LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, November 17, 1959.

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

QUESTIONS.

WIDENING OF CHURCHILL ROAD, PROSPECT.

The Hon. A. J. SHARD—During the past few years, I am informed, the Highways Department has purchased frontages of properties along Churchill Road, Prospect, for the purpose of widening that road. Some residents have heard rumours that it is not the intention of the department now to widen the road and I ask the Minister of Roads if there is any foundation for those rumours?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—I am not in a position to give the honourable member full details now, but I will undertake to get the information and let the honourable member have it.

EGG PRICES.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON (on notice)—

1. What was the net price paid on November 1, 1959, by the South Australian Egg Board for eggs delivered at—(*a*) Port Lincoln; (*b*) Adelaide?

2. Is the basis used in Port Lincoln for fixing the price of eggs the same as that in Adelaide?

3. Are eggs purchased in Port Lincoln graded according to quality?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—The replies are:—

1. (*a*) 2s. 0¼d. per dozen net.

(*b*) First quality hen—3s. 2¾d. per dozen net.

First quality medium—2s. 8¾d. per dozen net.

Second quality—1s. 6¾d. per dozen net.

2. and 3. No. Purchases of eggs at Port Lincoln are all on the ungraded basis.

PROTECTION OF PORPOISES.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON (on notice)—Is it the intention of the Government to devise ways and means of protecting porpoises in special waters away from the shark fishing grounds so they may breed safely?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—It is not the intention of the Government to introduce legislation upon this matter.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORTS.

The PRESIDENT laid on the table the following final reports by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence:—

Augmentation of Metropolitan Water Supply (Temporary Pumping Units).

Grand Junction Road Trunk Water Main.

LOCAL COURTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

SAVINGS BANK OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

VINE, FRUIT, AND VEGETABLE PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Vine, Fruit, and Vegetable Protection Act, 1885-1936, by section 8 empowers inspectors to enter lands, buildings or vessels and examine and remove any trees or plants for the purpose of ascertaining whether they are injuriously affected by any insect or disease. Other provisions of the Act empower the destruction of affected trees or plants. The power of entry and examination is, however, limited to lands, buildings and vessels. The object of this Bill is to amend section 8 of the principal Act by extending the power to cover trains, aircraft, vehicles, carriages or conveyances and, at the same time, to make it clear that inspectors may not only examine and remove, but also search for plants or trees suspected of being affected.

Honourable members will appreciate the need for the amendment. As the law stands at present although vehicles may be stopped and searched in the absence of objection by the occupants such a search could not be enforced over an objection. All honourable members are aware of the danger to the fruit industry from the scourge of fruit fly, and this measure is to bring legislation into line with modern transport and to deal with the problem of diseases and infected fruit, and I commend it to the favourable consideration of members.

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

LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONTROL OF RENTS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The principal purpose of this Bill is to extend the operation of the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act, for another 12 months. While the housing position in South Australia continues to improve, the demand for rental accommodation is still greatly in excess of the supply.

In 1953, the Act was amended to provide that any premises built after the passing of the amending Act were to be completely free from control under the Act. It was expected by some that the fact that new premises were free from control would bring about the building of houses for letting. In point of fact, however, very few houses have been built since 1953 for this purpose, apart from those provided by the Housing Trust. There has been some building of flats for letting, but these are usually let for fairly high rentals beyond the means of the average worker. Thus the position is that, with an increasing population, the number of houses available for letting has shown only a relatively small increase, while the demand for those houses which are available for letting has not diminished. If the controls provided by the Act were lifted, the result would most probably be that the rents of houses now subject to control would increase substantially. This has frequently been the case where, under the exemption given by section 6 of the Act, premises are let upon written leases for terms of years.

That the demand for rental houses is not abating is shown from the applications received by the Housing Trust. During the year ended June 30, 1959, the trust received 5,385 applications for rental housing and 1,331 for emergency dwellings. During the preceding financial year the figures were 4,828 and 1,938 respectively. It may be mentioned that, during the year ended June 30, 1959, the trust received 3,418 applications to purchase houses, as compared with 2,750 for the previous year. Accordingly, the Government considers that it is desirable to extend the provisions of the Act for another 12 months. Clause 5, therefore, extends the operation of the Act until December 31, 1960. Clauses 3 and 4 make minor amendments to the Act. Section 55c of the Act provides, among other things, that a lessor of a dwelling house may give notice to quit on the ground that possession of the dwelling is required for the purpose of facilitating its sale. Section 55d provides that, if notice to quit is given on this ground and the lessee delivers up possession in consequence of the notice to quit and the lessor does not sell within three months after possession is given up, then, among other consequences, the lessor is to offer the tenancy of the house again to the lessee and any lease of the house, either to the former lessee or otherwise, is to be on the same terms as the previous lease.

The Crown Solicitor has advised that, if after notice to quit of this kind, the lessee does not give up possession until after a court order is made, he does not deliver up possession as a consequence of the notice to quit but as a consequence of the order of the court and that section 55d, therefore, does not apply. This result is, of course, contrary to the intended purpose of section 55d and clause 3 of the Bill, thererfore, amends section 55d so that it will extend to a case where the lessee, after receiving notice to quit on the ground that possession of the house is required to facilitate its sale, gives up possession as the result of an order of the court. Section 60 provides that where notice to quit is given upon one of a number of grounds, such as that the lessor needs the house for his own occupation, and possession is obtained as a result, the house is not to be sold or let within the ensuing twelve months without the consent of the local court.

Among the grounds upon which notice to quit may be given is paragraph (*n*) of subsection (6) of section 42, namely, that the premises are reasonably needed for reconstruction or demolition. The Housing Trust has reported to the Government that cases have occurred where, after notice to quit is given under paragraph (*n*) and the tenant vacates, the house is then immediately relet, usually at an increased rent under a lease in writing. It is, therefore, proposed by clause 4 that section 60 be amended by including a reference to paragraph (*n*). The result will be that, if possession is obtained after giving notice to quit under paragraph (*n*), the consent of the local court will be necessary to a reletting or sale of the premises within the ensuing 12 months.

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

RENMARK IRRIGATION TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The object of this Bill is to give effect to arrangements which have been concluded between the Government and the Renmark Irrigation Trust. These arrangements may be shortly described. The Government has agreed to assist the trust by way of a grant of £50,000 per annum and a loan of £25,000 per annum for the next ten years. The trust, for its part, is to provide out of its own resources £25,000 per annum for the same period. Under these proposals there would be available to the trust a total sum of £1,000,000 for that period which is to be used by the trust for the purpose of undertaking a comprehensive drainage scheme for the district, the general improvement of the district and the rehabilitation of its irrigation system. At the same time the trust has agreed to relinquish its local governing functions but will continue to operate its electricity undertaking within the districts now supplied by it.

The Bill accordingly provides by clause 17 for the necessary financial arrangements. That clause repeals the existing section 123 of the Act which, since the loans therein referred to have been repaid, has become a dead letter and substitutes a new section. This section appropriates a total sum of £750,000 to be paid by the Treasurer into a trust account by annual payments of £75,000. Subsection (2) of the new section will empower the Treasurer to pay to the trust out of the trust account such amounts as are required by the Irrigation Trust by way of grant or loan. The total sum to be granted is not to exceed £500,000 and the total to be advanced is not to exceed £250,000. The Irrigation Trust is required by subsection (3) of the proposed new section to set aside £25,000 out of its own resources or to make arrangements for such setting aside to the Treasurer's satisfaction. Such sums set aside by the Irrigation Trust, together with amounts received from the Treasurer, are to be paid into a separate account and expended only for the purposes mentioned in subsection (5) of the proposed new section, namely, the undertaking of a comprehensive drainage scheme and the re-habilitation of the irrigation works, subject to the approval of the Minister of Lands.

Subsection (7) of the proposed new section provides that the Irrigation Trust will repay the amounts advanced with interest at 5 per cent per annum to be calculated from the end of the period of 10 years (or if the works should be completed earlier, then from approximately that date) by equal annual payments. Subsection (8) of the proposed new section will provide that the balance of the loan shall be a first charge on all the property of the trust but an equal first charge is given to the Bank of New South Wales, to a limit not to exceed £75,000, except with the Treasurer's express approval. The reason for this is that the Irrigation Trust has a standing arrangement with the Bank of New South Wales for an overdraft, the amount of which varies from time to time and which is necessary to enable the trust to function pending collection of its rates from time to time.

The next part of the Bill to which I refer covers clauses 4, 14, 15, 18 and 19. These clauses relate to the continuance of the Trust's electrical supply undertaking. Clauses 14, 18 and 19 are consequential but clause 15, which repeals the existing sections 115 to 116 (which are redundant) inserts into the principal Act the whole of the existing provisions of the Local Governmnet Act relating to electricity undertakings with the exception of one or two sections that would not be applicable to the Irrigation Trust. The new section 115 will empower the trust to establish and maintain electric supply works and supply electricity within the district of the trust and other parts of the State outside the district as proclaimed by the Governor. It is contemplated that the districts of Chaffey and Cooltong, which the trust is at present supplying, should be proclaimed. The new section 116 will give the Irrigation Trust the exclusive right to supply electricity within its own and proclaimed districts.

The remaining new sections have been taken from the Local Government Act and adapted to the conditions of the trust. It is considered desirable that all of these sections should be in the principal Act in view of the proposal that the trust shall, on a day to be proclaimed, cease to exercise local governing functions which will, of course, mean that it will be unable to rely upon the Local Government Act in respect of its electricity undertaking. The next provision of the Bill to which I refer is clause 10. This repeals section 72 of the principal Act which is the section that gives to the trust the powers of a district council. Consequential amendments are contained in clauses 6 and 8.

The remaining clauses concern, in the main, the powers and functions of the trust in relation to drainage. Section 115 of the principal Act having been removed, clauses 5, 7, 11, 13 and 20 of the Bill cover power to construct drains and drainage works. Clauses 9, 12 and 16 relate to financial matters. Clause 9 will extend the power of the trust to expend moneys derived from the trust's general revenue and will limit power to expend money to expenditure for the general benefit of the district. Clause 12 will empower the maximum of the rates which may be declared by the trust to be fixed by the Minister of Lands from time to time. This is designed to avoid the necessity for amendments to the Act from time to time.

Clause 16 extends the borrowing power of the trust to the raising of loans on the security of other revenue besides rates. Lastly, I will mention that those clauses which remove the local governing powers of the trust and effect consequential amendments will come into operation only on a date to be fixed by proclamation. It will be appreciated that there will be a number of matters of detail to be resolved before the district of the trust can be placed within another local governing area and it is contemplated that action to this end should take place some time early next year.

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

THE AUSTRALIAN MINERAL DEVELOPMENT LABORATORIES BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 11. Page 1509.)

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Leader of the Opposition)—An organization under the Mines Department was set up in 1949 and one of its functions was to conduct experiments in the treatment of uranium ore, and these experiments were successful. At Radium Hill the plant is in full production and the ore is sent to Port Pirie for treatment. A contract was let to an overseas purchasing commission, a body representing the United Kingdom and the United States of America. So much of the ore has been sold overseas that about half the cost of establishing the Radium Hill mine and the Port Pirie treatment works has been recovered. The main purpose of the Bill is to set up the necessary machinery for implementing the agreement between the South Australian Government, the Commonwealth Government and the mining companies. The amount to be contributed for the project amounts to £225,000, of which South Australia will provide £135,000 and the Commonwealth Government and the mining interests £45,000 each. The object is to enable further research and expansion. The Mines Department has done a very good job. A few years ago only a very small amount was provided on the Estimates for mining operations, but during the past two or three years the Government has recognized the important place of mining in the economy of South Australia.

The Radium Hill project has been developed by the Government under an agreement with the Combined Development Agency, a procurement agency set up by the United States of America, the British Ministry of Supply, and the United States Atomic Energy Commission. It includes the development and operation of the mine at Radium Hill and the provision of a chemical treatment plant at Port Pirie for the production of uranium oxide and its sale to the abovementioned authority, either in the United States of America or the United Kingdom, as directed. That agreement provides for a production and selling period of seven years from January 1, 1955. When the agreement expires in 1962 further legislation will be necessary. As the Bill will be to the benefit not only of South Australia but of the Commonwealth, I have much pleasure in supporting it.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY (Central No. 2)—A laboratory was founded about 10 years ago when the desire to produce radium was very pronounced. Uranium had been discovered in the northern part of the State, and as it was difficult to handle, a very elaborate laboratory was established at Parkside. As described by the Minister of Mines, it is the best of its type in Australia, and that is saying a lot. Mining ventures are usually glamourous, and I think that in this case the production of radium was so glamourous that the Government provided a laboratory that is a little too good for the requirements of the State. Research at any time is difficult to justify from actual results. Such research must continue, but the public must be satisfied that over the years something will develop that will pay for it. I cannot understand what prompted the Government to develop to so great an extent the laboratories at Parkside, which we have inspected. We are not a very rich mineral State, and it seems that in the enthusiasm of

the moment the Government slightly overreached itself and provided a laboratory more elaborate than warranted by our requirements, as it so turned out. I realize it is all very well to pronounce on it 10 years later, but the results have shown that that is so.

There is also an establishment at Thebarton known as the Thebarton Laboratories. Can the Minister in charge of the Bill tell me whether the Parkside Laboratory only is to be transferred to this new group or whether the Thebarton Laboratories will go with it, too? The arrangement made when the Government decided that we could not work this laboratory satisfactorily was good. We have received assistance from the Commonwealth, but after all the mining industry of Australia is vitally concerned with all problems of research and development. Consequently, I feel the laboratory will now serve its originally intended purpose, and that much more work will be done. One cannot help feeling that the arrangement arrived at is a little one-sided, inasmuch as South Australia will be paying considerably more than the other two authorities in the way of capital expenditure, for which we receive no interest. There is also a certain amount of maintenance of the gardens and other facilities connected with the laboratories. I know enough about research to appreciate that one cannot expect an immediate return in terms of pounds, shillings and pence. I hope that during the years the new group that will control these laboratories will have sufficient research requirements in South Australia to warrant the outlay by the State. We all gain from research developments carried out anywhere in Australia. Science shares its knowledge. What is discovered in Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane is made known throughout the other States and, I think, generally throughout the world. In this case we may be adding our quota to knowledge in mining research. If so, I hope it will redound in some way to our credit.

I notice that the arrangement is for five years only. That may be caution on the part of either the Government or the two other authorities that are combining to make one organization, but it seems to me a worthwhile trial. I hope that at the end of that five years the work done by these laboratories will warrant the continuation of that association, and perhaps on slightly better terms to this State than those proposed. The board is, of course, weighted against South Australia, inasmuch as we have a minority on the board. I do not think that matters because people in research work treat it as research generally. They are after facts irrespective of the interests of any individual, company or firm. I had hoped that the arrangement would be better, but we have good laboratories and the Government has made excellent arrangement for their future use. If used properly they will be an advantage not only to this State but to the mining industry and the people of Australia generally. Particularly in the mining industry one has to be careful how one views it in its early stages, and not to be too influenced by the glamourous possibilities of the future, which often do not eventuate. I support the Bill and wish the new organization the best of luck.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 6 passed.

Clause 7—"Research and investigation."

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY—This clause empowers the Minister to make available to the organization the laboratories and the possession, occupation and use of the buildings, furniture and equipment free of charge. I would like to know whether that includes the Thebarton laboratories as well as the Parkside?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Minister of Mines)—It covers all that is involved in research and development at both Parkside and Thebarton.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (8 to 23) and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment and Committee's report adopted.

POLICE PENSIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 11. Page 1510.)

The Hon. A. J. SHARD (Central No. 1)—This Bill makes one alteration to the Police Pensions Act, but does not alter the amount of contributions by members of the police force. It certainly does not affect the amount of benefits provided, but it alters the basis upon which Government contributions to the fund are made. It means the adoption of an important new principle in connection with the fund, although that principle has operated in connection with the South Australian Superannuation Fund since 1927. Recently the Government paid into the police pensions fund

an amount certified by the Public Actuary as being sufficient, together with contributions from members of the police force, to meet pensions that will be paid from time to time, and this meant that the fund accumulated a large sum.

For the year ended June 30, 1959, the main items of income were, contributions by members of the police force, £65,000; and subsidies from the State Treasury, £162,000; and the total income was £279,000. Pensions paid for the year were, to police officers £89,000; and to dependants £30,000; a total of £119,000. Cash payments to officers on retirement were £27,000 and to widows of officers £2,000, a total of £29,000. Total charges on the fund for the year were £148,000 as against an income of £279,000.

The procedure for the year ended June 30, 1959, has gone on to a greater or lesser extent ever since the fund was established, and the amount of the fund is now £1,303,000. I find it difficult to follow the actuary in arriving at the amount. It means that the liability of the Government will be greater and greater, and the amount in credit will increase accordingly. The effect of the emendment is that the Government, instead of having to contribute £162,000 as it did last year, will pay, on the actuary's suggestion, only £90,000. This is a large saving for the Government as compared with last year, and as time goes on it will save further sums, possibly not to such an extent. Eventually the Government may have to increase its contributions to the fund to meet pensions accruing to members of the forces who are joining at earlier ages and to provide for the larger police force that will be necessary in consequence of the growth of our population. I support the Bill.

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

DOG FENCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 11. Page 1513.)

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON (Northern)—At the outset I express great pleasure at the improvement that has taken place over recent years. Going back some three or four decades I can remember quite well the damage caused by wild dogs when they came down to the farming areas, and I have a vivid recollection of the serious ravages by a pack of dingoes that took place on one occasion. Since then vermin boards have been established and private owners have erected dog fences in their own interests, and today we enjoy comparative freedom from this menace to the great sheep industry in the north. Some authorities have assessed its worth to the State at at least £10,000,000 annually, and without strenuous efforts to hold the pest in check this great source of revenue would be in jeopardy. For quite a number of years we relied upon localized vermin boards and farmers themselves, but in 1946 it was decided to consolidate efforts and what is now known as the Dog Fence Act was enacted. This runs from the New South Wales border to the west of Eyre Peninsula and is 1,360 miles long in South Australia, plus 460 miles linking up with it in New South Wales. That is the barrier which is really the life-line upon which we depend to keep the ravages of the dingo in check.

The Act provides for a committee of four members of whom the chairman shall be the chairman of the Pastoral Board (who at present is Mr. J. Lisle Johnson), two members representing the Stockowners' Association, one of whom must have land adjacent to and adjoining the fence, and the fourth is a representative of the vermin boards, Mr. Ian McTaggert. The two representatives of the Stockowners' Association are Messrs. P. H. McLachlan and R. J. Rankin. I would like to pay a tribute to all those gentlemen, for I feel sure that we could not possibly have had a better committee to carry out the functions of the board. The more I delved into the question the more was I confirmed in the opinion that we owe a tremendous lot to that committee for the way in which it has carried out its work. In order to get some information with regard to the operation of the Act I first rang the secretary of the Stockowners' Association, Mr. Kelly, and he recommended me to see Mr. McLachlan, one of the representatives of the Stockowners' Association on the board. When I rang Mr. McLachlan he delayed a visit to one of his properties to get the information I was seeking. I was satisfied, after having received the information from him, that I could come to the House and support the Bill in its entirety. A few days later I had a visit from the President of the Stockowners' Association. He proposed a further visit when he would bring along with him Mr. Jim Mortimer. Both of these gentlemen are members of the Vermin Board and each said he appreciated the

work of the board and he believed it had the right men controlling it, but they were afraid of reports from an inspector who might, on some occasions, report adversely when the board might not be in a position to give full effect to the reports. I said, "Tell me what you want and get the solicitor of the Stock-owners' Association to draw up an amendment." That was done and I shall read the proposed amendment later.

I pay a tribute to owners along the fence. I had the good fortune to meet one of the owners at the Yunta gymkhana some weeks ago, and he told me what he had done during the last few years. Last year he spent over £1,000 to put his fence in order. Mr. Jim Mortimer, who owns a lot of country in that area, is spending £2,500 a year to service his particular area. He has a man patrolling 37 miles of fence and he provides that man with a jeep and a house that cost over £3,000. The last report of the Dog Fence Board was that the fence is continually being improved and it is today in a fairly satisfactory state. In New South Wales the fences are controlled by the Government, which employs a patrol man for every 21 miles of fence and it is costing £174 a mile to service that fence. The people in New South Wales are rated at 13s. 4d. a square mile. In South Australia the Act provides for a maximum rating of 3s. a square mile on the lessees or owners with a contribution to them of £16 a mile. The Dog Fence Board has up to date levied only 2s. 6d. a mile and has made a contribution of £13 a mile. Our rates are so favourable when compared with costs that consideration might be given to increasing the rate to at least 3s. and the payment to the maximum amount of £16 a mile to recoup the people for the work they do in the area. The work is not plain sailing because there are great sand-dunes, and a northerly wind can change the whole face of the country. Sand may be blown in such a way that instead of being under the fence it may finish up by being almost over the top of the fence. It is most difficult work and we must remember that these people are providing a barrier to safeguard other people too. However, it is their own fence and they have to maintain it, without any contribution if necessary, because it is impossible to operate in that country without it. However, the question of whether they can economically control it themselves and carry on in the area is important.

The Act provides that these fences shall be kept in order by the owner and if the board is not satisfied that the work is being carried out satisfactorily it may do the work itself and charge the owner. That is being done in one case where the owner told the board to go ahead, stating that he would meet the bill. I was advised by the Secretary of the Stock-owners' Association that that man paid the bill before the board paid the people who did the work. That was very satisfactory, but the present amendment provides that if the work is not carried out a fine of not less than £50 or more than £100 shall be imposed on the offender.

The people who waited upon me thought that provision was all right if the owner did not carry out the work. They thought in that case the work should be done by the Dog Fence Board and charged to the owner and if he did not pay within a reasonable time he should be fined. However, they were afraid of a report by an inspector who might be prejudiced against some owners or managers and they thought the board might act on his report without giving proper notice to the owner. The amendment which I propose moving today is to amend section 22 of the Act by adding at the end thereof another subsection, the preceding portion of the section being read as subsection (1). Dr. Wynes (the Parliamentary Draftsman) put this amendment in order and said it met what we set out to do. The proposed amendment is:—

(2) Where the board is satisfied that an owner of any part of the dog fence has failed to comply with any of the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, the board may serve such owner with a notice in writing specifying wherein such owner has failed to comply with the provisions of subsection (1) of this section and requiring the owner to comply therewith and within a reasonable time to be specified in such a notice.

That provides that after notice has been given, in addition to the other liabilities provided by the Act, a penalty of not less than £50 or more than £100 shall be incurred.

I later had a visit from the Secretary of the Dog Fence Board, Mr. Osborne, who is an officer of the Lands Department. We had a cordial interview and he informed me of the policy pursued by the department and the Dog Fence Board at the present time. He told me that the Inspector of Fences is not employed by the Dog Fence Board but by the Lands Department, and the Lands Department makes his reports available to the board for its information. All requests by owners for

repairs, etc., are authorized by the board at its meetings and are recorded in the official minutes. Mr. Osborne assures me that the board will not take action unless it firstly has failed to receive a reply to its letters, secondly, intends to do the work itself, and thirdly, has issued the owner with formal notice that it intends to do the work itself unless the work is completed within a specified time. No action would be taken unless authorized by the board. The Inspector of Fences is not authorized and will not be authorized to issue notices. That is exactly what we are aiming at in this amendment; that all these things and only these things should be done. There is no complaint about the present board, and I am satisfied that I can tell this House that it is doing a good job, but this House can never be sure that over the years the same personnel will continue as members of the board. All this amendment does is to ensure that the policy now being carried out will be provided by Statute in the future. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill and will move this minor amendment in Committee.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

SOUTH-EASTERN DRAINAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 11. Page 1517.)

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS (Northern)—This Bill amends the South-Eastern Drainage Act by bringing in certain areas which were not previously declared to come within the ambit of the Act. The new areas defined in the Bill are those known as the Eastern Division. When the Minister presented the Bill he said that it arose out of a report and recommendations made by the Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement. I am a member of that committee and it naturally follows that I favour the Bill and commend it for favourable consideration by honourable members. When the committee dealt with the reference submitted to it by the Governor it made its investigation from two aspects; firstly the possibility of increased production in the areas concerned and, secondly, the effectiveness of the drainage scheme which was before it.

Over the years drainage of the surplus water of the south-eastern districts of the State has been a matter that has occupied the attention of the settlers. The water accumulates not only because of the high rainfall in that area but also because of drainage from other parts of the State which has this area as an outlet. That particularly applies to the Eastern Division. Earlier references to drainage go back into the 1860's. In those times more or less localized efforts were undertaken with localized results; whereas one part of the district would benefit, a problem would be produced elsewhere. Over the years inquiries have been made by various committees, and in 1925 a Royal Commission studied drainage. It was then recommended that a comprehensive drainage scheme would be necessary for the drainage of these lands in the South-East.

The Land Settlement Committee made very extensive inquiries, examining about 60 witnesses, including not only the landholders interested, but also representatives of financial institutions, stockowners and anyone likely to be concerned with the development of the district. In addition, the committee had the benefit of an exhaustive agricultural survey by an officer of the Agriculture Department as well as a soil survey by the C.S.I.R.O., and it made the fullest inquiry into every aspect. Having regard to the fact that the proposal included the expenditure of some £3,000,000, the committee appreciated its responsibility to survey every avenue so that it could present an accurate report of the conditions as it found them. As an indication of the correctness of the ultimate recommendation of the committee for the beneficial development of the area, the Bill provides for the full expenditure. The proposal is for the extension of a main drain, with discharge into the sea. Main drains already exist in the area, but not all discharge into the sea. Over the years this has been considered the most effective method and one that should be adopted. A drain is to be constructed from the existing drain at Bool Lagoon, the water to be discharged ultimately into the sea at Beachport. The committee made a recommendation for a partial approach for the ultimate drainage of the area because it had been made evident in other drainage proposals that as the work progressed some of the subsidiary drains initially proposed were not actually necessary. More than 700,000 acres is involved, the greater portion of which is completely inundated during portion of the year. This is due not only to local rainfall, which from Kalangadoo to 25 miles north of Naracoorte varies from about 30in. down to something over 20in. further

north. The Morambro, Mosquito and Naracoorte Creeks have their watersheds in the western districts of Victoria, and the water from these creeks aggravate the position by discharging into some of the areas concerned.

Usually references to the Land Settlement Committee have been in connection with the development of lands under the Commonwealth War Service Land Settlement Agreement. On this occasion there was a somewhat new phase in as much as the committee was asked to report upon not only the amount of increased production that could be expected, but also the suitability of the area for repurchase, development, subdivision and settlement, and for development and subdivision "by the present landholders." The latter part was a new aspect in inquiries by the committee, and it was one to which the committee paid much attention. In an endeavour to come to a decision members of the committee wanted to know what the people concerned thought about the prospects and whether sufficient finance would be available; and also the policy of those concerned to carry out the drainage works which are of much importance. It appeared to the committee that the financial institutions had full confidence in the prospects of the proposal and of the likely achievements. We had a report from the Agricultural Department on the potentialities of this area, and above all and most important was the willingness expressed unanimously by the landholders concerned to undertake the development of the land by their own resources and not to call upon the Government to do that part of the work.

Of course, the drainage work will be carried out by the Drainage Board. The committee's recommendation was that the development of the land, which is now largely unproductive, should be undertaken by the landholders concerned. This is a departure from the previous practice. Previous references to the committee have been that the Lands Department would undertake the development for soldier settlement. Another aspect was that as some landholders would benefit progressively from the scheme, they should contribute something in the way of a betterment rate, and the Bill includes such a provision. Under the South-Eastern Drainage Act previously, although miles and miles of drains might be constructed and portion of the works could benefit some people 12 months before the actual scheme was completed, no betterment rate could be charged until the scheme was completed. The committee felt that those who, for varying reasons and over varying periods, received benefit should make a contribution according to the benefit received. The committee regarded this phase as important and I am pleased that provision has been made in the Bill along those lines. The committee's report points out that the added potentiality in development can be in the region of £3,000,000 a year. From that angle alone, it seems to me a matter of good business that the scheme should be undertaken and that some of this country, which perhaps is among the best in South Australia from an agricultural development point of view, should be at the earliest possible date brought into full production. In its recommendation, the committee alluded to this and I feel sure that that will be the policy adopted. As to landholders undertaking the responsibility of developing the land, the following was included in the committee's report:—

> Regarding part (*b*) of Your Excellency's reference the committee considers that the matter of land development and subdivision can safely be left to the landholders concerned to carry out after the drainage construction work has been completed by the Crown, an opinion formulated from the following factors:—
>
> i. Evidence tendered to the committee by landholders indicated a desire and readiness on their part to take full opportunity of further developing their holdings following the improved conditions that artificial drainage would provide, a prospect supported by inquiries from other sources.
>
> ii. Private individuals and institutions controlling finance appear to be favourably disposed towards the South-East, and the potential production from the area under review.
>
> As in the case in the western division, practically the whole of the lands in the eastern division are held under perpetual or other forms of lease, agreement to purchase, or freehold, and in view of the large sums of money involved in drainage construction works, the committee is of opinion that any funds available for draining the eastern division should be used to the fullest extent for this purpose, rather than in the purchase and development of land, especially as a State undertaking.

The other sources referred to in the first factor were the financial institutions and others who would be concerned in any such scheme. I will now refer to the committee's recommendations. Incidentally, this report is available, and it has been on our files for the last 12 months. Anybody interested can get more details from it than I am now giving, and he will be satisfied that the proposal is commendable and well worth-while. The recommendations made were as follows:—

> The Committee has reached the conclusion that the subject lands are eminently suitable

for drainage construction, development, and closer settlement, and recommends as follows:—

(*a*) The construction of the proposed main outlet to the sea at Beachport, as shown on the attached plan (Appendix B) be undertaken as a first step in the complete drainage of the Eastern Division of the South-East.

(*b*) The engineering works as set out in paragraph 9 of this report be undertaken by the State at an estimated cost of £3,254,800.

(*c*) That adequate allocation of loan funds be made to the South-Eastern Drainage Board each year to enable it to proceed systematically and progressively with the project.

(*d*) That any proposed additional drainage construction works within the Eastern Division of the South-East be submitted to this Committee for consideration and further report.

(*e*) That development and subdivision be carried out by the landholders when each phase of comprehensive drainage construction has been completed.

(*f*) That policy be formulated to enable the South-Eastern Drainage Board to impose a betterment rate on landholders as the drainage scheme progresses, and immediately after a comprehensive drainage scheme has been completed in any compact and self-contained area.

That sums up the position fairly well. I support the Bill.

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

COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

LOTTERY AND GAMING (CHARITABLE PURPOSES) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 12. Page 1570.)

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Leader of the Opposition)—Section 19 of the Lottery and Gaming Act, 1936-1956, sets out the maximum number (per annum) of ordinary and charitable race meetings at which each club holding a licence for the purpose is entitled to use the totalizator. Honourable members will remember that during the war period there was a ban on racing in South Australia and that after continued agitation, on which a by-election was fought, it was decided to restore racing. At that time there was a number of raceless Saturdays. A Bill introduced on two occasions by myself added to racing on Saturdays, in one instance six Saturdays and in the other instance three. During 1960 there will be 53 Saturdays. Therefore, there would be a raceless Saturday before the racing season ended, and the Government was asked to consider granting a totalizator licence for that day. It decided it would grant the request and make it a charity race-day. At present, there are two charity meetings every year. If this Bill becomes law, there will therefore be three charity meetings in 1960, I do not question the necessity of charity meetings, for they have a worthy object, but I draw attention to what the racing public of South Australia subscribes to this important sport, and particularly the rake-off the Government is receiving. I understand it is intended that the proceeds of this charity meeting shall go to the Adelaide Children's Hospital. That is sufficient reason for members supporting this Bill.

Under existing legislation all the revenue from betting transactions goes to the State, the racing, trotting and coursing clubs, and charitable institutions. If one goes to the sport one pays for it. If one happens to win one also pays for it. The total invested last year was over £28,000,000. The amount payable to charitable institutions decreased by £4,000 to £23,000. The amount derived by the State and the clubs from winning bets was £645,000. Dividends and winning bets unclaimed last year amounted to £34,000. I suppose in some instances people make a mistake about winning bets. Why does the Government not give this amount to charity? Why should it go to the Treasury? If the Government wants to be sympathetic and assist charity, I respectfully ask it to consider charitable organizations receiving it instead of the Treasury getting the benefit of people's mistakes.

The Hon. E. H. Edmonds—A fair bit comes out of the Treasury for charitable organizations.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Exactly, but the amount I have mentioned of £34,000 comes from totalizator bets.

The Hon. E. H. Edmonds—You think it should be specially earmarked for charity?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—The Government should not at the expense of the person investing put that money into the Treasury; it should divide it among the charitable organizations in South Australia.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—A lot of money besides totalizator bets is unclaimed.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—The honourable member can look after that; I will look after the sporting side. It is a fair and reasonable request. This is a Bill that we can all support, in the interests of both racing and charity. Its object is laudable. Over the years the racing public of South Australia has been very generous to charity. It has set a fine example. I pay a particular tribute to all those connected with racing, for their charitable actions over the years. They should be commended for doing what they can to assist charity. I support the second reading.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY (Central No. 2)—This Bill introduces another racing day for next year, presumably on the application of the racing clubs. I think that is quite justifiable. An extra Saturday occurs next year and as there are people who make a practice of attending race meetings every week I see no reason why they should not have the opportunity of doing so on this occasion. Although some people criticize racing, in my experience it is very well conducted by the clubs in South Australia. They provide good facilities at moderate prices, and South Australia produces some very good horses; I think one was the favourite, or almost so, for the last Melbourne Cup and, generally speaking, South Australian horses made a mark in the recent racing season in Melbourne. In the main racing is conducted very satisfactorily and should be supported. This extra effort is to be made for charity. I presume any expenses incurred will be deducted from the takings and the surplus devoted to charity.

Mr. Condon said that unclaimed bets should be paid to charity also, but I do not think that is necessary. All unclaimed moneys, whatever their source, find their way to the Treasury and I see no reason why there should be any distinction in respect of racing. In this Bill it seems that we are only conforming with the wishes of racing clubs and those who patronize racing. No harm is being done to anybody and charity will benefit from the extra money from this source. I support the Bill.

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

PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 12. Page 1581.)

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Leader of the Opposition)—On previous occasions when addressing myself to a Prices Bill I have not been too enthusiastic, and I support Mr. Bevan's contention that legislation of this description is not very effective unless it is of a Federal character. From experience in South Australia I realize how difficult it is to fix prices. I also appreciate that there are two sides to this most important question. As a member of the Labor Party it is my policy to support price control, but I cannot understand people who have a different policy doing so; I think I am right in saying that one political Party supports it at its conferences and the other opposes it.

My second point is that once you adopt wage fixation you must adopt price fixation, and that may be the strongest point in this Bill. It has long been the recognized policy in Australia to peg wages, and I think I am right in saying that South Australia is now the only State where prices are controlled.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—No, you are wrong there.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Well, perhaps I should say where price control is so rigidly enforced. I know that there is legislation in some other States, but it is not enforced to any great extent. My reason for speaking this afternoon is to point out to members what is likely to happen under price fixation before the end of the year. On quite a number of occasions I have brought under notice the necessity of placing an embargo on the export of wheat, because the Australian Wheat Board fixes the price of wheat and the South Australian Prices Commissioner fixes the price of flour, offal and bread and other products of wheat. I said on September 15 that the powers that be should give earnest consideration to placing an embargo on wheat export otherwise we would have a repetition of what took place in New South Wales in 1957, when wheat was imported from overseas and at the same time was exported to Victoria, Western Australia and South Australia—a very foolish thing. The result was that the people of New South Wales were called upon to pay the increased price that had to be paid for the imported wheat. The same applied in Queensland.

Since I introduced the matter on September 15 I have mentioned it here several times, and quite a few have jumped upon the band waggon. Certain men have been quoted in sub-leaders in the press as wanting to know what this Government and the wheat authorities intend to do. The Chief Secretary said, in reply to a question by me on September 15, that the Government was taking up the matter with the Wheat Board. The outlook today is much worse than it was on September 15. Last week the General Manager of the Australian Wheat Board came to South Australia and conferred with the Premier, the Minister of Agriculture and the Prices Commissioner concerning prices to be paid for wheat and for articles made therefrom.

My chief concern is that I want to protect the employees in the flour milling trade, and at the same time try to assist the industry generally. The Premier says that he will not allow the consumer to be penalized. The Wheat Board says it will not reduce the price of wheat, so who is going to pay? Are we to allow the industry to be ruined? I have every respect and regard for the Prices Commissioner, and if any manufacturer or employer can put forward a justifiable case he is entitled to every consideration. We hear people say "We cannot allow the price of bread to be increased," but we do not hear so much about the increased price of meat. I do not advocate it, but what would it mean to the consumers of South Australia if they had to pay an extra half-penny a loaf for bread in order to keep the industry going?

The Hon. A. J. Shard—Less than 3d. a week.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Yet when called upon to pay an extra 2s. a pound for meat nothing is said. I ask the House to consider this point. We have to pay 14s. 8d. a bushel for wheat which is the price fixed by the Australian Wheat Board. It is estimated that 5,000,000 bushels of wheat will be produced in South Australia this year and over 2,000,000 will be grown on the West Coast, but none of the wheat produced there will be consumed in South Australia; it will all be exported. Why is that? It is because it costs 2s. a bushel to bring wheat from the West Coast to the mainland to be ground into flour. What is the other alternative? Wheat can be imported from Victoria, but 4d. a bushel extra has to be paid for that wheat. That means that the South Australian consumer is paying 15s. a bushel for his wheat while wheat is being exported overseas at 13s. 2d. a bushel. That is the Premier's argument and I do not know whether it is correct or not. If we are to consider any industry I think this is one worthy of consideration.

Of the flour manufactured in Australia 50 per cent is exported overseas and South Australia's proportion represents a fair amount. What chance has this country of maintaining its connections and its export trade if it is called upon to pay 15s. for wheat to grind into flour? How can it compete with wheat sent overseas at 13s. 2d. a bushel? It is impossible to do that and the trade will be lost. This question is too big to be passed by lightly but it is not for me to say what should be done. The Premier is today discussing this matter with the Prime Minister. On the one hand we have the Australian Wheat Board which says it will not reduce its price below today's price and on the other hand we have the Premier who says the consumer is not to be penalized any more. What are we going to do? Is the export market trade to go out of existence? Something should be done to meet the position. The trade even suggested it would be satisfied if the price of offal, which was reduced last July, were increased but the Premier said he would not do that. The poultry breeder, the pig industry and the primary producer would be penalized if prices were raised. Who is going to pay for it? I give full marks to the Premier for what he is trying to do, but the consumer will have to pay. If the Premier can overcome that problem he will be lucky. An embargo should have been placed on the export of wheat long ago. We saw what happened to another State two years ago. After November 29 there will be no more wheat sold for flour unless the position changes in the meantime. It is not for me to say what should be done but I am telling houourable members of the position. My consideration first of all is for the employees engaged in the industry and secondly it is for the industry generally, and if the consumer can see no way out of it he will, as is the case with other commodities, be compelled to face the problem.

What chance has the industry of keeping its trade when it has to pay 15s. a bushel for wheat for flour when wheat is sold overseas at 13s. 2d. a bushel? I hope the Premier can do something to protect the consumers and also the interests of the producers.

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

HOLIDAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 12. Page 1584.)

The Hon. G. O'H. GILES (Southern)—I am glad to have an opportunity of adding my contribution to the debate on the Bill, which deals with Saturday morning closing of two Savings Banks and makes it possible for these banks to implement this legislation. The principle embodied in the Bill has already been accepted on a previous occasion by both Houses, but I am glad to add my contribution, if rather belatedly, on these matters. Nobody believes more than I that, in a civilized country like Australia, the average man should have as much leisure as can be given to him as long as the economy of a particular enterprise warrants it. I am completely in favour of that as a principle, but I do object in this case because outback people will be faced with an added burden by Saturday closing of banks. This argument applies more the further outback one goes. These people come into their nearest town on Saturday morning and do their shopping, their banking and attend to their financial matters and in the afternoon they join in the organized sport provided or seek other entertainment. Saturday morning is the time for knocking off work and going into town centres in the far outback.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan—Rats!

The Hon. G. O'H. GILES—The honourable member interjected very softly, but when he spoke on this Bill he said farmers could go to midweek sales. I was surprised to hear him adopt the viewpoint of the owners of properties because the point I was trying to make was that employees cannot always get off and in some way they should be allowed to go into these centres to conduct their banking, shopping and other activities and to engage in sport. I appreciate the attitude of the banks to help their employees in every way possible to enjoy their amenities, but I think in the case of outback people it is a little unfortunate and it will interfere with their way of life. After all, we very largely have to thank these people for the wealth and good conditions that apply in Australia generally. To use a colloquialism, we have been riding on the sheep's back for a good while, and we shall continue to do so for many years to come.

I sum up by saying that some hardworking members of the community will be unduly penalized by this action on the part of the banks. I refer to newly married couples keen to get on and make their mark in life, and New Australians who, having arrived here, are trying to get on their feet and make a do of it, also outback people. These people do not always wish to knock off after doing 40 hours a week but wish to continue and the time available to them to conduct business in the town is on Saturday morning.

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

UNDERGROUND WATERS PRESERVATION BILL.

Bill recommitted.

Clauses 1 to 3 passed.

Clause 4—"Interpretation."

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—I move—

After "dwelling" at the end of subclause (1) to add "or any well having a depth of 15ft. or less."

We have been told that the purpose of the legislation is to stop the pollution of underground waters, and also, as I see it, for the purpose of assuring that everyone gets a fair share of the water to be drawn from underground, and that one does not get more than he is entitled to to the detriment of his neighbours. As regards drainage, on the information I have, I do not think that a well 15ft. deep, which would be the maximum exemption, would have the effect of polluting any stream in any area that I know of; and as regards the taking of water from underground, I think it is obvious that if a water table is above 15ft. it would not matter if if were pumped out so that it went down below 15ft. I consider there are few places where the water table is at such a shallow depth. The object of the amendment is to exempt matters which need not come within the scope of the Bill, ensure people of their existing rights, and save much paper work in returns and filing. I should like to give four examples of the type of thing that should be exempt. I have had personal experience of the four things I will mention. The first is a shallow well. I have a shallow well in the cellar of my house at North Adelaide, an area that may well come within the scope of the Bill. The cellar is probably 6ft. underground, and the well has a depth of four or five feet. I believe it is on top of an old spring, but is no longer used. Under the Bill as at present drawn I should have to go to all the bother of reporting this obsolete

well to the department, and perhaps have officers coming into my house to inspect it.

A second phase includes natural springs, seepage and soaks. Springs were exempted from the Bill as presented to the House of Assembly previously, but for some reason that exemption no longer applies. I have had experience of a spring which would come within the scope of the Bill, because it had been deepened by hand. My amendment would exempt that spring and other similar springs. The same relates to soaks, which provide a natural water supply by gravitation. I see no reason why these things should come within the scope of the Bill and give trouble to people in making returns and to the department in filing them.

There are two types of drains I intend that my amendment should exempt. The first is septic tanks and their pits. There must be thousands of these all over the country, but I know of no pit that goes below 15ft. I have never heard anyone say that such pits pollute the water supply, but under the Bill every septic tank pit would have to be reported, and the report filed by the department, although that information is or should be in the hands of the Central Board of Health, which regulates these matters to a large extent. The other type of drainage is very commonplace, particularly in the country, where people have a pit for waste water from the house, such as from the bathroom and the kitchen. I also have one of these, which is only a few feet deep and does no harm to anyone. I envisage that such a soakage pit down to a depth of, say, 15ft., would not harm the water supply. It is very common, and again if this is included in the Bill it will create a festoon of paper going to and from the department, and I cannot see any need for it. The present provision will cause unnecessary work both to the public and to the department, particularly to the public in having to make out returns about things which do not matter at all.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Minister of Mines)—I listened with interest to the honourable member's remarks, and do not think there is any need to repeat that I have endeavoured to meet suggestions of honourable members and gone out of my way not only to get a workable Bill, but also to indicate to honourable members the sincerity of the whole measure. I repeat that this Bill does not control the quantity of water—quantity is completely eliminated. It is purely contamination that we are concerned with, so the honourable member's objection regarding interference with wells, etc., does not arise.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill—Do you deny that there is power to restrict quantities?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—It does not apply to a well under the floor of the honourable member's house.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill—Contamination and deterioration are referred to.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—Deterioration is contamination in another form. One could put poison into something and contaminate the water; or there could be a breakthrough of water from one stratum into another, and that is the only time it is effective. It is no use the honourable member trying to throw a red herring across the track of the department.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill—Rubbish!

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—The clause would operate only where there was contamination or deterioration in the quality of the water, and not the quantity.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill—That is not what the Bill says.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—The honourable member is giving his interpretation and I am giving mine. I have given some indication of the sincerity in the drafting of the Bill and if the honourable member can draft it in another way without destroying it, that is all right. I am prepared to accept what Mr. Story will move in another amendment, which is slightly different from Sir Arthur Rymill's, and which covers soakage pits and septic tank installations. The Health Department can deal with such matters. The objection to the honourable member's amendment is that there could be sand of a porous nature at 15ft. just as there could be at 100ft., and to put any limit on the depth would completely destroy the effect of the Bill. It depends on the geological and hydrological conditions existing in the area, and to put a limitation on the depth of wells would override any advantages of the Bill. I am happy to accept Mr. Story's amendment, but ask the Committee not to go so far as Sir Arthur Rymill's amendment.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY—I welcome the stipulation as to depth. A great deal of water drawn from the earth comes from wells under 15ft. deep. We do not control wells 15ft. deep or less. The whole Bill is fundamentally bad. If there is something that can be shown to be interfering with our artesian basins where boring operations take us down through the

salt water strata and into the fresh water streams, I agree that that should be controlled; but surely not in the case of a well under 15ft. deep, whether for drainage purposes or for the purpose of drawing water for stock. The Minister said it was not the intention of the Government to curtail the drawing of water for stock. If that is the case, wells under 15ft. deep should be released from the provisions of this Bill.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY—This is an important clause. We do not know where the declared areas will be, whether in the country or in the metropolitan area but, as the honourable Mr. Densley has said, there does not seem to be any risk or danger in digging a well 15ft. deep, wherever it may be. The amendment proposed by Mr. Story covers the waste, but not the small well. This regulation will apply to various parts of the country and much unnecessary work will be involved in tapping soakage wells, which has not much to do with underground water. By stipulating a depth of 15ft. we would clear the matter up altogether and obviate the necessity of our having to define waste material only. A well could be under 15ft. deep without infringing the provisions of the Bill. I support Sir Arthur Rymill in his amendment.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—Soakage wells are under the control of the Health Department, therefore I am prepared to exempt them. There is no reason for stipulating a depth of 15ft. any more than a depth of 55ft. It depends on the geological nature of the country and local problems. That is the point.

The Hon. A. C. HOOKINGS—Many problems are involved in an amendment of this nature. I should like this Bill to be confined to one particular area only. I know of areas in the lower South-East where waste water and sewage are being discharged into pits less than 15ft. deep and water is being drawn from bores 15ft. deep and less. If the Bill is to operate in South Australia, I fail to see that 15ft. would cover the whole picture.

The Committee divided on Sir Arthur Rymill's amendment—

Ayes (4).—The Hons. L. H. Densley, Sir Frank Perry, Sir Arthur Rymill (teller), and C. R. Story.

Noes (13).—The Hons. K. E. J. Bardolph, S. C. Bevan, F. J. Condon, E. H. Edmonds, G. O'H. Giles, A. C. Hookings, N. L. Jude, Sir Lyell McEwin (teller), F. J. Potter, W. W. Robinson, C. D. Rowe, A. J. Shard, and R. R. Wilson.

Majority of 9 for the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived.

The Hon. C. R. STORY—I move—

After "dwelling" to insert "or any soakage pit used for the disposal of effluent from any septic tank or waste water from a private dwelling."

The amendment of the Minister goes some way towards meeting the problem that I observed when I first read the Bill—that is, the disposal of surplus water and household waste. As I pointed out then, I considered it somewhat of an imposition that people should have to notify a septic tank and the disposal of water from their homes. As the Minister has indicated that he is prepared to accept this amendment I will delay the Committee no further with explanation.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY—On the previous amendment the Minister complained about using soakage wells under 15ft. deep but he told us the other day that he had no objection to the amount of water that might be drawn from the wells for other purposes. It would not matter what the geological formation or the hydrological position was, it would not hurt our underground waters if we drew water from wells under 15ft. deep. Any danger that exists is from drainage. I cannot see why the Minister accepts this amendment but not the other, which provided a convenience for many people whereas this amendment will provide only for the disposal of effluent, against which the Minister spoke so strongly on the last amendment.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—This Bill with all its amendments looks like patch-work. It deals in many places with declarations, proclamations and regulations. Clause 50 reads—

(1) Nothing in the Pastoral Act, 1936-1953, or any amendment thereof shall affect the obligations of any person to comply with the Act.

(2) Nothing in this Act shall affect the obligation of any person to comply with the provisions of the Health Act, 1935-1956, and the Pastoral Act, 1936-1953.

It is totally unfair to expect members to deal with this highly technical Bill. I submit that it be referred to a Select Committee of this House or, as has been done in the past, to the Land Settlement Committee.

The CHAIRMAN—I am afraid the honourable member is a little late in his proposition. We are now in Committee.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I know that, but it is still the prerogative of the Minister to report progress for the purpose of

considering the proposal I have made. In the next session of Parliament further amendments will come up either to rectify something in this legislation or in the Pastoral Act or Health Act.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—I hoped that the Minister would reply to Mr. Densley. If he intends to do so I will reserve my remarks until later.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—I can only repeat what I have said twice already, namely, that we consider that the subject matter of this amendment is covered by the Health Act and therefore it is not so vital as the other.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER—I ask the mover why he confines his amendment to "private dwellings"? I should imagine that there are soakage pits and septic tanks in use in buildings not strictly within the definition of private dwelling, particularly in country towns. I do not know whether Mr. Story intended to include, say, office buildings or hotels. If so, I am doubtful whether it goes far enough.

The Hon. C. R. STORY—I am perfectly aware of what I want to do, which is to make provision for private dwellings. If we include a hotel, which is virtually a dwelling, there may be three hotels adjacent and they could combine to put their effluent down one hole. That is far beyond the scope I visualized when moving my amendment. I want to save the private householder in country districts from being unduly inconvenienced, by having to go to the trouble of making a declaration and fighting a paper war with the department, and later on having to obtain a permit for new installations. In addition to having to obtain a permit from the Central Board of Health it would also be necessary to get a permit for new septic tanks. The whole purpose is to make the burden a little lighter on the individual and to protect the very thing we have set out to do in the Bill. I believe we would be avoiding the issue if we allowed hotels and hospitals, and so forth, to come in under this amendment.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—I would like to comment on the matter raised by Mr. Densley. My amendment was limited to 15ft., but of course it did not limit what could be done with it at that depth. The only exception, apparently, that the Minister took to it was in relation to drainage or pollution, and not in relation to sinking for water. This amendment, which I support, means that either septic tank wells or waste water pits are not limited to 15ft., but can go to any depth. It seems curious that a more extensive amendment, in some ways, should be accepted whereas mine has been rejected on the basis that it goes too far.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 5—"Proclaimed areas and prescribed depths."

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY—This clause gives the Government power to cover any part or the whole of South Australia. I think it wrong to go to that length as a start on what is recognized as, shall I say, an unknown science. To tackle the thing properly it should be done in a defined area that is as well known as possible, and that area should be extensively dealt with. That is why I suggested, on the second reading, that the area should be confined to the metropolitan area and the northern plains extending to Gawler. I do not know whether the Minister has any definite ideas of the extent to which this legislation is to be put into force and how the areas are to be classified—whether it will be dealt with on the basis of electorates, or a few hundred square yards or a square mile. This seems to be a blanket power giving the Government control of all the underground waters of South Australia on an unknown basis. If it has to be done ultimately a clause like this may be necessary, but where so little is known about underground waters I do not think anything so far-reaching as this should be attempted in the first instance. I ask the Minister if he has any information as to the localities that will be dealt with.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—The honourable member implies that there is some provision in the Bill suggesting that it can be applied to certain areas.

The Hon. L. H. Densley—I think that was a reference to something in the Minister's speech.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—Possibly, in dealing with a supposititious case, I may have said it could be applied to a given area. This is not unusual even in this very department. We have power to reserve mineral resources and may proclaim any part of the State if we desire to investigate an area. It is not unusual to blanket the whole State but to proclaim an area being reserved from the Mining Act and that has been done repeatedly when it has been necessary to carry out investigations into the development of our mineral resources in past years. To state in the Bill

where it applies—the honourable member suggested Gawler—is unnecessary. The point would be properly investigated by the advisory committee set up by the Bill. In the past we have not had authority to deal with this problem when it did occur and this is an insurance measure to preserve the quality of our water and to get the greatest use out of our underground supply while not impairing the quality of it.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY—I thought this Bill was introduced for a purpose and that that purpose was to prevent contamination in certain areas.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin—But not to the extent that it could be prescribed in the Bill.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY—I know it is not in the Bill but I do know what the Minister said in his speech. These waters have always been regarded as the right of the owners of the land and we are now, in one fell swoop, taking these rights away or curtailing them without having a pre-examined plan. I think that is the danger. I am not quite clear on underground waters but I think they should be controlled although the responsible people should have something definite to put before this House and should not offer a blanket proposal that they may deal with next month, next year or in the next 10 years.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin—Where is the suggestion of a blanket proposal? I cannot see it anywhere.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY—The Minister's explanation of the Bill suggested it.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin—The word "blanket" was never used.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY—This is a blanket authority to control any part of South Australia and I am disappointed that the department concerned has not a definite plan. I question whether there is not another method by which this could be controlled.

Clause passed.

Clauses 6 to 10 passed.

Clause 11—"Terms and conditions in permits."

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY—We have now dealt with all the clauses that refer to effluent and the spoiling of water in wells. This is one thing that strikes against our rights and it is particularly onerous. I have not been particularly impressed with the explanations given by the Minister on one or two other clauses and I do not want to harass him on this but I feel, subject to the information he has given us and subject to the remarks made by the Premier in another place, that it was not the intention to control farmers drawing water for stock, but this clause does give the Minister power to do anything he likes when he wants to. It has nothing particularly to do with effluent or with deterioration and yet if we had a clause like the one that was rejected a while ago as to depth I would oppose this clause.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—The honourable member has not been quite fair in quoting one clause only. Clause 3 distinctly sets out that it applies where contamination or deterioration occurs. It is all related to that. We cannot have more water than there is, but if the supply is spoilt what can we do?

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—I was pleased to hear the Minister, when debating my amendment recently, say there was no intention to legislate on the quantity of water. The Bill only applies to contamination and to what he interprets deterioration to mean, which he relates unsuccessfully to quality. I think I am correct in thus quoting the Minister. My interpretation of the word "deteriorate"—and I have had Murray's Dictionary to help me—is "to make worse." Although it has a specific meaning "to make worse in quality," its primary meaning is "to make worse," and it comes from the Latin *deteriorare,* which means the same thing. As I mentioned before, I have a spring in the country and it has deteriorated this season to the extent where it has stopped running altogether. Surely that is a deterioration? If that is the intention of the Bill, I should respectfully suggest that the word "deteriorate" be defined and that the position be clarified by an addition to each of the clauses, or an addition to the definition which would be better, to make it clear that "deteriorate" relates to quality and not to quantity. I moved an amendment to prevent the contamination or deterioration in quality of underground water. If that is the Minister's intention, there should be no objection to the amendment, because it makes clear what the intention is.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER—I take it that there could be restrictions in the taking of good water if that action deteriorated the remaining water left underground. Can the Minister say whether that is so?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—We are getting into a babel of words. I have nothing to add to what I have already said. The legislation applies only where contamination takes place.

The Hon. F. J. Potter—Or is likely to occur?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—That is what the Bill says and that could be decided on the geological structure of the country.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—I move—

After ''deterioration'' in subclause (1) to insert ''in quality.''

The effect would be to restrict the taking of good water from a well if this action was likely to deteriorate the quality of the water. My amendment will not alter the intention of the Bill, but clarifies the verbiage. It is our job to look at words, assess their meaning, and see that ambiguity does not creep in.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—I have not had the amendment to study it, and in view of the position I suggest that progress be reported so that we may consider the point we are trying to arrive at.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.23 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, November 18, at 2.15 p.m.