governor's opinion is suitable to represent breeders of sheep and cattle and is selected from three persons nominated by the Stockowners' Association of South Australia.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE—When progress was reported there seemed to be some doubt as to the present constitution of the board. As I see it, there will be a chairman and seven members, consisting of one representative each of lamb breeders for export, pig breeders for export, the Stock Salesmen's Association, meat exporters, the Meat Industry Employees' Union, master butchers, and a consumers' representative appointed by councils. Previously two of these members were appointed from a panel suggested by the South Australian Chamber of Rural Industries, but apparently that body is not in existence, and the purport of the Bill is to appoint someone else in its place. The Rural Chamber previously nominated representatives from lamb breeders and pig breeders who exported. As far as pigs are concerned, the Bill proposes in place of the chamber to appoint a representative nominated by a committee of management of the Australian Pig Breeders' Society (S.A. Branch). That is straightforward enough and no-one has argued against it. It is also suggested in the Bill that the representative of lamb breeders should be selected from a panel submitted jointly by the

committees of the Stockowners' Association, the Australian Society of Breeders of British Sheep, the South Australian Wheat and Wool-growers' Association and the South Australian executive of the Australian Primary Producers' Union. That is very cumbersome. If those four associations have to meet and discuss these matters it seems a very poor way of appointing a representative for those who breed lambs for export. The honourable member who has moved the amendment suggests that we delete "Stockowners' Association" from this clause and that we leave the other three organizations to select someone to represent export lamb breeders. This would mean another member on the board who would be nominated for the approval of the Governor. The usual principle is that a panel is nominated and the Governor selects the man. As I see it, the amendment means that we would have an extra member on the board who would be a person who, in the Governor's opinion, is suitable to represent breeders of sheep and cattle, and he would be selected from a panel of three submitted by the Stockowners' Association. The chief difficulty about the amendment is that it will again increase the number of members on the board. After a report of the Select Committee in 1945 we appointed a board, and in 1948 we all had grave doubts about appointing an additional member.

The Hon. W. W. Robinson—But we did so.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE—I agree, but whether we did right or wrong then, I do not think we want to go on adding and adding until we get an unwieldy board. I oppose the amendment and draw attention to the fact that I have an amendment on file which comes in at exactly the same place, and the effect of which will be—

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, is the honourable member in order in referring to an amendment that he has to follow?

The CHAIRMAN—He can forecast that he has amendments but he cannot go into details of their effect.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE—Then I will simply leave it by saying that I have an amendment on the file and that it will not increase the number of members of the board. I ask honourable members not to carry the amendment moved by Mr. Robinson because it will mean another member on the board. Even with his amendment, having a new member nominated by the stockowners to represent sheep and cattle breeders, there will be the conglomeration of these other three bodies

from whom somebody has to be selected for the export lamb breeders. This makes it more cumbersome than it is now, so I ask honourable members not to agree to it.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Chief Secretary)—The Bill proposes to allow other organizations to appoint the representatives on the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs Board instead of an organization that is now defunct and does not alter the number of members. The amendment, as indicated by Mr. Cudmore, means an addition to the numbers and to this extent alters the Bill, and because of that I must indicate the Government's attitude. I think the board is already amply provided for by eight members and that the number should not be increased. It is for this Committee to decide whether it desires to increase the number and if it does not then it should be prepared to say who is to select the nominee.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY—When this matter was before the House in 1945 it was fully debated and by a vote of 11 to 6 members favoured having a person to represent the cattle industry. The main objection of the Government then was the undesirable addition to the number constituting the board. Ultimately, the Bill was returned and that provision was deleted, yet in 1948, probably at the request of the butchers, the Government was prepared to increase the number of the board in spite of its statement in 1945 that a board of seven members was large enough. If it was good enough to increase the number for the benefit of butchers, it is desirable at this stage to have an additional producers' representative. I support the amendment.

The Committee divided on the amendment.—

Ayes (11).—The Hons. K. E. J. Bardolph, S. C. Bevan, J. L. S. Bice, F. J. Condon, J. L. Cowan, L. H. Densley, E. H. Edmonds, A. A. Hoare, W. W. Robinson (teller), Sir Wallace Sandford, and R. R. Wilson.

Noes (7).—The Hons. E. Anthoney, C. R. Cudmore, N. L. Jude, Sir Lyell McEwin (teller), A. J. Melrose, F. T. Perry, and C. D. Rowe.

Majority of 4 for the Ayes.

Amendment thus carried.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Clause 2—"Members of board"—reconsidered.

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON—I move—

Before paragraph (a) insert the following paragraphs:—

(aa) by striking out the word "seven" in subsection (2) thereof and by inserting in lieu thereof the word "eight";

(ab) by striking out the word "six" occurring in the first line of subsection (3) thereof and in the first line of subsection (4) thereof and by inserting in lieu thereof in each case the word "seven".

Amendments carried.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE—The effect of the amendment just agreed to is that there will be an extra man on the board who will represent the breeders of sheep and cattle and who will be selected from a panel of names submitted by the Stockowners' Association of South Australia. As I see it the representative of the breeders of lambs for export will be selected from a panel submitted by the Australian Society of Breeders of British Sheep (South Australian Branch), the South Australian Wheat and Woolgrowers' Association and the South Australian executive of the Australian Primary Producers' Union jointly, and I do not think they are the right people. I imagine that almost all of the breeders of British sheep belong to the Stockowners' Association, although I have no foundation of fact for that assertion. I would also think that the South Australian Wheat and Woolgrowers' Association is more concerned with wheat than with stock, and the same applies in respect of the A.P.P.U., and I very much doubt whether the Government suggestion contained in the Bill is a proper and workable scheme. Mr. Robinson has told us that he has been breeding lambs for export for 30 years and he should know more about it than I do, but I do not think that having three bodies, two of which are more interested in wheat than in stock, responsible for submitting a panel of names from which the selection is to be made by the Government is the right way to go about things. Accordingly, to test the feeling of the Committee, I move—

In line 4 of paragraph (a) to strike out "jointly," and in the same line "committees" with a view to inserting in lieu thereof the word "committee," and to strike out all of the remaining words after "the" in line 5, with a view to inserting "Stockowners' Association of South Australia."

The effect will be that that association will nominate somebody to represent the export lamb breeders and someone to represent those who sell cattle and sheep for export. The association has a membership of some 2,400 and I think it is the recognized organization of people who breed and grow stock, and it is therefore desirable that it should be able to submit the panel of names.

The Hon. F. T. PERRY—Mr. Cudmore has raised a very good point. Representation of small sections on a board of this kind is

undesirable. The type of man required is a broadminded man who has had considerable experience and whose opinion is not focussed on one particular point. The main function of this board is the slaughtering, marketing and distribution of carcasses in the metropolitan area, plus a certain amount of meat export business, but the original conception of the abattoirs has been almost entirely departed from. By degrees it is becoming a sectionally representative board whose members are elected because of their individual knowledge. I think that is wrong. Selection by the Stockowners' Association should produce a person with a much wider general knowledge.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I oppose the amendment. With other members from this place, I was appointed a member of a Select Committee which made an exhaustive examination of the functioning of the Abattoirs Board and reported to Parliament. If Mr. Cudmore perused that report he would find that the Committee sought evidence from all concerned in the breeding of sheep, whether for the export trade or for the production of wool, as well as from those interested in the breeding of cattle and the Committee recommended that certain sections of the industry, including the employees, should be represented on the board. Mr. Cudmore's amendment would destroy the very basis of the legislation brought in by the Government at that time.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY—The only point on which I agree with Mr. Perry is that we should have the best man possible on the board to represent the stock industry. If he had several thousand lambs ready for export and could not get them killed he would realize the importance to the lamb industry of the proper functioning of the abattoirs. The industry has expanded phenomenally in recent years and must continue to do so with the closer settlement that is now taking place. Mr. Perry said he wanted the widest selection possible, and although the Stockowners' Association is a very important body its members are considerably fewer than those of either of the organizations mentioned in the Bill. It is unusual for Mr. Cudmore to be uncertain of his ground, and we have no knowledge of whether British sheep breeders are all members of the Stockowners' Association. Although that association should be competent to nominate members of the board I would like to refute Mr. Perry's statement on the lack of importance of the lamb raising industry.

The Hon. A. J. MELROSE—I support the amendment. The section it proposes to amend is very cumbersome. I agree with other honourable members that the Stockowners' Association is a recognized body which represents those who raise stock for disposal at the abattoirs or otherwise. It has at heart the widest interests of the breeders of stock of all kinds. Whether or not they are breeders of British sheep or lambs for export and are members of the Stockowners' Association does not cut much ice. I consider it would be safer to leave the nomination of a representative in that association's hands. Its members have a common interest in the disposal of stock to the best possible advantage. As Mr. Perry has said, what we want is a board made up of people who are capable of organization and management.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON—My opinion is that a majority of lamb breeders belong to either the Wheatgrowers' Association, the Primary Producers' Association or the Australian Society of Breeders of British Sheep. As has been said, we want the best man appointed, and I think we have a better chance of getting him if we do not exclude these other organizations, who would be excluded if the amendment were agreed to. Many members of those organizations are also members of the Stockowners' Association and it would be a mistake to exclude those other organizations.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY—It is undeniable that a great majority of fat lambs come from those who are engaged in mixed farming. I feel that there is no body more competent than the Stockowners' Association to nominate a panel for selection by the Government. The association is open to the breeders of all stock, and consequently I would be happy if it submitted a panel to the Government from which a selection could be made. Certainly the vast majority of sheep in the State are represented by members of that association. For Mr. Cudmore's information, the Australian Society of Breeders of British Sheep is not affiliated with the Stockowners' Association.

Amendment negatived; clause as amended passed.

Bill reported with amendments and Committee's report adopted.

STAMP DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the House of Assembly and read a first time.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT ADVISORY
COUNCIL BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 18. Page 1373.)

The Hon. F. T. PERRY (Central No. 2)—When the Bill was introduced by the Minister of Railways it sounded innocuous, but my view has changed since hearing several speeches in the Chamber. The Minister gave very little practical information concerning the measure, and it is from members' speeches that we have gained some idea of what is proposed. To my mind transport is reasonably controlled in the metropolitan area. We have an efficient railway service. Recently a committee was appointed to suggest improvements to our tramway system, but the ink was hardly dry on its report when another suggestion was put forward that a council be appointed to co-ordinate metropolitan transport. The Bill implies that the two organizations concerned are the railways and the tramways, but it does not provide that either of these organizations is committed to carry out the recommendation of the council if not instructed by the Minister. We have an efficient man in the Railways Commissioner, and if anyone knows anything about public transport in South Australia it should be the officers of that department and the Tramways Trust. We do not know who will be appointed to the council.

The traffic problem here is small compared with that in other parts of the world. The proposal is a reflection not only on the Minister but the two departments concerned—that they cannot amicably produce a scheme for the efficient handling of public transport in the metropolitan area without the proposed council. My view is that the idea is ill-conceived. The object could have been attained far more simply by a conference between the departments concerned and the Minister. When two additional Ministers were appointed I thought that Ministerial control of these matters would be improved and that fewer advisory bodies would be appointed, but that has not proved to be so. I have sat on many such advisory boards, but it always seems that following a report someone else later decides the position, and therefore apparently such advisory bodies have no responsibility. I would rather that control of traffic in the metropolitan area should be arranged by a conference between the two main traffic bodies and the Minister. If we are to include taxicabs, buses and motor cars, the position might be differ-

ent, but there was nothing in the Minister's speech relating to anything more than public transport. I am totally opposed to the Bill and will vote against it, and failing its defeat will support Mr. Cudmore's amendment to limit the life of the board and its responsibilities.

The Hon. N. L. JUDE (Minister of Railways)—I am glad honourable members have given careful consideration to this Bill. I was somewhat surprised when Mr. Perry suggested it was an innocuous measure. Any measure calculated to bring about some improvement in the difficult financial position in which we find transport should surely receive considerable support and should not be called innocuous. Honourable members suggested that I should have given them more information on several points. I thank Mr. Condon for his mention of improvement in railway finances, particularly in regard to the working account, and I can say quite sincerely that there is every hope that that improvement will not only be maintained but will be increased as the dieselization of the railways increases. I also agree with him that any measure introduced and any activity taken to prevent overlapping is highly desirable. He mentioned appeals, but I do not think it is necessary to include any matter of appeal in this Bill because it is a measure to establish an advisory body. All members have talked about the powers of this body, but I point out that it will have no power beyond that of recommendation.

The Hon. F. T. Perry—But you never get good judgment without responsibility, do you?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—I consider that a practical body of experts accept responsibilities when they take a job on. It may be only a responsibility to advise, but surely their own reputations will be such that they will endeavour to give of their best in giving that advice? In regard to appeals, the voice of Parliament will be in some sense a directive of the public feeling, apart from the Treasurer's much more realistic view of what is happening to the funds. I congratulate Mr. Condon on his forthright statement with regard to the public. I feel today that members should not hesitate in the course of their duty when they feel that sections of the public are expecting to get too great a share of the funds they contribute as taxpayers. It is not the coffers of the State but the taxpayers' money that is being wasted by duplication, because, as Mr. Condon said, they want a railway, a bus service and trams competing one against the other on

approximately the same routes, yet they as taxpayers are put to the expense. I was very glad to see that Mr. Condon adopted that attitude.

Honourable members referred to the powers of the council, and Mr. Anthoney seemed to fear that it had great powers, but I can assure him that it has not. If he reads the Bill carefully he will realize its powers are very limited. Mr. Bevan and Mr. Bardolph also seemed rather worried about the powers of the council. One or two honourable members expressed some interest with regard to its composition, and I can assure them that it is the intention of the Government to appoint an important person from the railways and an important person from the tramways as members, and probably a judge as chairman. I do not object to Mr. Cudmore saying that another board means another huge department but I feel he will see the more practical side now that I have told members the probable constitution of the council, and I do not envisage that it will mean another tremendous staff.

I was somewhat surprised when Mr. Cudmore lost his usual forensic ability and rambled off about nationalization and the Labor Party. There is nothing in this Bill of that nature. I would prefer honourable members, as against even thinking about nationalization in this connection, to think of an attempt at co-ordination and consider whether or not it will bring about increased efficiency, because I think that is the aim of the Bill. Mr. Cudmore referred to the Auditor-Generals' report, and said that he could not get much information with regard to suburban transport because the various items were difficult to separate. I indicate for his benefit that the Government has an extensive report on the suburban railways showing as near as possible that it cost the suburban railways approximately £2,152,000 to earn a revenue of approximately £562,000. These figures and the report are available to any members interested. He then mentioned passenger figures. I point out to him that the figures he quoted do not present the true picture because when tram and bus figures increased, buses were being substituted for trams and in that way the figures could be and probably were misleading. I do not say the passenger figures did not drop a little.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—As I read it, those figures were only for the private licensed buses.

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—The licensed buses took the place of trams in many cases.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—The Municipal Tramways Trust buses took the place of trams.

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—And also some licensed buses. It was mentioned by Mr. Cudmore, and supported by other members, that it is desirable to have a limitation on the period of appointment of this council. The Government has considered this matter, and it will be further considered in Committee. Suggestions have been made by, I think, all members of the Labor Party that the council should be a larger one and should include employees' representatives. As a matter of fact it was rather interesting this afternoon for me to look up the remarks I made on the Abattoirs Board Bill when a private member. Then I expressed the opinion that three expert business men might be better appointed than members of various interests. I also pointed out that because a man was an expert lamb breeder it did not necessarily mean that he would make an expert member of a committee to run the abattoirs. The same thing applies in this case. We want men with a practical outlook who can handle big finance. If we submitted to the suggestion of increasing the number, I have no doubt that we would have to have representatives of many other organizations. It is the Government's firm intention to endeavour to maintain the suggested council of three.

Mr. Bardolph has always exhibited the keenest interest in transport matters. On two occasions in the last few years he has brought in a special resolution suggesting that the Government should set up a Select Committee of members to control transport. I think it will be agreed that that shows he has a considerable interest in the subject. Therefore, Mr. President, you could, I think, agree with me when I say I was amazed that he suggested that this Bill is a farce, a sham and a fraud. When I asked him, "Are you going to support it?" he went a little further, and said, "Yes, because it is part of Labor's policy." I am sorry for the honourable member for what the Leader of the Opposition must have said to him outside.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—Be fair and complete my sentence.

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—That will not help the honourable member, although I will complete it. He said:—

Yes, because it is part of Labor's policy, but the Government was not courageous enough to accept the whole of Labor's policy whereby the two systems would be placed on a different basis.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—That puts a different complexion on it.

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—I do not think it makes any difference to the honourable member's suggestion. He said the Bill was a farce, a sham and a fraud, and then said he would support it. Mr. Perry appeared to make a grave error when he said he could not understand why the Bill permitted instructions to the Railways Commissioner but not to the Tramways Trust. I draw attention to clause 14 which specifically says:—

For all or any of the purposes mentioned in this section, the Governor, on the recommendation of the Council, may make orders giving to the South Australian Railways Commissioner or to the Municipal Tramways Trust or to both of them directions as to the policy to be pursued by the said Commissioner or trust.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan—The Minister contradicts himself. He said yesterday it was only an advisory council.

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—The honourable member should read the Bill again. The clause also provides:—

(4) It shall be the duty of the South Australian Railways Commissioner and of the Municipal Tramways Trust to comply with every direction given to him or it under this section.

I fail, therefore, to follow Mr. Perry's contention. However, I have made endeavours to cover the various requests for information and

I trust that the Bill will receive the consideration and therefore the support of members.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

RENMARK IRRIGATION TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

BULK HANDLING OF WHEAT.

The PRESIDENT laid on the Table the first progress report of the Public Works Standing Committee on the bulk handling of wheat, together with minutes of evidence.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORTS.

The PRESIDENT laid on the table the report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works on the Risdon Park Primary School, together with minutes of evidence; and its second progress report on the Onkaparinga Valley Water Supply (Emergency supply to Mount Bold and Happy Valley reservoirs).

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.20 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, November 23, at 2 p.m.