

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, December 1, 1954.

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

QUESTIONS.**COPIES OF BILLS FOR MEMBERS.**

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I desire to direct a question to you, Mr. President. Yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition indicated that the Bill in connection with the registration of mothercraft nurses was not before the House, and on a point of order being raised you said, as reported in *Hansard*, “There is nothing to say that the honourable member shall have a copy of it.” *Standing Order* No. 287 provides:—

Every Bill read a first time shall be printed by the Government Printer, with as little delay as possible, for the use of members.

Coupled with your interpretation, will it be the future procedure of this House for members not to be provided with a Bill and that any Bill may be introduced without members having the right to have a copy before them.

The PRESIDENT—It is usual for honourable members to be supplied with a copy of a Bill. Getting back to the beginning of the question, I ruled that the Bill was before the House, and I maintain that was a correct ruling. To start with the House gave the Chief Secretary permission to introduce the Bill. The House carried the first reading, and then carried a motion suspending the Standing Orders so that the Chief Secretary could move the second reading. The Standing Order referred to by the honourable member states that after the first reading the Bill shall be printed with as little delay as possible. “With as little delay as possible” certainly does not mean that printed copies shall be in the hands of members within two minutes or so. A printed copy of the Bill signed by the Chief Secretary when he introduced it was laid on the Table. Therefore, I claim that the Bill was before the House and that my ruling was correct.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—There was the other point I raised. You are reported in *Hansard* as saying that there was nothing to say that an honourable member shall have a copy of a Bill. Can you enlarge upon that?

The PRESIDENT—I am sorry if I did not answer that portion of the question. There is not, either. I think the honourable member is correct, but I should have added if it was necessary—and I do not admit it was—“at that stage.” It is very indefinite even then

whether it is absolutely necessary, because May lays it down that if a Bill has not been printed when it is called on for the second reading, the postponement of the Bill is the usual course, though, as no rule forbids the second reading of an unprinted Bill, a member is in order in moving its second reading, and it is for the House to determine whether, under the circumstances, it shall be read a second time. The whole thing is always in the hands of the House. If they propose to do it they can, and if not they cannot. I noticed that Mr. Condon made a comment at the end of his remarks yesterday which had I heard it I would have made him withdraw it.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—If I made any remarks yesterday which I should not have made, you had the opportunity, Mr. President, to ask me to withdraw, and I would have done so. I am not concerned about your first reply to Mr. Bardolph, but I am concerned with regard to the respect due to this House and upholding its dignity. You ruled that there was no provision requiring members to be supplied with copies of a Bill. I think a correction is necessary there, because the impression has got about that no member has a right to ask for a copy of a Bill. There is no feeling in this. I could have taken the opportunity to move that your ruling be disagreed with, but, as one knows, the President is always right. I should like the position clarified.

The PRESIDENT—It is only laid down by inference that copies of Bills shall be supplied to members. The inference is where it is stated that “with as little delay as possible” after the first reading the Bill shall be printed and naturally the usual practice then comes into operation and that practice has been that as soon as possible copies of Bills are supplied to all members. I think the honourable member will find that the Bill in question is on his file today.

ARDROSSAN WHEAT SILO.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE I ask permission to make a statement with a view to asking a question of the Minister representing the Minister of Agriculture.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—My question is in relation to the congestion which has occurred this season at the Ardrossan wheat silo. The position is that deliveries have been very heavy to that silo during the last fortnight. On Friday last 121,000 bushels were delivered, on Monday 123,000, and on Tuesday 125,000,

making a total of 369,000, or over three-eighths of the capacity of the silo in three days. By tonight they estimate there will be 990,000 bushels in the silo, the capacity of which is only 1,000,000 bushels. A boat has been chartered and is due there on Friday, but will only take away 185,000 bushels. It will mean that the silo will be full on Friday and will have to be closed for some time. It seems that the reason for this congestion is that farmers from a radius well outside the area it was originally intended the silo should serve are carting grain to this centre. Some farmers are carting from as far as 50 miles away. It seems that the remedy is to have another silo at Wallaroo which I think would get rid of the very serious difficulty that has arisen at Ardrossan, and also of the criticism and dissatisfaction following on it. In view of the serious congestion that has occurred at the wheat silo at Ardrossan because wheat is being delivered there from places outside the radius which it was originally intended that the silo would serve, will the Government do what it can to ensure that another silo is erected at Wallaroo in sufficient time to be in operation for the 1955-56 harvest and, if necessary, enter into negotiations with the Australian Wheat Board with a view to having the silo erected on the same basis as the one at Ardrossan so that the matter will not be delayed until the report of the Public Works Committee on bulk handling is available or until the necessary legislation has been passed by Parliament?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—I ask the honourable member to place his question on the Notice Paper.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS (REDIVISION) BILL.

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

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

RIVER MURRAY WATERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon N. L. JUDE (Minister of Local Government)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to ratify an agreement recently made between the Commonwealth, New

South Wales, Victoria and South Australia respecting the works for the conservation and regulation of the River Murray waters. I will explain the provisions of the agreement in the order in which they occur. First, the agreement provides for increasing the size of the Hume Reservoir. Under the amending agreement of 1948 provision was made for increasing the capacity of the reservoir from 1,250,000 to 2,000,000 acre feet. Works for this purpose are being carried out and the capacity of the reservoir has now reached 1,382,000 acre feet. This is an interim stage and further increases of the capacity are dependent upon the removal of the town of Tallangatta, which is already in progress. Investigations made by the River Murray Commission have shown that it will not be economical at any time to increase the total storage of the Hume Reservoir above 2,500,000 acre feet and the Commission recommended that the Governments concerned should now agree to enlarge the reservoir to this extent, so that further construction works may proceed with this object in view.

Completion of Hume Reservoir to 2,000,000 acre feet capacity and subsequent enlargement to 2,500,000 acre feet would cost a great deal more in total, Sir, than the enlargement to 2,500,000 acre feet in the one operation as now proposed. The increased capacity will be of considerable benefit to South Australia. The Engineer-in-Chief has estimated that the additional half-million acre feet in the reservoir will enable this State to plan its development so as to use an additional 67,000 acre feet of water a year. This would be sufficient to irrigate 27,000 acres or, alternatively, to meet the domestic and industrial needs of 500,000 people. The Government therefore, had no hesitation in supporting the proposal for increasing the size of the reservoir as set out in the agreement.

The next matter in the agreement, Sir, is a provision for the construction of embankments and other works to prevent the loss of water from the Murray between Echuca and Tocumwal. At present a considerable amount of water flows from the Murray between these towns into small effluents from which no-one derives any appreciable benefit and it has been agreed to carry out suitable works at an estimated cost of £100,000 to prevent this loss.

As a consequence of the additional works mentioned it is necessary to alter the financial provisions of the previous agreements. At present the agreement provides for an estimated expenditure of £14,000,000 to be shared

equally by the four contracting Governments. The new agreement now submitted to members provides that the estimated cost of the works to be carried out will be £19,750,000. This total, Sir, allows for a general increase in costs and includes a sum of £3,200,000 which is an estimate of the additional expenditure necessary to increase the Hume reservoir from 2,000,000 to 2,500,000 acre feet. It also includes £100,000 for the works between Echuca and Tocumwal. South Australia's share of the costs of the additional work is £825,000.

The new agreement also provides that if the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority makes a contribution towards the cost of enlarging the Hume Reservoir that contribution will be applied to reduce the amounts for which the Governments are liable under the agreement. The justification for the contribution is that the enlargement of the Hume Reservoir will relieve the Snowy Mountains Authority from the obligation to provide storage to regulate the large quantity of water which it will divert from the Snowy River in to the Murray. Some negotiations have already taken place between the Commission and the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority with the object of settling the amount of the contribution. Agreement, Sir, has not yet been reached, but no doubt the matter will be settled in due course.

Finally, the agreement provides for an increase in the amount of water to be held in the Hume Reservoir as a reserve for use in years of drought. Under the 1948 agreement this reserve was fixed at a total of 550,000 acre feet. Under the new proposals it will be increased to 750,000 acre feet, as a result of which South Australia would receive an additional 50,000 acre feet in a drought year. The Engineer-in-Chief has calculated that the present reserve is sufficient to secure South Australia against loss of production through drought until the season 1957-58, but that after that season the possibility of such losses would progressively increase. An additional 50,000 acre feet in drought years would therefore be of great value to this State.

From what has been said, Sir, it will be apparent that the new agreement provides for South Australia, as well as for the other States, benefits which are of prime importance for the future development of Australia and the maintenance of an increased population. The Bill is therefore confidently submitted for the favourable consideration of Parliament.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON secured the adjournment of the debate.

AMUSEMENTS DUTY (FURTHER SUSPENSION) BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Chief Secretary)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to further suspend the levy of amusements duty under the Stamp Duties Act until July 1, 1958. Amusements duty has not been collected in the State since 1942, when the Commonwealth Government imposed entertainment tax as a war-time measure, and the collection of amusements duty by the State Government was suspended by an Act of the State Parliament passed in that year. The Commonwealth Government continued to collect entertainment tax until last year when an Act was passed by the Commonwealth Parliament bringing the levy of the tax to an end.

In moving the second reading of the Bill to abolish the tax the Commonwealth Treasurer stated that the Commonwealth Government had found the tax somewhat unsatisfactory. The yield had been small and the tax was inconvenient to the public, and to some extent fell on those least able to pay. After considering all relevant factors the Government has come to the conclusion that, in the interests of the public, amusements duty should not be reimposed until the financial position definitely requires it. There is no immediate necessity for the reimposition of the duty, and the Government therefore proposes to further suspend it until July 1, 1958. Thus the public will continue to enjoy the tax concession granted by the Commonwealth for a further three years. The Bill provides accordingly.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON secured the adjournment of the debate.

WATERWORKS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

In Committee.

(Continued from November 30. Page 1751.)

Clause 10 "Power to levy annual construction rates on country lands."

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS—Yesterday I asked the Minister if he could amplify what is meant by a construction rate. Has he any further information today?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE (Minister of Local Government)—Construction rates, as they are called, are the only water rates levied in the districts in which construction rates are charged. In these districts, the ordinary annual water rates are not charged and there is no intention to alter this principle.

There is no intention of altering the general principle of rating of land within one mile on either side of the main. In practice, however, it has not been the rule to rate the whole of the land within one mile of the main, although this appears to be the intention of the existing law. It is proposed, when the Bill is passed, to express more accurately, by annual notice in the *Gazette*, the land which is to be rated, but there is no intention to alter the underlying principles of limiting the rates on land within one mile of the main.

The Hon. J. L. S. BICE—The Minister's explanation is entirely satisfactory to me.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (11 to 13) and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment and Committee's report adopted.

HIGHWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 30. Page 1573.)

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH (Central No. 1)—This measure affects only the Municipal Tramways Trust. Under it the trust's contribution for each mile of the highway traversed by its buses will be increased from .17d. to 1d., but this will bring into the State's coffers only about £130,000 which about offsets the registration fees that the trust would pay on its vehicles if they were registered in the ordinary way. Another alteration is that the money is to be paid monthly instead of annually, and will be paid into the Highways Fund for the purpose of providing street lighting and other amenities.

I have been struck on recent sitting days with the avidity with which the Minister in charge of the Bill accepts points raised by Government members in opposition to measures and agrees to reporting progress, as this contrasts sharply with the way in which points of order raised by Opposition members are over-ruled by weight of numbers. I submit that the new Minister should extend the same consideration to members of the Opposition as he extends to members of his own political complexion.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment; Committee's report adopted.

WHEAT INDUSTRY STABILIZATION BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 30. Page 1567.)

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON (Northern)—The objects of the Bill have been ably explained by Mr. Densley and Mr. Edmonds, who pointed out that it provides for the establishment of a stabilization fund with contributions of 1s. 6d. a bushel by growers which are to be placed in a fund to meet the danger of a falling market. Owing to the lack of agreement among the States a stabilization fund, to which over the years growers had contributed £20,000,000, had to be distributed—£11,000,000 in the first instalment on one pool, and £9,000,000 later. The Bill ratifies an agreement entered into by the Commonwealth and the States providing for a home consumption price of 14s. a bushel.

Judging by the reception from the Opposition, it would appear that some particular benefit is being conferred upon wheatgrowers, and that they are getting something to which they are not entitled at the expense of every other section of the community. Actually, the present export price of wheat is 14s. 10½d. to the West Indies, and 15s. to India. It will be remembered that some time ago sales were very difficult to execute, but owing to rust in Canada and shortages in various wheatgrowing countries there is a much greater demand now. The Wheat Board has been criticized by members in this Chamber for not accepting earlier in the year a price around 14s. 3d. for three or four cargoes, but the present state of the market does in some measure justify its action. It has been said by Mr. Condon that this legislation has placed £3,000,000 in the hands of growers at the expense of old age pensioners and others on low incomes. In South Australia there are about 800,000 consumers, whereas there are only about 13,000 wheat producers, and in the Commonwealth about 9,000,000 consumers. Over the years wheatgrowers have been providing cheap wheat to help the home economy, but at no time, not even under this legislation, have the public made any contribution to wheatgrowers. The price under this legislation is 14s. a bushel for home consumption.

When the agreement was ratified by the six States and the Commonwealth the price of flour was increased by £4 18s. 9d. a ton, taking it from £27 7s. 3d. to £32 6s. In February of that year there was a decrease in the price by 11s., brought about by cheaper cornsacks.

Later that month there was an increase of 15s., due to the reduced running time in flour mills because of lack of overseas orders. So, it will be seen that the increase has not been to the advantage of the wheatgrower. In 1926 the price of bread was 5½d. a 2-lb. loaf and it was about 4½d. in 1937 and 5½d. up to 6d. in 1948, and so on until it is now 1s. 0½d. In 1926 wheat was 6s. 2½d. a bushel and bread at that time was 5½d. a loaf. In 1948 the price of wheat was 6s. 3d. and bread was then 7½d. a loaf. It will be seen that it is not only the price of wheat which determines the price of bread. It has been said in the press that about 6d. represents the value of wheat in the price of a loaf and that the remainder is made up by labour and other charges. Considering the increase in the price of flour of £4 18s. 9d. a ton and that a ton produces 1,330 loaves, there is an increase of a shade over ½d. a lb. for the flour, and as it takes about 1½ lbs. of flour with the addition of water, yeast, etc., to make a 2-lb. loaf of bread it will be seen that the increase represents about ¾d. a loaf.

The State Premiers and the Commonwealth have agreed to a home consumption price of 14s. a bushel. Because there was a decline in the acreage sown to wheat it was feared that if we had a drought there would be insufficient wheat to supply our needs. In 1946 an area of 2,518,000 acres was sown to wheat and in 1953-54 a total of 1,526,000, a fall of about 1,000,000 acres. It has been said during the debate that the price of bread has been increased since the time wages were pegged by the Arbitration Court and that the cost of living has increased, resulting in the worker being penalized. For the September, 1953, quarter, following the pegging of wages, the C series index was 2,264. In the following December it was increased to 2,272 and by March, 1954, it had fallen to 2,260 and by the living has increased, resulting the worker end of June was 2,265. That year wages never caught up with the cost of living. These figures indicate very clearly that not only have wages been fixed, but costs have been fixed correspondingly. Unfortunately, the figures for the September quarter are not available, which is why I have quoted the June figures. These figures, prepared by the Commonwealth Statistician, indicate clearly that the statement that the cost of living has increased while wages have not is incorrect.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—What has the cost of living to do with this matter?

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON—The Leader has stressed from time to time that money given to the farmers has increased the cost of living, particularly of old age pensioners. However, at no time has the home consumption price been equal to the export price, and even now the producer is making some sacrifice. Under this measure the home consumption price is fixed but it is still below the overseas price, and when the overseas price falls below 14s. the home consumption price will be reduced.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—To what extent?

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON—To the level to which the overseas price falls. It behoves every person engaged in industry, whether in the factory, the office, the building trade or primary production, to achieve greater efficiency and reduce costs of production. Then the loaf of bread will be cheaper and the people in this State as well as the Commonwealth will reap the benefit. If people want the benefit of a lower price they must apply themselves to whatever task they are allotted. It is only by so doing that export industries can be successful, and without exports this country cannot be successful.

The PRESIDENT—I might agree with the honourable member, but I am not quite sure what that has to do with the Bill.

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON—What I have said is in answer to the criticism that has been levelled against the measure.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—There was no criticism of the Bill. We all favour it.

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON—This measure will place the wheatgrower on a level with other industries, such as the wool industry. It is only by paying a reasonable price for wheat that we can hope to meet the requirements of our people, especially in a lean year.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—The honourable member spoke about increased production. Why reduce acreages?

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON—If a farmer can devote a similar acreage to some other purposes, isn't that an advantage? It has been shown over the years that although acreages have been reduced there has been a steady increase in production per acre. In 1946-47 the average production per acre was 11 bushels, and in the following years 13, 12, 14, 16 and it rose to 22.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—That is only because the rains were good.

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON—That, and the better treatment of our land, the wider

rotation and the greater spread of the type of crop sown. Throughout the country great improvement can be seen in the land because of crop rotation. There is a better coverage and the usefulness of the rainfall has been increased. If the land is overworked it becomes fine and the water runs off, but today a coverage is left and even with the lower rainfall three bushels for each inch of useful rainfall is produced, whereas once it was only one. This Bill will be an encouragement to the producers to grow more wheat, and in that way we will avoid the fear of under-production. I support the measure.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 10 passed.

Clause 11—"Price to be paid for wheat."

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—This afternoon we heard that the farmer was receiving prices above the home consumption price, but I know that wheat has been sold overseas at less than the home consumption price for the Commonwealth.

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON—Can you give the names of the seller and the ship?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—I can, and I want the honourable member to understand that although he is in a very prominent position, other people know exactly what is going on. I do not object, because I admit that the price on the average could be above 14s. but it has been said that the Australian consumer will get the benefit when the home consumption price is low, which I doubt. Recently an additional farmers' representative for South Australia was appointed to the Australian Wheat Board and I wish to pay a compliment to Mr. Shanahan, the man appointed, because I think he will be a worthy representative who will not only look at the one side of the picture. One cannot buy a bushel of wheat in South Australia at the price paid overseas. If a man wants to quote for a sale of flour overseas, can he get wheat to compete with the world's markets at the same price as it is sold overseas?

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON—Yes.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—He cannot. I support this Bill, but I question the varying prices of the wheat sold overseas and for home consumption. We are dealing with the price to be paid to the farmer but we continually overlook the manufacturer, whose position is getting worse day by day. I would support not 14s. a bushel but 15s., if necessary, and I do not object to the farmer getting the parity price, no matter what it is. If the parity price overseas is 16s., 17s. or £1 a

bushel, let the farmer get that price. However, if we do that with wheat why not with butter, meat and eggs? Why cry out for London parity for one article and ask the consumers to make up the deficiency?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—We are still subsidizing butter.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Yes, by 7½d. a lb. and I do not object, but I say to those who advocate London parity for one article that we should have it for all. I have no objection to the London parity price because the people of Australia have been getting wheat at a lower price than that for some time, but what the farmer has lost another section of the farming community has gained in another way. Admittedly, the consumer has received the benefit of cheaper bread, but he has had to make it up in other directions. I have no wish to see the price of wheat reduced to an unpayable level to the growers, but while we spend much of our time helping one industry we are, unfortunately, overlooking the manufacturing side of it.

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON—I was very careful to make sure that no sale of f.a.q. wheat had been made at under 14s. I checked up with an authority in the wheat industry and he told me that the only sales made overseas for less than 14s. a bushel were of inferior grade. Not content with that I rang the South Australian Wheat Board on the point and was assured that no sales had been made at less than 14s. I could not do more than that. As regards the consumer getting wheat at the overseas price, I also checked on that and found that the price to the consumer is 14s. 1½d. a bushel on rail, the 1½d. being for stacking, so that it is equivalent to the overseas price. It costs 9d. a bushel to put it on the boat and the price is exactly the same.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (12 to 22) and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment and Committee's report adopted.

SUCCESSION DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

In Committee.

(Continued from November 30. Page 1569.)

Clause 3—"Duty free gifts."

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—I move—

In new section 9a, after "shall" insert "for the purpose of assessing the duty payable thereon."

Yesterday I said that careful consideration ought to be given to the aspect raised by Mr. Cudmore, and since then I have had an

opportunity of considering the matter further. The point at issue appears to be whether new section 9a provides simply that, in calculating the value of a gift for succession duty purposes, the will is to be read as though no such direction was included in the will, or whether it could possibly mean that for the purpose of distribution to the beneficiaries the clause in the will providing that the gifts were to be duty free would be upset. To make the position clear I think we ought to insert the words contained in my amendment. They are contained in section 9 of the principal Act. I have spoken to a member of the Legislation Committee of the Law Council, also the Parliamentary Draftsman, and he feels that we would not be doing anything wrong by inserting the words.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE—I, too, have had an opportunity of studying this clause further. I felt yesterday that there was something wrong with it because it said “the net present value of that property . . . shall be calculated as if there were no such direction.” That is where I jibbed. I not only agree with Mr. Rowe that there is no harm in inserting the words suggested, but I would suggest that they are absolutely essential. As he said, they are contained in section 9 of the principal Act and I suggest that if they were not put in here new section 9 may come into conflict with the duties of administrators and trustees under section 46 which states:—

(1) Subject to any specific direction appearing in any will, deed of gift, or settlement, to the contrary, every administrator or trustee or person required to pay duty under this Act, shall adjust any duties, and the incidence of any duties payable or paid by him, so as to throw the burden thereof upon the respective properties on which the same shall be ultimately chargeable.

Whether or not the Government intended to interfere with that I do not know, but on its own statement all it wants to do is to simplify the difficult position which has arisen in the assessment of duty on a gift plus the duty on that duty, which is the present trouble because of the exemptions, etc. Therefore, if we insert the words proposed we will do what the Government wants without interfering with the work of the administrator in calculating the net value of the property.

The Hon. N. L. JUDE (Minister of Local Government)—The Government has examined the amendment and has no objection to it.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Remaining clause (4) and title passed.

Bill reported with an amendment and Committee's report adopted.

TRAVELLING STOCK RESERVE: HUNDRED OF BARUNGA.

Consideration of the following resolution received from the House of Assembly.

That it is desirable that sections 747 and 748, hundred of Barunga, containing 22 acres, which were set aside many years ago as a camping ground for travelling stock, as shown on the plan laid before Parliament on July 27, 1954, be resumed in terms of section 136 of the Pastoral Act, 1936-1953, for the purpose of being dealt with as Crown lands under the provisions of the Crown Lands Act, 1929-1944.

(Continued from November 25. Page 1543.)

The Hon. N. L. JUDE (Minister of Local Government)—I move—

That the resolution be agreed to.

Following on inquiries to lease the sections, investigations were made by the department to ascertain whether the area was still required as a camping ground for travelling stock. The district council of Snowtown has advised that the land is not further required for the purpose for which it was set apart as stock are now generally carried by motor transport. Inquiries made by the departmental inspector support this contention and it has been ascertained that the area has not been used for a considerable number of years. Portion has been used as a stacking ground by the district council of Snowtown and if the resolution is agreed to this area will be retained whilst required for that purpose. The Stockowners' Association has advised the department that it would raise no objection to the land being resumed. In the circumstances I ask members to agree to the resolution.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON (Northern)—The resolution deals with a piece of land situated between Redhill and Snowtown. There are many such areas in the northern districts held as stock reserves, but which have not been used for some years. I see no objection to this land being resumed by the Crown and allotted for grazing or cereal growing. It is not a good policy that areas of this description should be left unattended, as they are usually a breeding ground for vermin and noxious weeds, and it is therefore a good idea that they should revert to the Crown. The Stockowners' Association has no objection to the proposal, and I therefore support the resolution.

Resolution agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.18 p.m. the Council adjourned until Thursday, December 2, at 2 p.m.