LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, September 28, 1955.

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

QUESTIONS.

NEW CITY OVAL.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—Has the Attorney-General obtained further information in reply to the question I asked yesterday concerning the proposed new city oval?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—Since yesterday I have been able to obtain the following report from the Crown Solicitor which goes into somewhat greater detail than I had available yesterday. It is as follows:—

So far as I have been able to ascertain in the time available the Park Lands are Crown lands which are under the care, control and management of the City Council by virtue of section 450 of the Local Government Act. The Council rights to deal with land under its care, control and management are regulated by the Act and the question of setting up of a new oval depends on the application of section 457 and 458. By section 457 the Council may lease an area of not more than 10 acres "to be used for the purpose of sports, games, agricultural shows or public recreations" for a term or successive terms of 21 years. No such lease may be granted except with the approval of a meeting of ratepayers and if a poll is demanded until a poll has resulted in favour of the resolution.

By section 458 the council itself may from time to time on the parklands . . . construct "golf links, tennis courts and other facilities for sport and may allot sites upon the parklands for the playing of games thereon." I have not been supplied with the details of the council's proposal but if it involves the construction of a structure similar to the Adelaide Oval, I do not think it would be justified by section 458 In my opinion the right to construct "facilities for sport" does not include the right to fence off a large area of the parklands for the construction of an arena into which the public will be admitted only on special occasions and usually no doubt only on payment of a fee. This view is supported by the special provisions of sections 854 and 855 in the same Act authorizing the leases of the Victoria Park Race Course and the Adelaide Oval. The implication of these provisions is that the public parks should not be withdrawn from their normal use except by Parliamentary authority. Section 855 provides that a proposed lease must either be approved by the Governor or laid before Parliament and be subject to disapproval by either House. The first legislation authorizing the lease of the Adelaide Oval was passed in 1871. This was replaced by the Adelaide Oval Act, 1897, the provisions of which have been incorporated in the Local Government Act. The inclusion of these special provisions indicates to my mind that Parliament did not intend a council's general powers to extend so far as the present proposal.

As to whether the Government proposes to set up a special committee, it seems to me that the Adelaide City Council's proposal is a long term one and we certainly have no details of what is involved.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—It is only in embryo.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—That is so and no funds have even been appropriated. It would therefore seem, particularly in view of the Crown Solicitor's opinion, that there is no necessity to set up a committee to consider the matter.

PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—Has the Attorney-General a reply to the question I asked yesterday concerning public examinations?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—I have received the following reply through the Minister of Education.—

The principal secondary education examinations are carried out by the Public Examinations Board of the University of Adelaide, and include the Intermediate, the Leaving and the Leaving Honours Examinations. These examinations are fully competitive. The Education Department also issues an Intermediate and a Leaving Certificate for examinations carried out in boys' and girls' technical schools and area schools. These are internal examinations conducted by each school independently.

EVIDENCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Attorney-General), having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Evidence Act, 1929-49. Read a first time.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill makes three amendments to the Evidence Act. Two of them were included in a Bill introduced last year which lapsed. The third, which deals with evidence given by children, has been included in the Bill as a result of consideration given by the Government to an amendment moved last year. The Bill provides as follows:—

Clause 3 requires unsworn evidence given by a child in proceedings for any offence to be corroborated in a material particular if the accused denies the offence on oath. At common law, evidence could only be given on oath, and this meant that a person could only give evidence if he was capable of understanding

the nature of an oath. A result of this rule was that in many cases small children, whose evidence might be essential to prove an offence, could not give evidence. In the past century in most British communities the rule has been relaxed to allow children of tender years to give unsworn evidence. In almost all cases where children of tender years have been permitted to give such evidence, it has been provided that the evidence must be corroborated in a material particular implicating the accused. Thus the laws of England, Canada, and all other States of the Commonwealth so provide. However, section 12 of the South Australian Evidence Act, which provides for children under ten to give unsworn evidence in proceedings for offences, does not require the evidence to be corroborated.

The explanation for this difference appears to be historical. South Australia first permitted such evidence to be received by the Offences against Women and Children Act, 1874, and was one of the first British communities, if not the first, to permit such evidence to be received. The South Australian provision, now section 12 of the Evidence Act, has not been substantially altered since then. The common law rule was first relaxed in England by the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1885. This Act required such evidence to be corroborated. Acts dealing with the subject, which were passed subsequently in England, Canada and the other States of Australia are all based on the provisions of the Act, and require the evidence to be corroborated.

Last year the Supreme Court, in giving judgment on an appeal against a conviction of a charge of indecent assault, drew the attention of the Legislature to the fact that South Australian law was out of line with the law of other parts of the British Commonwealth. (*R. v. Williams* [1954] S.A.S.R. p. 216 at pp. 226 and 227.) The circumstances of the case were that the accused, a bread carter, was accused of indecently assaulting a girl of six in the course of a very short journey in his cart. Although the accused denied the offence on oath, he was convicted of the offence on the unsworn and uncorroborated evidence of the child. There were some unsatisfactory features about the case, but on appeal the Supreme Court did not feel able to disturb the verdict of the jury. Had South Australian law been the same as the law of other parts of the British Commonwealth, the accused could not have been convicted because of the lack of corroboration. The Government has given careful consideration to the whole question, and has come to the conclusion that it is desirable in the interests of justice that corroboration of such evidence should be required where the accused denies the offences on oath. Clause 3 makes the necessary amendment to the principal Act for this purpose.

Clause 4 repeals section 17 of the principal Act. That section provides that in proceedings instituted in consequence of adultery, a witness shall not be liable to be asked nor compelled to answer questions tending to show that the witness has been guilty of adultery, unless he or she has given evidence in disproof of the adultery. It is proposed in this Bill to abolish this rule of evidence. The primary reason for so doing is that the rule has completely ceased to have any logical justification. Until some time in the last century there was a general rule of law in England in both ecclesiastical and civil courts that a person should not be compelled to answer a question tending to show that he or she had been guilty of adultery. The reason for this rule was that to compel a person to answer such questions might expose the person to ecclesiastical censure or punishment by an ecclesiastical court.

In early English and South Australian enactments relating to the evidence of practice in matrimonial causes, exceptions are made which make it clear that such a general rule was still regarded as being in existence, and that it was desired to preserve the rule. Section 17 is in origin an enactment of this kind, though it appears to be a modification of the general rule. It originally formed the proviso to an enactment passed in England in 1869 which made parties and their husbands and wives in divorce proceedings instituted in consequence of adultery competent for the first time to give evidence in such proceedings. The position at present is that there is no longer any such general rule of privilege from answering questions tending to establish adultery, the courts having recognised that the privilege had become an anachronism. The general rule has certainly ceased to exist for 50 years and probably for considerably longer. As section 17 is confined to proceedings for divorce on the ground of adultery, it preserves for those proceedings a rule which has long since ceased to apply to other proceedings, and is therefore an anomaly. The continued preservation in England of the rule laid down in section 17 was severely criticized early in the century. A Royal Commission which sat there in 1912 to consider the law of divorce recommended the

abolition of the rule. More recently, in 1947, it was considered by a committee presided over by Lord Justice Denning, and was again condemned.

Although the rule has nevertheless not yet been abolished in England, it was abolished both in Western Australia in 1948 and in Victoria in 1952. The rule is one which leads to unfortunate results. First, it may prevent the parties in divorce proceedings instituted in consequence of adultery from being questioned about the very matter in issue, a situation which seems contrary to common sense. Second, the rule has given rise to a series of complicated and divergent judicial decisions. The rule is not well framed and the courts have found that this, coupled with its anomalous nature, has made it very difficult to apply. Third the rule has the extraordinary result that a plaintiff seeking a divorce on the grounds of adultery, who is himself guilty of adultery is, so long as he does not deny his adultery, privileged from answering questions about the adultery. It also may prevent the defendant from calling another party where his evidence would be valuable to the defendant, and vice versa. It was this aspect of the rule which most concerned the commission of 1912 and the committee presided over by Lord Justice Denning. The Denning Committee quoted the following passage from the report of the commission:—

The result is that however guilty the petitioner may be and however much the judge may suspect his or her guilt, so long as he or she confines his or her evidence to the case against the respondent, no question can be put to the petitioner as to guilt on his or her side, and all the court can do is to direct the King's Proctor's attention to the case. Moreover, if the respondent does not choose to appear, and the co-respondent does and fights the case, he is in a difficulty about compelling the respondent to give evidence. So, also, is a respondent if a co-respondent will not contest a case. These restrictions should, in the interests of justice, be done away with.

It is impossible in the present day to find any justification for the retention of the rule. To any suggestion that it protects innocent persons from being injured by disclosures of adultery or that it prevents the asking of vexatious questions, it can be answered that there are nowadays adequate provisions in the law for prohibiting the publication of evidence and for preventing the asking of vexatious questions. The rule is an artificial and technical one, the main effect of which is to hinder the courts in finding out the truth. The Law Society has been approached about the matter and supports the proposal to abolish the rule.

Clause 5 makes comprehensive provision for the performance of notarial acts in South Australian matters by Commonwealth diplomatic and consular officials. I use the expression "notarial act" to mean the taking of oaths, affidavits and declarations, the attestation, verification and acknowledgment of documents and generally all forms of notarial acts. At present, section 67 of the Evidence Act provides that notarial acts relating to South Australian matters may be performed outside this State by British or Australian diplomatic or consular agents. The section defines the expression "diplomatic agent" and "consular agent" to include a variety of diplomatic and consular officers. Prior to 1947, the section applied only to diplomatic or consular agents of Great Britain. In that year, however, the section was amended at the request of the Commonwealth to apply also to Australian officials. The Commonwealth was greatly increasing its representation abroad at the time, and desired that its representatives should be able to perform State notarial acts. All States were asked to amend their law to this effect. The Commonwealth asked only that its official should be enabled to perform notarial acts to the same extent as British officials and, accordingly, when the principal Act was amended in 1947, that was all the amendment did. It has since transpired that there are a number of Australian diplomatic and consular officials who could perform notarial acts outside the State, but who do not fall within the definitions contained in section 67. The Commonwealth desires these officials to be included.

The Commonwealth has requested each State to embody in their law a model definition of the Australian officials who are to be permitted to perform the notarial acts of the State abroad. This definition mentions the following officials who are not so permitted at present under the principal Act, namely, High Commissioner, Head of Mission, Commissioner, Councillor or Secretary at a diplomatic post other than an embassy or legation, and Trade Commissioner. The Government considers it desirable that these officials should be enabled to perform notarial acts in South Australian matters abroad and has agreed to embody the model definition in the Evidence Act. Clause 5 makes the necessary amendment to section 67 of the principal Act.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE secured the adjournment of the debate.

FRUIT FLY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

PUBLIC PURPOSES LOAN BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 28. Page 874.)

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY (Southern)—I am not unduly concerned about the fact that these Estimates provide for a larger amount than last year because I do not think that is an unhealthy sign. The expansion of this State over the last 15 years has been tremendous. Not only are we producing a greater volume of primary products such as wool, meat and barley, but our industrial development has been stepped up to such an extent that we are perhaps earning as much from that source as from primary produce. In a young country such as ours with the tremendous expansion that has occurred it is only realistic that we should need extra money. It would be a happy position if we were able to do all the necessary jobs without borrowing, but we will not be in such a position for a long time, and I do not think it is desirable to impoverish the people by doing this work from normal taxation because there is some responsibility on the coming generation to shoulder some of the expenditure that has been incurred in providing the many facilities they will enjoy. I pay a tribute to the very fine management of State affairs by the Government over the last 15 years. It is unquestionable that the progress and prosperity of the State during that time warrant extreme commendation.

There are several difficulties in raising Loan money and consequently we must be prepared to cut our programme according to the funds that can be raised for the purpose. Whilst I believe that it is very desirable to borrow within the Commonwealth if we can, I believe also that now that we are introducing so many people from so many parts of the world it would not be improper or unrealistic to obtain Loan money from other countries, provided a reasonable interest rate could be arranged. We have had a phenomenal increase in population and have been called upon to provide very many new facilities, such as housing.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—Foodstuffs, too.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY—We have not had to provide Loan money for foodstuffs, because this is an agricultural country. There has been a considerable fall in the prices paid for much of our primary produce, but nevertheless primary industries, such as wool and grain, are on quite a stable basis. In addition, the output from mining could easily be of major importance to this State because not only have we still the normal mining output but we also have uranium, barytes and other minerals.

Housing is one of the first essentials. A sum of £4,350,000 is provided for the Housing Trust and £1,450,000 for advances for homes. These two sums are essential to provide accommodation for the large numbers of people coming here. Not only are we straining at our resources of men and material to provide for these people, but also money. As far as I can see that demand will be with us for quite a number of years. Even to satisfy the existing demand for homes will ensure a big building programme for many years, and the advent of many more migrants naturally will increase still further that demand and make an even larger call upon our loan funds I think we can be rather pleased than otherwise at the prospects of having to do all this building and provide the essential amentities.

A sum of £75,000 is provided for development of Crown lands in the hundred of Jeffries alone, and I would like to say how pleased I am at the considerable amount of development that has taken place within recent years. It is gratifying to know that the progress is being made in a most satisfactory manner and within one of the few large tracts of country enjoying a good rainfall. The Government is doing developmental work on Coonalpyn Downs which will be of extremely great value to the State and which will be the forerunner of the development of the remainder of that country, and it is to be commended on the manner in which it is going about the task. A survey of water supply is now being made so that settlers will not be placed on any country without an adequate supply. The work being done by the A.M.P. Society around Tatiara is also very valuable. There are a number of private developmental schemes as well as these which will all call for an extension of roads and amenities and all the other things that go with the requirements of primary industries in new areas. The work of the A.M.P. Society is of real interest to the public generally and the very many people who have seen the work are loud in their commendation of it. At present about 100,000 acres are sown to pasture and are showing good development. The rate of work is being stepped up and this year the society hopes to plough about 50,000 acres. I believe that its aim is to provide for settlement of about 80 men within the next two

years. Everyone will agree that this is a fine contribution not only for the settlement of those people, but towards the development of the State. In the head station of the scheme there is quite a township that is taking its place in the social life of the district as well as on the production side and the people are running their own shows and displays very satisfactorily. It is to be hoped that every assistance that is desirable will be provided so that we can extend this scheme for the benefit of the State and Australia generally.

Although we appreciate the sum of £200,000 set down for roads and bridges, it is not very large in view of the work calling for attention. Generally speaking, our road programme is carried out within the limits of motor revenue available to the State plus a portion of the petrol tax that is refunded by the Commonwealth Government. As one travels throughout the State one can but appreciate the tremendous amount of work being done by the Highways Department in the development of roads, but in these newly developed areas the tracks become quagmires in winter and sandhills in the summer so it is most essential to provide money for roads in these localities. I make a plea, if that is necessary, that the greatest possible amount be made available even from loan funds for the provision of roads in developmental areas. Some of the properties are situated as far as 25 to 30 miles from a township, so obviously transportation becomes a major factor in the cost of development and production. Our developmental schemes are to a large extent circumscribed by the fact that much of the land cannot be occupied because it is inaccessible at certain times of the year. This is a rather sad state of affairs and stresses the urgent need for providing roads if we are to continue our policy of development. Obviously, when the Government does the developmental work it will have to provide the roads, and if it is relieved of developmental expenditure that is an added reason why it should extend its contribution for road purposes in those districts which are moving ahead with such rapid strides. I cannot stress too strongly the costs which must be added to these areas if the developmental work has to be done with bad roads. Whilst the Government is providing £200,000 from loans for roads and bridges a lot more could be spent advantageously.

There has been some criticism in this debate of the money to be provided for loans to producers and advances to settlers, but I am strongly in favour of this provision. It is not to be imagined that these are merely amounts that have become necessary to meet some obligations which settlers have failed to fulfil. The £200,000 for loans to producers is for the provision of cold stores, packing sheds, milk processing works and loans to fishermen, all with a view to promoting greater production and preservation of foodstuffs to meet the growing demand. Our basis of sales of land to new settlers is on a very high plane; sometimes I wonder whether we have not even gone just a little over the top in the matter of land prices. We should appreciate that although the farming and grazing community have had a very good time in recent years there are many who have been recently settled on the land at very high prices and they are not in the same position as men who have been on the land for a number of years. We know that there will be a demand for this money for the purpose of providing fencing materials, water piping and other facilities on farmlands in future just as there has been in the past, and indeed there might easily be a greater demand, in as much as the cost of these things has risen so greatly. The provision of this sum is a good thing and if it is not all needed this year I am sure that in years to come there will be a demand.

The provision of £900,000 for harbour improvements also has my commendation. I do not know how the soldier settlement scheme on Kangaroo Island could be a success unless more money were spent on harbour facilities. Considerable progress has been made in the last few months and, with increased production of grain, meat and wool in that area, there will necessarily have to be greatly improved facilities to enable the settlers to carry on proficiently. We see that in the results of the Bulk Handling Bill which we dealt with recently. A sum of £130,000 will have to be spent at Wallaroo and £30,000 at Port Lincoln out of this loan money to provide those essentials for which the Government will be responsible in the scheme. We will at least have the satisfaction of knowing that the Government will probably be a little ahead of the bulk handling authority, and I do not think we would like to have it otherwise. Although I have expressed opinions regarding the desirability of the Government's doing the whole job, I am at least anxious that it should do its part at the earliest moment.

I propose to comment on only one other matter, namely, sewerage in the country. I think it was 15 years ago at least when councils throughout the country were circularized

regarding their requirements for sewerage and asked to indicate whether they were prepared to accept sewerage schemes. Many country towns were pleased to receive this notice and heartily endorsed the proposal. One notes that £556,000 is provided under this Bill for sewerage in the city of Adelaide and £199,000 in the country, but examining it a little more closely I think one would be justified in saying that all but £4,000 will be spent in the city and its environments, for one may almost term the satellite town a part of the city of Adelaide in the matter of sewerage.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—Several country schemes have been recommended.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY—Yes, but councils have been faced with increasing difficulties. In the first place, it is very difficult to get anyone to do the work of night soil disposal, and closer settlement of the towns is creating conditions that are most undesirable and causing great difficulties for councils. I would be pleased if even the whole amount allocated under the Bill for sewerage were spent in country towns, as this would give great satisfaction to the people. I would again urge on the Government the desirability of turning its attention to sewerage for the larger country towns at the earliest possible moment. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH (Central No. 1)—As was pointed out yesterday, the Bill provides for an expenditure of £28,300,000 on capital works for the current financial year. In addition, the Commonwealth Government will provide £3,600,000 for housing under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, and the total expenditure will be £31,900,000, an increase of £1,300,000 on last year. I have always expressed the opinion that the financial powers of the States were handed over to the Commonwealth when the Financial Agreement came into operation. While it continues this and the other States will find that their powers to carry out developmental works are restricted to the extent of the money which can be borrowed by the Commonwealth Government. So long as the argeement remains, it will be found that we will be in the same chaotic position in regard to developmental work. The States have sovereign rights and powers, and the powers enjoyed by the Commonwealth Parliament are as the result of the action taken by the State Parliaments to transfer those powers. We see the spectacle at the Premiers' Conferences of a virtual scramble by the States for loan moneys to carry out their programmes. The time has arrived when they should make a determined stand, because it is the Australian people's money, as the country is not divided into six separate entities. The Financial Agreement should be reviewed in the interests of the States.

I compliment the officers of the various Government departments, because in the final analysis it devolves upon them to present the Loan Estimates in the form in which we receive them. I particularly compliment the Housing Trust, and the Hospitals Department; and also Dr. Rollison, the Director-General of Medical Services, together with the Minister of Health, for the extension of our hospital services. Whilst we have an extensive hospital building programme we are experiencing difficulty in being able to staff our institutions. Actually we have buildings unoccupied because the necessary nursing staff is not available. I also compliment the officers of the State Bank on the prominent part played by their institution in the extension of home building. I am sorry that the constructional side of its programme was abandoned and that it has now become virtually a lending authority. Together with the State Savings Bank and other lending authorities, such as the co-operative building societies and lodges, these institutions have played their part in providing homes for the people, and therefore their avenues of operation should be extended and money made available to them by the Government as is done in the other States.

I will now reply to statements made, no doubt in good faith, by Mr. Story yesterday. He, like me when I first came into this House, was short in the political tooth, and as the years go by—and I hope he will be a member for some years—he will find it wise before making a direct charge against any Parliamentary Committee to ascertain all the facts. He said he regretted there was no line on the Estimates for the establishment of a co-operative cannery. Members of the Labor Party believe that the primary producer should get the full value of his labour. I am therefore pleased to notice a direct representative of fruitgrowers in this House advocating one of the foremost planks of Labour's policy—that a co-operative cannery should be established in this State. Mr. Story said that the Industries Development Committee had recommended huge amounts for the development of secondary industries which had been established to the detriment of primary producers. On calm reflection I think he will realize that no money,

the expenditure of which would be detrimental to any section of the community, is recommended by that committee. The view taken by its members is that the money should be expended for the establishment or maintenance of industries which will be of benefit to the whole community.

Mr. Story also said, in reference to one project recommended by the Committee, that everyone was looked after, including the Treasurer, taxpayers, the Committee itself and the men employed to see that they got their right and proper wage, and the only one overlooked was the unfortunate man who produced the fruit for canning. I shall not give the full details of the application which came before the committee because that would be improper, but I do not think I would be transgressing the rights of that committee if I mentioned that when the submission was made one concern was taking the major portion of the fruit and another a lesser proportion, and they decided to amalgamate. One was involved to the extent of thousands of pounds with one of the banks, and the other to a lesser amount, and the Committee was asked by the Government to expedite the application because it did not desire to see the fruitgrowers not receiving payment, as the fruit was coming in ready for canning. Had the committee not recommended the amount, the growers whom Mr. Story desires to protect would have had no industry and it would have gone out of existence, with resultant big losses to growers.

The Hon. C. R. Story—The point I made was that the growers should have been protected by the Committee.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I quite agree that they should be protected. If the honourable member will only read the Act under which the Committee is appointed he will find that the object is to provide employment and to give an industry a reasonable chance of becoming a profitable undertaking. It must also inquire into the soundness of the people making the application and their ability to undertake the project successfully. The honourable member said that the Committee was protected, but I suggest to him that it needs no protection for its reports.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—We never see its reports.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I know there has been some heartburning by some honourable members because they were not included in the Cabinet, but if they had been they would have seen these reports. It is true that these reports do not come to Parliament, but they are sent to the Premier who submits them to Cabinet. Mr. Story bemoaned the fact that there are no growers' representatives on the Committee to deal with applications. I refrain from mentioning names when dealing with these matters because that would be unfair, but there are three large organizations operating in this State, very excellent concerns, and their industry at the time would have been financially embarrassed if the Committee had not come to their aid. Furthermore, it would be wrong for an industry to demand a representative on the Committee to deal with the industry's application, because it is only a matter of money lent by a bank on a Government guarantee, and if the industry fails the bank's responsibility would be to realise on its assets, and if they were not equal to the liabilities the Government would make up the difference. Had one large concern that comes readily to mind had a representative on the Committee Mr. Story could justly have said that the Committee's report was coloured, but Parliament decided that it should be a Parliamentary committee except that it was to have on it a representative from the Treasury.

The Hon. C. R. Story—The workers' representative looked after them very well.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I am surprised to hear that statement. It is a Parliamentary committee and members take pride in the fact that they have saved for this State one of its largest industries that would have been sold and would have gone to another State. Mr. Story said that this company has taken it out of the hide of the growers because it is not paying Fruit Industry Sugar Concession Committee's price.

The Hon. C. R. Story—That is a complete inaccuracy.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—The honourable member said:—

> There is the reluctance of South Australian canners to pay the prices fixed by the Fruit Industry Sugar Concession Committee for freestone peaches and apricots. The establishment of a co-operative cannery should be on somewhat similar lines to those operating in Victoria and New South Wales, which, after overcoming their early difficulties, were able to pay big bonuses to growers.
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> If the company is not paying the proper rates under the agreement it is a matter for the growers' organization to take up with the company and the Government, because in the last analysis it was the guarantee of the

Government that kept the company on its feet. Mr. Story was quite ill-informed about the activities of this body. Every Opposition member will support him in his advocacy of the establishment of a co-operative cannery here, but it is up to the growers to formulate a proposal and submit it to this Committee. If the Committee decides after an investigation that such a cannery is desirable it will make a recommendation to the Government, but the first move must be made by the growers and not by the Committee, which has not the legislative power to make it.

We are reaching a stage of centralization of population that must be arrested. I was pleased to hear Mr. Story say that there should be a census of the various fruitgrowing areas as to the best location to establish a cannery to eliminate as far as possible unnecessary transport so as to expedite the delivery of canned goods to all parts of Australia. I support that, but I point out that no proposal has been made by this Government over the years to combat the centralization of the population in capital cities. The population of this country at June 30, 1954, was 8,988,000 of which 4,817,000 or 54 per cent were in capital cities. Adelaide's population was 484,000, or 61 per cent of the State's population.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—And they should be entitled to more representation.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I quite agree. It is the responsibility of the Government to carry out a policy of decentralization. If Australia's population increases to 20,000,000, and the capital cities still have the same percentage as they have now, they will have 10,800,000 people. Sydney will have a population of 4,100,000 and Melbourne 3,500,000. It is not only South Australia that is lacking a policy of decentralization.

An expert body appointed by the Government of New South Wales which reported, amongst other things, on the effect of the explosion of a hydrogen bomb over Sydney, has clearly described the cost of centralization in the event of atomic war. In the first zone—within a radius of 3½ miles of the centre of the city—740,000 would be killed; there would be 80,000 surviving casualties and the destruction of buildings would be almost complete. In the second zone—within a radius of seven miles—230,000 would be killed and 70,000 would be injured. In the third zone—between seven and 10½ miles of the centre of explosion—45,000 would be killed and 120,000 injured. In the fourth zone—between 10½ miles and 14 miles of the explosion's centre—4,500 would be killed and 40,000 injured.

Not only is decentralization necessary to populate our country areas and maintain greater production of rural products, but it is also necessary for the defence of the nation. Something should be done in this matter, and after March next year I hope there will be a Labour Government to carry out these things. I support the Bill.

The Hon. Sir WALLACE SANDFORD (Central No. 2)—Mr. Condon referred to the fact that at one time not very much information was given to explain proposed loan expenditure but on this occasion he complimented the Chief Secretary on furnishing such full particulars. Certainly we all enjoyed the Minister's explanation after a lot of careful and expert opinion of the amounts that would be available if the funds were forthcoming. The total estimated expenditure for 1955-56 is £31,900,000 of which £28,300,000 is for capital works and in addition £3,600,000 which is to be made available by the Commonwealth Government. This latter amount is for expenditure on housing pursuant to the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement and honourable members will doubtless remember that the actual total expenditure during 1954-55 was approximately £30,600,000, including housing. At the Loan Council meeting last June a borrowing programme of £190,000,000 for all the States was approved for this financial year whereas the available loan funds amounted to £180,000,000.

Last year proceeds of public loans raised in Australia amounted to £123,000,000, so the balance necessary to finance the requirements of the States was obtained from Australian currency proceeds of loans arranged overseas assisted by finance provided by the Commonwealth from its own sources. It is obvious then, that to finance the £190,000,000 expenditure approved, the local loan market will have to provide quite as much as it did last year, and it does not perhaps appear that this source of supply will be fully forthcoming. The Loan Council, at which all the States as well as the Commonwealth are represented, has wisely undertaken to make monthly advances to the States. This will continue to be done for the first half of the year at the annual rate of £190,000,000. The situation is to be reviewed in the light of the amounts raised, and for the present the Commonwealth has not committed itself to the extent to which it is prepared to guarantee the borrowing programme.

As the Chief Secretary made clear when explaining the Bill, it has been prepared on the assumption that the full amount of £190,000,000 will be available. It would indeed be highly retrograde if obstacles were to arise that rendered it necessary for expenditure to be restricted. The total amount proposed to be expended from the loan fund on capital works is £28,300,000, of which £22,550,000 is to be derived from loans raised in Australia. Most of us can remember the days when Government loans were free of taxation and this certainly added to their attractiveness both to the investor and the borrower. If even a portion of the borrowing were granted some degree of immunity it might add to the popularity of the loan in the way that the 3¾ per cent loans of a few years ago were so regularly sought. Within the last week or so the chairman of a leading investment company in Melbourne said that Sir Arthur Fadden, the Commonwealth Treasurer, had frankly admitted in his Budget speech that increasing difficulty was expected in raising Commonwealth loan moneys in the local market, and that there was little expectation of raising more than a relatively small amount abroad, apart from International Bank loans.

As has been the case over the last couple of years, semi-governmental and local authorities are finding difficulties in respect of their loan requirements. This, it is considered, has been due to the fixation of an arbitrary coupon rate of 4¼ per cent for public loans for those bodies. Thus, they have to face up to competition from company debenture and registered unsecured note issues at rates ranging up to 7 per cent or more. As speakers to this type of Bill have reminded us, Australia is being developed under twentieth century costs, charges and conditions and the full impact is being borne by the borrowing arrangements.

Last year the State Bank dispersed £1,441,000 under the Advances for Homes scheme, when advances were made for 435 new homes completed, and progress advances on 782 homes in course of construction, in addition to nearly 350 advances for purchasing existing homes and to discharge mortgages. From these figures it is amply evident that the Government is pressing forward to fulfill the demand for houses by the many new South Australians who have increased the population. It is of some interest to note that in 1914 the total population of the State was 448,000 of which the metropolitan area accounted for 225,000, or about half. In the 20 years from 1914 to 1934, which included the whole of the first war and the post-war period and nearly up to the second world war, the population of the State grew to 585,000. By the end of the next ten years it had reached 623,000 and by 1954 it was 808,000.

The sum of £200,000 is provided to supplement the funds available for the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges. Members will have observed that the irrigation and reclamation of swamp lands charge was £233,000 last year, whereas this year the amount is increased to £259,000, and this makes possible further progress in the electrification of pumping plants in the Chaffey, Loveday and Nookamka irrigation areas and drainage works in the Cobdogla area. In the South-Eastern drainage scheme more than 4,500,000 cubic yards of excavation has already been completed at a cost of £1,680,000, and it is expected that the main channels will be completed by 1957.

Last year the expenditure on afforestation and milling amounted to £1,397,000 and the establishment of forests was continued. Work on the new sawmill near Mount Gambier has gone ahead and £313,000 was spent to the end of June, 1955, the total estimated cost of the mill being £1,000,000. Railway accommodation requires £2,300,000 and rolling stock £1,760,000. Harbours accommodation, £900,000, compares with £824,000 expended last year on new wharves at Port Adelaide and Osborne, and at Kingscote the existing jetty is being widened and strengthened to assist in the expansion of Kangaroo Island trade resulting, very largely, from the soldier settlement scheme.

Waterworks and sewers will require £5,600,000. A year ago expenditure under this heading was set down at £7,365,000, and we all remember the day in March of this year when the water was pumped from the River Murray into our reservoirs, thus fulfilling a hope we had all held for so long. We can now look back upon a scheme nearly completed, the estimated cost of which is nearly £10,000,000. Of this sum £8,000,000 has already been spent, and £1,300,000 is included in this Bill to enable the work to proceed during the present financial year. It is considered that this work also will be completed by 1957. It is not my intention to refer in detail to more items and details for I am sure that other speakers will wish to speak on this most interesting and stimulating Bill. I cannot recall one item that was not satisfactorily supported by the remarks of the Chief Secretary when introducing the Bill. South Australia is making great

strides and our children as well as New Australians are enjoying the benefits which good government is providing. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON (Northern)—I know that every item appearing in the Bill has been carefully investigated, and therefore I have every confidence that it will be supported by honourable members. I found it rather difficult to follow the Leader of the Opposition yesterday when he referred to criticism of the Public Works Committee. I can assure him I have every confidence in that committee. Its members certainly receive information which is not at the disposal of members of Parliament generally. If any criticism is levelled at the committee it is of a constructive nature rather than otherwise. The installation of a system of bulk handling for grain is now being put into motion as a result of legislation passed earlier this session, but it is regrettable that considerable delays are being caused by differences of opinion of the bulk handling authority, local councils and the Public Works Committee. I have in mind particularly Wallaroo, and I do not know whether the final site has yet been decided. The same is happening at Bute, where some people desire the plant to be placed in a different position from that selected. With the next harvest approaching I am afraid there will be little accommodation available for bulk handling other than that already established at Ardrossan.

I agree with Mr. Condon that an amount of £900,000 for the Harbors Board is rather small considering the necessity to provide better accommodation at Wallaroo, Port Lincoln and Port Adelaide. However, it is pleasing to know that of this amount £30,000 is allotted for the installation of bulk handling at Port Lincoln. Yesterday Mr. Condon said it was because of the introduction of bulk handling that extra money would be necessary, but that is not so. For many years the Port Lincoln facilities have been in need of improvement, and embodied in the new plan is provision for bulk handling. The amount of £30,000 provided will permit some of the work to be put in hand during the current financial year. This is really the first activity toward urgent improvements at this valuable port. I believe it has the deepest water of any port in Australia. Exports from Port Lincoln are increasing year by year, and this requires that the present outmoded and obsolete facilities should be replaced with something more modern.

I believe that something will have to be done at Port Pirie in the near future and that a huge expenditure will be involved. This is partly due to the erection of a treatment plant to deal with uranium from Radium Hill. Money will also be required to overcome the bottleneck in the harbour approach where the water is only 16 feet deep. This is an urgent work. Good progress has been made in the last 12 months with the northern water supplies. During the debate reference was made to the provision of £50,000 for the Jamestown-Caltowie extension. When travelling on Yorke Peninsula recently I was amazed to notice the huge amount of work involved in an extension of a water supply to this valuable part of the State. The ultimate cost will be £6,041,000. There has been a replacement of the main as far as Bute and this, together with the huge storage tanks one sees, gives one an idea of the expenditure involved. I understand that the large reservoir at Paskeville has been completed. I was born on Yorke Peninsula and therefore am pleased to see that the settlers in this highly productive part of the State are to receive the benefit of reticulated water. It is true that portion of the Morgan-Whyalla main will have to be duplicated and I believe that project will have to be undertaken in the near future.

I was rather surprised to notice that the estimated cost of extending water from Port Pirie to the uranium treatment plant is £41,000. That seems a tremendous sum considering the short length of main involved. However, this water supply will be of great benefit to the people on the western side of Port Pirie.

I pay a tribute to the Housing Trust for the number of houses it has built during the last 12 months. Recently I attended a ceremony for the naturalization of New Australians and spoke to several of them and without exception their ambition is to secure a home. Some have built homes with their own finance and labour, but others are dependent on getting a home through a Government instrumentality. Unless migrants can get a home they will not be contented. Applicants for war service homes have had a serious setback recently and they, with home building contractors, are in a state of chaos. They have been advised that no more money will be made available for this purpose for about 13 months. That is a bitter disappointment to those who have been waiting to get a home under this scheme.

An amount of £450,000 is allotted to the Leigh Creek coalfield, a considerable drop on last year's loan expenditure of £750,000. The Aroona dam has absorbed most of the expenditure in the last year or so, but now that it is completed Leigh Creek has a permanent and assured supply of good water. Until this project became a possibility, a satisfactory water supply was the chief difficulty confronting this Government activity.

There has been a big allocation of money during recent years to the Municipal Tramways Trust. One thing which is affecting many people and will continue to affect them is the trust's policy of changed routes. Many who have had the convenience of the trust's services near at hand have found the service taken away from them, and as a result there is much resentment. I hope something will be done to replace these services.

Mr. Anthoney contended that the sum provided for loans to settlers should be reduced and added that there was no reason why these loans should not be liquidated rapidly because producers had never been in a better position to repay, and if they could not repay their debts now they never would. I think he should have qualified this remark by saying that that should not apply to those who were making a start to establish themselves in primary production, particularly those involved in clearing and developing new areas. I can assure him that they are really in difficulties. However, I realise that any man who was already well established should be in a good position. The time may come when some writing off of producers' debts will be necessary, because I cannot visualize their being able to meet the high commitments in which they are involved. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.44 p.m. the Council adjourned until Thursday, September 29, at 2 p.m.