

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, October 26, 1960.

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

VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

TOWN PLANNING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

In Committee.

(Continued from October 19. Page 1422.)

Clause 8—“Amendment of principal Act, section 13”.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER—The principal amendment provided by this clause is for the appointment of an independent chairman to the appeal committee in lieu of the Town Planner. The person appointed shall be a legal practitioner of not less than seven years' standing and he shall be appointed by the Governor for such term and upon such conditions as the Governor shall determine. I agree with the appointment of such a person as an independent chairman, but it would be inadvisable for the Government, at any time, to consider appointing a solicitor who is an officer of the Public Service. The Government is directly or indirectly concerned with the administration of this Act and the appointment of someone from the Public Service would not meet with a good response from landowners who are concerned as applicants. I do not intend moving an amendment, but would like an assurance from the Minister that no such appointment is contemplated.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Attorney-General)—I cannot give the honourable member a definite assurance that at some time or other a solicitor from the Public Service will not be appointed, but it is our present intention to appoint someone outside the Public Service because there are advantages in doing that. I am prepared to say that is the present intention, but I am not prepared to give a binding undertaking for the future, because circumstances may arise which would make another decision necessary.

Clause passed.

Clauses 9 to 13 passed.

Clause 14—“Amendment of principal Act, section 23.”

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—I ask that progress be reported and that the Committee ask for leave to sit again, because the

Hon. Mr. Bardolph, who is handling the Bill for the Opposition, is not present.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—I am agreeable; and that will allow Mr. Bardolph to handle his amendment.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

EXCHANGE OF LAND: HUNDRED OF SKURRAY.

Consideration of the following resolution received from the House of Assembly:

That the proposed exchange of land in the Hundred of Skurray, as shown on the plan and in the statement laid before Parliament on August 25, 1959, be approved.

(Continued from October 25. Page 1508.)

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Leader of the Opposition)—I have examined the plan submitted by the Land Board, which has recommended the exchange of the land in question on the River Murray which is to be used for camping and recreation purposes. The recommendation appears to be in the interests of all concerned, and the exchange is a reasonable one because the land in question is of equal value, although there is a difference of two acres. Blanchetown is a place that needs a little boosting and the construction of the proposed bridge should be an added attraction to this town.

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland)—As the Hon. Mr. Condon said, the area is to be used for recreation purposes. This is one of those things we must provide these days when people like to get away from the city for a visit to the country. In his speech the Attorney-General said:—

To relieve the situation the Murray Pastoral Company is prepared to relinquish its ownership of section 44, provided it can obtain the freehold of section 42, hundred of Skurray, and the adjoining 150 links river reserve.

I do not know whether that means that this will result in giving the pastoral company the land right down to the river's edge, but according to the Minister's statement that would appear to be so. As honourable members know, there are reserves on many of the newer subdivided areas on the Murray to enable people to have access around the edge of the water. That is quite important, because people like to get on the river to fish and to walk on the banks to see the scenery; but if someone erects a fence and a solid gate which prevents people from proceeding past that point, that makes the position difficult. On the upper river for some time people have been advocating that when such land is handed over at any time a reserve

is retained. In early legislation, such as that relating to the establishment of irrigation settlements by the Chaffey brothers, the title applied right to the river's edge, and this resulted in excising much of the scenic part of the river for use by the public. I ask the Attorney-General to look into this matter and tell me whether or not such land is being cut off under the terms of the agreement. I believe it is a very generous act on the part of the company to exchange the land, as it will certainly give the public much better access to the river. However, if the reserve extends right to the river's edge I should not be happy about it, because I believe the public have a right to use a waterway such as the Murray so that they can participate in fishing. I support the motion.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Attorney-General)—When speaking on the motion I said:—

To relieve the situation the Murray Pastoral Company is prepared to relinquish its ownership of section 44, provided it can obtain the freehold of section 42, hundred of Skurray, and the adjoining 150 links river reserve.

That does not make it quite clear whether there is to be the retention of any area that could be used as a road on the river frontage. Under the circumstances I ask that consideration of this matter be postponed to enable me to look into the question raised by the honourable member.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—Have you not replied to the motion and thus closed the debate?

The PRESIDENT—Under Standing Orders the debate has been closed and a vote must be taken forthwith. The Minister, having spoken to the motion in reply, cannot speak again tomorrow when he gets the information he is after.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—Under the circumstances I cannot see any answer to the point raised by the Hon. Mr. Condon, but I am prepared to give the Hon. Mr. Story an undertaking that his request will receive the Government's serious consideration.

Motion carried.

TRAVELLING STOCK ROUTES: HUNDREDS OF DAVENPORT, WOOLUNDUNGA, GREGORY AND WILLOWIE.

Consideration of the following resolution received from the House of Assembly:—

That the travelling stock routes, containing 4,468 acres, in the hundreds of Davenport, Woolundunga, Gregory and Willowie, extending south-easterly from Stirling North to Wilmington, and easterly from Wilmington to

Willowie, as shown on the plan laid before Parliament on August 11, 1959, be resumed in terms of the Pastoral Act, 1936-1959, for the purpose of being dealt with as Crown lands under the provisions of the Crown Lands Act, 1929-1957.

(Continued from October 25. Page 1509.)

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Leader of the Opposition)—Representations were made by the District Councils of Wilmington and Port Germein and investigations were undertaken by the Lands Department and the Pastoral Board in association with the land-owners concerned, and everyone seems to be happy with the proposal. I have visited the locality three times during the past month and noticed that a number of stock were straying on main roads, thus being a danger to the travelling public. I hope that the passing of this motion will result in that danger being obviated. The Stockowners' Association has recommended that the stock routes be resumed. I support the motion.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON (Northern)—Since I have been a representative in the Council of this part of the State for nearly 12 years there has always been a strong agitation to have certain stock routes closed; and the one under consideration has for some years resulted in anxiety to people who hold adjoining land. Generally stock routes are about a quarter of a mile wide and often extend for a great length. In the very early days these stock routes were necessary because stock travelled on the hoof, but today we have motor transport, and the only people using such stock routes are generally dealers. These stock routes have been the means of spreading many noxious weeds and have provided a breeding ground for vermin. The Wilmington stock market is not very important these days, as it was years ago and the local council favours the route being closed. The Stockowners' Association has recommended the resuming of this land under Crown lease and I believe that this will result in a benefit to those people who desire to free their land from vermin that has been troubling them for a long time. I support the motion.

Motion carried.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 25. Page 1500.)

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland)—I should like to speak to the Bill, because I want the opportunity to draw attention to one or two matters, and that after all is the purpose of

the debate. The amount of money mentioned in the Bill is an amount that people 10 to 15 years ago would not have thought possible. The estimated income and estimated expenditure for the year is about £85,000,000, and the estimated surplus is £312,000.

Recently I was privileged to be sent overseas by this Parliament to represent the six State Parliaments of Australia at a conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, which took place in Uganda, East Africa. It was most beneficial to all the delegates who attended. With the concurrence of members I want to make comparisons between some of the countries I visited and Australia in connection with several of the items mentioned in the Bill. Australians are an extremely privileged people and unless they travel they do not realize how fortunate they are in being Australians and being able to live under a democratic system. *En route* to Uganda I visited a number of places, including Singapore, Malaya, Ceylon, India and East Africa. In the short time available I was able to get an idea of the conditions prevailing in most of those countries, and I was greatly impressed by the Australian Trade Commissioners. Recently the Hon. J. McEwen (Commonwealth Minister for Trade) said that the job of the Trade Commissioner was not to sell Australian goods but to provide a facility and service for business people desiring to trade in the country where he was located. That was a sound and sane statement. I thought that the trade position in Ceylon was not encouraging. This country has embraced nationalization and socialization and is at present facing many difficulties. I visited many of the nationalized or socialized industries in Ceylon, and Mr. Condon will be interested to know that I visited a test bakery and saw Australian flour. The Singhalese were particularly keen to show me the bakery which had been provided under the Colombo Plan, and of which they were proud. It served a useful purpose and gave them the opportunity to get the flour they wanted. When I was there they were satisfied with the Australian flour sent to them. They had nationalized bakeries, cordial manufacture, canning factories, bus services, milk supplies and other things.

Some of my friends will be interested to know that horse racing in Ceylon, unless something unforeseen occurs, will cease within three or four years because it is now heavily taxed and the clubs are getting practically no

returns. The Singhalese are happy people but they are to be deprived of a sport about which they are keen. The same remarks apply to liquor. It costs over £5 sterling to buy a bottle of Scotch whisky. This is the result of a Government impost. It does not seem that Australia will have much opportunity to trade with Ceylon. The Holden motor car was an extremely popular car in that country prior to the introduction of new tariffs, but now not so many Holdens are going into Ceylon, because each costs about £2,000. Generally speaking, the country is in the grip of a socialization scheme. Money must come from somewhere in order to make hand-outs. There is a form of subsidy to the producer of various commodities so that he will bring his goods to the supermarket which is nationalized. The housewife is subsidized to buy goods there, and the result is that everything is pulled down to the level of the supermarket. The gap between the subsidy to the grower and the subsidy to consumer must be made up in some way, and at present the Government is trying to do it by imposing high taxes on luxuries. I thought the financial position in Ceylon looked desperate. I may be wrong, but I thought that the way they were approaching the matter, particularly in connection with motor cars, would develop black markets in a short time. The Singhalese were most kind to me and showed me everything they could. My criticism is not against them but against the form of government that they have adopted.

Singapore is a flourishing place. The popular view is that Singapore will become less and less important as Malaya becomes more and more important, which it is at present striving to do. Maybe the Minister of Roads has seen the system of traffic control they have in Singapore. It is mainly second gear travel, foot flat on the accelerator pedal, hand pressed hard on the horn, and the devil take the hindmost. It is certainly the most amazing traffic system I have seen, and one-way traffic is the general rule. The traffic moves fast and there is a terrific number of roundabouts. The traveller seems to go miles and miles in order to get to his destination. When I was there kidnappings were rife and it was not safe for members of the wealthier class to move about because of the likelihood of their being taken by bandits and large ransoms being demanded. Australia has been successful in connection with trade in Singapore. I took a particular interest in wines, canned fruits, and citrus, because I know a little about those industries in Australia.

I am more convinced than I was when I left that if we wish to sell in the eastern markets we should market fewer brands and advertise them. It is futile for 20 or 30 Australian brands to compete with two or three brands from South Africa or America.

Much money must be spent in advertising Australian goods in the eastern markets, which are most conservative. Other countries advertise their goods too. It is a market which is prejudiced; if Grandma used a certain brand of canned fruit, then her children continued to use that same brand. Unless that brand goes off the market or we are prepared to make sacrifices in the early stages of establishing another brand, it is almost impossible for a new brand to become known. The popular brandy is Hennessy's Four Star, which is more expensive than Australian brandy, but they add ginger ale to it. It seemed silly to me to buy expensive brandy and then do that, but my Chinese host informed me that he would be considered an extremely bad host if he offered any other brand, as that brand was the recognized one in that country. There are art snobs, and there are wine snobs, and unfortunately our industry is faced with the problem I have mentioned. The best way to overcome it is to export under one brand, and this is a matter that co-operative concerns should consider.

Malaya impressed me, because its trade is expanding rapidly. South Australia and Malaya have much in common because both are developing in much the same way. Malaya has plenty of land to develop and in my opinion the Malayan Government has the answer to Communism. It is allocating reasonable areas of land to the poor people, who will eventually become producers for the eastern market. Our future trade prospects with Malaya are good, because they are well disposed towards us, mainly as a result of the Colombo Plan. The Prime Minister of the country appreciates what has been done in education for his people under this plan. I believe this is a country which will remain within the British Commonwealth, which has helped it to solve its internal problems and also assisted it in controlling Communist bandits. The Malayan people are not unappreciative that we sent troops to assist them. The Malayan Government budgeted for a deficit of £2,000,000 sterling, but had a surplus of £80,000,000 because of the price rises of tin and rubber. The amount was not returned to the taxpayer, but the Government

built more schools and hospitals and is doing a magnificent job in that regard. Private schools operate in the country as well as State schools, and education is on a high plane.

It is heartrending to see the poverty in many parts of India. This country is fighting strongly to remain in the British Commonwealth and not be absorbed by Communism, and it is just starting its third five-year plan. I attended a meeting in Colombo at which the speaker was the Foreign Minister of India, Shri Krishna Menon, and he outlined what would happen when this new plan was operating. This country is very short of overseas earnings, but is making an honest endeavour to keep itself within the British Commonwealth, which is a good thing.

In East Africa I was amazed to see the potential wealth of the country. Kenya and Uganda particularly are countries that could really become among the greatest producers of all the necessary stable commodities used in Europe and Asia. In Kenya the country rises from sea level to a height of 6,000ft. at Nairobi in a distance of about 200 miles, and within another 200 miles rises to 8,000ft. These highlands are fantastically rich and produce 90 per cent of the export earnings of the country. This is similar to Australia in that 80 per cent of our export earnings come from primary production. This year the Lancaster House plan was negotiated for the future of African, Asian and British population of Kenya. The Africans will have a majority in the House of Kenya and in Cabinet after next March. As a result of the Mau-Mau trouble from 1954 to 1956, the leader of the Mau-Mau people was imprisoned for seven years and is due to be released about now. One of the great problems the Government is facing is whether to keep him in prison until after the election, or release him now. Although he is a fanatic he is a man who was educated at the London University in about 1908. He has, without doubt, one of the worst records in Africa in connection with the blood oaths he has been able to induce people to take from fear. The problem facing the country is that the Asian and European populations live in fear that is so great that many of them are moving out and abandoning farms which, in Australia, would be worth £30,000 to £40,000. They are not prepared to stay and face another Mau-Mau campaign because no British army will be available to support them on this occasion. It is interesting to note that one in every four of the population is either a policeman or a soldier.

I was amazed at the wealth of the country. The soil is black in appearance, like the Mount Gambier soil, and it grows coffee, pyrethrum (the base for flyspray), and wonderful crops of cereals at the 8,500ft. to 9,500ft. level. I saw wheat, barley and oat crops that were as good as any we could grow in our best areas. This portion of Kenya is on the equator where the temperatures range from 60 to 80 degrees throughout the year. The people there have a fire at night to make them believe they are having a winter. The country will grow practically anything and its scenic beauty is remarkable. The only complaint I have is it is a great pity that the people who were asked by the British Government to go out there and develop this country have no guarantee of stability for the future.

The African in East Africa is not ready for independence. He has only been under the influence of civilized people for 50 or 60 years and while some of the Africans have been educated at universities and are extremely nice people the trouble is that the nicer they are the less likely they are to become leaders. Two strong men are recognized in Kenya, one educated in the United States of America and the other in Russia. I am fearful that if the British walk out or grant independence (it may be fairer to say the latter) there will be a terrific civil war to see which of those two men is the stronger. Uganda is a country with a 60-inch rainfall and one in which Britain has done much building. The capital (Kampala) has been mainly built with British money. The Asian plays a big part in the business section of the community and he is a lively businessman. The Africans are gradually becoming businessmen but they are still very much on the lower rung. The country is divided into four kingdoms and the British have not unduly interfered with the land allocation. The land is still more or less vested in the Africans. A few very big estates are operated under a 999-year lease. The Kabaka is the king of the Baganda tribe. This kingdom is a protectorate and fame was brought to it by the meeting of Livingstone and Stanley.

The church has played an important part in the development of Uganda, such an important part that once the two factions—the Roman Catholics and the Anglicans—fought it out and eventually Kabaka became an Anglican. Religion is something which has deep roots in the country. The people are Christians and although denominational the people mainly acknowledge themselves to be Christians. The

arrangement in the country is complicated. A federal type of government has been set up but the Kabaka told his people they were not to vote at elections and he asked the British Government for his kingdom back. That kingdom has been a protectorate of Britain since about 1870. The problems associated with this country are great.

As an Australian representative I attended the court of King George II of Toro, another of the ruling kings, and to illustrate how difficult it is to grant independence to this country the Chief Secretary to the King approached him on his knees and crawled to the King to present him with the scroll of welcome.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill—I would like to see a Chief Secretary doing that!

The Hon. C. R. STORY—It would not occur here. That happened every time the people came into the presence of the King and I only refer to that to illustrate how difficult it is to give independence to a country at that stage of maturity. It is not democratic. The people crave independence but they do not know what independence means. They have been told all sorts of things. If Australia could within the next few years provide Africa with technicians and people to assist in the education of the African people it would be a great help. Schools are established there, but Asians, Europeans and Africans are segregated and have their own forms of education. I believe that Britain would make a great mistake if it now handed over the country to the African community because the avowed oath of the Mau-Mau is to remove everybody but Africans from Africa. I am afraid the situation may develop into another Congo.

I was most interested in the water supplies. The greatest inland water way in the world, Lake Victoria, is located on the border of the Congo and Uganda, portion of it being in each country. About 13,000 square miles of the country is under this lake in Uganda and there are islands which are far bigger than Kangaroo Island on which people live. It is the head waters of the Nile. At a place near Jinja, the Owen Falls Dam has been established and it is a remarkable dam where hydro-electric power is made for Kampala and Entebbe, the two big towns in the country. Electricity is very cheap. The Government of Egypt is constantly sending people to check that Uganda does not hold back more than its quota of the water.

In that regard the position is not unlike that existing in Australia where we have much the same problem with the Snowy River scheme. We want to make sure that we receive our quota and we have a Government that is prepared to protect us and see that we receive our quota from the head waters. That is what Egypt is doing regarding the Owen Falls.

Agriculture in these countries is just reaching a point where, if given an opportunity, the countries will be among the world's leaders in this field. South Africa, as we know, is not in favour with these countries, which do not import anything from South Africa at present. However, cattle and sheep (of the type bred by the Hon. Mr. Hookings) are prominent and the cattle are of a high standard. I attended the Royal show at Nairobi for two days and had a wonderful opportunity to see that country's wares, but through political instability they have reached a stage where 12½ per cent of the European population has, within the last seven months, made application to the Trade Commissioner located in Kenya to come to Australia as farmers.

Coming closer home, our Agriculture Department is doing a good job. I was interested to receive a letter from one of the councils in my electorate stating that it viewed with some alarm the introduction of Noogoora Burr. I do not blame the council for being alarmed and the Government has seen fit to take some action. Noogoora Burr is similar to Californian Burr which exists on the Darling and down through the Murray areas. On August 11, 1960, the department gazetted regulations empowering inspectors to take action ensuring that sheep changing hands must be shorn within 14 days or slaughtered. I recently attended a big sale and saw 10 pens of sheep, which had come from New South Wales, sold. The inspector said that they were infested with burr and would be bought with that knowledge. That meant that they either had to be shorn or slaughtered within 14 days of purchase. I also saw other sheep and the firms concerned had a team picking burrs out of them. The men had four-gallon drums into which they tried to throw the burrs, but as the day was very windy many burrs were blown on to the ground. I am wondering whether we have gone far enough in tackling the burr. I should like the Agriculture Department to have another look at this and see whether we should not go as far as Western Australia and provide that

sheep are shorn before they are sent in. Otherwise, it will be futile to try to get rid of these burrs. Some people contend that the burr does not grow well in some parts of South Australia, but I am sure that there are a number of places where it will grow and become established. We have enough pests in the country already. I should like the department to have another look at the matter and do something about it. I support the Bill.

The Hon. Sir LYELL MCEWIN (Chief Secretary)—I thank honourable members for the attention they have given to this Bill, which has provided an opportunity for them to express opinions. It was rather noteworthy throughout the debate that much consideration was given to the economic conditions now existing. We were treated to a highlight by our delegate to the recent Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference (the Hon. Mr. Story), and we are grateful to him for bringing back such valuable information on his trip abroad. I think the Leader of the Opposition struck a somewhat pessimistic note on this occasion, more so than previously. He seemed to be suffering from hallucinations about leadership, and altogether his remarks seemed to be symptomatic of a condition of despondency. I agree with his inference that my Party has a particularly competent leader. We are all proud of our Premier because of his achievements over the years. I know that no-one has a greater appreciation of the value of and necessity for loyalty to a leader than Mr. Condon himself. For any leader to achieve anything, he must have loyal supporters. I rather think that it is lack of leadership which is worrying the honourable member and embarrassed him at the time he spoke, and that it was not wilful disparagement of the efforts of the Premier himself. While the honourable member was speaking I read from the press that the Federal Labor executive was proposing to take action against its Parliamentary political representatives if they did not obey the demands made from that quarter. I am very thankful that in the years I have filled Ministerial portfolios I have been able to take some part in Cabinet deliberations with the Premier without any outside interference. I think that is important for the success of any Government—for the Ministers to be in the position of using knowledge that is available to them and thus assisting in framing legislation.

Much of the debate has been addressed to the changed conditions affecting our economy

because of the fall in prices of primary products. I think that any prudent observer of the inflationary post-war trend would know that ultimately there would be of necessity a period of adjustment. The Government has been cognizant of these conditions for some time and has controlled the finances of the State in such a way as to enable the Treasurer to achieve a creditable performance and present balanced Budgets over a period of 22 years. The Government has been persistent in its efforts to maintain stable economic conditions in industries, both secondary and primary, and thus enable them to expand and survive. Export prices for primary products have been showing a downward trend for some time and this was climaxed this year by quite a serious fall in the price of wool that will have a considerable effect upon the amount of new money that will be distributed in the field of business. I have heard it said that wool production is no longer profitable, but I question whether that is the position. However, as has been suggested, where too much money has been paid for land there will be a difficult period, but when one compares prices today with those prevailing during the pre-war period and makes allowance for inflation it will be found that we are very close to the conditions that prevailed before the beginning of World War II. We have had the satisfaction, different from any previous experience, that during an extended period of prosperity we were fortunate enough to escape with but one severe drought and then find ourselves with a good season, which will assist us by providing an opportunity for adjustment. Prosperity is not a creator of efficiency, and I am confident that improvement will occur in production costs that will assist in an adjustment far better than any other means.

However, we must not, through indifference, permit a recurrence of conditions that applied in the 1930's. When I entered the Council in 1934 the country was in the throes of a depression, which necessitated a 25 per cent cut in salaries and all kinds of other unhappy experiences. Because of unemployment there was a need for legislation that I hope we shall never have to resort to again. At that time the highest price available at the seaboard to producers of wheat was 1s. 8d. a bushel as against a payable price at that time of 3s. 8d. Wool was then bringing 8d. a lb. as against what was considered a payable price of 1s. 6d., though higher prices were achieved after the war. At that time lambs were selling in the market for about 10s. a head, whereas the price

considered reasonably profitable was more like £1 to £1 10s. Following that experience we had the Farmers Assistance Act and the Debt Adjustment Act, which had the effect of ruining storekeepers. Someone has suggested that money is not readily available, but it was certainly not available then, and it was because the banks were unable to offer assistance that many storekeepers could not carry on, particularly on Eyre Peninsula, and ultimately they were forced out of business by the legislative action Parliament had to take. Later we had the Marginal Lands Act, which was introduced because of the effect of drought conditions. Much of our mallee land was then being developed and it was a case of rolling scrub and burning it, growing a crop, rolling again and then burning the shoots. Because of persistent re-sowing of crops ultimately the land drifted and became marginal land and holdings had to be increased to allow for extended rotation.

Later followed the Wheat Products Prices Act, which became known as the flour tax, and I remember that this was one of the first Bills to which I addressed myself in this Council. It was referred to by the Leader of the Opposition as a class tax. The object was not to make wheat production profitable, but to assist in some way to keep prices up to the cost of production. During that period we had such things as the Commonwealth acreage bounty, which further encouraged gambling and the sowing of crops in order that farmers could collect more income to keep their properties going. Altogether these palliatives did nothing to increase efficiency within the industry. Thank goodness that today we are not in that position. Those conditions are very fresh in my mind, because early in 1931 the Hill Government appointed a State Advisory Committee on Public Finance. That committee presented a report on agricultural conditions. An agricultural committee was also appointed to report on agricultural production and conditions of agricultural industries generally. The report of the committee was laid on the table of the Council on November 23, 1931, and was ordered to be printed. I commend that report to honourable members, because it indicated the similarity of circumstances created during the inflationary period after World War I and showed what happens when there is a sudden price fall. The cost factor is the only one which can be taken into consideration. The position was established that costs were the main problem associated with production when an export commodity was

being dealt with. I will quote one portion of the report. It is as follows:—

According to Mr. Justice Powers, if the Arbitration Court fixed wages which an industry could not afford to pay, this industry would have recourse to the Tariff Board, which has been created by the Federal Parliament to make necessary recommendations for the granting of whatever protection was necessary. This system has been made possible by the infliction of penalties on unsheltered export industries, a great proportion of which obviously has no refuge such as the Tariff Board from which to seek protection since the products have to be exported and sold at world parity. Thus, the high protectionist policy of Australia has benefited and fostered protected industries at the expense of export industries

That is all I want to quote from the report.

Mr. W. J. Young, the chairman of the Advisory Committee on Public Finance, commended the report for the consideration of everybody, particularly members of Parliament, because it was a valuable piece of information. The legislative action was confined at the time to farmers' relief; however, the problem persisted and in 1932 the Government appointed the Paine committee to investigate matters of debt adjustment, and as a result, the Debt Adjustment Act was passed by Parliament. The Paine committee was representative, and consisted of His Honor Herbert Kingsley Paine (chairman), Reginald Robert Stuckey (Under Treasurer), Edgar Layton Bean (Parliamentary Draftsman), and Edgar John Field (Director of Lands), as Government representatives; farmers' representatives were James Nairn of Mallala, Frank Harry Lock of Whyte Yarcowie and myself from Hart; the representative of the Adelaide Chamber of Commerce was Stanley McGregor Reid; the representative of the Chamber of Manufactures was William Johnston Barker; the representative of the Stockowners' Association was Waldemar Gaskell Hawkes; and the representative of the Associated Banks was Edmund Harry Matthews. It presented a report, and there was one interesting reference because it came back to the cost factor. It said:—

Wages—The committee considers that wages generally react sympathetically with tariff duties, and thus affect the cost to the farmer of practically all his plant and working materials.

Then the report referred to interest rates. All this indicates that if an inflationary trend continues, so the purchasing power becomes affected. To buy goods at higher prices there must be corresponding increases in wages. When that continues indefinitely we get into a position like they have had in other countries

where the purchasing power became practically nil. I will not refer to all the conclusions in the report, because they are now history. I just mention this one matter to show that if the trend continues we finish ultimately with disaster to everybody, unless we take cognizance of it and do what we can to avoid it. Later, when speaking on the Wheat Products Prices Bill I quoted another section of the report of the Agricultural Settlement Committee, as follows:—

If there is ever to be a policy of Government which should be continuous, whatever party might be in power, it should be one directed to the development of the agricultural resources of the country, one which will tend to make agriculture and stockraising permanent, productive and profitable industries, and one which aims at encouraging the man on the land to become as efficient as possible. A continuous agricultural policy for the State could be maintained by the constitution within Parliament of a permanent agricultural standing committee comprised of members of both Houses of the legislature. The principal functions of this committee would be to periodically investigate the agricultural industry of this State, recommend the directions in which improvements in agricultural production could be brought about, and to keep Parliament apprized of all things affecting the welfare of the agriculture of the State. Some of the outstanding points requiring the attention of such a committee at the present time are:—(1) Reduction of costs of production; (2) Intensive production from existing settlements, rather than opening up more scrub lands; (3) Diversification of production and developing export markets for agricultural products; (4) Draining the South-East; (5) Encouraging research work in agriculture; (6) Improving the facilities for agricultural education and extension work; (7) Reducing railway freights on articles which increase agricultural production and agricultural produce; (8) Advancing educational facilities for country children.

It will be seen that all the recommendations of the committee have been honoured during the life of the present Government. Under the Prices Act it has helped to hold down costs of production. There has been a direct saving, as a result of action by the Prices Department, of about £750,000 in the cost of superphosphate. There have been considerable savings in connection with fuel, because of care taken about fuel prices. There has been the development of the pyrites industry in order to provide the sulphuric acid requirements when we were threatened with high prices and a lack of brimstone supplies from overseas. Because of this we have been able to make superphosphate available at reasonable prices.

The Hon. L. H. Densley—There is a Commonwealth subsidy on acid.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—Yes. There has been assistance in connection with buildings and tools, and a guarantee and other help were given to install bulk installations for the handling of wheat. All this has been done in order to try to maintain costs at a reasonable level in our export industries. I heard prices of land mentioned in this debate, and it was said that they were one reason for our difficulties. However, for a period after the war there were controls of land sales, and if they had not been so speedily removed we would perhaps be in a better position than we are. People with an over-supply of money found an opportunity to invest it in land. The Government has done all it can to prevent a recurrence of the unhappy conditions that we had after the inflationary period that followed World War I. Since World War II a shortage of goods has brought about much spending and high costs, and it may be necessary to reassess our ideas about many things. The achievements here outlined have much to commend them in contrast to the palliatives of the 1930's, and have already shown that they are justified. I thank members for their interest in this Appropriation Bill.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 1).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 18. Page 1375.)

The Hon. F. J. POTTER (Central No. 2)—Last year I spoke for the first time on this Bill and was severely taken to task by the Chief Secretary because of what I said.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—Have you changed your mind since?

The Hon. F. J. POTTER—I have not changed my mind. It may be that in my fresh enthusiasm I made a somewhat flamboyant speech, to which obviously some exception was taken. This time I intend to speak more soberly, perhaps even a little more sensibly, than I did then.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—If you want to be heard you have to kick up a noise.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER—I have found that is so. If the Minister had perhaps cut aside some of the overtones in my speech and reached the pith of some of my points, I think he would have discovered that I made four fairly telling points. I still think the four points are relevant and that they apply today as much as they ever did. The first point was that the longer we have price control the

harder it is to get rid of it; secondly, that what is in operation today is not strictly and properly price control, but profit control; thirdly, that in our conception of how our economic laws should work in our form of political philosophy—and I am speaking as a Liberal member—the market should be as far as possible free to let the normal economic factors work; and fourthly, that cartel type agreements should be dealt with by proper legislation and not attempted to be dealt with under the provisions of this Act. Dealing with the first point, we have had this Act for a long time and each year it is produced to us for a further 12 months' extension. The Act is now being used for purposes which are quite alien to those for which it was originally intended so that I for one cannot see how the Government can ever get rid of it. I have spoken to honourable members and Ministers

The Hon. C. D. Rowe—Which Ministers?

The Hon. F. J. POTTER—I have mentioned this to the Premier himself and I asked him how he could ever hope to get rid of this legislation, and frankly, I have not received any answer at all. Therefore, I think if that is the situation, and let us assume for a moment that it is, we must look forward to this Act being produced to us year after year for a 12 monthly extension, virtually a permanent thing grafted upon our Statutes. We should therefore look at it in a much different light from what we are asked to do because it seems to me beyond doubt that the provisions of this Act are being used for certain conditions which exist in the country's economy today, but which can only be dealt with by legislating in a different way. If that is the situation, then the present Prices Act is completely outmoded and it will never get my support.

The second point I made last year was that the operation of this Act is not strictly price control but profit control. I know that this particular assertion has been made, not only by myself but by many people, over recent years and more vehemently in recent months, and I know that Ministers and the Premier himself on private and public platforms have vociferously denied that it is profit control, but I have yet to be given any convincing reason why this is not so. Where because of increases in costs the Prices Commissioner himself adjusts prices or acquiesces in a rise when the particular goods are not subject directly to price control—then I cannot see how that is not

indirect profit control. If we continue to have allowances made in the agreed prices because of increases in the cost of production and those increases are the only ones passed on that must indirectly be profit control. I have had no answer at all to that.

The Hon. E. H. Edmonds—The Commissioner has often permitted increases.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER—Yes, because of greater costs of production but, over any length of time, that must mean an indirect attack on the percentage of profit involved in the goods. If one is merely allowed to pass on increased costs of production the ratio of profit is reduced. Let us not get away from that fact because it is the situation. A small amount of mental arithmetic would soon show that.

The third point I made last time was that in our conception a market should be a free market and it always was until this Act came into operation. In future, we have to make sure we have a free market. This seems to me to be the real heart of the problem we have to face. One of our greatest problems is the problem which is linked with the fourth matter I dealt with last year and it is the matter of price fixing by a cartel type of agreement or what is more popularly called, in other spheres, a restrictive trade practice. It is obvious that by direct or indirect means the Government has come up against this problem of restrictive trade practices and threatens through the operation of this Act to control such agreements. This Act should not be so used and I shall suggest an alternative in a moment.

We all know that restrictive trade agreements are in operation and they take the form primarily of a directive by manufacturers and distributors that the products are not to be sold below a certain fixed price and if any are sold below the fixed retail price supplies will no longer reach the distributor. Not only will the supplies from a particular manufacturer be stopped, but supplies from other manufacturers will be cut off. This is a feature of our economy which is undesirable and it is a matter which the Commonwealth Government has endeavoured to remedy. For some time it has been mooted that the Commonwealth Attorney-General is to introduce a Bill to deal with cartel agreements or restrictive trade practices. I and many people in the community would welcome that Bill. I doubt whether the introduction of such a Bill by the Commonwealth would be a complete answer to the problem because fairly severe

Constitutional difficulties are involved which would leave some ragged holes in the Bill. If anything is to be done to legislate against restrictive trade practices it should be done by a joint Commonwealth-State move and there is no reason why, if the Commonwealth is prepared to tackle this problem, the individual State Governments should not be prepared to deal with it. It has been done overseas.

In 1956 the Conservative Government in England enacted the Restrictive Trade Practices Act and anybody who reads the weekly and monthly law reports of the English courts will know that it is no dead letter. It works well in England and it has done substantial justice to all sections of the community in that country. None of us in this Chamber or in another place should be afraid of saying we would be ready to support or examine carefully such legislation if it were introduced. We have all had the experience of seeing many commodities, where competition is stifled, offered at exactly the same price in various shops. I could give a list of articles as long as my arm where the price to the retail customer is the same because it has been fixed in the first instance by the supplier or the distributor.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—That went on long before price-fixing was introduced.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER—It may, in some sense, be said to be a problem that is always with us, but there is no question that in the last 10 years it has spread like a bush fire and it is obviously a problem the Government has to face. The Government is trying indirectly to fiddle with this problem and to deal with it by backdoor methods through the operation of the Prices Act. If for no other reason, and there are ample other reasons that I do not intend detailing today, than to try to persuade the Government it should replace this legislation by some other legislation dealing with restrictive trade practices to restore freedom of competition in the market, honourable members ought to vote against an extension of this legislation.

We should try to establish proper democratic control. Members should examine the English legislation. It is not an easy matter to explain in a brief second reading speech because it is an involved Act in its phraseology although its operation is fairly simple. It provides for the establishment of a restrictive trade practices court, and that is something that could be introduced here if, say, the Industrial Court were given jurisdiction. That is a

matter which, overall, would work at a minimum cost. There would be no need to set up a comprehensive department costing £60,000 a year, which is the amount now spent on the Prices Department, and the results achieved would be much better. That would be hitting at the big problem, and not at the small man. It would not be magnifying the iniquity of small lapses as far as prices are concerned, but it would be attempting to hit at the big factors.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin—The Prices Department assists many manufacturers.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER—It is difficult to get an analysis of how the £60,000 is spent. What I am saying is that the department is costly to run. I do not know in what manner the Prices Department assists industries, but that may be interesting to know. I assume most of the money is spent in the administration of prices. Basically the English legislation deals with the necessity to register a restrictive trade agreement. That agreement can be compulsorily registered, and once it is registered it can be overlooked by the court and declared to be contrary to the interests of the public, and disallowed.

The Hon. E. H. Edmonds—It will have to be policed.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER—There is no question of policing here. It is an extremely interesting Act. Proceedings may be instituted by the court on information supplied and persons may be requested to give evidence on oath as to any restrictive trade practices. It is extremely good legislation and it would never have been introduced by the English Government unless there were proper safeguards for the protection of all persons engaged in business and trade. That is a matter which the Government should seriously consider, and if it were prepared to tackle the problem of restrictive trade agreements, which is the real problem so far as injustices to the consuming public are concerned, we could tip this prices legislation overboard because it is doing nothing but perpetuating injustices to many honest people who are subject to this indirect form of control that is contrary to the ideas and political faith of members on this side of the Council.

I feel that the time has arrived when the prices legislation should be allowed to lapse. I am not prepared to support it this year, nor in its present form on any other occasion. I say openly that I would look carefully at any legislation the Government introduced dealing with restrictive trade practices, as we

cannot get rid of such practices unless something is done. Last year I talked about the possibility of using the Fair Prices Act. Strangely enough, some attempt was made to use it in the period that has intervened in regard to the price of milk. However, it did not prove successful and it appears from what happened in that instance that no satisfactory method could be expected from the operation of that Act. I intend to vote against the second reading and hope that the Government will seriously consider the points I have presented.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY secured the adjournment of the debate.

BUSH FIRES BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 25. Page 1508.)

The Hon. R. R. WILSON (Northern)—The Bill aims to consolidate the Bush Fires Act, repeals 12 amending Acts, and has 107 clauses. I believe that the Bill will do much good, create a better understanding, and result in the avoidance of much of the criticism now heard. The revision committee mentioned in the second reading speech of the Minister includes Mr. Kerr (Director of Emergency Fire Services), Mr. Rush (Secretary, Minister of Agriculture), Mr. Bednall (chairman of the Bush Fires Advisory Board), who is also Conservator of Forests, and Mr. Botting (Senior Clerk, Minister of Agriculture's Department). I understand from Mr. Kerr that Sir Edgar Bean has taken a very active part in drafting the Bill. We are all aware of Sir Edgar's outstanding ability. I am told that three months was required in the preparation of the Bill, that many meetings were held, and that it was not until Sir Edgar was satisfied that the measure came before Parliament. The Emergency Fire Services are well organized. They have an excellent standard of equipment, and the young men engaged in this work are all volunteers who take a deep interest in the service. The Bill provides for fire ban days. This provision has been well received in many parts of the State, particularly on Eyre Peninsula. This has been a most contentious matter when it is remembered that conditions existing at the place where the temperature is recorded are often different from those in far away parts of the State.

Eyre Peninsula is largely virgin country. On a visit there last week I found that up to 500 acres a day was being cleared. Satisfactory clearing depends on a good burn, and

often owners of land have been frustrated because of ban days, thus being prevented from getting a satisfactory burn, which is so important. As the Hon. Mr. Hookings said, the Bill will give councils much better control in fighting bush fires. These authorities have local knowledge of conditions, know the people, and are aware of the dangers of fire. No alteration has been made in the provisions relating to the burning of stubble and pastures.

It is deplorable that so many people whose properties are endangered provide no fire breaks. During the whole of my trip last week I do not suppose that more than two or three per cent of the properties I saw were provided with breaks. It is hard to understand this, because today with tractors and disc implements no great effort is required to make a break compared with the days when horses were used. I saw houses and outbuildings surrounded by high grass. What chance would there be if a fire broke out? I saw miles and miles of grass higher than the fences, and there would be no chance of stopping an outbreak because no protection had been provided. I maintain that compensation should not be paid to those people who do not look after themselves. The provision of fire breaks should be compulsory, as in some of the other States, and I should like provision for this to be included in the Bill. In order for a person to burn scrub he must give 48 hours' notice. Previously some weeks' notice had to be given. There is no alteration in the provision relating to the width of breaks, except that along roads the distance is reduced from 15ft. to 12ft. and for pasture the clearance of 12ft. is reduced to 6ft. if it is ploughed.

The authority of fire controllers is provided for in the Bill, and these personnel are given powers similar to those of a policeman in the event of an outbreak of fire. They have the power to break into a building on a property after consultation, if possible, with the owner; they have power to remove any inflammable material and authority to take possession wholly or partially of any buildings, fencing or structures. I have carried out the duties of a fire controller for a number of years, and often I did not know what my authority was, including whether I had the right to instruct or to demand that a break should be made, or that burning back could be undertaken, but the Bill clarifies that position. The throwing of cigarette butts from motor cars seems to have become a habit. Such a practice should be prevented all the year round and not only during the prohibited period. It

would be a great advantage if people got the habit of using ash trays in cars instead of throwing butts out of the window. It is proposed that councils shall have power to prohibit burning off on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. The burning of lime and charcoal is exempt.

The payment of compensation to those injured in a fire is of vital importance. No distinction is made between people who are self-employed and employees. Previously, there was a distinction. Under the Bill it will be compulsory for councils to take out workmen's compensation. Therefore, voluntary firefighters will be assured that they have some protection in this regard. The proposed advisory committee will consist of nine members, three of whom will be nominated by the Conservator of Forests, one by the Police Commissioner and one by the Railways Commissioner. Our railways are not nearly the danger they have been, because of the introduction of diesel engines. In the days of steam trains the danger of fire was always present. I support the Bill, feeling sure that it will result in a better understanding of the position.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY (Southern)—I also express my appreciation of this legislation. I have been closely associated with district council conferences over a period of 25 years, and at these conferences possibly most of the time was taken up in discussing the Bush Fires Act. However, it was rather unusual to find anyone who had a reasonable knowledge of its provisions. The ramifications of this legislation will be increased under the Bill. Provision has been made for many things for which country people have asked, fought for, and pleaded for over the years. I refer particularly to compensation to fire control officers and those who are injured. I support the maintenance of an advisory committee that will have bush fire matters under consideration at all times and be able to supply information required by the Minister. There was a time when Government money made available to district councils for fire-fighting equipment was regarded as a gift, but later insurance people came under the scheme and now there is provision for the payment of subsidies to fire-fighting bodies.

Another matter that has caused much thought over the years is the appointment of fire control officers. The fire menace is increasing tremendously in my area, and I think in most parts of the State. Since top dressing has become the normal practice in farming the

vulnerability of the countryside to bush fires is greater than ever, and consequently the difficulties of extinguishing fires are greater. I said previously that individual land holders can provide one form of protection against bush fires. For his own protection it is good policy for a landholder to plough fire breaks around his paddock. In these days of mowers and balers there is not much loss in providing such effective fire breaks. There was a period when great emphasis was placed on firefighting equipment. Particularly in the South-East we have a fine array of equipment for fighting bush fires but I point out that losses are always possible, even when efficient machinery is used. I am pleased that the Act has been consolidated because people will be able to understand it better than they did previously. One effective way to control bush fires is a proper understanding of the legislation.

There was much opposition in the South-East to the appointment of Forestry Board employees from other parts of the State to be fire control officers. I understood that that had been eliminated from the Act. There can be no better fire control officer than the forestry officer who has been properly trained in the area. I am not sure that it would not be desirable to amend the Act so that only a forestry employee trained in the area is appointed as fire control officer. It has been said that some people at a bush fire are a menace rather than a help. When I say that I do not include Forestry Department officers. Fire control officers need help in the fighting of bush fires. I come from the Tatiara district where there was never enough fire control officers. The Act has been altered from time to time and now the number of officers that can be appointed by a council is 15. In special circumstances an additional number can be appointed, and on top of that the Minister can appoint others. Consequently there should be no excuse for having insufficient fire control officers in country areas. The proposal to have a reciprocating authority apply in the South-East, to which Victorian forests are adjacent, is a good one. Where the circumstances are favourable, it is a good move to have reciprocation.

There has been much opposition to announcements over the air of days when a total prohibition applies on fires. I have not supported that entirely, because although the information may be helpful to people in dry areas it may be raining in other areas. I think the latest position will prove better than the position

we had in earlier days. In the South-East there is a scarcity of ploughed fire-breaks, and I think it is due to the trend in affairs. When we have a bush fire relief is frequently given to the sufferers, and it is people who have not properly protected their blocks or insured adequately that get the relief. The spirit throughout the country is indicated when everybody turns out to fight a fire. The storekeeper, the hotelkeeper or the ordinary worker feels that it is his duty to help put out a fire, and it is that spirit that has really been responsible for keeping the fire menace down to a low level. Motorists with caravans go into camping areas and light fires. They create a menace and more care will have to be taken in this matter.

It is a wise move to have an advisory committee. I think that such a competent committee will be happy to receive information from country people about bush fire matters. It will not be an autoeratic body to say that this and that must be done. I think the advisory committee will prove helpful also in the advice it tenders to the Minister and to councils. The advent of Mr. Kerr has meant increased education in the control of fires. I commend him for the work that he is doing. I will not speak about each clause in the Bill, but content myself with these few remarks on general matters. I have much pleasure in supporting the measure.

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

MENTAL HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 25. Page 1509.)

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Leader of the Opposition)—This Bill repeals section 20 of the Mental Health Act. It was enacted in 1935 when medical officers lived in houses in the grounds of institutions. There would be very few, if any, medical officers who do that now. Each officer is entitled to six months' leave after five years' continuous service. Section 20 states:—

Every superintendent, deputy superintendent or other medical officer of an institution who resides in the institution shall in lieu of any claim for long leave of absence under any Act relating to the Public Service be entitled to and shall take six months' leave of absence on full salary after each period of five years' continuous service by him whilst in residence in any institution or institutions.

The position of medical officers today is much different from what it was when this legislation

was first introduced. In 1959 the number of beds available for mentally ill and mentally handicapped patients, if accommodation at Minda Home is included, was about 3,200. If the figure of four beds for each 1,000 of population for mentally ill patients and one bed for each 1,000 of population for mentally handicapped patients be accepted as a reasonable minimum, the conclusion is that South Australia, in terms of present population, is short of 800 beds for patients in both categories. The number of patients in our mental institutions for each 1,000 of population is falling. I have previously spoken about the need for the Government to do something for alcoholics. In some States they are placed in portions of the institutions available for people suffering from mental illness, but that is not so in South Australia. Of course, it is possible for a person to go voluntarily to either the Northfield or Enfield institution. I said earlier that many of these alcoholics are to be pitied more than blamed. Placing them in gaol for three weeks or so because of drunkenness does not meet the position. The Government should consider setting aside portions of our institutions where these unfortunate alcoholics can be treated and helped back into the community as good citizens.

South Australia's population is steadily increasing, but the number of beds available for mentally ill people has not increased in proportion. In mental hospitals a ratio of at least one medical officer for each 100 patients, in addition to the superintendent and his deputy, would seem to be a conservative estimate. In this respect the number on the medical staff at our Parkside and Northfield mental hospitals falls far below the desirable minimum. In the Public Service officers who have served for 10 years are entitled to long service leave, but this Bill provides for a departure from that and I think it is justified. Members of the medical profession are called upon to perform their duties at all hours of the day and night, whereas ordinary workmen finish at the end of their eight hours. Medical officers should receive more consideration.

I regret that Dr. H. M. Birch will soon be leaving the Public Service because of retirement. He is a man who has done wonders in our mental hospitals, and let us hope that his successor will also render valuable service to this State. The Bill is a good one and will give just consideration to men who are entitled to it. I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

HAWKERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It amends section 20 of the Hawkers Act, 1934-1948, in two ways. Section 20 as it now stands empowers a local governing body to make by-laws for the licensing as hawkers of persons who do not usually reside or carry on business within its area. It has been decided that a visiting trader who makes it a regular practice to visit the same town does not come within the scope of this provision because such a person is one who can be said usually to carry on business within the area. The object of section 20 was to give some measure of protection to local traders and it will be seen from what I have said that it does not achieve that object effectively. Paragraph (a) of subclause (1) of clause 3 of the present Bill will substitute the word "continuously" for the word "usually" and will afford some measure of protection to local traders as well as some measure of control to local governing bodies.

The second amendment is designed to get over what appears to have been a mistake when the Act was amended in 1948 when section 20 was last amended. By the amendment all of the words in section 20 after the fifth line were struck out including the final paragraph empowering by-laws to fix fees and fines. Apparently the final portion of section 20 was overlooked when the amendment was made. Paragraph (b) of subclause (1) of clause 3 of the present Bill accordingly reinstates the paragraph and subclause (2) makes the reinstatement retrospective to 1948. I commend the Bill to honourable members.

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

BIRTHS AND DEATHS REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the House of Assembly without amendment.

HIGHWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the House of Assembly without amendment.

POLICE PENSIONS ACT AMENDMENT
BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 25. Page 1510.)

The Hon. A. J. SHARD (Central No. 1)—
I support this Bill which, broadly speaking, increases the pension rate for police officers by an amount of approximately 12½ per cent with a corresponding increase in contribution. This Bill has been introduced as the result of a report by the Public Actuary, and it has been accepted by the Police Officers Association. It is pleasing to note that an amending Bill of this nature can be brought about by mutual agreement between the parties. That particularly pleases me because I believe in round-table conferences. I know of no section of the public service that deserves adequate pension provisions more than the police force does. South Australia is singularly fortunate in having such a fine body of men who perform their duties with great credit to the State and to themselves. Whether one approaches a constable in the street or an inspector at headquarters, courtesy is shown and information is given in a ready manner. I pay a tribute to the men who follow that arduous occupation. I support the Bill because it is based on a report by the Public Actuary and is agreed to by the Police Association.

Clause 3 provides that the Act shall come into force on a day to be fixed by the Governor by proclamation. I am not happy about that clause because the Act should be brought into force by regulation which would enable Parliament to exercise its rights and would not mean an extra minute's delay. Why the Government will insist on proclamation rather than regulation is beyond me. If the Government's policy is sound there is no reason why Parliament should not have the power to do these things by regulation, but a habit seems to be growing by which everything possible is done by proclamation. I especially wanted to say something about that aspect because, unless we keep hammering at it, we shall find more Acts being brought into operation by proclamation instead of by regulation. I hope there will be no undue delay in the proclamation of the Act because the benefits contained in it extend beyond present-day members of the police force to pensioners whose incomes have been affected by the falling value of money.

Clause 5 provides that police officers reaching the retiring age may have the right to accept a pension of £480 a year or, if an officer, by notice in writing given to the Public Actuary within 28 days after the date of his retirement so elects he may receive a pension of £580 a year until he reaches the age of 65 years and thereafter a pension of £420 a year. That clause is fair. An officer who is compelled to retire at 60 has greater needs between the ages of 60 and 65 than he would normally have after reaching the age of 65. Another point is that the lower rate, after he has reached the age of 65, may enable him to receive a pension from other sources, particularly as the means test has been liberalized. People who have paid for superannuation should not be entirely debarred from collecting an age pension.

I give the Government credit for including clause 9, which represents a humane action to help police officers who run up against bad times. I do not know if honourable members have read the clause, but it is a very good one, and at the risk of wearying the Council I shall read it in full so that members may have full knowledge of it. The clause provides:—

The following sections are enacted and inserted in the principal Act after section 30B thereof—

30c. (1) The amount of any cash payment (other than a refund of contributions or of twice the amount of contributions) or of any limit of a cash payment and the rate of any pension payable pursuant to this Act to a member of the force who at the time of his retirement holds a rank not lower than that of Superintendent and who retires from the force after the day of commencement of the Police Pensions Act Amendment Act, 1960, and the rate of pension and cash payment (if any) payable to the widow of a member of the force who at the time of his death or retirement held a rank not lower than that of Superintendent and who on or after the said day of commencement retired from the force or dies while still a member of the force shall be the amounts or rates fixed by the other provisions of this Act and in addition a proportion of such amounts or rates varying with the rank of the officer in accordance with the following table:—

Salary or rank.	Proportion.
1. Superintendent ..	Thirteen-twentieths.
2. Deputy Commissioner	Seventeen-twentieths.
3. Commissioner . . .	Nine-tenths.

(2) If the Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner retires from the force after the commencement of the Police Pensions Act Amendment Act, 1960, and after attaining the age of sixty years, the pension payable to

him under this Act shall be in accordance with the following table:—

Age at retirement.	Pension payable to the Deputy Commissioner. £ per annum.	Pension payable to the Commissioner. £ per annum.
Over 60 and under 61	888	912
Over 61 and under 62	968	995
Over 62 and under 63	1,048	1,077
Over 63 and under 64	1,128	1,160
Over 64 and under 65	1,208	1,242
Over 65	1,288	1,325

(3) If the Commissioner or the Deputy Commissioner dies after attaining the age of sixty years and after the commencement of the Police Pensions Act Amendment Act, 1960 and while in office, the pension payable to his widow shall be one-half of the pension to which he would have been entitled had he retired on the day of his death.

(4) If a pensioner who had formerly held office as Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner and had retired after attaining the age of sixty dies after the said commencement, the pension payable to his widow shall be one-half of the pension being paid to him at the time of his death.

30d. If the Commissioner of Police certifies to the Public Actuary that a member of the force holding a rank not lower than that of sergeant has at his own request and on the grounds of ill-health been reduced to a lower rank, that member shall be entitled to receive a cash payment certified by the Public Actuary to be the surrender value of the difference between the total contributions paid by that member and the total contributions which that member would have paid if he had not at any time held a rank higher than such lower rank: Provided that if any such member has at the time of such reduction in rank attained the age of fifty years and has held the higher rank for a period of at least five years that member may, by notice in writing given to the Public Actuary within thirty days after such reduction in rank, elect to continue to pay contributions at the rate paid by him before such reduction and in that event that member shall for the purposes of section 30c be deemed to hold at the time of his retirement or death the rank held by him immediately prior to such reduction.

That clause provides that even if an officer has dropped back to a lower rank he still has the right to elect to pay the higher contribution he was paying before his unfortunate illness or disability. This is a good clause and adds to the encouragement given to police officers above the rank of sergeant to protect themselves by adequate superannuation at the time of retirement.

I appreciate the worth of clause 10 and give credit to the people responsible for it. It is a good clause because it increases by 12½ per cent the rate paid to people who are

already pensioners at the commencement of the Act. They are entitled to the increase without further contribution. This provision is particularly appreciated because the falling value of money has decreased the value of superannuation units taken out by officers who have paid money into the scheme for many years to obtain security in retirement. Such people have found it difficult to carry on. I hope the Government will continue along such reasonable lines when dealing with other pensioners under its control. All in all, this is a very good Bill, and it is pleasing that the people concerned are happy with it. It gives me great pleasure to support the second reading.

The Hon. A. C. HOOKINGS (Southern)—I wish to add a few words in support of the measure, and particularly following the Hon. Mr. Shard's statement about the trust and high esteem in which police officers are held. Every responsible person in South Australia is proud of our police force, and I take this opportunity of expressing what I am sure is our sincerest appreciation of our excellent police force. The Mount Gambier Centenary Show was held last week in excellent weather, and the mounted police and the police band attended. I would like the Chief Secretary to know and to convey to the Commissioner the appreciation of the people of Mount Gambier for the appearance of those members of the police force, not only for the way the horses performed and for the way in which the band played, but for the general way they assisted at the show. I am sure that the appearance of members of those police force units in an area so far from Adelaide was appreciated, and I hope that type of visit may be arranged in other areas in South Australia in the future. I understand that the Commissioner is overseas at the present time, and I trust he will be granted a safe return and that the extra knowledge he may bring back to this State may assist the police force to rise to even higher esteem than that in which it is held at the present time.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

WATER FRONTAGES REPEAL BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 25. Page 1510.)

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Leader of the Opposition)—I cannot remember any Bill being introduced into Parliament with such a short explanation of why it should be

passed. The second reading explanation was contained in only 12 lines. I am not objecting to that, but point out that this is a new departure. In the case of many other Bills introduced we are given a lengthy explanation.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill—It is not a long Bill.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—But it is an important one. When legislation has been on the Statute Book for many years, we should not pass its repeal over lightly. This Bill repeals three Acts. The first was passed 74 years ago, the second 58 years ago, and the third 50 years ago. In the early days wharves were privately owned and the main purpose of the legislation was to prevent the erection of structures on the bed of the Port River or of the canal which might unduly restrict navigation. The Harbors Act was enacted in 1913. Anyone who knows Port Adelaide is aware of the improvements that have been made since the South Australian Harbors Board was established in 1913 and took over control of the wharves.

The canal in question is centrally situated and I hope that before long a road will be built over this canal, which has been gradually filled in. This will provide another outlet and relieve traffic on the Birkenhead and Jervis Bridges. Years ago, when the private companies were operating, the canal was very busy. Produce used to be carted in barges down this canal and loaded on overseas ships. It was a hive of industry. When the Harbors Board took over control, some of this work was transferred elsewhere.

Let us examine the three earlier Acts. The first was an Act to fix and define the water frontages of portion of section 2112 in the Hundred of Port Adelaide. Section 2 dealt with parts of the beds of the river and the canal that were vested in the Canal Company Limited. Other sections in the Act related to parts of company property that were to become parts of the public waterway, boundaries were defined, and provision was made for the company to deepen the new course of the waterway and sheet-pile the banks. This measure was assented to on November 30, 1913. Another Act, which was assented to on November 17, 1886, fixed the boundaries of the water frontage and provided for slips to be removed. This Bill referred to Fletcher's Slip and the waters of the Gawler Reach and Hawker's Creek. The third Act was assented to on November 13, 1902, and dealt with the boundaries of the water

frontage situated in the hundred of Port Adelaide and abutting on the Gawler Reach and Hindmarsh Reach, Port Adelaide. These three measures gave the company certain rights.

A Royal Commission was appointed to deal with wharves and water frontages and its report was ordered to be printed on November 22, 1911. The Hon. F. S. Wallis, M.L.C., was then Chief Secretary. The members of that Commission were the Hons. J. Verran, M.L.C., John Bice, M.L.C., E. L. W. Klauer, M.L.C., B. A. Moulden, M.L.C., and Messrs. W. J. C. Cole, M.P., Ivor MacGillivray, M.P., and J. E. Moseley, M.P. It was appointed on February 2, 1911. This was the third Wharves Commission that had been appointed.

Since the wharves have been taken over by the Harbors Board great improvements have been provided. For years there had been talk of wharf acquisition, with the result that they were allowed to get in disrepair, and it cost the Government a considerable amount when they were taken over. The report of the Royal Commission was unanimous. In 1880 a resolution was carried in the House of Assembly that the Government should acquire all wharves and water frontages at sea ports. At that time there was a Marine Board in South Australia. In making its recommendation for the Government to take over the wharves, the commission was guided by provisions already existing in the other States. In 1889 the Government of New South Wales resumed certain frontages at Woolloomooloo and Circular Quay. The Harbors Trust of Victoria was constituted in 1876. The Royal Commission's recommendation was largely on the lines of what was operating in the other States.

The unimproved value of the wharves as assessed by the Port Adelaide Corporation in 1911 was just under £2,000,000. The English and Australian Copper Company valued its property at £105,000, the Adelaide Steam Tug Company valued its property at £10,000, John Darling & Company valued its property at £100,000, the property of S. Jenkins was valued at £17,500, and the Canal Company's property was valued at £136,000. The Port Adelaide Dock Company, the Adelaide Steamship Company, the South Australian Company and the Birkenhead Wharf Company valued their properties in all at £1,484,000. Those figures are what the Government was asked to pay in taking over the wharves. The wharves at Port Adelaide today

are equal to any wharves in Australia. Wonderful improvements have been made since they were taken over by the Harbors Board.

On several occasions I have referred to the loss of revenue by the Port Adelaide Corporation since the transfer of the wharves to the Harbors Board. When this took place the Bill then under discussion proposed that compensation amounting to £20,000 should be paid to the corporation, and be spread over five years. Since the wharves have been taken over, Port Adelaide council rates have been increased by up to 93 per cent. At the time of acquisition the corporation claimed £243,700, but received only £20,000. Since then the corporation has lost in rates about £400,000. It is true that it has sublet some premises, but the return from that source has not been great. The ratepayers have been called upon to pay extra rates. This has applied not only to Port Adelaide, but also to Port Pirie, Wallaroo and Port Lincoln, where Government property is not rateable. This has been a hardship to the local councils, which have been called upon to make up the deficiency by increasing rates. It can be truly said that the Harbors Board has provided greatly improved conditions at Port Adelaide and we should be satisfied with what has been done. I support the second reading.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY (Central No. 2)—I also support the second reading. It is true, as the Hon. Mr. Condon said, that the speech of the Chief Secretary in explaining the Bill was very short. The Bill repeals three Acts which have served their purpose and are no longer of any use on the Statute Book. Any legislation that reaches such a stage should be repealed. Mr. Condon gave the history of the three previous Acts and their effect upon the development of Port Adelaide. That indicated that even 70 years ago trouble was taken to define the limits and boundaries of the areas covered by the legislation. The Harbors Board has taken over all the obligations involved in those Acts and has done an excellent job. It is time that the Acts were repealed.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Attorney-General)—I am sorry if the Leader of the Opposition felt that the second reading explanation was not as long or as full as it might have been. I am indebted to him for the work he has done in putting information before the Chamber, and I thank him for his co-operation.

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

COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Consideration in Committee of the House of Assembly's amendments:

No. 1. Page 2, line 11 (clause 5)—After "Part XII" insert "and a corporation that is by proclamation declared to be a company for the purposes of this Part."

No. 2. Page 8, line 4 (clause 5)—After "interests in" insert "or arising out of an investment in".

No. 3. Page 10, line 4 (clause 5)—Strike out "are" and insert in lieu thereof "or on such other day as may be approved by the Registrar, were".

Amendment No. 1.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Attorney-General)—Under new section 114f no person except a company or a duly authorized agent of a company will be permitted to issue or offer to the public for subscription or purchase in this State any interest. A company has been defined for the purposes of a new Part IIIa, inserted by clause 5, as a public company or a corporation that is a public company under the law of a proclaimed State and registered under Part XII. Thus, a public company incorporated in a proclaimed State and registered in this State as a foreign company would be able to issue or offer interests in this State. But, although the other States and the Commonwealth have indicated their intention to introduce similar legislation corresponding with Part IIIa, it would not be expedient to declare any other State or Territory of the Commonwealth a proclaimed State for the purposes of this Part until such legislation had been passed in such State or Territory. This would have the effect of preventing a reputable company, though incorporated as a public company in another State and registered in this State as a foreign company, from issuing or offering interests in this State until the State in which it is incorporated becomes a proclaimed State. The Government is anxious to avoid such hardship being imposed on companies which, during the transitional period, through no fault of their own would fall into that category, and feels that some protection should be afforded to any such company that complies in all other respects with Part IIIa. This amendment is accordingly designed to enable such a company to be declared by proclamation to be a company for the purpose of this Part. This matter was brought to my notice since the Bill was in this Chamber by a representative of a reputable interstate company, who pointed out that these additional words should be inserted to ensure that his company could carry on operations during the transitional period until

his State became a proclaimed State. It is in the nature of a drafting amendment, although it goes a little further. However, it does not alter the original purpose of the Bill, and I ask that it be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment No. 2.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—Subsection (2) of the new section 114g provides for the matters and reports to be set out in the statement to be issued before an interest is issued or offered to the public. Paragraph (a) of the subsection provides for the matters and reports to be included in a statement relating to interests issued or offered by unit trust companies, while paragraph (b) of that subsection provides for matters and reports to be included in a statement relating to other kinds of interests. Interests issued by unit trust companies could consist of rights or interests in or arising out of an investment in marketable securities, and not merely of rights or interests in marketable securities, and this amendment seeks to make the position clear. This is a drafting amendment to clarify the position, and I ask that it be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment No. 3.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—Under the new section 114j (1) a company that has issued

an interest in relation to which an approved deed is in force is required, *inter alia*, once at least in every calendar year, not more than 30 days after its annual general meeting, to prepare and lodge with the Registrar a return containing a list of all persons who on the day of the annual general meeting of that year were holders of the interests to which the deed relates. It has been brought to the notice of the Government that some of these companies have to prepare a list of interest holders at the time when each dividend is payable in respect of the particular deed, and this usually occurs at least twice a year, but the payment of these dividends does not always coincide with the time of the annual general meeting of the company. This amendment seeks to give the Registrar power to approve of the list being prepared as at some other appropriate day in cases where it would be unreasonable to require the company to prepare a special list as at the day of the annual general meeting. This amendment is to make a little more simple the mechanical work in connection with the filing of lists, and I move that it be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.25 p.m. the Council adjourned until Thursday, October 27, at 2.15 p.m.