LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, October 15, 1957.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir Walter Duncan) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

GREATER ADELAIDE PLAN.

The Hon, F. J. CONDON—With reference to the master plan for the City of Adelaide, has consideration been given to the advisability of devising a Greater Adelaide Scheme, and can the Attorney-General give any information as to the proposed undertaking?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—About two years ago we passed an Act which gave power for the appointment of a Town Planner and a Town Planning Committee with the object of forming an overall plan for the metropolitan area. It was expected that the gathering and collation of the evidence and the working out of the plan would take about five years. The Town Planner and the committee have been appointed and much provisional work has been completed. Although it is not proposed that the scheme shall be approached on a Greater Adelaide basis it is hoped to ensure that the excellent work of Colonel Light shall be continued and will meet the contingencies of the future.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—Does the Attorney-General's reply mean that the progress of the city will remain in abeyance until the master plan has been completed?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—No. I think the honourable member will know that the provisions of the Act give control over subdivisions, resubdivisions and developmental areas, and every effort is being made to see that current development fits the ultimate plan, which, of course, must be approved by Parliament before it can come into effect.

SITTINGS OF THE COUNCIL.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—I understand that it is the intention of the Government that Parliament shall go into recess at the end of the month. Can the Attorney-General indicate what Bills are likely to be introduced, and if it is the intention to ask members to sit at night this week and next?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—I think the statement in another place was that we might conclude our business "at the end of the month or early next month." Only one or two more Bills are to be introduced, and I will let the honourable member have detailed information on them as soon as I can, but it is not the intention to ask members to sit late this week.

HOUSING TRUST RENTAL HOMES.

The Hon. L. H. Densley for The Hon. C. R. Cudmore (on notice)—

1. What number of applications for rental homes was current and unsatisfied with the Housing Trust on June 30 in each of the years 1950, 1955, 1956 and 1957?

2. What is the present rental being collected by the Trust for the houses originally let for 12s. 6d. a week in 1937?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—The replies are:—

1. The Housing Trust can only make an estimate of the number of effective applications, as applicants who obtain other housing most frequently fail to withdraw their applications to the trust. The Trust's estimate of effective applications is as follows:—

June 30—	
1950	8,500
1955	11,807
1956	12,050
1957	10,130

2. Pursuant to the provisions of the Act authorizing the Trust to equalise rents, the rents of these earlier houses have been increased to permit of rents of later-built houses to be kept at a lower level than would otherwise be the case, and also the original rents of the houses first built by the Trust would be very much too low at the present time and would give those tenants an undue advantage over tenants occupying later constructed houses.

METROPOLITAN AND EXPORT ABATTOIRS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

EVIDENCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

SCAFFOLDING INSPECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Attorney-General)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to supplement the measures which have already been taken by the Government for securing a higher degree of safety for workmen employed in building operations. New regulations respecting tubular scaffolding have recently been gazetted and improvements made in the administration. The scaffolding legislation, however, which is contained in the Scaffolding Inspection Act

of 1934 is not satisfactory. This Act is a consolidation of several Acts, the principal of which was passed in 1907, and they are characterized by limitations and deficiencies which considerably reduce their usefulness in present-day conditions. The present Bill is designed to remedy the defects of the present law.

Clause 3 makes some amendments of the definitions in the principal Act. The amendments in paragraphs (*a*) (*b*) and (*c*) are drafting and consequential. The amendment in paragraph (*e*), however, has an important effect. It relates to the definition of scaffolding. Scaffolding is defined in the principal Act as a structure or framework for the support of workmen in building operations. Many years ago the Government was advised by its lawyers that the term "workmen" means person acting as employees, so that if scaffolding is erected for persons who are working as contractors or sub-contractors it is not governed by the Act. It is proposed to remove this restriction in the definition and to make it clear that the term "workmen" includes any persons working for reward whether as employees, contractors or sub-contractors. This extension of the definition will considerably widen the scope of the Act in view of the fact that much work on buildings nowadays is done by sub-contractors.

Clause 4 deals with the appointment of scaffolding inspectors. At present the principal Act provides that the Governor may appoint one inspector and such acting or assistant inspectors as he thinks fit. No person, however, can be appointed either as an inspector or assistant or acting inspector unless he has had at least four years' experience in the erection of scaffolding. These provisions contain unnecessary restrictions on the appointment of inspectors and make it legally impossible to use the services of highly qualified inspectors in the Factories and Steam Boilers Department just because they have not had the appropriate length of experience in the erection of scaffolding. It is proposed to alter the law so that the Chief Inspector of Factories and Steam Boilers will automatically be the Chief Inspector of Scaffolding and the Governor will have a general power to appoint any suitable persons to be inspectors of scaffolding.

Clause 5 contains minor amendments of the provisions of the principal Act by which a person who intends to erect scaffolding is obliged to give twenty-four hours' notice to the inspector. The amendments provide that notice must be given to the Chief Inspector of Factories and that the maximum penalty for failure to give notice will be raised from £5 to £20.

Clause 6 deals with the duty to report accidents. At present the only accidents which have to be reported are those which cause loss of life or serious bodily injury to any person. The first amendment proposed in clause 6 is to extend the law as to reporting accidents so that it will be necessary to report accidents in which any load-bearing part of scaffolding or of any gear or hoisting appliance is broken, distorted or damaged.

Another amendment is that the duty of reporting accidents is placed upon the person who has the use and control of the scaffolding at the relevant time. Under the present law the duty to report an accident is on the owner. This was satisfactory when scaffolding was owned, as it used to be, by the builder or contractor but nowadays when tubular steel scaffolding is hired out to builders and contractors by scaffolding companies which are not otherwise concerned with building operations, it is not satisfactory to place the duty to report accidents upon the owner of the scaffolding. For this reason the Bill proposes that the onus of reporting accidents shall be on the person using and controlling the scaffolding.

Another amendment made by clause 6 is to raise the penalties for not reporting accidents from £10 to £20. Clause 7 makes consequential amendments.

Clause 8 provides for a substantial extension of the scope of the principal Act. At present the Act and the regulations are restricted to ensuring the safety of men working on or in connection with scaffolding. But if men engaged in building operations are not working on scaffolding or gear or appliances connected therewith, there is nothing in the Act to require that any safety precautions shall be taken. It is proposed in clause 8 to enable inspectors to give directions for safety precautions in any case where men engaged in building operations are working in a place where they are exposed to risk of injury from falling or from being struck by moving material whether or not any scaffolding is erected. Such directions may be given in writing either to the owner of the building or to the person carrying out or in charge of the building operations. As in the case of other directions given by inspectors under the Act, these directions will carry a right of appeal to the Minister who will have the final say in the matter.

Clause 9 gives inspectors a general right of entry to lands, buildings and structures for the purpose of ensuring the proper observance of the Act. Clause 10 raises the maximum penalty for obstructing inspectors under the Act from £5 to £20. The Government believes that these amendments, when taken together with the new regulations which have recently been made and gazetted, will greatly improve the effectiveness of the scaffolding legislation as a safety measure.

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

HOMES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Attorney-General)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to increase from £1,750 to £2,250 the amount of the maximum housing loan which may be guaranteed by the Treasurer under the Homes Act. The Act originally provided for a maximum loan of £1,000. This was increased in 1947 to £1,250, in 1949 to £1,500 and in 1951 to £1,750. These increases were considered necessary to make the Homes Act conform, in some degree, with the increases in building costs which have occurred since the end of the war. It is now considered that the maximum loan should be increased to £2,250 in order to conform with present-day building costs and with the mortgage loan limits of some of the principal institutions lending money on first mortgage.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH secured the adjournment of the debate.

AMUSEMENTS DUTY (FURTHER SUSPENSION) BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Attorney-General)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It suspends the levy of amusements duty under the Stamp Duties Act until July 1, 1961. If a Bill is not passed, amusements duty will automatically come into force again on July 1 of next year. The collection of amusements duty in this State has been suspended ever since the Commonwealth Government imposed entertainment tax as a wartime measure in 1942. The Federal entertainment tax was abolished in 1953, but the State did not re-enter this field of taxation. It is not the policy of the Government to reimpose amusements duty at present, and this Bill is accordingly introduced for the further suspension of this impost.

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

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 9. Page 991.)

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland)—I wish to address myself briefly to this measure because there are one or two things that we should discuss under it. Although we can do very little, we can issue a word of warning on the general overall picture in this State at present. As we go around the country it is apparent that we are experiencing very dry times. As I have said previously, the time is ripe to look at this State from an economic point of view to see if we have made some progress and have learnt some lessons from the last dry period, which occurred between the 1944 and the 1947 seasons. We should analyse this matter carefully, because some people believe that the farmer has run along very easily in the last 10 years, that he has been very careless and has not taken advantage of the good seasons but has lulled himself into a false sense of security. My contention is that that is not so. It is stated that the sheep yards at the abattoirs are absolutely full. That is quite true, and the same applies practically throughout the State. However, when we look at the sheep population figures we find that in 1856 there were 1,962,000 sheep in South Australia.

As we moved on through the years that population increased appreciably. But at odd times in that period of 100 years we ran into severe droughts which knocked our sheep population back severely. For the period of 50 years up to 1900 we had 5,000,000 sheep in South Australia producing 36,000,000 lb. of wool. By 1914 we had just on 7,000,000 sheep, but by 1915 after a drought year we lost over 3,000,000 sheep and the production of wool dropped from 63,000,000 to 36,000,000 lb. That is a terrific blow to the economy of any country or State. In 1944 the sheep population was 10,000,000 producing 115,000,000 lb. of wool. Within two years we had lost 4,000,000 sheep and our production of wool dropped from 115,000,000 to 73,000,000 lb. What a vast effect that must have on the economy of any State and on those deriving their livelihood from that industry.

By 1956 we had reached the 13,000,000 mark, and in 1957 we had 14,000,000 sheep producing 191,000,000 lb. of wool. Those figures do not include sheep which had been slaughtered and sent overseas as a very useful export. Pastures have been vastly improved. In 1926 they totalled 123,000 acres, but by 1955 had increased to 3,500,000 acres. Carrying capacity has also been improved, but we have had ten bountiful years, in other words two complete cycles, which is a very different pattern from that of the State over the last 100 years when there have been recessions every four or five years. There has been a steady increase from 1947 to the present day, and it is only natural that when we get a dry year people must reduce flocks to a reasonable size. It is far better to reduce now while they are still holding decent reserves of fodder. Many people still hold fodder reserves, and it is a very wise policy to reduce numbers to what a person can hold properly and adequately to see him over a long dry period. In 1947 only 275 balers were purchased, but last year the figure rose to 2,011. That is an indication of the way people have been endeavouring to conserve fodder. They are holding back some fodder and grain in order to keep at least a nucleus of their flocks. There is nothing more depressing to a man who has spent years in building up a strain suitable to his particular part of the State to see his flock dissipated by having his sheep slaughtered at the abattoirs and receiving only 3s. plus the skin. The skin is very poor consolation when one works for many years to establish a good flock.

I am very pleased that primary producers are reducing their flocks while there is still time. Even now we can still see the scars caused during the years when we had overstocking and erosion. It will not take much to start erosion again on our drifty country and unless we can keep that under control most of our soil will be flying over New Zealand as it was in the 1930's.

I commend the Government for the way in which it has presented the Estimates to us. In explaining them the Attorney-General gave a very clear picture of how the State's finances are being spent. I suggest to the Minister of Roads that he should give country councils reasonable grants to carry out some work in the construction of lateral roads. The majority of the roads from the city lead to the north. Those roads prong out and we have very good arterial roads running north and south, but we have no roads running east and west across the north or lower north. I do not think we have one completely sealed road running east and west. There is a road from Truro through Balaklava to Eudunda leading to Marrabel, Saddleworth and Auburn. If that road could be sealed and joined up with the Port Wakefield Road it would make a good lateral road and would give access from the River Murray areas to Yorke Peninsula. The councils in the areas I have mentioned have the equipment which they have been enabled to acquire through interest-free loans by the department, but in many cases the plant is not working at full capacity. If, say, £10,000 a year could be granted to 10 councils, making a total of £100,000, it would keep their equipment in full use, give their employees adequate employment and tend to decentralize the control of the department.

I have always been of the firm opinion that district engineers should reside in the districts which they supervise. I do not know what proportion of their time it is necessary to spend in the head office, but I do know that there are a lot of foremen engaged on the various roads who could be very well looked over a bit more by the engineer in charge of the district. I have always thought that if a man had an area to supervise he should be resident centrally in it. Even if it necessitated his coming to Adelaide as often as once a week it would be better than his living in Adelaide and returning to his home each weekend. The Minister may have a good reason why it cannot be done, but I offer it as a suggestion. Reverting to the question of lateral roads, other members can probably suggest equally good roads which ought to be sealed so as to enable produce from Eyre Peninsula and other parts to be brought expeditiously to market.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan—Would £10,000 give full employment?

The Hon. C. R. STORY—It would be £10,000 more than they are getting now in each council area, and it would be something on the way, for at present there is nothing.

I note that a considerable portion of the expenditure of the Engineering and Water Supply Department has connected with the Mannum-Adelaide main for pumping water to the city. I have never taken sides on city versus country expenditure, and perhaps if more adopted that line we would be better off. However, it has been necessary this year to do an enormous amount of pumping, and although rates have been slightly increased I do not think the increase has been anything like sufficient to cover the actual cost. We ought to thank

our lucky stars that we have the Mannum-Adelaide main. Many people were not much in favour of it at one time but it has certainly turned out to be a boon for South Australia and the metropolitan area in particular.

The sum of £67,000 is to be provided for the Lands Department for the photogrammetric survey. This is well worth mentioning because the department is doing a wonderful job. The survey enables the computers to work out contours at almost a minute's notice and the survey gives a very good overall profile of South Australia—something that would have taken surveyors years to do. Hire of aircraft is of course costly, and the same is true of rain-making and other projects, but they are all necessary for the economy of the State.

The River Murray Waters Agreement, which Mr. Bevan mentioned, is being well attended to by the Government, and we are pleased indeed to see that it is taking a very firm stand in the matter. The Mines Department is again carrying on its function and if it can locate further substantial bodies of iron ore in the Middleback Ranges it will make a considerable difference to our economy and, by ensuring continuity of supply, make possible a steelworks in South Australia.

I now want to touch briefly on a subject that I always seem to refer to in speeches of this kind. I again urge upon the Government the necessity of ensuring that we start now to allocate the Murray River water to the various streams that flow into it. Production is moving very fast at present and if we do not allocate a proportion of the water to the creeks and streams that are being developed we will not be able to provide for the dry years which may come.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—We have never used our quota yet.

The Hon. C. R. STORY—One or two low rivers would make it very difficult for the people who have developed properties along creeks. These creeks will have to be opened up at Government expense so that we can get water to places where it will be needed. In many places along the Murray the soil near the banks is not suitable, so water must be taken 10 or 15 miles through these creeks. Most of the land I am talking about is low-lying.

The Hon. J. L. S. Bice—What lift would be necessary?

The Hon. C. R. STORY—Under 100ft. I believe tenders are to be let for the decking of the Paringa Bridge. Nothing has been done there yet, and the bridge is now in a worse condition than some years ago.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—You want to change the Government.

The Hon. C. R. STORY—I do not think it is necessary; if I agitate enough for something to be done, I am sure it will be done. I support the Bill.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH (Central No. 1)—I listened with a great deal of interest to Mr. Story's eulogistic references to the Government, but I could not find mention of one item that had been carried out by this Government since the last two elections. Members of my Party are twitted in this Chamber as acting on instructions, but I am sure the only record of the Party to which Mr. Story belongs is its members convince themselves that things have been done, thinking that they are convincing the people. I was rather interested in Mr. Story's figures relating to primary production. Although we of the Opposition may be looked upon as representing the metropolitan area and not having any knowledge of the need for developing primary industries, I assure this Chamber that members representing metropolitan districts, such as my colleagues, are just as much concerned as country members to see that the interests of the man on the land are protected and that he is assisted to the fullest degree so that the primary production of this State is developed fully.

As Mr. Story said, this State was originally a primary-producing State, and it was only through the advent of war and by virtue of our geographical position that various large munition factories were established here. This brought South Australia up to the third largest manufacturing State of the Commonwealth in what could be called an overnight change, and the establishment of these industries took labour from the land. Our secondary production has also developed. Although there is financial stringency in secondary production, primary producers are faced with a possible drought and the lack of fodder for feeding stock. Mr. Story spoke about our sheep population. The Commonwealth Statistician has listed 12 disastrous droughts, as well as minor droughts, since 1900. These droughts have represented the greatest period of calamity for this State, as they caused more stock losses than any other factor. Mr. Story mentioned the loss in money values of wool and meat, but the bad droughts of 1892 and 1902 halved the sheep population, and it was not until 1932 that it reached 106,000,000.

The Abattoirs Parliamentary Select Committee, of which I was a member, suggested amendments to the Abattoirs Act whereby an employees' representative was to be placed on the board. Sir Wallace Sandford was chairman of the commission, and during a visit to Victoria and New South Wales members were afforded much information on the sheep and cattle population of Australia. It was then mentioned by such prominent people as Sir William Angas and Mr. Sim Cooper, who were large exporters of lambs, that drought was the main dread of those engaged in primary production. I have been a member of this Chamber for a number of years, and although such measures as drought relief and bush fire relief have been brought down from time to time, I cannot remember one measure to carry out a policy of fodder conservation ever being placed before the Council. During one lean period we compulsorily acquired hay in various parts of the State to provide feed for stock, but I cannot remember an over-all plan being introduced by the Government to assist primary producers.

The Hon. E. H. Edmonds—Fodder conservation is being preached every day.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I know that, and a deep sea port in the South-East has also been preached by members of the Party to which the honourable member belongs, but no over-all legislation has been brought down to assist primary producers.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—Do you think the Government should do this?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—Yes, if it genuinely wanted to help them.

The Hon N. L. Jude—A few moments ago you said they had had a wonderful time.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I did say that they have had 12 bountiful seasons, and I put it candidly to my honourable friend that despite that he has never advocated any overall plan with regard to fodder conservation for stock. Mr. Robinson has asked for concessions to bring stock to the abattoirs. This Government often claims to help primary producers, but it should bestir itself and meet the emergency before it arises so that it can truly claim that it is legislating in the interests of primary producers and the people of the State generally. Sir Frank Perry will agree with me when I say that none of our secondary industries could continue without primary production. Those who are tilling the land and living off it have a responsibility not only to themselves but to the State.

The Hon. E. H. Edmonds—They are discharging that responsibility very well.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I am not decrying the man on the land. I am attempting to assist him, and I say that this Government has had no overall plan to assist him.

The Hon. E. H. Edmonds—What do you suggest it should do?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I am coming to that. In the good seasons since 1946 the Australian sheep population has reached an all time record, and today it stands at approximately 150,000,000. There were increases and decreases in the cattle industry prior to 1946, but today that population is about 17,000,000. It is a known fact that Australian farmers have never conserved enough fodder to withstand a drought, and with the record numbers of livestock being carried today, fodder reserves have fallen further behind. Research into statistics has revealed some startling figures. From 1948 to 1957 the total fodder reserves needed to satisfy annual requirements of stock for survival during a drought year grew from below 30,000,000 tons to over 40,000,000 tons, an increase of 33 per cent. Comparing the above figures with actual production we find that in 1948 a total of nearly 2,000,000 tons was produced and in 1955 the production was 3,100,000 tons. No figures are available for 1956 and 1957. That increase amounts to 55 per cent, but it is only 4 per cent of the production necessary to maintain livestock during a drought. I think members will agree with me when I say that because of the dry spell early this year it would be reasonable to assume that the figures I have mentioned have deteriorated, and thus the need is greater. It must be emphasized that these figures are for total livestock population including pigs and poultry. Probably only half of these fodder reserves would be available to feed sheep and cattle. These facts indicate how dangerously low our fodder reserves are today.

Mr. Edmonds said the farmers have conserved fodder and that may be so in some cases. However, many are unable to do so because of lack of finance. In the farming areas many people would have fodder reserves, but through financial stringency they were unable to purchase the necessary machinery for baling the fodder. They could not get money through their own private banks and were told to go to hire purchase companies for assistance. The Minister, being a grazier, knows that when one goes to a hire purchase company to buy machinery the interest cost is prohibitive. The private

banks are not able to give the necessary finance because of the present policy on finance dictated by the Menzies Government through the Commonwealth Bank. My friend has an opportunity to deny that statement. I quite agree that people should refuse to pay the prohibitive cost entailed when purchasing through the hire purchase companies.

The Hon. C. R. Story—Couldn't they hire machinery?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I presume they could, and those who can hire it are doing so. My friend does not hire all the machinery he needs, but pays for it for very obvious reasons.

The Hon. C. D. Rowe—I think the honourable member forms his ideas from what he sees in the south parklands.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I do not. My friend represents a district which has had bountiful seasons, and I have never heard him talking on this subject. It is left to the metropolitan members to speak of the needs of the man on the land.

I have said before in this Chamber that when my colleagues and I voted for the acquisition of the Adelaide Electric Supply Company we were told that it would mean cheaper power and lighting, meter rents would go, and the trust would be run as a social service in the interests of the people. It was on that basis that we voted for the acquisition, but what do we find today? The Auditor-General points out that it cost £8,500,000 to earn £10,800,000. I am concerned at the charges being levied on the consumers, and the top heaviness in regard to the executive. Honourable members who are connected with large industries know that no industry can afford to become top heavy; a balance is necessary to ensure financial success. The time has arrived when this Government—either by Royal Commission or Parliamentary Select Committee—should make a complete investigation, not to delve into the doings of the trust as though something sinister were being done, but to determine that its over-all policy shall be in strict conformity with the legislation passed at the time of acquisition.

The Hon. C. D. Rowe—Which of its functions do you think are superfluous?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I say that the executive is top heavy; there is more executive control in proportion to the amount of revenue than would be found in any industry in Australia. Let me give a small instance; not many years ago the trust had only one industrial officer, whereas today it has two or three under different names. I do not suggest that these people should be dismissed, but it appears to me that the undertaking is becoming a haven for the appointment of people to the executive to the detriment of members of trade unions who, after all, are the very basis of the continuance of the trust. They are the men who produce the energy, and when any industry becomes top heavy the time has arrived for an examination of its policy.

The Hon. C. D. Rowe—I am sorry to hear the honourable member making disparaging remarks about the trust.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I do not want my words to be twisted by the Attorney-General because I made it perfectly clear that I did not think anything sinister is being done. That does not alter the fact that the trust can pursue a policy quite different from that determined by this Parliament.

The Hon. C. D. Rowe—No electricity authority is better regarded.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—When employees of the trust have the temerity to ask for a small increase in salary or better working conditions the trust bristles with indignation. If the Attorney-General peruses *Hansard* he will find that the Premier said that meter rents would be abolished, whereas there has been a general levelling up of charges.

I come now to the proposed grant of £800,000 to the Adelaide University. I do not deny it the right of a grant, but that money is granted by the votes of all members in both Houses of Parliament yet the Opposition is represented by only one member on the University Council; this House has no representative from the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition has brought this forward for a number of years. If we are charged with the responsibility of voting the taxpayers' money we are entitled to some representation on the University Council, and I earnestly ask the Government to consider this when framing its Budget in future.

According to the Auditor-General's report, the net cost of education met from Consolidated Revenue in 1956-57 was £9,004,000 and the over-all percentage increase above the 1952-53 expenditure rose from 7.5 per cent in 1953-54 to 55.4 per cent in 1956-57. Every member here knows that the Opposition has always advocated free education from primary schools through the University, but in addition to the State schools there are denominational schools conducted by the Presbyterian, Methodist, Anglican, Lutheran and Catholic churches and they, too, have primary and secondary schools. Just as costs have risen in the State sphere they

have risen in the continuance and maintenance of denominational schools and I put it to the Government that it should give some measure of financial relief, if only for the erection of buildings.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—These schools charge fees, whereas the Government does not.

The Hon. K. E. J .BARDOLPH—I am not suggesting a straight out gift, but some way in which the denominational school can be assisted for the purpose of enlarging existing schools and erecting new buildings.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan—The same parents provide the money for the State schools.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—Yes. People who send their children to denominational schools also contribute to the cost of our State schools. If a parent desires, by virtue of his conscience, to send his child to a denominational school he has a perfect right to do so, and these schools are carrying on a work which, if they were closed tomorrow, the Government could not undertake as it would have neither the accommodation nor the requisite teachers. Therefore I submit that this is one of the items that the Government could well consider closely in order to make possible the continuance of the extremely valuable work being carried on by these denominational schools. It is true that some are obtaining loans from banks, but they practically have to go from door to door of the lending institutions to get even part of the money they need. I hope the Government will review the circumstances, as it has done in the matter of housing and aged people, which is a very laudable work and I compliment the Government upon it. Now it should concentrate on the other side of the human family and do something to assist the children through the schools.

We on this side have been twitted from time to time as to what we mean by democratic socialism, and I undertook to enlighten Sir Arthur Rymill as to exactly what our policy is. I am convinced that the time is not far distant when he will be a most ardent advocate of democratic socialism as enunciated by members of our Party. I put it under three headings.

The Hon. C. R. Story—We take our choice?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—No. They are interwoven.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill—Is it the same as capitalistic communism?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—The first, with which I think all members will agree, is "Security in all its forms in the home." Secondly, "The breadwinner working usefully in the community and being remunerated on a level which will enable him to discharge the responsibilities of family life." Thirdly, "Each child to be well equipped in our schools to play his part in the years to come in the development of human society based upon the enlightened principles of the Four Freedoms of the Atlantic Charter."

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill—Is that all?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—It does not need to be more. The honourable member should realize we have just come through the fires of war—

The Hon. C. D. Rowe—It does not provide for long service leave.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—At times the Attorney-General seems to think that he is in the courts, but he is not there now. When World War II started Great Britain was regarded as the Island Fortress of Democracy, and no-one decried that fact. In due course there came that famous meeting of President Roosevelt and Sir Winston Churchill which resulted in the declaration of the Four Freedoms of the Atlantic Charter as the Allied objective and full purpose in continuing the war: freedom from fear, freedom from want, freedom of association and freedom of religion. Those are the fundamentals upon which Labor's policy of democratic socialism is based, and whether it be long service leave or some other issue they are all based on those freedoms. That is why the Labor Party takes its stand on long service leave, for it conscientiously believes that the proposals submitted by the Government are not based upon those principles.

The PRESIDENT—Order! The honourable member must not anticipate debate.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—Thank you for pointing that out, Mr. President. I want to make it abundantly clear that, irrespective of what policy the Labor Party puts forward, it will always be branded by those opposed to it and those representing certain interests as something inimical to the best interests of Australia, as was done during the war. However, members of the Labor Party, who subscribe to the principles I have spoken of, have played a prominent part in the development of the economic security of this country. They have handed down these principles, and it is democratic socialism to which we subscribe.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill—Where does "democratic" come in?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—We believe in Parliamentary institutions at whatever cost. We do not believe in implementing a policy

by dictatorship or a firing squad, but constitutionally through the elected representatives of the people in both Houses of Parliament, and at the end of three years, whether in the Federal or State sphere, the people can determine through their votes whether they want to continue with that policy. That is the difference between the propaganda that is being indulged in by those opposed to Labor and the true principles that actuate the Labor Party. I leave the matter there knowing full well that I have convinced Sir Arthur Rymill of the justice of our case, and I look forward to the time when he will support us in every matter we raise, in the interests of the people of Australia in general, and of South Australia in particular.

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

METROPOLITAN MILK SUPPLY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Minister of Employment)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to enable the Government to extend the metropolitan area, as defined in the Metropolitan Milk Supply Act, 1946. The general objects of this Act are to regulate the production and treatment of milk sold for human consumption in the metropolitan area so as to ensure a supply of milk of good quality produced under hygienic conditions, and to provide for the stabilization and equalization of the returns to the producers.

The metropolitan area, within the meaning of the Metropolitan Milk Supply Act, consists of the municipalities and districts within which the Food and Drugs Act operates. For purposes of this Bill it is not necessary to mention them all. The relevant point is that no territory north of the municipality of Enfield is included in the area. The northern boundary of Enfield is a line running roughly east and west a little way north of Dry Creek. Since 1946, when the metropolitan milk scheme was introduced, settlements north of Enfield have extended considerably, and there have been important developments at Salisbury North and Elizabeth. It seems reasonable to expect that as time goes on there will be substantial further extensions of the northern suburbs. All these rapidly developing areas are outside the territory within which the Metropolitan Milk Board controls the retail milk supply.

The Government has received a request from the Board asking that the metropolitan area should be extended so as to take in the towns of Salisbury and Elizabeth. The same request is supported by the representative organizations of the milk producers who supply the metropolitan area. The Government has not yet decided what extensions of the Act should be made, but it seems likely that as residential settlements extend, the ambit of the Board's jurisdiction will also have to be extended. The Government by this Bill accordingly seeks power to do this. The proposal is that any alteration of the metropolitan area will be made by regulations approved by the Governor on the recommendation of the Metropolitan Milk Board. Under this arrangement the Government and the Board will have to reach agreement on the question of what extensions are desirable, and in the last resort Parliament will have control over any proposed changes.

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

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It makes amendments to the Road Traffic Act dealing with a variety of matters, including traffic rules, administration procedure and registration, as well as some consequential amendments. The explanation of the clauses is as follows:—Clauses 3 and 4 are consequential amendments, rendered necessary by amendments previously made.

Clause 5, Sir, provides for a minor change in departmental practice. For a good many years, an applicant for registration of a motor vehicle has been required to make a statement that his vehicle is insured, and also to produce a certificate of insurance from an insurance company. Under the practice now followed in the Motor Vehicles Department there is no longer any need for the applicant's statement as to insurance, because the certificate is a sufficient safeguard to ensure that no vehicle is registered without insurance. The statement merely adds to the cost of printing the forms. It is proposed, therefore, to repeal the provision requiring the statement.

Clause 6, Sir, deals with the registration fee for diesel-engined vehicles. In 1951 the registration fee for these vehicles was doubled. The reason was that diesel fuel was not subject to

a Federal tax as petrol was, and in order to secure an equitable contribution to the roads from the owners of diesel-engined vehicles, Parliament decided that they should pay a higher registration fee. But in view of the recent Federal tax of one shilling a gallon on diesel oil the justification for the higher registration fee no longer exists, and the Government desires to repeal the provision imposing it.

Clause 7 deals with the transfer of the registration of a vehicle which has been registered at a concessional registration fee or with payment of any registration fee. The present law is that such a registration is not transferable. This rule was enacted some years ago to prevent evasion of the payment of the proper registration fees, because in some instances owners entitled to concessional rates had transferred their vehicles to persons who should have paid full fees. However, in recent years the Registrar has found that the risk of evasion is small and that it would facilitate administration and meet the needs of the public if transfers of concessional registrations were allowed in cases where the transferee was entitled to the same concession as the transferor. Clause 7, Sir, will enable this to be done.

Clause 8 makes amendments to authorize a new system of issuing traders' plates. In the past traders' plates have been provided by the owners of the vehicles, and the same plates remain in force year after year, subject to the owners paying the appropriate renewal fee. This system has some unsatisfactory features. The Registrar has reason to believe that there has been a fair amount of misuse of the plates by people who have ceased to be carrying on the business for which the plates were issued, but detection and prosecution in specific cases has been found difficult.

With the object of securing better control the Registrar has recommended a new system. Under this the plates will be issued from year to year by the department. There will be a different colour each year so that the plates will be readily identifiable. Further, there will be less likelihood of plates remaining in the possession of people who have ceased to be traders. In order to cover the cost of the new scheme, and the cost of the traders' plates, it is proposed to increase the fees. The fee for limited traders' plates will be raised from £2 to £3 and that for general traders' plates from £16 to £17.

Clause 9, Sir, provides for an alteration in the period of operation of drivers' licences. Under the present law every drivers' licence continues in force for a period of 12 months, commencing on the first day of the month in which it was issued. Thus licences expire on the last day of a month and work in connection with renewals accumulates at that time.

The Registrar has found that in order to obtain an even flow of work, it is desirable that each licence should be current for a year from the day when it comes into force. This will mean that a new licence will operate for a year commencing on the day when the applicant completes compliance with all the conditions for the issue of the licence, including payment of the fee. A licence issued by way of renewal will operate from the day after the expiration of the previous licence, unless the holder of the licence is more than a month late in applying for renewal. If he is more than a month late, he will be treated as an applicant for a new licence so far as the period of operation of his licence is concerned. As time goes on this new system will result in an even flow of work throughout the year in connection with drivers' licences.

Clause 10, Sir, deals with clearance lights on wide motor vehicles. These lights were provided for by the amending Act of last year. In laying down the rules as to the position of the lights the Act followed standards which had been worked out by competent authorities, but it has been found that more flexibility in the rules as to the position of the lights is essential. Last year's Act provided that the front clearance lights had to be within twelve inches of the front of the vehicle. However, the Government has been informed that there are some vehicles which are narrow in front and on which it is impossible or highly inconvenient to affix the clearance lights within twelve inches of the front.

Similarly, it has been found as regards some vehicles that if the clearance lights are placed within twelve inches of the rear of the vehicle as was required, they are difficult to see. It is therefore proposed in the Bill to provide that front clearance lights may be not more than two-fifths of the length of the vehicle from the front, and rear clearance lights not more than two-fifths of the length of the vehicle from the rear.

Another rule enacted last year which was in accordance with the standards code stated that rear clearance lights must be not less than two and not more than five feet above the ground level. On some large vehicles, however, and on tramway buses it has been found more convenient to have the clearance lights

higher up. Some of the buses which were built before last year's Act was passed are equipped with rear clearance lights somewhere about eight feet high. An inspection of the buses showed that these were satisfactory. It is proposed to amend the law as to the height of rear clearance lights by allowing them to be at any height not more than nine feet above ground level. It is also proposed that clearance lamps need only be carried between half an hour after sunset and half an hour before sunrise.

Clause 11, Sir, deals with the amount of the fine imposable for a first offence of driving under the influence of liquor. At present this fine must be not less than £30 and not more than £50. In conformity with recent increases in penalties and on the recommendation of magistrates it is now proposed to raise the maximum from £50 to £100. Honourable members are, of course, aware that imprisonment and disqualification from driving can also be imposed as penalties for a first offence of driving under the influence of liquor. Clause 12 is a consequential amendment.

Clause 13 deals with the offence of driving while disqualified by order of a court. At present it is an offence punishable by imprisonment for a person to drive a vehicle anywhere, whether on a road or not, while he is disqualified. It has been submitted to the Government that this provision causes undue hardship in a case where the disqualified person desires to drive a vehicle on privately owned property, such as a farm or pastoral holding, and the Traffic Committee has recommended that it should be limited to driving on roads. Clause 13 makes an amendment for this purpose.

Clause 14 makes an amendment consequential on that made by clause 5. Clause 15 deals with the approval of insurance companies as insurers authorized to issue third party motor insurance policies. Ever since third party insurance became compulsory all companies applying to be approved as insurers under the Act have been required to give undertakings that they will not refuse to grant policies to members of the public except in certain specified cases. A very large majority of insurers have honoured their undertakings with complete fidelity and the Government has not had a word of complaint from the public about them. From time to time, however, there have been complaints against a small number of companies from members of the public alleging unjustified refusals of insurance. Some of these complaints were undoubtedly based on good grounds and the Government has had to intervene. The matter now appears to be satisfactorily settled, but what has occurred reveals the desirability of having provisions in the Act to amplify the provisions as to approved insurers.

Under the present law there is little doubt that the Treasurer can grant approvals for a limited time, and can refuse to renew the approval of a company if reasonable cause exists for doing so. But it is doubtful, Sir, whether the Treasurer can withdraw an approval before its normal term expires, or whether he can suspend an approval. These are desirable powers and less drastic than the power to refuse a renewal. Another question which arose for consideration is whether a third party policy issued by an approved insurer whose approval was not renewed upon expiry thereof would remain a sufficient policy for purposes of the Road Traffic Act. In order to deal with these and allied questions it is proposed to insert in the Act a short clause which will give statutory sanction for the present system of granting approvals and also make it clear that the Treasurer can withdraw or suspend the approval of an insurer who has contravened the terms of his undertaking. It is also proposed to lay down a rule that withdrawal, suspension or non-renewal of an approval will not affect policies previously issued by the insurer.

Clause 16, Sir, deals with the amount of the fine which may be imposed for the offence of dangerous or reckless driving. At present the fine for a first offence is not less than ten pounds and not more than fifty pounds. It is proposed to increase this amount so that the prescribed fine for any such offence, whether a first or a subsequent offence, will be not less than £50 and not more than £100. The minimum of £50 will of course be reducible under the Justices Act in the case of a first offence, if circumstances justify this course. For any second offence of dangerous or reckless driving, imprisonment for not more than three months can be awarded under the existing law and it is not proposed to alter this.

Clause 17 deals with compulsory stops at railway crossings. About two years ago, in view of some serious accidents, a strong demand grew up for a law that passenger buses should be required to stop in all cases before crossing a railway line. The Traffic Committee supported the idea and a general rule was enacted applying to all railway crossings requiring large passenger vehicles, and all vehicles carrying inflammable gases or explosives, to stop before moving across the railway line. However,

experience of the working of this rule, particularly at elaborately-equipped crossings such as Emerson, has shown that the compulsory stopping of any limited class of vehicles is undesirable at crossings where there are signals giving warning of the approach of each train, or gates or barriers which close against road traffic when a train is coming. These devices are reliable and if they are not operating so as to indicate the approach of a train there is little reason why vehicles should stop. Bus drivers complain that although they are obliged to stop, drivers of other vehicles are not, and this sometimes creates awkward or dangerous situations. After consideration of the information and recommendations received the Government has decided to suggest to Parliament that the general duty of buses to stop at railway crossings should be limited to crossings other than those where there are warning signals or gates. Clause 17 carries this decision into effect. It is not proposed, however, to alter the effect of stop signs at railways crossings.

Clause 18, Sir, deals with the placing of lines or marks on roads for the purpose of indicating the route to be followed by vehicles turning to the right. At a number of intersections where there are islands, beacons or special arrangements for controlling traffic such as at Emerson, it is necessary that the ordinary method of making a right-hand turn should be modified. One modification often required is that vehicles, when making a right turn, should keep on the right of the island or beacon, instead of on the left as the general law requires. In order to make this duty clear to motorists it is necessary that some public authority should have power to place lines or marks on the road for the purpose of indicating the route to be followed by vehicles making a right turn.

It is also essential that there should be some arrangements for ensuring a uniform policy in this matter. For that purpose it is proposed that the Commissioner of Highways will be the controlling authority, and that he shall have power to place the necessary lines or marks on the road or to authorize a municipal or district council to do so. The Commissioner now has an expert traffic engineer on his staff who can advise on such matters.

Clause 19 also deals with the law as to the mode of making right turns. The first part of it is complementary to clause 18. It provides that when lines or marks are lawfully placed on a road for the purpose of indicating the route to be followed by vehicles turning or about to turn to the right, motorists must act as indicated by them. The other part of clause 19 deals with the duty of a motorist who is making a right turn at an intersection, to give way to approaching traffic. Until recently it was commonly accepted that in all cases a motorist turning to the right had to give way to oncoming—as well as overtaking—traffic and should not make the turn until the road in front and behind was sufficiently clear to enable him to do it with safety. This was thought to be the law whether there was or was not a traffic island in the intersection.

In a recent case, however, relating to an intersection in which there was a traffic island, the Supreme Court held that a motorist making a turn to the right did not have to give way to oncoming traffic, but on the contrary was entitled to be given the right of way by an approaching motorist. The Government, of course, accepts this decision as being the law at the intersections to which it applies, but there is much doubt about the scope of its application. It is obviously not applicable to every intersection in which there is an island, irrespective of the size of the island. No-one can say what intersections the principle of the decision applies to. The decisions given by magistrates on this subject are not easy to reconcile. The police have been embarrassed by a real doubt as to the legal duty of drivers turning at intersections where there are islands and at intersections in double roads such as the Port Road and Anzac Highway. There is a strong opinion among traffic authorities that the former rule as to the duty of motorists turning to the right should be restored, that is to say, Sir, the onus should be placed on a motorist turning to the right to give way in all cases to oncoming traffic, and it is thought that this duty should not be affected by the existence of an island or a traffic beacon or a median strip in the road. It is proposed, therefore, by clause 19, to restore the old rule.

Clause 20 makes an amendment dealing with the towing of one vehicle by another. Under the existing provisions of the Road Traffic Act, Sir, when one vehicle is towing another, a competent person must be in charge of the towed vehicle so as to control it so far as the condition of its brakes and mechanism will permit. The Government has been recently informed that there are towing devices now on the market which keep the towed vehicle in its place and obviate the necessity for having a person in charge of it. The State Traffic Committee has enquired into the matter and is

satisfied that such devices are practicable and safe and recommended that provision should be made for exempting a towed vehicle from the necessity to have a man in charge of it provided that it was attached to the towing vehicle by a device complying with regulations to be made for the purpose. Clause 20 carries this recommendation into operation. I commend the Bill to members for their consideration.

The Hon. A. J. SHARD secured the adjournment of the debate.

VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Attorney-General)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Among other things, it provides that an owner or occupier, after receiving notice so to do, must destroy all vermin on his land and half the width of adjoining roads. During what are termed the simultaneous vermin destruction months the land holder is under an obligation to destroy vermin whether or not he receives specific notice for the purpose.

In 1945 the law was extended to provide that a landholder must destroy rabbit burrows on his land and adjoining roads but this duty is limited to a case where notice to destroy is given by the council or other appropriate authority. There is no general duty to destroy burrows during the simultaneous vermin destruction months, and the purpose of this Bill is to provide that such a duty will apply.

Accordingly, a number of amendments are made to the Vermin Act for the purpose of imposing on landholders the duty to destroy burrows during the simultaneous vermin destruction months without notice. However, as is now provided in the Act relating to the destruction of burrows after notice, it is provided that it is to be a defence to show that, owing to the physical features of the land in question, it is not practicable to destroy the burrows.

The only other amendment made is contained in clause 2 and clause 3 (*b*). The Act provides that the months for simultaneous vermin destruction may be changed from time to time with respect to any area and it is felt that adequate notice of what months are simultaneous vermin destruction months should be given to landholders. Clause 2 therefore requires the council to give at least a fortnight's notice of the advent of a simultaneous vermin destruction period by publication of a notice to that effect in a newspaper circulating in the locality. Clause 3 (*b*) provides that it is to be a defence to proceedings if it is proved that the requisite advertisement was not given.

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

CROWN LANDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Attorney-General)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It deals with a problem which arises mainly as a result of action taken by South Australian Governments last century with the object of establishing new townships, mainly in the northern parts of the State. Between the years 1860 and 1890 many proposed town sites in areas of sparse population were surveyed and subdivided into building allotments with roads and park lands. The allotments were offered for sale to the public and in the aggregate some hundreds of them were sold, though only a small proportion of the total. For example, in one town 90 out of 360 blocks were sold, in another 26 out of 130, in another 14 out of 350 and in others only one or two out of about 100. These are typical cases.

The townships with which this Bill is concerned did not develop according to expectations. In practically all of them there are no buildings at all nor, as far as can be foreseen, are there likely to be any. The titles to the allotments which were sold by the Crown are now in some cases in the names of deceased persons, since the executors or administrators have not bothered to register transmissions or transfers. In other cases the owners are in other States or overseas and apparently have lost all interest in their blocks.

From time to time however owners or lessees of other lands near these old towns apply to the Government for a lease or grant of some of the vacant and unused township allotments. The problem then arises whether the Government can do anything to help such applicants. In 1913 an attempt was made to solve this problem by legislation. An amending Crown Lands Act was passed containing provisions for the cancellation of superfluous townships, and these provisions have been incorporated in section 261 of the consolidating Crown Lands Act of 1929. They provide, in effect, that when Crown lands have been set apart and subdivided as a town site but, in the opinion of the Minister of Lands, no town has been built and the land is no

longer required as a site for a town, the Governor may cancel the proclamation creating the town, and the Minister may acquire all or any of the township allotments. The Act also lays down the procedure to be adopted for acquisition, and it is this question of procedure which is dealt with in this Bill.

The procedure which now has to be followed is that laid down in Part X of the Crown Lands Act. However, Part X was designed for the acquisition of large estates for subdivision and closer settlement and is completely unsuitable for the acquisition of isolated town allotments. It takes years to go through the necessary steps and it is by no means certain that the Crown can ever obtain a clear title at all. It seems that Part X was passed not to facilitate acquisition, but rather to make it very difficult. The Land Board, which has the task of dealing with cancelled towns, has asked that the law should be altered so as to provide a practicable method of acquisition.

The Bill sets out to achieve this object. The proposal is that in cases where it is intended to cancel the proclamation establishing a town the Governor shall have power to acquire town allotments by proclamation. Proclamations will be made only where the Minister is satisfied that the land is no longer required as the site of a town. A proclamation will declare that the allotments to which it applies will be vested in the Crown as from a named day. On that day the Crown will obtain a clear title and everybody having any estate or interest in the allotments will have a claim for compensation. Notice of the acquisition must be given to every person having a right to compensation who is known to the Minister or who, after diligent inquiry, becomes known to him. If a person who is entitled to be given notice of acquisition cannot be found the Minister can serve the notice on the person in occupation of the land, and if there is no occupier the notice can be affixed in a conspicuous place on the land itself. After the preliminary procedure any person claiming compensation may bring an action for such compensation in any court of competent jurisdiction. The compensation will be the value of the land at the time of the acquisition and any other damage which the claimant suffers by reason of the severance of the land from other land owned by him.

Under this Bill a person entitled to compensation will be better off than he is at present. In most cases the amount involved will be well within the jurisdiction of a local court and if the amount is not settled by agreement, as no doubt it will be in most cases, an action can be brought in a local court. Under the present law, however, disputed claims for compensation have to be settled by arbitration, the arbitrators being a judge of the Supreme Court and two persons appointed respectively by the claimant and the Crown. Past experience has shown that arbitration under Part X of the Crown Lands Act is an unsatisfactory procedure. Furthermore, there are no special provisions in this Bill intended to protect the Crown by limiting or defining the basis of compensation and owners will be entitled to the full value of their blocks.

The Bill will remove difficulties which have confronted the Land Board for some time and in the opinion of the Government will not cause injustice to anyone. On the other hand, it will enable town blocks which at present are not being used by their owners to be allotted by the Crown to persons or authorities who will make better use of them than has been done in the past. It should be pointed out that this Bill is not in any way related to the question of decentralization. The cancelled towns to which the Bill will apply are places where there have not been any industries and where industries are not likely to be established within any time that can now be foreseen.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH secured the adjournment of the debate.

RENMARK IRRIGATION TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Attorney-General)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill has been asked for by the Renmark Irrigation Trust. Its object is to confer on the trust power to acquire land compulsorily for the purpose of carrying out any works which the trust is authorized to carry out under its Act. The need for a power of compulsory acquisition was clearly shown during the recent floods when, for the protection of large areas of the irrigation settlement, the trust found it necessary to construct banks on private properties. Although it ultimately succeeded in constructing these banks, some difficulties with land owners arose. It became clear to the trust that if a land owner refused his consent, it might not have been possible for it to construct works which were essential for the protection of the settlement as a whole.

In the long run, all authorities, whether government or local, which are charged with the duty of constructing public works, find it necessary to have a power of compulsory acquisition for the purpose of obtaining the land on which the works are to be built. This, of course, applies to district and municipal councils, and also to the Minister of Irrigation as regards the settlements under his control. However, there is no provision at present in the Renmark Irrigation Trust Act for this purpose, and, pursuant to a promise made by the Government to the trust, this Bill is now submitted for the approval of honourable members. The Bill confers a general power for the trust to acquire land for authorized works. It also empowers the Governor to grant to the trust the fee simple of any Crown lands when the trust has acquired the interest of any purchaser or lessee of such lands.

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

BRANDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

LONG SERVICE LEAVE BILL.

Adjourned debate on the motion of the Hon. C. D. Rowe (Attorney-General)—

That this Bill be now read a second time—which the Hon. F. J. Condon had moved to amend by deleting all the words after "be" with a view to inserting "withdrawn and redrafted to provide for three months' long service leave after ten years' continuous service."

(Continued from October 8. Page 955.)

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL (Central No. 2)—I welcome the introduction of this Bill as a forward looking measure and one which is redolent of optimism and faith in the future. It seems to me to constitute a definite gain in the standard of living of the people, which, as I said in my maiden speech in this House, I believe, and I think I hold this in common with all other honourable members, should be as high as the country can afford. The question of holding balances in these matters is one which must at all times be carefully investigated by those who have access to the information which enables them to gauge such things, and I rely on the Government assertion that this stride can be accomplished within that specification. I read in the press last week something which seemed to me very apt in that regard—an utterance by Lord Nuffield some little time ago that a nation which goes into semi-retirement cannot progress. Indeed, one can say that even to maintain existing standards of living everyone must do a reasonable amount of work. Consequently, the question of hours, working conditions and so on must be fully investigated and cannot be stretched all the time as certain interested parties would like.

It is paradoxical that this Bill, which I described as a forward looking measure, should be introduced in the same session as a Bill to extend the application of price control, because if ever there was a measure which looks backwards it is that one. Whereas I described the Bill before us as one of optimism and faith in the future, the other is one of living in the past.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon. E. Anthoney)—I am afraid that the honourable member cannot discuss that.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—Various matters must be considered with the Bill. One of the important aspects raised is whether progressive legislation of this nature should be dealt with by Parliaments, or left to the Arbitration and Industrial Courts. In general, I believe that the arbitration system should be allowed to operate. It has worked very well in the past and will continue to do so so long as there is a desire for it in the minds of the people; and thus, speaking generally, I think it is good that industrial matters should be left to those tribunals. However, there are exceptions to every rule, and I believe that this is one, for several reasons. The main one is that the Bill is intended to cover all employees, whether or not they are unionists or work under industrial awards, trade agreements and so on. There are other arguments in favour of Parliament dealing with this matter, such as the fact that similar legislation exists in most, if not all, the other States, and it seems to be working reasonably well. It is proper that in such circumstances South Australia should come into line.

In giving general support to the measure, with certain qualifications, I do not regard Parliament as setting a precedent in interfering, as it were, in industrial matters, because I have said that each case needs to be dealt with on its merits, and there are particular reasons why Parliament should deal with this measure. We have heard much about the attitude of employees to the Bill. Not so much has been said about the attitude of employers, but I think that the recent publicity shows their attitude. They have been negotiating for various applications of the long service leave principle. The general atmosphere among

employers has been one of acceptance of the principle, and they have been making their own bargains.

It is important to compare the Bill, not only with the Acts of other States, but with awards, the policies of employer and employee organizations, and indeed with the ambitions of some politicians. The debate in this House has centred mainly on the amount of leave in comparison with that provided in other States, and to the length of retrospectivity provided in the Bill. A further aspect is the number of employees who would be entitled to leave under the varying awards and legislation. Our Bill provides for one week's long service leave after the first seven years of employment and one week a year thereafter. That means that in 20 years the employee is entitled to 14 weeks' leave and thereafter one week per annum. The generality of the Acts of other States provide for 13 weeks after 20 years and thereafter a *pro rata* amount, *i.é.*, 6½ weeks for every 10 years, so that in 30 years under this Bill an employee will get 24 weeks' leave whereas under the other Acts he will get only 19½ weeks, and after 40 years his long service leave would be 34 weeks under our legislation whereas it would be only 26 weeks under other legislation. I think members can see that as far as the amount of leave is concerned the employee is better off under this Bill.

With regard to retrospectivity, ours is retrospective to seven years but other Acts are retrospective to 20 years. In other words, our employees of seven years' standing are entitled to one week and thereafter a week per annum, whereas employees of 20 years' standing now are entitled to 13 weeks under the Acts of other States. So in that regard this Bill is not as good as the generality of Acts of other States, but I believe there are good reasons for that as I shall mention later.

The other question is the number of people affected. Here again our Bill is better for the employee and I do not think that can be gainsaid, although it will not be as much better for them as when it started off on account of the acceptance of the principle of *pro rata* leave after 10 years by trade agreements that are being made. Nevertheless, a great percentage of employees will benefit under this Act because they become entitled after seven years to long service leave and there are many more employees of seven years' standing than there are of 20 years, or, indeed, of 10 years' standing, so, within limits, again our Bill is better.

The reasons I referred to for limiting the retrospectivity of this Bill I think are fairly apparent, namely, the impact that will be made on employers. In this regard it has to be remembered that this Bill covers employees all over the State and not only in big industries and large commercial undertakings, and this immediately dictates caution. The impact on employers will not be so great initially, but it will be greater when spread over the years, which seems to be a fair way of doing things. Long service leave in itself seems to involve some concept of retrospectivity, although it can be said that the Act should start from the time it is passed. Nevertheless, it involves, by its very nature, some looking back, but is it fair that it should look back for 20 years? I do not believe it is for this reason principally: contracts for service of employees over 20 years have been solemnly made and carried out on both sides.

This Bill sets out to superimpose something on a past contract. Notwithstanding that both sides have agreed to work under those conditions one side is now going to receive from the other side a further benefit, and the unfairness of that is that in one case, for instance, the manufacturing industry, that extra benefit has not been included in the price structure. The employer has made up his price structure according to his costs, not anticipating that later some authority is going to add to those costs in retrospect. That is therefore a very valid argument, I think, why long service leave should not look back too far. The allowance has to be met by the employer and in those circumstances they cannot be met by the employer from profits. They have to be met from accumulated reserves or, in many instances, from future earnings. In regard to small employers—for whom everyone has considerable sympathy—if we make the Bill retrospective for 20 years it could bear very hardly on some of those who have done a good job over the years but have not accumulated much money. Indeed, it has been said that some of them could be driven out of business by the impact of 20 years' retrospectivity. Further, there is a very good case for the comparatively limited retrospectivity provided in this Bill, particularly as the Government has made an edict that later on employees will get more because they get longer leave over a period than under the other States' Acts.

Now I should like to analyse the attitude of the Labor Party on this matter because it is extremely interesting. Where Labor is in power in other States it has brought in Acts giving 13 weeks' long service leave after 20 years' service and the A.C.T.U., in conjunction with

employers' organizations, has recently agreed to a draft code which also provides for 13 weeks after 20 years, but what does the Labor Party here, that has not the responsibility, do—and this of course is where the difference lies. Perhaps before I go further I should clarify what the A.C.T.U. has said, as reported in the *Advertiser* of September 25 last:—

The A.C.T.U. Congress today approved a code of long service leave which trade union leaders are confident will ultimately affect more than 1½ million workers under Federal awards throughout Australia.

The code, broadly a composite form of the New South Wales and Victorian Long Service Leave Acts, is based on the principle of 13 weeks' leave for 20 years' continuous service with one employer, and operates retrospectively for 20 years. Workers would have a *pro rata* entitlement after 10 year's service.

After the first 20 years' service, workers would be entitled to an extra 6½ weeks' leave for each completed period of 10 years.

Mr. Bardolph referred to the fact that there were three ex-Presidents and the present President of Trades and Labor Council of South Australia in this Council. I am credibly informed that two of the ex-Presidents are gold medallists, and there is also the reigning monarch of the moment who is not a gold medallist, but who is rapidly qualifying for that honour. It is therefore obvious that these gentlemen are very closely connected with the trade union movement and have been stalwarts of the movement for many years, and it must be a matter of some embarrassment to them to come under the A.L.P. edict in this matter. Let us have a look at what the A.L.P., which these gentlemen, perhaps, more directly represent in this House, has to say.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—What has this to do with long service leave?

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—It is right on the knocker. In the *Advertiser* of June 17 last there was a report of the annual Convention of the South Australian Branch of the A.L.P. Following the recommendation of the executive the convention accepted the following resolution:—

That the Parliamentary Labor Party press by all means at it disposal for a Long Service Leave Act to conform with principles laid down by the State platform of the A.L.P., irrespective of any proposed Act introduced by the State Government and any alleged threats made by Government members of Parliament.

And there was a note to the effect that the State platform is for three months' long service leave after 10 years' service. Mr. Fred Walsh, M.P., sought a ruling as to whether this meant that members of the Parliamentary Labor Party would, under no circumstances, support the Government Bill. He said, "Does this mean that we must speak and vote against the second reading of the Bill and the chairman, Mr. R. E. Bannister, said, "Yes." Mr. Bardolph, M.L.C., subsequently asked the chairman to reconsider his ruling. He said Labor members of Parliament would attempt to amend the Bill in Committee and if this failed they would vote against it. The chairman indicated that because of the procedures involved he would consider the matter further and give a ruling tonight. Mr. Walsh then cryptically remarked, "I hope they keep you locked up till then." Mr. Cameron, M.H.R., rather let the cat out of the bag when he said, "The Parliamentary Labor Party is in the same quandary as before in that it has to decide to accept what is offered, or hold out and lose everything." "My suggestion," he said, "is that we should oppose the Playford plan of long leave. If the Bill is dropped we should fight the next elections on this issue. We could not lose." In other words, he advocated sacrificing workers' interests so as to gain a political advantage.

In the *Advertiser* of June 18, 1957, Mr. Bannister, evidently having gone to bed with a copy of Standing Orders, is reported to have said that he had closely studied Parliamentary procedure before giving his ruling. "In short, members must completely and uncompromisingly oppose any Long Service Leave Bill that does not conform to Labor's policy as contained in the platform. In effect this means that Labor members must oppose the second reading of the Bill." He added, "In the Committee stages they must not accept nor must they seek any amendments which provide for a Bill containing less than Labor's policy on long service leave. They must also oppose the third reading." At least we know in advance what members of the Labor Party are going to do, because the report in the *Advertiser* goes on to say that an amendment to the Party rules moved by the secretary, Mr. J. C. Sexton, and carried, provided:—

Caucus decisions are binding on A.L.P. members of Parliament provided that they do not conflict with opinions given by the Central Executive or other authoritative A.L.P. body.

There we know precisely where members of that Party must stand. They are free to make Caucus decisions, which are binding on them anyhow, so long as they do not conflict with the dictation of these outside bodies.

The Hon. A. J. Shard—What is wrong with that? They are our bodies.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—I am quite happy if that is the position, but I believe everything is wrong with it, because surely Parliament is elected to judge the things it is capable of judging, and has far more information to judge on rather than accept dictates from people who have no responsibility in the matter. We can see what all this means—that Labor members are made to bow the head under pain of dismissal, something to which I referred to the other day as being "Chamberized," which is a very unpleasant thing.

Some individual statements of members during this debate bear repetition. When explaining the Bill, the Attorney-General said he hoped no member would deny anyone an advantageous right, and I think that it is a very statesmanlike utterance. Mr. Condon said he had advocated long service leave for 48 years. I have no doubt that is correct, and it seems a pity to me that he is now being denied the fruits of his labour by having to oppose this Bill. Mr. Bevan made a very good speech. He, in effect, tiptoed among the pebbles on the beach, and got through very well. Mr. Shard, who is also very knowledgeable on industrial matters, made a good contribution, but it is a great pity that these men had their hands tied, because I am sure if they were not they would have made a far better contribution to the debate. I am sympathetic towards them, because there is no doubt that the efforts of members of the Labor Party over the years have resulted in benefits to the people they claim, although not exclusively, to represent, and I would have liked to see them able to support this Bill rather than saying "If we cannot get what we want we will take our bats home and not play at all."

It seems to me rather curious that the A.C.T.U. advocates 13 weeks' leave after 20 years' service and the A.L.P. is insisting on exactly twice that amount, saying that if they cannot get it they will have nothing. Even if this Bill were amended by the Government to provide for 13 weeks' leave after 20 years' service, which the A.C.T.U. accepted, Labor members of this Council still could not support it. This is a most extraordinary situation.

I shall refer to one or two clauses, but as they will be subject to amendment and will be discussed in Committee, I shall not take very much time on them. Clause 13, which relates to exemptions, definitely needs amendment because in my opinion it is defective in that it makes no provision for exemptions outside registered awards and agreements. That is very bad for several reasons, the first of which is that many superannuation schemes are in existence that are far better for the employee concerned than any Long Service Leave Bill or award in Australia. It would be a sorry day if that type of scheme were not encouraged, because not only does it give better benefits for the workers than legislation or awards, but it also makes for good feeling between employer and employee. In addition, the best employers brought in these voluntary schemes, and if they are not exempted we would be saying to them that they should not have provided the benefits. When we bring in a Bill to force them to do something compulsorily, they will have to to do that in addition to what they are already doing voluntarily. The other employers would be riding in the box seat because they could say, "We have been told we have to do this" whereas the employer who has tried to help his employees would be penalized. I would not like to discourage these voluntary schemes under which better relations are encouraged between employer and employee over and above what is necessary under the laws of the land. I am rather surprised that the Bill is defective in this regard, because provisions for exemptions appear in every other State Act and in the recent draft code between the A.C.T.U. and employers. I cannot understand why this clause was not drafted to be in line with legislation in other States, and I hope that the Government will be prepared to accept a suitable amendment, which will not strike at the roots of the Bill, but will merely provide that employers who have done things in advance of having been made to do them will not suffer. As the Attorney-General has invited amendments, I hope he will give the consideration to this amendment that he says he always gives to all amendments.

The Hon. C. D. Rowe—To good amendments.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—I do not think they are the words the Attorney-General used when introducing this Bill; I think he said:—

The Government, as it always is, is prepared to accept amendments.

Methinks, perhaps the gentleman protested too much, because he emphasised that amendments would be considered in this case. However, we will judge by results, and I hope that the stress the Attorney-General placed on the matter will fructify. I believe the proposed amendments to be moved by Sir Frank Perry are excellent, as they are aimed at making the Bill more equitable, more workable, and above all do not

strike at any of the principles of the Bill. In other words, except in a minor way, they do not take away any rights but bring the Bill into line with commercial, industrial and ordinary practices.

The clause relating to casual workers is rather an extraordinary provision to find in a Long Service Leave Bill, firstly in the manner in which it is provided that long service leave should be applied to casual workers—by proclamation or regulation—that is to say, an executive rather than a Parliamentary act. Secondly, it seems to me that the idea of being a casual worker is a direct antithesis of a person who would qualify for long service leave. Although these men are employed as casual workers there is some idea that they will stay in their jobs long enough to qualify for this leave.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—That happens quite often.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—It happens in certain specialized industries, and I realize there are good reasons for it, but on the other hand these people are already rewarded specially by being better paid than workers with more security. If I am wrong in that, then their industrial tribunals will see that they are provided for, but I cannot see their place in a long service leave scheme. As I understand it, long service leave is a reward to an employee who has been loyal to his employer and has given years of his best work to him. Apart from the fact that even under these special cases referred to by Mr. Condon certain casual workers are not quite as casual in that sense as others, even at best they are still casual workers, as they do not work for one employer. If such a principle were accepted the next step would obviously be to give long service qualifications within an industry; that is, if a man worked for 20 years with three different employers in the same industry, under this principle he could claim to be entitled to long service leave. I do not believe that is the intention of this legislation; I think it is intended to cover the man who works for one employer only, and I think that also is in the A.C.T.U.'s code. If this clause relating to casual workers were passed it would develop the principle of intra-industry employment to the extent where employees could readily claim that although they had worked for half a dozen employers in 20 years they would still be entitled to long service leave, and that is not the way it lines up in my mind. Special circumstances apply to casual workers in industry, and if those employees are not receiving the special consideration they are entitled to it is a matter for their tribunals. In no sense of the word are they long service employees with one employer.

I give general support to this measure, but I feel that several of the amendments foreshadowed by Sir Frank Perry are vital ones. I think it is most important that they be carried, particularly the amendment of the exemption clause, and if the Government does not see fit to accept that amendment I will naturally have to consider my position in relation to the whole Bill. Mr. Condon has moved an amendment within the latitude which has been permitted. I regard that amendment as merely a negative one for the purpose of delaying the matter, and I do not think it is necessary for me to consider its merits. That amendment seeks more than twice as much as any other State has provided by legislation, and twice as much as the A.C.T.U. has advocated, and I will not support it. I give my general support to the second reading within the limitations which I have mentioned.

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

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 9. Page 989).

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Leader of the Opposition)—I am afraid this Bill is too important to be discussed fully in the time at our disposal. Very few Bills cause more discussion than a Local Government Bill, and that is because in my experience everybody appears to be an authority on local government matters. I think the Government would be well advised to have a look at this legislation next year. I am not going to delay the Bill and my speech will be very short because I recognize that this is a Committee Bill. I will refer to one or two clauses, and when the Bill is in Committee I will elaborate more fully on what I have in mind.

Most of the amendments are the result of recommendations by the Local Government Committee. Clause 2 deals with exemptions of ratable property, and gives some consideration to the Adelaide Children's Hospital and other hospitals which afford gratuitous services to poor or helpless persons. Last year a grant of £453,000 was made to the Adelaide Children's Hospital, which was an increase of £13,000 over the previous year. I support this clause because I think that hospital is worthy of every consideration in

return for the good and splendid work it does for the children of South Australia.

Section 73 of the Act provides that a mayor or chairman on taking the judicial oath and the oath of allegiance is to be *ex officio* a justice of the peace during his term of office. However, if he is re-elected to that office at present he is required to take the oath again. Clause 3 provides that where a mayor or chairman continues in office he will continue to be a justice of the peace without again taking the appropriate oaths. I think that is an improvement in the legislation, because I do not think he should have to take the oath every time he is re-elected.

Part V of the Act provides for the appointment of a committee consisting of the Auditor-General and an officer of the Highways Department to conduct examinations and issue certificates to qualified persons as local government auditors. Clause 4 provides that there is to be a third member of the committee, and I think that is a very wise precaution because with only two members on the committee it would not always be possible to reach a decision. According to the Auditor-General's Report, adverse reports, unfavourable in varying degrees, were received in connection with almost half the councils in the State, and it appears that some cleaning up is necessary. This clause, in my opinion, effects a further improvement in the legislation.

Clause 5 takes away the time limit which at present is imposed on persons who wish to inspect the minutes of council meetings. That is an improvement, because if a person wishes to peruse the minutes he will now have ample opportunity to do so. Section 158 authorizes a council to pay an allowance to the mayor or chairman, but in the case of a chairman of a district council the allowance is not to exceed £100 in any financial year. In these times £100 does not go very far, and this Bill repeals that provision. In many cases the chairman's duties are numerous and he is entitled to the same consideration as a mayor, and I therefore agree with the deletion of that provision.

Clause 11 is a very important and controversial one. Section 214 is the section which authorizes a council to declare a general rate. Subsection (2) provides that a general rate in respect of properties within any portion of the area may be greater or less than the rate for the remainder of the area, that is, a council is given power to impose a differential general rate. Clause 11 provides that if a differential rate is imposed it is to apply to all the property within a particular ward. This will be a hard blow to some metropolitan councils. I have received a very lengthy report from interested councils, and later I will point out to members the hardships some will suffer if the clause is passed.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—It will assist the district clerk more than anybody else.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—A house at 57 Junction Road, Rosewater, now has an assessed value of £596, and with the present rate of 7d. in the pound the amount payable is £17 7s. 8d. At the revised rate of 1s. 5½d. in the pound and with the same assessed value the amount now payable is £43 9s. 2d. The rates will be increased in the back streets of the city and reduced in the case of business premises. It costs the council a considerable amount to make a road in a main street, whereas a person living in a back street may not have any road made. Clause 12 empowers a council to spend relatively small amounts, not exceeding £200, on matters for which there is no specific authority in the Act, such as for charitable purposes or on bands. I would suggest that the maximum be increased to £500 because such expenditure can be authorized only by a majority of the council and we should trust them to do the right thing.

Quite a number of problems occur in respect of street alignments at petrol stations and clause 14 gives power to the Commissioner of Highways to start necessary proceedings as well as the Registrar-General or the Surveyor-General or the council as now provided in the Act. Clause 16 allows petrol pumps to be erected on footways. Clause 18 deals with the borrowing power of councils and, in effect, doubles them. In general I think this is a Bill that can be discussed better in Committee but there are a few clauses which I think will be keenly debated for I am sure the Minister only wants to do the right thing and I hope that he will give favourable consideration to any suggestions offered.

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

METROPOLITAN TAXICAB ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 9. Page 992.)

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL (Central No. 2)—This short Bill deals with a number of what one might term technicalities of varying importance. I recall that when the Metropolitan Taxicab Bill came up for consideration last year a number of members, including

myself, expressed the opinion that it would soon need amendment. Well, here in the very next session we find at once that the Act needs amendment, and this time I would like to go one step further and say that this will not be the last time we will have the Act before us for amendment, for I believe we will have it again very soon.

I have carefully scrutinized the Bill as I have taken a great interest in this subject and have fairly strong views on what is right and what is not right in the division of powers as between councils and the board. My approach to it—and I think it is the approach of most other municipalists—is that the Taxicab Board should have the administration of the particular business, whereas the councils should retain the general control over the physical aspects of their own municipalities. The main object of the Bill is to give the Taxicab Board powers over who shall use taxi stands, and their conduct and such like matters, but—and this is where I applaud it—it retains the power of the councils to say how many stands there shall be, where they shall be and to vary those stands. In other words, this Bill does not set out to give the Taxicab Board the power to override the councils in as much as to direct them where to put the stands and how many they are to have, which would be a completely unwarranted interference with the control of a council over its own area. What the Bill says, in effect, is that a council shall have the power to determine the number of stands and to fix their size and situation and that from there the board takes over and says who shall use these stands and the conditions they shall observe. So this legislation seems to provide the sort of balance that the initial Act set out to achieve, and this is desirable for the smooth working of the Act.

I would like the Minister before replying to check on the number of stands. The verbiage of the Act I think enables the municipality to establish further taxi stands. It enables a council to alter, cancel or remove stands, but it does not say in specific language that it can increase the number. I think that is covered by the general phrasing of the Bill but I always like an Act of Parliament to be as clear as possible having seen so many arguments in the law courts over matters where there is some doubt. The Act sets out only to deprive councils of powers in relation to taxicabs, but the verbiage is vital and it should be clarified.

Clause 5, which amends section 36 of the principal Act, provides that the by-law making powers of a council under the Local Government Act shall not be applicable to the extent that it relates to the licensing of taxicabs. I draw attention to that point because it still retains this by-law making power in respect of other vehicles used for hire for passengers or goods. This is vital because councils are still concerned with other modes of transport. What the Bill does is to say that taxis shall be controlled to the extent of the authority given by the board, but the by-law making powers of the council shall be interfered with only to the extent that "taxicab" is defined by the principal Act; I think "hire vehicles carrying not more than eight persons."

The Hon. S. C. Bevan—Will the Bill prevent the farming out of licences?

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—I do not know exactly what the honourable member means because there are a number of ways of trafficking in licences or in transferring them from person to person. There is a provision in the Bill for special taxi plates, and it finishes with the proviso that two sections of the Road Traffic Act shall not apply to licensed taxicabs. One of those sections deals with the requirements as to inspection of hired vehicles, and the second is with reference to information that has to be written on the outside of the hired vehicle. The reason for this, I imagine, is so that there shall not be competing authorities, because the Taxicab Board is already vested with power to deal with these matters.

As I have said, being particularly interested in this Bill, I have possibly given it more than usual scrutiny and I cannot, within my limits of understanding, find anything in it with which I do not agree. I have approached it with the view that it ought to be carefully studied so that it does not unduly interfere with the interests of councils, and in my opinion it does not. I shall therefore support the second reading, but I would be glad if the Minister would check on the question of increasing the number of stands because there may be some technical difficulty there, although I do not think there is.

The Hon. J. L. COWAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

FRUIT FLY (COMPENSATION) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 9. Page 993.)

The Hon. E. ANTHONEY (Central No. 2)—As far as I can see this Bill contains no unusual provisions and is merely a re-enactment

of existing legislation. It is rather interesting to note that in the 10 years this legislation has been in existence the Government has spent £1,300,000 in its efforts to eradicate this obnoxious insect. One realizes, of course, that if nothing were done the damage caused would probably be much more than the expense of trying to eradicate it. It is very unfortunate that we have not been able to find a cheaper method of combating this serious threat to the fruit industry. I believe a move is being made to introduce some form of insect to combat this fly. It would be wonderful if it could be wiped out by that method.

I made some enquiries regarding the payment of compensation to interested parties and found that the greatest care is taken by the committee, small as it is, in allocating the money. The party concerned is brought before the committee, is closely interrogated, and his assessment is closely examined, so from that point of view the public has no need to fear any laxity. Although it is necessary to spend a considerable amount, I cannot see any other means to deal with what could be a great danger to the fruit-growing industry of this country, so I support the second reading.

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland)—As I have pointed out before, this is a matter of great importance to the economy of the State and to the fruit and vegetable growing industry as a whole. I am very pleased at the attitude that was adopted for payment of compensation in the first place in 1947, and which has subsequently continued, with the additional provision that in those areas where fruit fly has occurred and people are not able to plant crops in the following year, they are compensated for the loss of the use of their land.

The method of eradication in this State was modelled in the first place on the method used in the Florida outbreak of 1928, where a successful eradication campaign was carried out. As I ascertained by question a few days ago, Australia will take notice of their recent action in the use of parasitic insects. The method of baiting and spraying used in this State is quite up to date, because we have the advantage of D.D.T., which Florida did not have in the early days. I asked the Department of Agriculture to investigate the use of a new chemical used in Florida recently. It is called protein hydrolozate; it is used as a bait, and in conjunction with D.D.T. may speed up eradication.

Mr. Anthoney said that we have not achieved much in actual eradication, but that statement should be analysed. We had two separate types of fruit fly in this State—Queensland and Mediterranean. We have wiped out the latter type, as we have had no outbreak since 1949, when there was a recurrence at Wayville of the 1948 infestation. We had far more information on the Mediterranean fruit fly than we had on the Queensland type, because the problem has not been attacked in Queensland nearly as vigorously as here. We can tell the people of Queensland a lot more about fruit fly eradication than they can tell us. It has been a matter of trial and error. From time to time we have been criticized for stripping and spraying for a mile radius from the place where the first infestation is found, but we have only to go to Victoria to see what happens if that is not done. In that State money was provided, but it was too little too late. There an area a couple of hundred yards from the point of infestation was sprayed, and the disease was soon out of hand.

If any criticism is made about the expenditure being high, I think it can be pointed out that the Government has adopted a very wise policy, because we at least know that the Mediterranean fruit fly has been wiped out. It is necessary to strip and spray for a mile radius if the pest is to be combated. A good deal of the expenditure is on border road blocks in the Upper Murray area to check interstate air and rail travellers from bringing in diseased fruit. If these road blocks have done nothing else, they were successful a few days ago at Yamba, which is just outside Renmark, where live maggots were found in custard apples being brought from Queensland. If these apples had been tossed into any of the properties on the way, it would have caused chaos in the industry. I cannot say anything more except to commend this Bill thoroughly and to say that the department is acting wisely. While we have this menace with us it will cost us money, but we should not in any way hamper the department in its efforts. I support the second reading.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.25 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, October 16, at 2.15 p.m.