

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Thursday, May 24, 1956.

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

QUESTION:**HOUSE PRIVILEGES OF EX-MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.**

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE—I ask leave to make a brief statement with a view to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. R. CUDMORE—I understand that in the Commonwealth and all other Parliaments of Australia certain privileges are extended to ex-members of Parliament, whereas in this Parliament the only privilege is to allow them the use of our library. In the other Parliaments much greater privileges are extended, in some cases with limitations based on length of service. I feel, and I know other members agree with me, that members who have given long or distinguished service to Parliament should be extended further privileges. Has the Joint House Committee considered making some rule on this matter and, if not, will it do so?

The PRESIDENT—I will bring the question before the Joint House Committee at its next meeting and report later.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from May 23. Page 195.)

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Central No. 1)—Before discussing the motion before us I should like to offer my congratulations to you, Sir, on your re-election to preside over this distinguished Chamber. It is regrettable that the Leader of the Opposition, the Honourable Frank Condon, is unable to be with us because of illness, but his deputy, Mr. Bardolph, in extending congratulations to you on behalf of the Opposition, did it admirably. However, I felt that I would like personally to add my own congratulations to you. It has been my privilege to receive from time to time your guidance, always so readily given to any member who desires advice. I feel that the prestige and great esteem in which his Chamber is held throughout the State are, in a large measure, due to the manner in which

you control its destinies. Every member was happy to know that you were willing to submit yourself for re-election.

I would also like to add my condolences to the families of the Honourable A. W. Christian and Mr. Don Michael. All who knew those esteemed gentlemen felt considerable regret at their untimely passing, and its suddenness came rather as a shock to us all, as it must have done to their families, and I wish to convey to them my sincere sympathy.

When Mr. Shard rose to speak in this Chamber I felt that, although he had previously served the State in the House of Assembly, he would be looked upon as a new member here, as indeed he was. I was therefore somewhat surprised to hear interjections during his speech, as I thought that he would have been considered as delivering his maiden speech and extended the same courtesy as has been shown to others in like circumstances. However, there were some interjections, unfortunately for us but perhaps fortunately for Mr. Shard, who I think was helped by them.

I shall not attempt to discuss all the matters contained in His Excellency's Speech, but only one or two matters of interest to the whole State. I join with other members in offering my congratulations to the Governor for the excellent speech with which he opened this Parliament. He referred to the construction of a section of the Adelaide-Mannum main, which is operated partly by gravity, to improve the water supply to the metropolitan area. Progress of the South Para Reservoir was also mentioned, and it was stated that it would be ready to store water in the winter of 1957. The Governor also mentioned that the Government intended to give further consideration to the proposed Myponga reservoir and the Onkaparinga Valley water supply. The construction of the Myponga reservoir was first dealt with by the Public Works Committee in 1930, when it was estimated that the cost would be £2,500,000. At that time it was estimated that it would provide sufficient water for our needs until 1969. However, it seems that we are still in the talking stage although 26 years have elapsed. If we had had action instead of words millions of pounds would have been saved. The Mannum-Adelaide pipeline has already cost about £10,000,000, and that figure excludes pumping charges, a very expensive item. If the Myponga scheme had been proceeded with, probably it would have been necessary to review the water supply position before 1969 because of the greatly increased

population due to migration, natural increases, and an expansion of industry, but it would have been a considerable period yet before it would have been necessary to have this pipeline. Mr. Story suggested an extension of the pipeline to outlying farm districts to irrigate land, and made a veiled suggestion that the cost should be partly borne by metropolitan users.

The Hon. C. R. Story—It was not veiled.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—It was not direct. The honourable member was very careful not to make any direct reference to the fact that he thought portion of the cost should be borne by metropolitan users, although it was clear that that was in his mind. I do not agree with his contention. If it takes the Government as long to consider his suggestion as it has taken to deal with the Myponga scheme, the honourable member will be old and grey before he sees a realization of his wishes.

The supply of water to some parts of the metropolitan area is far from satisfactory. In the winter there is enough water because of a decrease in the demand, but during the summer it is difficult in some areas to obtain enough water even for sanitary purposes. It has been said in this Chamber that our catchment areas are sufficient for our needs, but even at the commencement of each summer it is impossible in the western districts to get an adequate supply. I defy anyone to come to my place and obtain sufficient water to have a shower in summer. This is general throughout the western districts. It happens in Underdale, Lockleys, and Mile End. Last year a petition was signed by numerous people requesting that an improved service should be provided for the Mile End area. When I complained last year about the water pressure at my home I was advised by an officer of the Engineering and Water Supply Department that my own service was corroded and needed replacing, and if this were attended to I would have an adequate supply. I have had the pipes replaced and so did many others in the same district, but it did not make the slightest difference. I assume the trouble is due to the condition of the mains. The main in my street has been down for a number of years and although a 3in. cast-iron main it is probably corroded to such an extent that it is equal to only 1½ inches. Nothing has been done to it since it was laid. It is not a question of how much water is conserved, because unless the mains are adequate to carry it

shortages will be experienced during the summer. I hope these matters will receive consideration and an attempt made to rectify the position so that the people can get the water in the summer when it is so necessary.

The Governor's speech included the following interesting paragraph on the Government's proposed road programme:—

The great increase in the number, weight and size of motor vehicles, and particularly motor trucks, necessitates constant attention to maintenance and improvement of existing roads. The Government's road programme, in addition to providing for these matters, also includes a vigorous policy of extending bituminous surfaces and the reconstruction of numerous bridges. This latter work is estimated to cost £4,000,000. Secondary roads, and feeder roads giving access to newly-developed areas and to timber resources, will receive special attention. The existing arrangements for road finance will be maintained, under which the whole of the receipts from motor tax and the petrol tax are allocated for road work. The expenditure last year was approximately £6,145,000. This year it will be £6,750,000 and the estimate for next year is over £7,000,000, which includes an additional £400,000 to be received by South Australia from the recent increase in the petrol tax.

South Australia's main roads are far from satisfactory, particularly in country districts. Farmers generally transport their goods on what I would call "farm to market" roads. Over the years they have used their own vehicles and often the roads are in such a condition that trucks are bogged in mud and axles are broken because of potholes, and the produce is sometimes spoiled because it is so bumped about. This wastage of produce results in increases to producers' costs, and consequently increased costs to consumers. The condition of these roads also entails increased petrol consumption, which in turn also adds to the cost of products to consumers. We must realize that finance has an important bearing on the position.

The western portion of North Terrace has been reconstructed and now, because of a sound foundation and about four coats of bitumen, it is one of the best stretches of road in South Australia and should stand up to the heaviest of traffic for a considerable number of years. This programme on North Terrace should be extended. It is a main road between the city and Port Adelaide and the Outer Harbour and carries a very heavy volume of traffic. The tramway tracks which ran parallel with the Port Road from near West Terrace have been removed from the parklands and I suggest that this area should now be

utilized to widen the Port Road and thus provide additional accommodation for the heavy stream of traffic which uses this thoroughfare. We have a double intersection which is a very busy one, carrying a very heavy volume of traffic. That corner could be taken right away, and it would allow almost the width of another roadway. I feel that it should be done now that the department is on the job.

The Hon. N. L. Jude—The corporation is doing that; the next part is ours.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—I dare say the corporation would do it if a grant were made available for the purpose. I suggest to the Minister that that work could be carried out now.

I draw the Minister's attention to the condition of the Hilton Bridge. Mr. Bardolph asked a question earlier in the session with regard to the cost of reconstructing the bridge and the roadway. That is a road which carries a heavy volume of traffic. There are turnoffs right on the top of the bridge, with traffic coming and going both ways to the railway yards. That road also carries a large volume of passenger bus traffic. Portion of the bridge was reconstructed not very long ago, one side at a time. When that portion was finished it still left a big hump on the bridge, and that was repeated later some distance further on. Apparently that has been necessitated because of the improvement in our locomotives from time to time; a higher type of locomotive was introduced, and now we have diesel engines. It appears to me that the bridge over the line has been raised in these particular sections to allow a clear passage for the locomotives underneath. The bridge has not always been like a switchback, as it is now; when it was built in the first instance it was a straight bridge.

The Hon. N. L. Jude—The approaches keep sinking.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—Whatever has happened, it is dangerous at the moment, and I am afraid that one day one of those crowded passenger buses will go over the top. The bridge is on a bend, and has narrow approaches at both ends. Travelling in a westerly direction there is an acute turn right at the top of the bridge, and there is a very flimsy guard fence right on the edge of a considerable drop to railway land beneath. I would like the Minister to drive over the bridge and have a look at the fences I mentioned. Buses using this bridge are invariably fully loaded, especially at peak periods. I am very much afraid that one

day there will be a serious accident, not necessarily through any fault of the driver, because that fence is not strong enough to stop anything. Previously there was a galvanized iron fence there, but it was knocked over and the authorities decided it was time to put up a new fence. The new fence they decided upon was of a cyclone type, but, as I said earlier, it is not strong enough. I suggest that it would be practicable to erect a parapet wall which would give very much greater protection than the fence and would not involve very great expense. I hate to think what would happen if a bus got out of control on the turn on that bridge. I hope my remarks will have the attention of the Minister, and that perhaps in the very near future greater protection can be provided for those using the bridge.

Considerably more could be done to improve our main arterial roads, roads in country districts, and those leading in and out of the metropolitan area. Some of them are not too bad, but many are very bad. I feel that it is a waste of money to reconstruct a road with a metal foundation, spray it with a coat of bitumen, throw some sand on it and leave it. In a short while the road is in just as deplorable a condition as before, and this has happened to a portion of the road leading into the West Beach airport. That section has had to be reconstructed on quite a few occasions, because of the fact that a metal base was put down and merely sprayed with bitumen, which soon breaks away and leaves holes in the roadway.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—Who did that work, the local council or the Highways Department?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—I presume it was done by the Marion Council, but it is an arterial road to the airport unless the Henley Beach Road is used, further cluttering up an already overcrowded highway. Loan money is made available to councils for the maintenance of roads and they should do the work properly. That brings me to the point that I do not agree with the attitude of the Commonwealth Government in the allocation of the petrol tax. Responsibility for our main roads should be shared by the Federal Government with the States.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—Why?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—To take one angle alone, if hostilities broke out—and do not let us fool ourselves that they cannot, for it could happen more than at any other time in our history—what sort of roads have we with which to stem the tide of invasion. Money should be made available to provide roads

capable of allowing the movement of heavy military equipment and troops, and proof of my contention is the fact that the Commonwealth Government during the last war, shouldered the responsibility of laying down a bitumen highway from Alice Springs to Darwin, and apparently did a very fine job. From that viewpoint alone it is the Commonwealth's responsibility, quite apart from the fact that interstate traffic benefits the whole of Australia. I am not suggesting that our Government will not make full use of the £400,000 granted it out of the additional £12,000,000 which will be collected, but I was under the impression that the Commonwealth Government levied the petrol tax for the specific purpose of construction and maintenance of our highways and not for building up general revenue. Two-thirds of this additional taxation is paid into general revenue and only one-third allocated to the States, whereas the whole of the additional amount, to say nothing of the original taxation, should be distributed amongst the States for road purposes. Even had the Commonwealth allocated two-thirds to the States it would not have been so bad, but it was completely unwarranted in taking two-thirds for general revenue.

The Hon. E. H. Edmonds—Is the honourable member sure of his figures?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—I am quoting the Statistician's figures. Mr. Anthony made a very fine contribution to the debate in dealing with educational matters, although I could not agree with his contention regarding the inducements offered to young people to enter the teaching profession. He referred to their entering dead-end jobs, but young people with the necessary qualifications to enter the Teachers' College are, at that stage, able to think for themselves, and they will not enter the teaching profession because the inducements offering are insufficient compared with those available in other walks of life.

The Hon. E. Anthony—That is exactly what I said.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—But the honourable member talked about dead-end jobs. The young people who normally would enter the teaching profession say to themselves, "If I enter the Public Service, and continue my studies, in a short period I can reach an executive position and my future is assured at a much more lucrative salary and with much better amenities than are available to teachers." Consequently they are turning more and more to these other avenues where they have greater prospects. This, I believe, is

one of the main reasons why the Government has to look elsewhere for qualified teachers. The Government will have to give more consideration to the inducements offered to pupils to enter the teaching profession and remain in it. Nowadays we have to rely in some considerable degree on part time teachers to help us out of the difficulty. They are not fully qualified and therefore cannot adequately teach the grades they are in charge of, and if this continued it will ultimately lower our standard of education, which is to be deplored.

I congratulate Sir Arthur Rymill most sincerely on his very fine address during which he, too, referred to our educational system. He said amongst other things that parents are relying more and more upon the Government instead of bearing some of the responsibility. Objection was taken to the provision of swimming facilities and the training of children in the art of swimming. Mr. Cudmore stated that in his day parents took their children to the beaches and taught them to swim. I remind members that what is being done by the department in teaching children to swim is only in line with what has been done for a considerable number of years, for I recall that when I was a school student we walked one afternoon a week under the guidance of our teacher, to the City Baths, when that old South Australian identity Charles Bastard was in charge of them. His staff taught us the art of swimming. That cost the pupils one penny, and even then I think one penny would not nearly foot the bill, and the Government therefore shouldered some of the responsibility of teaching school children to swim. I cannot see that expenditure by the department for this purpose can be regarded as wasteful.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—Are children asked to pay anything today?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—I have not made inquiries from any parents so I am unable to say, but even if expenditure on this item were increased I consider it would be money well spent, because it might be the means of saving a life, not only of the child, but perhaps of someone else who cannot swim. It is a worthy move for which I commend the Government. Sir Arthur Rymill said that he thought rent controls should be abolished.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—He said price controls, not rent controls.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—His statement related to the maintenance of rent control. When this legislation comes before us I will certainly support it, because its abolition would cause chaos as there is still a considerable

shortage of houses, and people would pay very high rents to obtain homes. The position is bad enough even under the present legislation, but I shudder to think what would happen if it were struck off the Statute Books.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—Do you not think there would be far more building if it were struck off, as has happened with commercial premises?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—No. It would enable the Government to step up the building of trust homes but it would not affect the building of private homes because people have not the money to build. If they have the money there is nothing to stop them from building; there is no shortage of materials. The abolition of this legislation would not increase the amount of home building because anyone desiring a home and who has the necessary finance can build whether the legislation exists or not. All that would happen if this legislation were abolished would be an increase in rents so that the landlord could get his money back sooner. It will be some time before the supply will catch up with the demand, as we could see if we obtained figures from the Housing Trust on the number of applications it has for both rental and purchase homes. The abolition of control might be an advantage to landlords, but it would not be an advantage to tenants.

The Potato Board supposedly controls the price of potatoes, yet it was stated that the price may go up to 2s. a pound. In last night's *News* it was stated that there are adequate supplies of potatoes in this State, but that they are being hoarded by merchants to obtain higher prices.

The Hon. C. R. Cudmore—Do you believe all you read in the *News*?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—The person who made that statement would not have made it unless he had good grounds for believing it. There is a shortage of potatoes in other States and the growers can obtain higher prices by sending them there, which they say they will do unless they can obtain higher prices here.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—Where does the board's control come in?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—The board's control in this State is useless. If we are to have controls, they should be imposed by one central authority, not six or seven. What is the use of the Potato Board here trying to control prices when there is no such control in other States? What the growers have said

about sending the potatoes interstate unless they receive higher prices here amounts to blackmail.

Mr. Shard drew the Minister's attention to at least one clause of the Industrial Code dealing with the powers of the Minister. I thought it was the intention of the Government to overhaul this legislation this next session. In 1951 or 1952 I said that the Code was obsolete, and Mr. Shard repeated that during this debate. In the interpretation clause, "employer":—

(a) means any person, firm, company, or corporation employing one or more employees in any industry, whether on behalf of himself or any other person; and

(b) includes—

- i. the Public Service Commissioner, as regards any Public Service employees;
- ii. the Railways Commissioner, as regards any railway employees;
- iii. the Metropolitan Abattoirs Board;
- iv. any district council;
- v. the Fire Brigades Board;
- vi. the council of any municipality;
- vii. any other person, firm, company, or corporation, in respect of whom both Houses of Parliament pass a resolution approving their inclusion in this definition;
- viii. the Board of Trustees of the State Bank of South Australia;
- ix. the Board of Trustees of the Savings Bank of South Australia.

In the definition of "industry," those engaged in agriculture, hospitals or rural occupations are excluded. The Code should be extended to cover *bona fide* employees in any industry. The employees of the dairy industry, the agricultural industry or hospitals cannot approach any industrial tribunal to have their working conditions or wages adjudicated upon, and I suggest that the Minister should consider extending the Code to include these people so as to give them the same facilities as other employees.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—Are these people suffering because of their exclusion?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—I can name many who are. In the case of domestics in hospitals, there is nothing to set out the hours of work, the amount of sick or annual leave or sick pay. Employees in State Government hospitals have an authority to which they can appeal, but those in community hospitals, which are subsidized by the Government are not entitled to protection under the Code because they are

not a business carried on for profit or gain. They should be entitled to protection just as much as Government employees. In section 306 of the Industrial Code under the heading "Safety, conveniences, and appliances" appears the following:—

(1) Written notice shall be given by the Chief Inspector to the occupier of a factory which, or any part of which, in the opinion of such inspector, is defective by reason of being—

- (a) dilapidated; or
- (b) unsafe; or
- (c) unfit for use; or
- (d) injurious to health; or
- (e) insufficiently provided—
 - 1. with privies or urinals;

I draw attention to the words "with privies or urinals." I consider that the word "or" should be deleted and "and" included. Undoubtedly, that was intended originally. The following verbiage appears in section 310:—

The occupier of every shop, office, warehouse, or building (other than a factory) in which persons are working or employed in any business whatever shall, in the prescribed manner, construct privies and urinals for the use of such persons . . .

Under that section it is compulsory to provide both, but in a factory like General-Motors Holden's where thousands of men are employed it is not necessary to have both. They can install either one or the other.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—There are many other controls covering these things apart from the Industrial Code.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—The conditions are laid down in the Code. Perhaps action could be taken under the Health Act in some instances. I consider that every factory should be compelled to comply with the Code and supply both conveniences. The trade union movement looks to the Code and not to the Health Act. Not many union officials would be conversant with the Health Act and may not even know it exists. In the case of a new factory the owner inquired through the Chief Inspector of Factories whether he must install both conveniences. He was told that the Act provides, "one or the other" and that therefore it was not compulsory to have both. When the union demanded that both should be installed the employer said, "I do not intend to do it. You make me." The difficulty was got over by the application of other Acts. If it is necessary for the union to consider the powers of two or three Acts to find something to rectify such a case as I have mentioned, it is time the Code was overhauled. I am sure that it was originally intended that

both conveniences should be provided. I hope the Minister will consider the matters I have raised and that in the near future the Government will bring the Code up to date to meet present day standards. I sincerely congratulate Sir Arthur Rymill on his speech in moving the motion, which was ably supported by Mr. Edmonds. I feel sure that members were inspired by those addresses and as a result the following speeches were of a very high standard. I support the motion.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Minister of Industry and Employment)—I join with other members in congratulating you, Mr. President, on your reappointment. The wishes of the Council were unanimous and the appointment was well deserved, and I hope that for a long time you will preside over our deliberations. I also join with other members in congratulating Sir Arthur Rymill on the very excellent speech he delivered in moving the motion. It was not only well expressed but contained matters of importance. Likewise, I congratulate the seconder of the motion, Mr. Edmonds, and also Mr. Shard on his maiden speech, which was delivered with ease and certainty. Mr. Bevan referred to interjections made during Mr. Shard's speech, but I can assure him they were made not with any intention of discourtesy or to break down tradition, but because the honourable member spoke as one used to participating in the deliberations of this House and for the moment members did not realize that they were listening to his maiden speech here. I can assure the honourable member that he has the affection and esteem of all members of the Chamber, and I know that as time goes on he will enjoy his associations here. I am sure the new members will improve the debating strength of the Council, and as a result it will be able to accomplish its work and achieve its purposes even more satisfactorily than in the past during its long and outstanding history.

I propose to deal with some of the matters raised regarding the Department of Industry. The first relates to quarterly wage adjustments and the cost of living, about which Mr. Shard spoke at considerable length, giving many figures. He suggested that employees in this State were being unfairly treated because the Government had not adopted the same policy as that of other States to provide for an increase which they would have enjoyed had the Commonwealth Arbitration Court not suspended cost of living adjustments. To understand the position we must understand the history of this legislation. Prior to 1950

the Board of Industry in this State inquired into the living wage and made a declaration as to what it should be, and that was the living wage which was in fact paid. But in 1950 Parliament amended the Industrial Code to provide that in future the State living wage would vary in accordance with the quarterly fluctuations made from time to time in the Federal basic wage by the Federal Arbitration Court. So, from 1950, by virtue of the amendments of the Code, our State living wage was tied and did vary with the increases or decreases in the Federal basic wage. These adjustments followed that course until 1953, when the Federal court decided that its basic wage should no longer be adjusted quarterly, and since then adjustments were suspended and this also applied to the wage paid in this State.

The important point is that although the Federal court made the decision to suspend quarterly adjustments that did not affect the power of the Board of Industry in this State to make inquiries into what the living wage should be, and if necessary make a declaration as to whether it should increase it or not. Therefore, there is still power within the State legislation for employees to go to the Board of Industry and request that the living wage be adjusted. It is interesting to note that in fact an application was made to the Board by the United Trades and Labor Council for an adjustment, but for some reason unknown to me it was withdrawn. Whether it was withdrawn because it was felt that the circumstances would not warrant an increase or not, I cannot say. There is still machinery under the Board of Industry which would enable employees to apply for an adjustment of the living wage, but they have not taken advantage of that machinery.

Reference was made to adjustments made in other States. I think a fair inference from Mr. Shard's remarks would be that in each of the other States the adjustment was made by legislative action by the respective Governments. I have looked carefully at the matter and I find that that is not so. The adjustments were made by Government legislation in New South Wales and Victoria, but in Western Australia and Queensland the increases which have occurred since the suspension of adjustments by the Federal Arbitration Court have been made by the State Industrial tribunals themselves, in the same way as could have been done here if an application had been made. In Tasmania the State Wages Board has agreed to an increase since February of this year, but I am informed, and I think it is

correct, that the Tasmanian Government has not yet agreed to pay these increases. The statement that all other States of the Commonwealth have agreed by legislation to these increases is therefore incorrect. The Government's view on this matter is that it is not the function of the Government to fix wages and conditions. For very many years we have enjoyed the benefits and conditions of the arbitration system, and I do not believe that it is the function of Parliament to usurp the prerogatives of that system. The basis of any democracy is that there are three principal organs of government, the Legislature, the Executive, and the Judicature, and the maintenance of democracy depends on the maintenance of those three separate organs of government. If the Legislature attempts to take over the work of the Judicature we are getting away from a basic principle. There is, in fact, an application before the Arbitration Court on the matters which I have been discussing, and I understand that a judgment will be delivered tomorrow morning.

It is interesting to note that whilst the New South Wales Government has legislated to provide these increases, within a very short time after that legislation became operative the Government found that it was not able to pay all its employees and had to give notice to some of them that their services were no longer required. The economy of this State must be kept on a basis where we can secure continuity of employment. My own view is that later in the year, when the State Budget is presented and the whole story told regarding the finances of the various States over the last 12 months, it will be perfectly obvious to everyone that the efforts of this Government to retain a sound economy and keep everyone in employment will bear more than favourable comparison with any other State in the Commonwealth.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan—Then don't you think our goods should be produced more cheaply than in other States?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—I think they should be, and I think they are, and that is the reason why this State is progressing as fast as it is. With the disadvantages we have with regard to raw materials, such as coal, we must keep our costs lower than in other States if we are to retain our markets there. Immediately we fall into the trap of bringing costs up to the level of other States secondary industry in this State will start to decline.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—You have the co-operation of the trades union movement.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—I am not suggesting we are not getting co-operation from them in industry. I agree that industrial relations in this State between the Government and industry are better than in other States, with very obvious results.

Mr. Shard raised the question of the relationship of our Wages Boards to our Industrial Court system. He said he felt the Wages Board system in this State was the best in the Commonwealth, and I entirely agree with that statement. I have had an opportunity of watching the way in which these boards work, and I certainly think there is ample evidence to support that statement. He went on to say that he felt that over the 20 years he had been associated with these matters the prestige and standing of the Industrial Court with the trade union movement had consistently and slowly deteriorated. With that statement I am not able to agree. Just because the industrial tribunal does not always give the answer which one person may desire, it is not correct to draw a deduction and say that its standing and prestige has decreased. In my view the standing and prestige of our Industrial Court is as high as it has ever been.

The Hon. A. J. Shard—Ask the Chamber of Manufactures that one.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—He raised a question with regard to the Constitution of the court. I am aware that some years ago we had a President and a Deputy President of the Industrial Court, whereas now we have only a President. Prior to the honourable member's remarks the Government had considered this matter and it proposes, in the not too distant future, to appoint a Deputy President of the Industrial Court.

The honourable member also mentioned fees paid to members and chairmen of wages boards. I think he expressed reasonable satisfaction with the fees paid to members of these boards, although he thought perhaps they should be higher. In that connection I would like to say that I feel there probably could be a case for not paying anything at all. Their function on the boards is to represent either the employees or the employers. Advocates in the Arbitration Court have to be paid by the parties who engage them for the purpose. It has never been the policy that members of boards should not be paid, and it is the Government's intention to continue making payment to them. I think it is fair to say that the payment made to members is primarily for the purpose of recompense for their out-of-pocket expenses.

The Hon. A. J. Shard—Even then some of them are out-of-pocket.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—With regard to the amount being paid to the chairmen of these boards, we give them a retainer of £10 10s. and we guarantee a minimum fee of £2 2s. per meeting.

The Hon. A. J. Shard—How long has that been operating?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—I do not know, but I think since about 1951. I know that there was an increase in 1948 and another in 1951. I have had some figures taken out and the position appears to be as follows:—In 1953-1954 the average wage paid to chairmen was £3 8s. 6d. per meeting; in 1954-1955 it dropped to £2 18s. per meeting. That was the average payment to chairmen prior to the increase which I granted during last year. The figures for 1955-1956 take into account the increase which I allowed, and the average payment per meeting will be £3 3s. The average time of a meeting does not exceed one hour, so I feel that what we have done with regard to chairmen is quite reasonable, and is in fact very close to what was actually requested.

The honourable member raised another question with regard to fees paid to members of the Board of Industry, namely, the two employers' representatives and the two employees' representatives. Representations were made to me that these fees should be increased from £2 2s. to £3 3s., and the fee was in fact increased to £2 12s. 6d. I think that is reasonable, because it appears to me that one of the most important functions that the Board of Industry has to perform, namely, the fixing of the State living wage, has not been exercised by them since 1950 when automatic adjustments followed the Federal basic wage. Whereas the powers and ambit of the Board of Industry have not decreased, portion of their functions have not had to be exercised since 1950, and in fact have not been exercised. I therefore feel that £2 12s. 6d. per half-day, or £5 5s. per day, is very reasonable. They get the £2 12s. 6d. whether they sit for a half-day or one hour. Mr. Shard mentioned the relationship between the Chamber of Manufactures and the Government and semi-Government departments on the one hand and the United Trades and Labor Council on the other. He stated that the relationship between his council and the Chamber of Manufactures had been most satisfactory. I agree with that, and I hope it will continue. He went on to say that the relationship between that council and Government and

semi-Government departments had not been on quite the same plane. I cannot agree with that. My experience of the officers of my department is that they are competent, efficient, and attentive to their work, and I feel that they have done all they reasonably could do to keep matters on a very satisfactory plane. He mentioned the Abattoirs dispute, and with regard to that he said:—

That was brought about in our opinion—and I am firmly convinced of it—by a direction given by one of two, or both, Cabinet Ministers to the Abattoirs Board.

I cannot agree with that statement. The honourable member did not mention what the direction was, but I am not able to find any record of any direction given by any Cabinet Minister or anybody from my department which added to or prolonged the dispute.

The Hon. A. J. Shard—I was not referring to your department.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—Everything possible was done by members of the Cabinet to settle that dispute, and the ultimate action taken by the Premier did, in fact, have a very satisfactory outcome.

The Hon. A. J. Shard—You can give him all of the credit for settling it.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—Be that as it may, I do not think it is fair to say that the history of the Abattoirs dispute last year indicates that there was any lack of co-operation on the part of the Government or the Department of Industry.

With regard to the third matter, the honourable member said:—

Again, there was the dispute in December last at the Nangwarry timber mills which should never have occurred. The secretary of the union concerned saw an officer of the Department of Industry in mid-October and put all his cards on the table. He was informed that the points at issue would be investigated and that he would be given a decision. However, nothing more was heard during October or the whole of November. The secretary got in touch with the officer in early December and informed him that if the men did not get a decision by Wednesday, December 7, they would stop work, and he asked whether the officer would visit Nangwarry before that date and make a decision on the spot.

I have had the docket turned up and I find that the facts are not quite as stated by the honourable member. On October 24, 1955, four requests were received from the State secretary of the Federated Enginedrivers' and Firemen's Association regarding his members employed at the Nangwarry timber mill. They were:—

1. That the same number of staff should be employed in the engine room and boiler

house at Nangwarry as was employed at Mount Burr, namely, one engine driver and two firemen each shift.

2. That enginedrivers and firemen working on a continuous shift roster should be granted three weeks annual leave.
3. That the roster should be altered so that the overtime shift which each man worked once in every four weeks would not fall on a Saturday or a Sunday.
4. That steps be taken to eliminate or reduce the amount of dust in the boiler house at Nangwarry.

Immediately on receipt of these complaints they were referred to the Conservator of Forests for a report, but before it could be obtained three further requests were addressed to the manager of the mill at Nangwarry on November 25, 1955, and they were:—

1. That the enginedrivers specified as in charge of plant be paid for same on all shifts.
2. That the extra help given to the boiler room be definitely defined as at present he was doing three jobs—fireman, assisting drivers and cleaning.
3. That outstanding back money owing to members be paid.

It will be seen therefore that there were two separate sets of requests, the first from the secretary of the association on October 24 and the second, directed to the manager of the mill, on November 25. The honourable member said, I think, that nothing was done and no reply was received by December 7, but the facts are that a letter was sent to the secretary of the Enginedrivers' and Firemen's Association at Trades Hall, Adelaide, on December 1, 1955, of which I have a copy available for inspection. The last paragraph of this letter was as follows:—

In view of the number of complaints which have been received from this mill recently I consider that it may be desirable, rather than dealing with these matters by correspondence, for a conference to be held at Nangwarry to discuss with the men the matters regarding which they have been complaining. Although he has a number of other commitments to fulfil in the next few weeks the Senior Industrial Officer is prepared to visit Nangwarry on Friday, December 16, if desired by your members to discuss the matter with the Milling Superintendent, Mill Manager, yourself and your members employed at Nangwarry.

That makes it perfectly clear that the strike did not occur because the men did not get a reply to their representations but because they were not satisfied with the reply they got, notwithstanding that the Senior Investigating Officer had volunteered to go down and discuss the position with them on the spot. I think nine men went out on strike, and as a result approximately 300 other men were

out of employment and left without the amenities of power, water and light. I fear that the position is that they struck, not because of slowness on the part of my department in dealing with their request, but because the replies to the seven requests were not considered satisfactory. I am pleased to be able to say that subsequently these matters were ironed out and that the position is quite satisfactory now.

The honourable member made another complaint regarding regulations under the Industrial Code. He said they had not been consolidated for some time and that it was difficult to find them or to learn just what they contain. This matter was raised, by correspondence, by the Leader of the Opposition in another place some months ago, when I told him that the matter would have my consideration. I am pleased to say now that a draft set of regulations under the Code has been prepared, and I should say within a month or two a complete reprint of the regulations will be available.

I do not wish to deal with other matters raised by various members as there will be other opportunities to do so, but I assure them that they have not been overlooked by me or by the Government, and that we are

prepared to make decisions on them and to indicate those decisions as expeditiously as possible to the parties concerned. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

Motion for adoption of Address in Reply carried.

The PRESIDENT—I have to inform members that His Excellency the Governor will be pleased to receive them for the presentation of the Address in Reply at 5 p.m.

At 4.55 p.m. the President and honourable members proceeded to Government House. They returned at 5.8 p.m.

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

I thank you for your Address in Reply to the Speech with which I opened Parliament. I feel confident that you will give full and careful attention to all matters placed before you and I pray that God's blessing may crown your labours.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.12 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, August 14, at 2 p.m.