LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, October 13, 1959.

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

QUESTION.

CHAIR OF ORIENTAL STUDIES.

The Hon. JESSIE COOPER—I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. JESSIE COOPER—In view of the urgent need for Australian men and women to be trained in oriental languages, not only to meet the demands of diplomacy, trade and commerce, but even more importantly, to develop understanding and goodwill between Australia and her neighbours in South-east Asia, the establishment of a Chair of Oriental Studies at the University of Adelaide could be of great benefit, not only to South Australia but to at least three other States. I understand that the Workers' Educational Association has this year instituted a course in Chinese, and that Colombo Plan Students are conducting classes in Indonesian and Malay, but these are the only facilities available at the moment. Will the Government seriously consider this question and perhaps recommend to the University authorities the establishment of such a Chair if possible?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—As the question involves matters of policy I would appreciate it if the honourable member would place her question on the Notice Paper.

UNDERGROUND WATERS PRESERVATION BILL.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Chief Secretary) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act for the prevention of contamination and deterioration of underground waters. Read a first time.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to enact provisions to prevent the contamination and deterioration of underground waters within the State. A Bill along somewhat similar lines was introduced in this Chamber in 1957 when, however, it was discharged. The present Bill differs from the earlier one in that its purpose is restricted to the prevention of contamination and deterioration. Honourable members will appreciate the necessity for this legislation. We have, unfortunately, a low annual rainfall and in many areas we are almost completely dependent on the supply of underground water. It is essential that proper steps be taken to ensure that the fresh water supplies that are known to exist should not become contaminated or polluted or be allowed to suffer deterioration so far as it is possible to take preventive measures. Not only has there been a great increase in the use of underground water for farming, industrial and ordinary purposes, but the introduction and widespread use of septic tanks has added to the demand. Problems of effluent disposal have also grown from this factor as well as the discharge of industrial waste.

The general scheme of the Bill is, therefore, to provide in critical areas for control of the sinking, deepening and maintenance of wells and the amount of underground water that may be taken from wells, with a view to prevention of contamination of the source of supply. Fresh water is very often found in a basin underlying salt water, or above it. In either case, if the work of sinking a well is not carried out under proper conditions, or if too much water is drawn from the well, salt water is drawn into the fresh water supply or percolates into it, with resultant contamination. The process of being drawn in or of percolating can be accelerated if too much water is drawn from one or more wells in the same area. This factor is of considerable importance in relation to the northern Adelaide plains where good underground water is available for market gardens in the metropolitan area. The fresh water zone is however, surrounded by a zone of saline water with consequential danger of the latter being drawn into the fresh water zone, seriously affecting the supplies available for market gardens. The system of controls is set forth in Part II of the Bill. Clause 5 empowers the proclamation of areas to which the other provisions of Part II will apply. It is contemplated that the Adelaide metropolitan area and the plains extending to some three miles north of the Gawler River will be proclaimed areas as well as certain areas in the Murray Basin and in the Mount Gambier district. Certain areas may be proclaimed in the vicinity of factories and industrial concerns which make use of underground water in connection with the processing of food. The foregoing is not an exhaustive list but will illustrate in a broad sense what the Government has in mind.

I shall now refer to the main provisions of Part II. Clause 6 requires occupiers of existing wells or wells in course of construction to notify the Minister of their existence, while clause 7 provides that wells may not be sunk or deepened or used for drainage purposes, nor may the casing of wells be altered or repaired in any way, without a permit, application for which is to be made to the Minister under clause 8. The Minister may, under clause 9, refuse a permit or a renewal if he has reasonable cause to believe that the work or use of the well would be likely to cause contamination or deterioration of any underground water.

The Minister may, under clause 11, include in a permit any terms and conditions, including terms and conditions restricting the amount of water that may be taken from a well which he deems necessary to prevent contamination or deterioration of underground water. Clause 12 provides for the transfer and variation of permits and clause 13 for appeals against any decision by the Minister. Clause 15 empowers the making of emergency repairs. Clauses 16, 17 and 18 provide generally for the maintenance of wells and for the Minister to direct owners or occupiers to take proper steps to ensure the prevention of contamination or deterioration of underground water. Clause 19 requires permit holders to submit returns as to wells to the Minister. Clause 20 requires the approval of the Minister of Lands in respect of wells on land leased under the Pastoral Act.

Part III of the Bill establishes an advisory committee to advise the Minister upon any questions relating to contamination or deterioration of underground waters or arising in connection with the administration of the Act. Clause 24 applies to the advisory committee the provisions of the Royal Commissions Act, 1917.

Part IV of the Bill sets up an appeal board to hear appeals by persons aggrieved by any decision of the Minister on applications for permits or renewals. The board has power to affirm, vary or quash any decision or direction appealed against, or to make any other or additional decision or direction as it thinks just.

Part V of the Bill contains general provisions complementary to the main theme of the Act and which are self-explanatory. I commend the Bill to honourable members as a means of saving one of our most valuable natural assets, unpolluted underground water.

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

NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 7. Page 928.)

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Leader of the Opposition)—I support the second reading of this Bill because I recognize it is worthy of consideration. The first Bill that was introduced into a Parliament in connection with a similar matter to that now before us was introduced by a lady member in Western Australia and I am sure the honourable Mrs. Cooper will be very pleased to know that. Probably as time goes on and after she has had more experience she may, as a Minister, be able to do the same thing. As one who has had the misfortune to be ill and yet had the good fortune to be well cared for by competent nurses I pay a tribute to nursing staffs generally for their attention, devotion to duty and self-sacrifice. While I am speaking on this Bill I say that I and I am sure all other members are very pleased to see the honourable Mr. Rowe in this Chamber this afternoon. He has had some experience of nursing in our hospitals, but he has now been on deck again for some considerable time and we are indeed happy to see him here this afternoon.

There are in our hospitals a number of patients who do not require skilled surgical or medical care, yet today trained nurses devote their time attending to these patients who could receive the necessary attention from less trained persons. The training proposed will be of a satisfactory standard, but on a lower level. I understand nurse attendants and aides will not be compelled to perform duties for which they are not trained. Twelve months' training and the passing of a prescribed examination and further nursing under supervision of a registered nurse in a hospital approved by the Nurses Board must be undertaken before the trainee will be eligible for enrolment as a nurse aide. She will train to a level lower than that of a trained nurse. A survey made showed that only one-third of the tasks performed required the services of a highly trained nurse. I am referring now to something that happened in other States. In other States the staff in many hospitals consists of one to two fully trained nurses, and the rest of those employed in the wards have acted as nurse aides for many years and are now capable women.

In Victoria the aides' training is considered a very popular but short form of

training suitable for their peculiar duties. The Bill will give nurse aides in this State a similar advantage. It is realized that many of the employees at present described as nurse aides have already gained considerable practical experience. For many years it has been the practice to employ nurse aides in hospitals and they are employed to perform duties that do not require the services of fully qualified nurses. It is now recognized not only in South Australia but elsewhere in Australia and other parts of the world that this field of service is essential and can be performed by attendants other than qualified nurses. In America a survey conducted several years ago by the American College of Surgeons showed that of all the nursing tasks required to be performed on the average patient in a general hospital, two-thirds of such tasks would be within the capabilities of a nurse aide.

There is one thing I am not sure about, and probably the Chief Secretary will be able to give me some information on the matter. I refer to the fines that may be inflicted under this legislation. In other States strong opposition was raised against the high penalties that were proposed for several matters which I will deal with. In South Australia we have a Nurses Board, but there are very few members of the board. They will have power as a board to reject or accept any applications from nurses for certificates. In Victoria there is a board consisting of 15 members as against the six members here. There is also there a council which consists of 26 members. I question whether the number of members on the Nursing Board should not be increased in South Australia.

The Hon. C. R. Story—Perhaps the quality is better here.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—I think the quality in all hospitals in Australia is about equal. In other States in the past more money has been spent on hospitals and no complaint could be made about any of the hospitals I visited in other States. South Australia is very fortunate in the standard of its public hospitals and I compliment the Government on what it has done in this respect. However, much remains to be done, and this is to be expected because of increased population. I doubt whether any hospital in Australia is better equipped than the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and we should all be proud to think that we have an institution of such a standard. It has not been my misfortune to be in hospital in other States, but I have been a patient of a couple in South Australia and the attention and skill displayed was wonderful. I believe that the Bill is a step in the right direction.

I think that the age of 19 proposed in the Bill for the enrolment of nurse aides is too high, and to encourage more girls to undertake this training the age should be reduced to 17, so that by the time a young woman reached 21 she would be fully qualified. However, under the proposal in the Bill, as I see it, it would mean that she would be 22 or 23 years before she could become a qualified nurse. A girl of 17 can now undertake work in a hospital and such girls are doing a wonderful job, and under the supervision of sisters or highly qualified nurses they can do much of the hospital work. A young girl who undertook nursing duties in a hospital at 17 could at the age of 21 be capable of becoming a sister. South Australian hospitals have turned out many highly qualified matrons and nurses. There is one matron on the Nurses Board, which shows that she has proved to be efficient.

The board will have power to register or refuse the registration of a nurse aide, who would have the right of appeal. I have sufficient confidence in the board to believe that it will encourage and assist applicants in order that we shall be able to get the best staffs possible. A few years ago in South Australia there was a big shortage of nursing staff, but I do not think that prevails to the same extent now. Often a girl trains as a nurse, becomes a sister, and before long gets married, and consequently Government hospitals lose many qualified sisters. However, when an emergency arises, many of these women undertake service in both private and public hospitals. This is a fine example of a commendable public spirit, and we should encourage this spirit so that every attention can be given to the sick. The introduction of nurse aides to South Australian hospitals is a step in the right direction. This scheme has already had a beneficial effect in Western Australia, where an Act was passed in 1951, and in Victoria, where an Act was passed in 1956, and now South Australia is taking steps to introduce similar legislation. I hope that honourable members will give the Bill a speedy passage because it is something which should be highly commended.

Sometimes people change their place of residence, and if a nurse aide has had experience in an interstate hospital, under the Bill she will be eligible to submit to examination in South Australia so that she can be accepted under

the provisions of this legislation. Although we are providing that a girl cannot be enrolled as a nurse aide until she reaches 19, this does not apply in the other States. Why should she have to wait two years from the age of 17 before she can enrol? Clause 5 provides that an unregistered person cannot make use of the title of nurse aide unless she is enrolled as such. That is a necessary protection. No person should be allowed to use the title unless she is competent. Also, a person shall not be permitted to use the authorized badge or uniform unless she is enrolled. I commend the Bill as I think it will be a great encouragement to young women to undergo training in the interests of the people, as well as improving their own status.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY (Central No. 2)—Any Bill that deals with the healing of the sick should receive the careful consideration of those responsible for legislating on the subject. At first blush I thought that a lot of trouble had been taken in drafting the Bill and making an Act of Parliament necessary to govern the employment of a few women—and possibly men, as the Bill does not debar them from becoming nurses—in the services they give in our hospitals. I find that the status of nurses is very carefully guarded and protected by Act of Parliament, and this is rightly so for the simple reason that they are dealing with the health of the community which is so vital to everyone. I believe that Parliament generally does not deal with the registration and classification of trades and occupations, for it deals with very few groups on those lines. However, nurses and doctors and professions and occupations of that type have received considerable attention over the years and I presume it is because these people are so vitally associated with the health of the community.

The Nurses Board has control of the following classifications:—nurses, midwives, mental nurses, infant welfare nurses and infectious diseases nurses and it is now proposed to add nurse aides, making six classifications in all. The 1958 edition of *The Statesmen's Pocket Year Book* reveals that there are 5,122 nurses in South Australia. I have been unable to ascertain whether they are all registered, but presumably they are, and I think the figures do not take trainees into account. There are 2,289 midwives, 232 mental nurses, 280 infant welfare nurses and 47 infectious diseases nurses. These figures indicate that the Nurses Board controls a fairly large number of people. However, another line in the statistics shows attendants and others. In the Royal Adelaide Hospital there are 864 nurses and 748 attendants and others; whether that includes trainee nurses I do not know, but it clearly shows that besides the nurses there is a large proportion of the staff that does not come under the Act, but is controlled either by wages boards or regulations.

It is not necessary for me to say that since the days of Florence Nightingale, when women took up the profession of nursing, the whole attitude towards treatment of the sick has changed. Those who have been in hospitals know how well they are carried on, and cannot but feel that these women are doing their work most effectively. The growth of hospitals has somewhat changed the attitude of people towards hospitalization. Nowadays most people wish to go to hospital for treatment instead of remaining home, as was the case in an earlier generation. Consequently, the expense of the development and expansion of hospitals is much greater and the tax burden on the community has increased tremendously.

This Bill, I take it, is for the purpose of enabling additional staff to be obtained. In one way I regret that it is necessary. The three years' training in a public hospital that a nurse undergoes—four years in a private or smaller public hospital—is admirable and something that stands her in good stead all her life. Having qualified, a nurse can go anywhere and hold herself out as a certificated nurse who is capable of joining the staff of any hospital in the world. It is a very highly regarded hallmark in the profession. Mere mention of the fact that a woman is a trained nurse confers upon her a status and quality of high standing. It is proposed under this Bill that a classification should be lower and that is the part that I regret. I listened with a good deal of interest to the honourable Mr. Condon and was very pleased when he supported the Bill because, although it may not be a desirable thing, it is a necessary development in our hospital control. That is the way in which I am approaching it. It is necessary, but I do not think it is desirable. It represents a dilution of labour and a lowering of the nursing standard, and that is a pity, but I agree with the figures the honourable Mr. Condon quoted showing that not more than one-third of the work in a hospital is required to be done by a fully qualified nurse. That leaves two-thirds that can be done by a person who is not so qualified educationally or trained so highly or who cannot attain the standard of a fully qualified nurse.

Hospitals have to be staffed, and I am glad there is no opposition to what might be termed a dilution or the lowering of the status of qualified nurses. I understand that persons in the nursing profession, after they have served their three or four years, are called sisters. They then leave the term "nurse" behind. These aides will only hold the title of nurse-aide. The Bill specifies the period of training required of the nurse-aides, and they can be trained only in certain hospitals that will be approved and classified, I presume, by the Nurses Board. Every hospital will not be able to train them. All nurses do not remain in hospitals and there comes a time when a nurse leaves a hospital as a trained nurse or a trained aide and goes into private practice or into private homes and I think it will then be necessary to distinguish between the qualified nurse and the nurse-aide, and there should be no ambiguity about that. The higher class of nursing dealing with surgical treatment or serious illness should be undertaken by the trained nurse, but the other forms of nursing could be performed by what might be called the semi-trained cadet. As long as that is done I feel that nurse-aides will be of benefit to hospitals, and a benefit to a number of people who are not able to qualify as fully-fledged, certificated nurses because they have not a sufficiently high standard of education or, given sufficient time, are not able to attain the ability to become a qualified nurse.

I understand that we in South Australia are following a trend in bringing down this legislation. Western Australia has adopted it and Victoria and some of the other States have it. It is of interest to note the regulations and controls that are necessary to control nursing aides. The copy I have covers seven pages of the West Australian *Government Gazette* and contains the regulations and the qualifications relating to nurse-aids. The regulations define the work a nurse-aide can do and it seems to me that a good deal of hospital work, except work required in extreme cases of illness, can be handled by a nurse-aide. Whether we in South Australia will adopt the same regulations or not I do not know, but I presume that will be the responsibility of the Nurses Board, which I understand is at the back of this Bill, though it has been encouraged by the Minister of Health, who has had difficulty over past years in staffing public hospitals in South Australia. I do not criticize the Bill. It provides machinery to enable this work to be done, and provided the necessary safeguards are given to the board to see that the Act is properly implemented it should prove beneficial.

I hope that as a result of this Bill and the regulations that will define what nurse-aides are, we shall not be lowering the status of a fully qualified nurse or providing ground for conflict in that direction. The more people we have to care for the sick and injured the better it will be, and on those grounds I support the Bill, at the same time hoping that it will work in the way the Minister of Health desires and that we can get our hospitals fully staffed.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL secured the adjournment of the debate.

EXCHANGE OF LAND (HUNDRED OF NOARLUNGA) BILL.

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

MILLICENT AND BEACHPORT RAILWAY (DISCONTINUANCE) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 7. Page 928.)

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Leader of the Opposition)—The majority of railways in South Australia were constructed before many of us were members of Parliament, and in the early days of the State they rendered valuable service in opening up lands in different parts of our country. In more recent years a few extra lines were constructed under guarantees, but after they were constructed political influence was used in order to dispose of the guarantees. If we were to close the railways that do not pay, how many would remain? Probably we would still retain the line from Port Pirie to Broken Hill. A large number of concessions are given to certain people who use our railways, but this does not apply to passengers. I am not objecting to that, but it cannot be expected that any of the Australian railways can pay under those conditions, although I understand that the Commonwealth railways return a handsome profit. If we are to develop the country, it cannot be expected that our railways will pay. If preference is given to road transport over the railways, then Parliament will have to consider seriously the closing not only of one or two lines, but perhaps of a number; that may prove detrimental to the State. On July 30, 1956, the Transport Control Board submitted to the Minister of Railways a report on its investigations into whether the railway line from Millicent to Beachport should

be closed. It contained notice of the board's intention to issue an order for the closing of the line, and on August 15, 1956, it was transmitted to the Public Works Standing Committee pursuant to section 10 of the Road and Railway Transport Act, 1938-39, so it was three years after the recommendation was made before the Government introduced the present legislation. The reason for this was the agreement between the Commonwealth and the South Australian Governments, so this Government cannot in any way be blamed for not having carried out the decision before. As honourable members know, the Transport Control Board cannot close a railway without the approval of the Public Works Standing Committee having first been given.

The construction of the railway from Beachport to Mount Gambier was authorized by the Rivoli Bay North and Mount Gambier Act of 1896, and the line was opened in 1879, which was eight years before Mount Gambier was linked by rail with Adelaide. The Transport Control Board inquired into the operations of the railway between Millicent and Beachport, and in the report made in 1936 it found in favour of the retention of this portion of the line. At that time all the lines in the South-East railway system south of Wolseley, with the exception of the one from Mount Gambier to the Victorian border, were of 3ft. 6in. gauge. With the broadening of the gauge from Wolseley to Millicent, the Millicent to Beachport section remained as a narrow gauge spur line. The estimated cost of converting this section of 21½ miles to a 5ft. 3in. gauge was £447,000. If the work were carried out under the Railways Standardization (South Australia) Agreement Act of 1949, seven-tenths of the cost would be borne by the Commonwealth and three-tenths by the State. However the Commonwealth had indicated that it was not prepared at that stage to allocate funds to this uneconomic project. Public meetings were held at three centres. Witnesses at Millicent wanted the railway kept open, but in view of the revenue and expenditure figures, there was small justification for the adoption of that course.

We find that when there is a proposal to close a railway line or to take something away from the people, there is always strong opposition; and if the local people do not whip up opposition to it, the member for the district will always do his best in that direction. In this instance, as in others, we find that the whips were out. Peculiarly enough, it was found that people who came to give evidence against the closing of the line were those who never used it. Those who cry out the most generally do not help in this direction, because they find it cheaper, more convenient and perhaps more economical to use other means of transport, though I do not blame them for that. Whereas every consideration should be given to amenities desired by the public, there is also the other side of the question, namely, how it affects the economy of the State. The Millicent people want to keep this line open, but if ever a railway in South Australia showed a greater loss, it would be hard to find. I am opposed to the closing of a railway if it can be avoided, but the time has arrived when one must change his views. Therefore, I think that in this instance the Government has done the right thing in introducing the Bill and therefore I support it.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY (Southern)—I support the Bill and commend the honourable Mr. Condon for the research he has done as a member of the Public Works Standing Committee. It is rather interesting to note that this railway was built many years ago—as Mr. Condon said, in 1876. That was some eight years before Adelaide was connected by rail with Mount Gambier, so we see how long this line has been open. The Road and Railway Transport Act, section 10, provides:—

> If the board, after due inquiry and investigation, is of opinion that it would be in the best economic interests of the State to close the whole or any part of any line of railway, it may by order declare that the said line or part thereof, shall from the date mentioned in the order be closed.

Subsection (4), however, provides that—

> An order closing a line or part of a railway line shall not be made—
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> (*a*) unless the board gives notice to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works of its intention to make the order;
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> (*b*) if the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works reports to the board within 28 days after receiving the notice that it is expedient to keep the line or part of the line open.

Actually, therefore, the Public Works Committee has the final say as to whether a line shall remain open or not. However, I understand that the Railways Commissioner has even greater power in as much as he can cease to run any transport on the line and so virtually close it, although he has not authority to pull up the rails and dispose of them, or to sell buildings and so forth. I take it that the purpose of this Bill is particularly to give him that authority.

This line has been closed for so long that most people have nearly forgotten that it was ever there. An interesting feature, as I see the position, is that this line, and another the subject of another Bill, came under the Uniform Gauge Agreement between the Commonwealth and the State. The estimated cost of converting the 21½ miles of 5ft. 3in. gauge between Beachport and Millicent, at that time, was £447,000. That was a very large sum for a railway that was not nearly paying its way. It had been the policy of the Railways Commissioner for some time before the final discontinuance of the service to run only one train a week, and that was a goods train to which was attached a guards van with provision for a few passengers if any cared to use it, which I understand was seldom. There were quite a number of advocates for the retention of the line, and that was particularly so in the Rendelsham area. The people there felt that it was something of an asset to them and therefore opposed its closing However, on a survey of the general position the Public Works Committee decided that the losses of the line were so great and its economics so bad that it had no alternative but to recommend closure.

It is interesting to note the volume of traffic on the line in the latter stages. The statistics show that superphosphate was the main item carried, but it is more interesting still to note that it was carried at a loss. We can understand, therefore, why the Government was not very anxious to continue the carrying of superphosphate to farmers in that area and pay quite a considerable sum for the privilege of doing so. It was not that the amount of freight was so very great, but once the line was broadened to Millicent what little freight there was had to be transferred to narrow gauge trucks. The Commissioner states that the cost of this was about 5s. a ton. In 1955 there was 2,912 tons of superphosphate carried beyond Millicent at only 6d. a ton more than the freight from Adelaide to Millicent; in addition there was the 5s. a ton transfer charge I have already mentioned. Therefore it was obvious that if the Railways Department intended to do anything about meeting its tremendous losses it had to do something about this position. Outward freight had declined by 1955 to 400 tons, and although it was carried at a somewhat higher rate than superphosphate there was little of it. Over a 35-year period the greatest number of livestock carried was 5,542 inwards and 9,546 outwards, and that was in 1950. The line had been allowed to run down and had not been maintained as it should have been. The Commissioner estimated at the time of the inquiry that it would cost about £100,000 to restore it to a reasonable condition, so I think we can agree that the time had fully arrived—indeed was past—when the line should be closed. The estimated revenue lost by virtue of the closure was the small sum of £2,914 as against an estimated loss of £17,200 for running and maintenance.

The recommendation of the Public Works Committee was that the line should be closed but that the ground upon which the line ran should be retained by the Commissioner. It took this view because it was felt that some day we might have a deep sea port at Rivoli Bay, when the Government would be glad to have land available for a line to carry produce to it. The prospects of getting that port are, I think, growing dimmer as the years go by. The line runs through some sandy country subject to drift, and the recommendation was that the Government should plant some vegetation to prevent this sand drift. The Bill contains no provision to this effect, but I have no doubt that the Minister of Railways will look after that aspect and see that the adjoining country is not allowed to deteriorate by neglect of the Railway Commissioner's property.

Perhaps an even more important facet of the whole business is what alternative transport the people of Beachport are to be given. There are quite a number there who desire to go to Mount Gambier at least once a week, and they assert that they were promised a road would be made so that they could get to Mount Gambier or Millicent by the shortest route. Unfortunately, that road has not eventuated although there has been some improvement of the longer route which involves an extra four miles of transport. I would like the Government, at some stage, to examine this aspect and provide for a more direct road to Millicent from Beachport if possible. The fact that it would be a very good tourist road would be an added attraction which might induce someone to run a bus service and thereby provide an alternative means of transport for the people. However, I think the decision to close the line was the right one, as obviously it would cost a tremendous amount to rehabilitate it, and this is unwarranted in view of the very limited amount of freight available. I support the Bill.

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

WANDILO AND GLENCOE RAILWAY (DISCONTINUANCE) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 7. Page 926.)

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Leader of the Opposition)—The construction of a railway from Wandilo to Glencoe was authorized by Act of Parliament in 1903 and the line was open to traffic on August 22, 1904. The Transport Control Board previously inquired into the operation of this line and decided against its closure. The estimated cost of widening the 9 miles 10 chains of line was £254,000, on the same conditions as mentioned in relation to the Bill we have just discussed. The Public Works Committee realized that the closing of the line would react adversely to two timber mills and, to a lesser degree, two cheese factories established in or near Glencoe, but it was satisfied that the extra cost incurred in these industries in transporting their products to other lines would be many times less than the cost of maintaining the line. A rider was added to its recommendation, "That the road from Glencoe to Kalangadoo be put into a suitable condition to carry the traffic diverted from the railway." I think it only reasonable to expect that adequate facilities should be given to the people residing in the locality to get their goods to market, and the Government should take this into consideration. A few years ago when the closure of this line was being considered it was probably thought that there might later be a deep sea port in the South-East and, in fact, two inquiries were made into the establishment of a deep sea port at Beachport, Kingston or Robe.

The Hon. L. H. Densley—The South-East has not given up hope yet.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Perhaps not, but the South-Eastern people should help themselves. I think they are Victorian-minded although naturally, if they can get better conditions by dealing with Victoria, they are entitled to them.

The Hon. L. H. Densley—They do now because they have not got a sea port.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—If we had a sea port I think the majority of their goods would still go to Victoria because the people who gave evidence said so. They said they had a preference for Melbourne, and any inquiry had to take into account the fact that the people were not interested in the South Australian railways. At that time it would probably have cost £7,000,000 to £8,000,000 to construct a deep sea port, so what would it cost today? What revenue would we get from it? What return would this State get if it spent that huge sum of money? There would probably be no advantage to the State from it. Those are the things that the committee at the time reported on.

The Hon. L. H. Densley—It may have become a bigger port than Port Adelaide.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Port Adelaide is naturally the biggest sea port in South Australia and that is probably because it has the best representation in Parliament. It is in the interests of the members concerned to maintain that port, but they are not so short-sighted that they would not accept representations put forward by other people. However, I do say that the people in the South-East should help themselves. They cannot lay any blame on other people. The project in the South-East was damned by the people concerned. Did the people there really want it? The Public Works Standing Committee was required to investigate whether a deep sea port was warranted at Robe, Beachport or Kingston. When one place was turned down there was a further inquiry. The committee travelled to the South-East and looked at every aspect of the matter besides consulting the captains of industry who had works in the metropolitan area. They were not prepared to transfer their industries to the South-East because they had spent a great deal of money here. The committee was guided by such information as that. I did not think there was any chance of a seaport being established after the evidence was tendered.

In 1936 the proposal to close both these railways that we have discussed was considered and turned down by the Transport Control Board, because at that time the board probably had in mind the construction of a deep sea port. I support the Bill. It is interesting to note that the Estimates show that the sum of £13,308 would be saved if the line were closed. The Federal Government would not approve of the spending of that money, and there was no alternative but to recommend the closing of the railway.

The Hon. A. C. HOOKINGS (Southern)—I take this opportunity to say a few words about the closing of the Wandilo-Glencoe railway line. As the honourable Mr. Condon mentioned, this line was opened in 1904 and closed on July 1, 1957. It gave 53 years' service to the Lower South-East, a locality which is

individual in that it is extremely fertile and practically surrounded by forest land. It is situated 15 miles from Mount Gambier and it is 12 miles by road from Kalangadoo. This area has many people working on very productive dairy farms and it has one small saw mill, while there are also dairy produce factories in the district. I support those speakers on the Millicent and Beachport Railway (Discontinuance) Bill who said it is not economically possible to widen both sections of the railway and provide transport services to these areas, but I do think it is necessary for the Government to do everything in its power to supply some alternative method of transport when the railway is closed. I now refer particularly to two matters relating to Glencoe which is not now serviced by the railway. The main road to Kalangadoo is one of great strategic importance not only to Glencoe but to many people in that vicinity. It runs approximately parallel to the road to Mount Gambier, *via* Nangwarry to Naracoorte, and people living to the west and south-west of Glencoe are faced with the alternatives of going through Millicent about 30 miles or of going to Mount Gambier on the bitumen road to Kalangadoo *via* Nangwarry, because that road at present is not in first-class repair.

In mentioning facilities in lieu of the railway line I point out on behalf of the people in the area that they are gratified with the progress made on the electrification of the area. By Christmas time the majority of the homes in the Glencoe area will be connected with electricity from the power house at Mount Gambier and they appreciate what the Government has done. Everything that is possible should be done to speed up and complete the bituminizing of the Glencoe to Kalangadoo section of the Kalangadoo Road. I think it is intended to seal that road by the end of 1961. The Tantanoola council, which services approximately half that 12 miles, has spent a considerable amount of money in the preparatory work required for bituminizing. The other half is maintained by the Penola council and I urge once again that everything possible be done to speed up and complete the bituminizing of the section of the road between Glencoe and Kalangadoo.

There is another matter I desire to raise. There is perhaps some way in which we could assist the dairy people of Glencoe now that the railway has been taken away from them. This is in regard to the carting of cheese from the Glencoe Co-operative Factory to Adelaide. A few years ago, before the railway line was closed, cheese was loaded on to trucks at Kirip siding and went through Wolseley and on to Adelaide. At present the cheese factory is faced with the necessity of having containers which load from 1½ to 2 tons of cheese sent out from Mount Gambier. The lorries carrying those containers return to Mount Gambier and put the containers on railway trucks. It costs the Glencoe factory 25s. a ton to have that cheese carted the 15 miles from Glencoe to Mount Gambier. It costs a further 164s. a ton to have that cheese carted from Mount Gambier to Adelaide. The co-operative factory applied to cart its own cheese by road transport direct to Adelaide to save all this handling, but its application was unsuccessful. I ask the Government to be a little lenient in dealing with that request and suggest that it may be able to give something in return for the closing of the railway line. I am sure that the people operating through this co-operative factory would be better off if that cheese could be carried direct from the factory to the place of sale in Adelaide. That is all I wish to say at the present stage and I support the Bill.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.44 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, October 14, at 2.15 p.m.