LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, November 6, 1963.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. L. H. Densley) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

FIREWORKS.

The Hon. L. R. HART: There are reports of very widespread damage last night, caused by the fireworks celebrations in connection with Guy Fawkes Day. Primary producers in particular are very concerned about these demonstrations each year, because they present a serious fire hazard. The extent of the celebrations is increasing each year, and the amount of the damage caused each year is also increasing. These celebrations cause a great strain to be placed on fire brigades and the Emergency Fire Services in country areas. There could well come a time when a major fire broke out that would require the resources of all the appliances, with the result that smaller outbreaks could not be attended to. This could create a situation where we could have a number of major fires. In view of this, can the Chief Secretary say whether the Government will consider altering the date on which Guy Fawkes celebrations are held to a time in the year when the fire hazard is less, or, better still, will the Government consider banning them altogether?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: I think the matter the honourable member raises has been considered before. I do not know just how we could celebrate it on another date, because then it would not be Guy Fawkes Day. It does not matter what the date is, because whatever the occasion we shall always have people who will do stupid things, despite warnings. If the honourable member wants action so that nobody will do anything stupid we shall probably need more days in the year for legislation to be considered by Parliament. Perhaps if the stupid acts of these people were given less publicity they would be less likely to repeat them. These things become magnified because they are reported in the press and the perpetrators of the stupid things are more apt to do them again because it is the only way they achieve notoriety.

AVAILABILITY OF AMENDMENTS.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH: With very great respect, Mr. President, I desire to ask you a question about a ruling you gave yesterday. During the Committee discussion on a Bill I raised a point of order about amendments not being before members in typed or printed form, and you gave this ruling:

> As long as the amendment is in a form that everybody can understand without his having a copy before him, I think we can proceed with the Bill.

Is that to be a firm ruling in view of the established practice and tradition of this Council that every amendment must be on the files for members to peruse before a Bill is proceeded with?

The PRESIDENT: I think it is desirable that members place all amendments on the files, but we do have occasions when a word is misspelt or an "and" is left out. On those occasions we do not need to have them on the files but leave it to the honourable members concerned to determine the matter.

ROAD TOLL HOUSES.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH: In this morning's *Advertiser* there appears a report from Mr. James Decker, of America, who has been seconded by the Adelaide City Council in connection with car parking, indicating that 55,000 cars park daily in Adelaide. I understand that this gentleman is to give a report to the council suggesting ways and means of providing parking space for these cars. In view of the controversy regarding parking meters and the power that has been given to councils in the amendment of the Local Government Act, in that they can use the money at will for any specific purpose, will the Government consider having a toll house erected at the entrance to every arterial road into the city for the purpose of securing revenue for State purposes?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE: The question basically was: will the Government consider toll houses on arterial roads leading into the city? The answer to that is that toll houses are completely impracticable unless there is limited access to the city. At the moment our roads leading into the city have no limited access.

EXTENSION OF MAINS.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: It was a matter of great satisfaction to me that in recent months proposed extensions of water mains were investigated and later approved for the Engineering and Water Supply Department to implement on Yorke Peninsula, particularly on the southern half. I am pleased that that

work is now to proceed, but there are quite a number of settlers in that area who do not have water supplies at all and have been seeking extensions. I believe this applies particularly in the Warooka area. I was gratified to hear the Minister of Mines say some time ago that he was having investigations made into underground supplies to see whether something could eventually be done for these people. Has the Minister any further information to give on this matter?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: The honourable member's question was referred to the Director of Mines, but I have no further information regarding details yet.

THIRD PARTY INSURANCE.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Yesterday during the debate on the second reading of the Motor Vehicles Act Amendment Bill I referred to certain matters in relation to third-party insurance and the use of unregistered tractors on roads. I should like to ask the Minister of Roads whether he has read my comments and whether he could clarify some of the questions raised.

The Hon. N. L. JUDE: I have not read the comments but I will certainly do so and endeavour to provide the answers for the honourable member.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: AMENDMENTS ON FILES.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: Pursuant to Standing Order 173, I ask the indulgence of the Council to explain a matter of a personal nature.

Leave granted.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: My explanation arises from a question asked by the Hon. Mr. Bardolph relating to some amendments to the Real Property Act Amendment Bill presented yesterday.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph: I never mentioned that; I mentioned amendments.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: The honourable member did not mention it but he did read a passage from *Hansard*, which I saw in his hands, relative to that particular Bill, and it was that matter to which he was undoubtedly referring. I should like to say this as a matter of personal explanation (because I think it does concern members of this honourable Chamber) as I should not like to feel that anything went on that was contrary to their interests, and I certainly should not like them to feel that I was doing anything like that. I arranged some month or so ago for amendments to be drafted to the Real Property Act Amendment Bill but, unfortunately, owing to extreme pressure on the Parliamentary Draftsman's Department, the amendments were not ready until yesterday. They were promised to me by then but they were submitted to me only immediately before the Council met.

Knowing that it was proper, particularly as they were rather complicated amendments, that every member should have the opportunity to consider the matter, when I found this out (because I had not had time to scrutinize them) I arranged with the Attorney-General that, when the Bill went into Committee, he would ask that progress be reported before my amendments were to be submitted, so that they could be put on all honourable members' files and so that they would be there for a sufficient time for them to be considered before they were actually moved. That is the position and I am sorry that the Hon. Mr. Bardolph has seen fit to raise the matter again because he raised it yesterday and it was one of those matters with which one is confronted as a matter of course. I am sure that honourable members, having heard this personal explanation, will agree that not only I but also the Attorney-General did everything we possibly could do in the interests of the Council.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH: I claim the indulgence of the Chamber under Standing Order 173 in connection with the statement made by the Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill. I wish to disabuse Sir Arthur Rymill's mind for I had no intention of impugning him with regard to the amendments not being on the files. I rose to maintain the dignity of the Council in the carrying out of Standing Orders which you, Mr. President, have done since you have been in the Chair. I asked your ruling this afternoon on whether amendments could be discussed in the Chamber without their being placed on the file. I am perfectly satisfied with your ruling in that regard and I assure Sir Arthur Rymill that it was never my intention to impute any improper motives to him in this connection.

WEST TORRENS CORPORATION BY-LAW: ZONING.

Order of the Day, Private Business, No. 2: The Hon. C. R. Story to move:

That By-law No. 19 of the Corporation of the City of West Torrens in respect of Zoning, made on July 10, 1962, and laid on the table of this Council on June 12, 1963, be disallowed.

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland) moved:

That this Order of the Day be discharged.

Order of the Day discharged.

BOOK PURCHASERS PROTECTION BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill for an Act relating to the protection of the purchasers of certain books and for other purposes is, as its title suggests, drawn up for a specific purpose, that is, to protect householders and individuals at work from their hasty and often ill-considered agreement to purchase books when confronted by high pressure door-to-door salesmen. Although at times books and sometimes pictures of highly questionable value have been purveyed and sold by unscrupulous salesmen, this Bill is not intended to initiate any controversy over the educational value or monetary value of any books or material that is sold to the public. The Bill, therefore, makes no distinction between any types of material, and has no ill effects upon reputable salesmen selling reputable goods, door to door.

It stipulates that every door-to-door transaction involving books over the value of £10, sold on terms, may not be confirmed before five days, or after 14 days. Clause 2 of the Bill interprets the meaning of the word "book" and includes engravings, lithographs and pictures which will bring door-to-door picture salesmen within its ambit. This addition is deliberate and is designed to protect householders from hasty agreement to a form of picture tinting and reproduction that has often been regretted at a later date. Clause 3 fixes a figure of £10 under which transactions are exempt and sets out the place of residence or employment of a purchaser as the situation where a contract must be agreed upon to come within the ambit of this Bill. Clause 4 is one of the main clauses and lays down that to be enforceable a contract must (*a*) be signed by the purchaser and all parties to it; and (*b*) have the main condition of this Bill printed upon it, that is, "This contract is unenforceable against the purchaser unless and until the purchaser notifies the vendor in writing not less than five or more than 14 days after the date hereof that he confirms it."

One of the main conditions of this legislation is to allow a second thought or, as it has been called, a cooling-off period for a purchaser entering into a contract made at a place of residence or employment. As a wife is often involved in such a contract during the week when her husband is absent, it is necessary that a weekend should be allowed in this period. Five days accomplishes this, because as set out in the Acts Interpretation Act, if the date of expiry falls on a Saturday or Sunday the time must be extended to the next day not falling upon a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday. A limit of 14 days protects the interests of the vendor. Clause 4 (*c*) ensures that a vendor supplies to the purchaser a copy of the contract and has received for it a receipt in writing, and (*d*) lays down the conditions explained in (*b*).

Clause 5 lays down a maximum penalty of £100 for violation by a vendor of the conditions set out in the Bill. Clause 6 exempts all forms of wholesale trading and contracts for printing or supply of books for sale or distribution by the purchaser. The Bill has received much attention in another place and is presented in a specific and simple form. It makes no discrimination, as I stated earlier, between any types of books or door-to-door salesmen on any grounds, and stipulates a cooling-off period that reputable salesmen should have no difficulty in complying with.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Attorney-General): I have had the opportunity to peruse this Bill and also the speeches made on it by a fairly large number of members in another place, and I believe it is one to which we can give our support. During the last 12 months, in my capacity as Attorney-General, I have received more complaints relating to the activities of door-to-door salesmen of books than to any other activity in the community. It does seem that this is a sphere in which the high-pressure salesman uses his influence and undue persuasion (in some cases it may go as far as duress) to get people, particularly women who may be at home, to sign contracts for amounts that are in some instances beyond their capacity to handle and in other instances represent, I believe, figures in excess of the actual value of the books involved. Therefore, I think this legislation might be tried to see whether it can curb this activity. Nobody wants to do anything to stop the activities of legitimate business or to put an obstacle in the way of a person who is seeking to expand a legitimate business activity, but it does appear that this is a case where, unfortunately, some careful and conscientious salesmen may perhaps be prejudiced and inconvenienced.

However, this legislation seems necessary in the interests of the community at large.

Another comment I make deals with an aspect that concerns me to some extent. This legislation will relate only to door-to-door salesmen selling books over the value of £10 but not to sales in any shop or business house. I believe the danger is that people may be confused as to the scope and ambit of the legislation. They may read in the press something about it and feel that it extends to something other than books and consequently may be a little careless in signing contracts, believing that they may have a right to cancel them within the specified period of 14 days. Emphasis should be given to the point that this legislation relates only to books sold at the door of the house.

The Hon. G. O'H. Giles: Did you say over and above £10?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: If I did not say it, I meant that that is the position. The matter has been well canvassed in another place and I do not think it is necessary for me to speak on it at length.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: What if they are sold in a place of employment?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: I should have said that the Bill relates not only to sales at a dwellinghouse but also at a place of employment. Much of the ill it is designed to cover occurs at dwellinghouses. It is not necessary for me to labour the matter except to emphasize the two points I have mentioned. I support the Bill.

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

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (SEAT BELTS).

Second reading.

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It provides that motor vehicles registered for the first time after the beginning of 1965 shall have two seat belts fitted—one for the driver and another for the front seat passenger. As members are aware a seat belt, or safety belt, is a device designed to secure a person in a motor vehicle in order to mitigate the results of any accident in which that vehicle may be involved. I do not propose to speak at length on the value of these belts in saving lives and serious injury when accidents occur. All the evidence and the whole weight of informed opinion is that they do. Seat belts have this effect for two reasons:

(1) A person is safer inside a motor vehicle than if thrown out of it. When catapulted out of a car the body runs greatly increased hazards not only from being smashed directly on to the roadway or other objects (such as electric light poles), but also from the danger of being hit by oncoming traffic. Furthermore, a motor vehicle normally acts as protective armour for objects inside it taking the initial shock of collision with another object. This absorption of the initial shock often marks the difference between life and death, or between minor and serious injury.

(2) A person wearing a belt is less likely to be dashed against the interior of the vehicle. Without a safety belt to hold the body in place, it acts like any loose object and can fly around inside the vehicle. The belt thus reduces the likelihood of being smashed against the windshield, the steering column or other protruding objects.

The opinion that seat belts do reduce the risk of death and injury has been publicly expressed in this State on a number of occasions. On August 15, 1962, the Premier, in replying to a question by the member for Albert, read a report from the Commissioner of Police which stated *inter alia*:

"As the necessary finance is available Police Department vehicles are being fitted with safety belts . . . . The equipping of police vehicles with safety belts is not only considered desirable but also a very important safety measure."

It was reported in the *Sunday Mail* of January 12 last:

The medical superintendent of the Royal Adelaide Hospital (Dr. B. Nicholson) said today it was generally agreed that the passenger in the front seat was much better off with a safety belt. In one recent crash the driver unclipped his safety belt and got out of the car uninjured. His passenger without a safety belt was thrown out and received multiple injuries.

Sergeant Swaine, a senior and experienced member of the Police Accident Investigation Squad, has been investigating this particular matter. It would be very helpful to the Council if the result of his investigations were to be made available to members. Perhaps the Government will have this done. Sergeant Swaine summed up his opinion by saying that "there is absolutely no doubt at all" about the effectiveness of seat belts. I expect all members have received a brochure entitled

"The Truth about Safety Belts", prepared by the Life Offices' Association of Australasia. It has been widely distributed throughout Australia. In it we read:

Every nine minutes, every day of the week, someone is killed or injured on Australia's roads. . . . Until road safety education takes full effect, we must take steps to defend ourselves and our families. . . . There is a simple, quick and inexpensive way in which you can do this right now—by fitting safety belts in your car and by using them every time you drive.

Finally I refer to the report of the Senate Select Committee on Road Safety, 1960. In paragraphs 158 and 159 we read:

Present statistics from overseas research projects establish to reasonable satisfaction the beneficial effects of safety belts in vehicles, for example. Exhaustive tests have been carried out of varying types, and the work has been extended to Australia to the extent that the Standards Association of Australia has drawn up specifications for approved belts and harness assemblies. The most thorough research on seat belts has been carried out by the Cornell University Automotive Crash Injury Research Group. The results of their inquiries showed that there was an overall improvement in the frequency of injury (of all degrees of severity) of 60 per cent reduction. Complete answers were found to the common criticism of safety belts, and the results were sufficient to satisfy a Congressional committee that safety belts, properly manufactured and installed, are a valuable safety device.

The Senate Select Committee recommends that "the motor trade should install seat belts of an approved standard in all motor vehicles" and that "road safety authorities should give publicity to the advantages of wearing seat belts". The carnage on the roads in Australia is appalling. The Senate Select Committee report (paragraph 2) says:

The stark fact remains that every year over 2,000 lives are lost on the road, over 50,000 persons are injured, untold suffering and anguish are experienced, and a fantastic financial loss is experienced by the community. This cost is estimated by the committee at a figure of £70,000,000 per annum.

The use of seat belts will not wipe out these grim figures—there are obviously many accidents in which seat belts make no difference—but such use will greatly reduce them. It has been estimated that by wearing a belt the likelihood of fatality is cut down by as much as 50 per cent and that of serious injury by 60 per cent. Even if the estimate of fatality is cut in half—the most conservative estimate I have seen—the saving in lives would still be about 500 annually. The solution to the problem of road safety has everyone baffled. There is, in fact, I believe no complete or easy answer. However, the compulsory installation of seat belts will very definitely help.

If then seat belts are such an aid to safety, are they being voluntarily installed and used in motor vehicles in Australia? A recent survey by the Australian Road Safety Council showed that 5 per cent of cars have seat belts and the owners of four out of five of these vehicles said they wore the belts regularly. This is a very small proportion of all vehicles on the road. Although it is rising, it is not rising fast enough. Although voluntary installation is so low proportionately, members will no doubt be interested to know that an increasing proportion of people in Australia thinks safety belts should be compulsory. I refer to the Australian Gallup Poll findings for May-July, 1962, as follows:

In this Gallup Poll in April, 1,800 people throughout Australia were asked: "In your opinion, should safety belts be compulsory, or not, on all new cars?" Similar questions were asked in 1959 and 1961. Comparison of answers then and now shows that an increasing proportion of people would make belts compulsory in new cars:

SAFETY BELTS.

	Compel them.	Don't compel them.	No. opinion.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
1959	60	24	16
1961	64	28	8
1962 April ..	67	26	7

The Hon. Sir. Arthur Rymill: Do you advocate having legislation in accordance with the results of Gallup Polls?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: The honourable member has raised an interesting point. I have often been critical of people who have not given me sufficient information in order to make up my mind. I am trying now to give members information to enable them to make up their minds on this Bill. If they are foolish enough not to want safety belts in their cars, that is all right with me. At least I am giving them an opportunity to hear what informed people think about the matter. The Gallup Poll report stated:

State by State the vote for fitting safety belts in all new cars ranged from 61 per cent in South Australia and Tasmania, to 65 per cent in New South Wales and Queensland, and up to 71 per cent in Victoria and Western Australia. Belts are favoured by 65 per cent of people with cars in the family, and by 72 per cent of other people. Of people aged 21-39, 70 per cent would compel the fitting of belts in all new cars. So would 67 per cent of people aged 40-49, and 63 per cent of older people. Those in favour of seat belts were asked whether they should be compulsory for all

seats, or for only front seats. Answers show that only one in three would vote to compel car manufacturers to fit belts to all seats in all new cars, but two in three would vote for belts for the front seats alone. So far as I am aware no State in Australia has yet legislated in this way. I hope that South Australia will in this, as in so many other things, take the lead. There is similar legislation overseas and I refer especially to the United States of America. In particular I shall quote from information received from Senator Edward J. Speno of the New York State Legislature. He is the Chairman of the Joint Legislative Committee on Motor Vehicles and Traffic Safety in New York State. There the compulsory fitting of seat belts in automobiles sold after June 30, 1964, has already been made law. New York State has 14 per cent of all motor cars in the United States. Senator Speno has sent me an issue of the *Traffic Laws Commentary* issued by the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Laws and Ordinances which shows that besides the State of New York such a law had already (April 25, 1963) been enacted in 13 other States and the District of Columbia. They are as follows: Wisconsin, Mississippi, Rhode Island, Virginia, District of Columbia, New Mexico, Indiana, Tennessee, Minnesota, Nebraska, Washington, Vermont, Georgia, and North Carolina. If such legislation can be enacted so widely in the United States of America, I know of no reason why it should not be enacted in South Australia.

I turn now to an examination of the clauses of the Bill. Before doing so, however, I should like to acknowledge the great assistance of our former Parliamentary Draftsman, Sir Edgar Bean, in drafting the Bill. As members know, Sir Edgar Bean was the chief architect of the Road Traffic Act, 1961, and I am sure that all members will agree that no-one is better qualified to draft this measure. Clauses 1 and 2 of the Bill are formal. Clause 3 enacts new section 162a. This section will therefore fall within Part IV of the Road Traffic Act, "Equipment, Size and Weight of Vehicles and Safety Provisions". It will be grouped with sections 159 to 162, which have the sub-heading "Safety Provisions" and deal with such matters as certificates for passenger carrying vehicles, defect notices, the suspension of registration of unsafe vehicles and the securing of loads. This seems the appropriate place in which to insert a section dealing with seat belts. New section 162a will have eight subsections.

Clause 3 (1) provides that the section applies to every motor vehicle having seating accommodation for one or more persons sitting by the side of the driver either on the same seat or on a separate seat. This will, I expect, include all or substantially all motor cars and most motor lorries. It will not, however, include buses, most of which have a single seat for the driver but none for a passenger next to him. The subsection also provides that the section applies to every motor vehicle registered for the first time after December 31, 1964. The date of operation is a long time ahead—over 12 months—so that everyone—manufacturers, merchants and the public—will have ample time to be able to comply with its requirements. I do not think any of them will have any difficulty, and my only doubt is whether it is necessary to wait so long.

Subclause (2) provides that a person shall not drive a vehicle which does not comply with the section. It thus puts the obligation for observance of the section upon the driver of the vehicle; it could have been the owner, the manufacturer or the seller. However, from the point of view of the proof of non-compliance it seemed most satisfactory to place the obligation to have belts upon the driver. I confidently expect that in any case the results will be the same—belts will be fitted by the manufacturer before sale. Subclause (3) makes provision for the fitting of a seat belt for the driver and for any person sitting by his side. It is well known that the front passenger seat is the "suicide" seat, and the incidence of injury in this seat is higher than in any other seat in a motor car. The front seat passenger above all others should be protected by having the opportunity to wear a seat belt. There is no provision for the fitting of seat belts in the rear seats of cars. Statistics show that comparatively few people ride in back seats of vehicles, and the incidence of injury to persons there is less. The section will not, however, preclude the voluntary fitting of seat belts in the back seats of cars should that be desired.

Subclause (3) also provides for anchorages for seat belts so fitted. Obviously, it would be useless prescribing the installation of seat belts if it were not possible to anchor them securely to the frame or chassis of the vehicle.

Extensive inquiries amongst manufacturers and sellers of motor vehicles in Adelaide indicate that without exception provision in manufacture is now made for the installation of seat belts in new motor vehicles. I think, therefore, that the trade will have no technical

difficulty in complying with the Bill. What I expect is that the maker will himself install seat belts at the time of manufacture, and I hope that this will reduce the cost of this equipment which even now is quite low.

Subclauses (4) and (5) provide for the Road Traffic Board to lay down specifications for seat belts and seat belt anchorages. It seems that the board is the obvious authority to lay down these specifications. It is certainly more convenient to make this provision rather than to include in the section itself specifications which will undoubtedly vary from time to time. Subclause (6) gives the board power to approve of seat belts and anchorages in any particular motor vehicle, even though they may not comply with the gazetted specifications. Subclause (8) empowers the Governor to make regulations exempting vehicles or classes of vehicles from the provisions of the section. It may well be that some vehicles—for example, heavy transport vehicles—should not for one reason or another be fitted with seat belts. This subclause makes provision for such eventualities. Members will see that subclauses (6) and (8) provide exemption where that is desirable.

Finally, subclause (7) provides that seat belts and anchorages fitted pursuant to the section must be maintained in sound condition and good working order. This is an obvious corollary of the obligation to install seat belts. In conclusion I point out to the Council that this Bill imposes an obligation to fit seat belts. It does not make it mandatory upon anyone to use a seat belt. So far as I am aware, no Legislature has yet adopted a law of general application to passenger cars requiring the use of seat belts while the car is in motion. Naturally, I hope that once seat belts become standard equipment in motor vehicles—as they gradually will from 1965 onwards if this Bill is passed—there will be an increasing use of the belts by the public. I believe this will happen. Obviously, the first step in this process is to make sure that they are in motor cars to be used if desired. I commend the Bill for the consideration of honourable members.

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

RENMARK IRRIGATION TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It amends the Renmark Irrigation Trust Act in three respects. The first of the amendments is affected by clauses 3 and 4 of the Bill which amend sections 64 and 73, respectively, of the principal Act. The object of these amendments is to empower the trust to supply to ratepayers or other owners or occupiers of land within the district additional water by way of special irrigations. At present section 64 empowers the trust, with the Minister's written consent, to make special arrangements for supplying ratepayers with excess water, but the Crown Solicitor has advised the trust that it may not lawfully charge for water supplied to a ratepayer except excess water. When section 64 was enacted in 1893 the need for what the trust calls "special irrigations" was not envisaged, it being thought that the cost of supplying sufficient water for irrigation purposes would be covered by the general rate. With the large increase in the planting of fruit trees, mostly on lighter soils, and the advent of spray irrigation and the tile drainage of soils, the number of irrigations needed to provide a sufficient supply by some ratepayers averages about ten a year as against four general irrigations a year.

Both the Irrigation Act and the Mildura Irrigation and Water Trusts Act empower the supply of special irrigations and the amendment affected by clause 3 of the Bill will confer similar powers upon the Renmark Irrigation Trust. Clause 4 is consequential since it includes in the regulation and by-law making power of the trust power to fix terms and conditions for the special irrigations to be authorized in pursuance of the amendment made by clause 3. Clauses 5 and 6 are designed to remove certain restrictive provisions regarding expenditure of the trust's revenue from its electricity undertaking. At the moment, subsections (2) and (3) of section 121o limit the application of this revenue to the payment of working expenses and maintenance, interest on debentures and provision of a reserve fund to answer any deficiency or meet any exceptional claim or demand arising against the trust in respect of the undertaking. Any net surplus remaining after fulfilment of these purposes is to be applied to lowering the price of electricity supplied by it.

No provision is made for repayment of capital expenditure on the undertaking. It is considered that the restrictions are unnecessarily restrictive and should be removed. Clause 5 accordingly removes the limitations and substitutes provision that the trust shall apply revenue from its electricity undertaking in payment of working expenses, maintenance and

interest (as before) and for any other purposes of or relating to the undertaking. This is followed by a provision that without the Minister's approval, given on the recommendation of the Auditor-General, none of the trust's electricity undertaking revenue can be applied for any other purpose. It is considered that this provision will give the trust a wider discretion in connection with expenditure of revenue from the undertaking while providing adequate safeguards. Clause 6 effects a consequential amendment to that made by clause 5.

The most important amendment is that made by clause 7 of the Bill, which amends the financial section inserted in the principal Act in 1959. The arrangement then made and embodied in section 123 was that the Government would provide the trust with up to £750,000 over a period of 10 years of which amount £500,000 would be by way of grant and £250,000 by way of loan. During the same period of 10 years the trust was to set aside the total of £250,000. This made £1,000,000 in all, of which one-half was by way of grant from the Government. This amount was to be expended on works in connection with a comprehensive drainage scheme for the district and its general improvement, or rehabilitation of the trust's irrigation works. It was then envisaged that the work would take a period of 10 years. However, it has now been decided that the work could and should be completed in a shorter period, but the trust has found that its financial position is such that it would be unable to provide necessary funds for the work within a reasonable time. The whole matter has been discussed with the trust and investigated by the Auditor-General and clause 7 of the Bill will substitute for the original provision the terms of a new arrangement.

This is that the original period of 10 years will be reduced to seven, but the trust's obligation for funds lent by the Government will be reduced from £250,000 to £175,000 and the total amount to be set aside by the trust out of its own funds will be similarly reduced. These reductions will now be offset by an increase in the total State grant by £150,000. Clause 7 makes the necessary technical amendments to give effect to these arrangements. I do not refer in detail to each of the paragraphs of clause 7, but would refer particularly to subparagraph (i) the effect of which is to provide for repayment by the trust of the Government loan over a period of 18 years commencing in 1967 or in the year following completion of the works. This means complete repayment in a period of 25 years instead of 40 years. The Bill, being of a hybrid nature, was referred to a Select Committee in accordance with Joint Standing Orders. That committee, after consideration, recommended its passage.

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

STATUTES AMENDMENT (MENTAL HEALTH AND PRISONS) BILL.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Minister of Health) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Mental Health Act, 1935-1962, and the Prisons Act, 1936-1956. Read a first time.

REAL PROPERTY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

MOTOR VEHICLES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

RIVER MURRAY WATERS AGREEMENT SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

LOTTERY AND GAMING ACT AMENDMENT BILL (TROTTING).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 5. Page 1432.)

The Hon. R. R. WILSON (Northern): This Bill will be welcomed by patrons of trotting in this State. The administration and control have presented problems for many years. It is appreciated that the Government's proposals are acceptable to all concerned. The South Australian Trotting League is the controlling body and the administration under the Act has been very difficult and much friction has existed. The South Australian Trotting Club has resented paying levies from their earnings to country clubs. The Bill provides that the 5 per cent of winnings tax at present going to the Treasury will be paid to country clubs. There are 13 clubs in South Australia, the main clubs being the South Australian Trotting Club and the Gawler, Mount Gambier, Port Pirie and Kadina clubs. I understand they all conduct races under electric light. Many of the smaller clubs hold meetings only once or twice a year but they are important to those isolated places. Many of the State's best trotters are born and bred in the country. If they win two races at country meetings they are eligible to race at Wayville. I know

of no greater spectacle of an evening than to see the State's best trotters racing at Wayville; and this provides much pleasure to thousands of people.

The Bill also provides for women to be employed in totalizators. This will overcome problems because certain qualifications are necessary for this kind of work. The reason I secured the adjournment of this debate yesterday was to enable me to quote what the South Australian Trotting Club at Wayville has done for charity, hospitals and various funds since 1939, and that is as follows:

	£
Charity meetings:	
Returned Servicemen's League Welfare Funds	63,927
Queen Victoria Maternity Hospital	27,853
Legacy Club of Adelaide	27,150
Adelaide Children's Hospital	2,250
Totalizator fractions:	
Various South Australian Charitable Institutions	187,752
Miscellaneous donations:	
1939 Bush Fire Relief Fund	1,523
1941 Red Cross Society and Fighting Forces Comforts Fund, Cheer-Up Hostel Fund	1,420
1942 Spitfire Fund	5,000
1942 H.M.A.S. Sydney Fund	2,000
1944 R.S.L. Poppy Day Fund	1,018
1946 Lord Mayor's Food for Britain Fund	2,800
1949 Cancer appeal	3,564
1961 National Heart Campaign	2,000
1962 Adelaide Children's Hospital	1,000
1963 St. John Ambulance Building Appeal	1,000
1963 Spastic Welfare Association	750
	£330,007

I believe this is a great credit to the South Australian Trotting Club. Consideration should be given to amending the Lottery and Gaming Act to permit totalizator licences to be allocated to racing and trotting clubs from August 1 to July 31, in lieu of the present system of allocation on the calendar year. Such a scheme would probably be of greater significance to trotting than to racing clubs. Trotting ceases to function during the winter months, whereas racing continues throughout the year. Postponements of meetings because of weather conditions affect trotting more than racing and often a lost date cannot be fitted into a calendar year for trotting clubs. Allocation on a seasonal basis will probably obviate this difficulty. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

The Hon. L. R. HART (Midland): I support the second reading. Most of the important points have been covered by previous speakers. I agree with the Hon. Mr. Wilson that this Bill should do much to eliminate the dissatisfaction that has existed between city and country trotting interests. There is no question that the country and city trotting interests rely on each other greatly and give each other support. Country clubs rely on city clubs for financial support and the city clubs rely on country clubs for providing races for those horses whose performances do not permit them to qualify for races in the metropolitan area. I also agree with the Hon. Mr. Wilson that the trotting year should be based on the lunar calendar rather than the calendar year. This, of course, would permit the meetings to be held during that time of the year when weather conditions were most suitable.

One other aspect that is not cleared up in this Bill is the desire of the South Australian Trotting Club to hold mid-week trotting meetings. Country clubs are very much opposed to this and, perhaps, rightly so. They claim that mid-week trotting meetings in the metropolitan area would take away some of their patronage but, of course, on the other hand they would gain in having a share in the increased finance that would be available from totalizator takings at these meetings. All in all, I believe this Bill does much to further the trotting industry in South Australia and, although it may have some shortcomings, it still has much to commend it and I have pleasure in supporting it.

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

INDUSTRIAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 5. Page 1434.)

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH (Acting Leader of the Opposition): I support the second reading and ask for the pardon of members in order to give a brief review of the circumstances that led to the introduction of our industrial legislation. I do not want to be thought presumptuous, but in this place at present we have three ex-Presidents of the Trades and Labour Council. If the Hon. Mr. Shard were here he would make a fourth. They have all played an important part in the industrial affairs of the State. I say with some humility that they have a good working knowledge of industry, particularly the relationship between employees and employers.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill: Do you have to be an ex-President of that council to become a member of this Council?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH: In the industrial movement we do not get any gilt-edged spurs unless we win them in a hard race. I have been President of the council on two occasions. Other members in this place bear the imprimatur of having been President of that industrial body. The history of conciliation and arbitration in South Australia goes back to the days of Charles Cameron Kingston, who, on October 8, 1890, introduced a Bill for an Act to encourage the formation of industrial unions and associations, and to facilitate the settlement of industrial disputes. During his second reading explanation he said:

I think they have the right to include strikes and lockouts as one of the evils the State ought to protect them against. Therefore, in the interests of justice let warfare be abandoned and "even-handed justice" triumph; where a matter goes to adjudication, the odds are that justice comes out of it, and even if neither party is satisfied half a loaf is better than no bread.

At that time South Australia was an agrarian State, but from 1939 to the end of the Second World War the State became greatly industrialized. Since those days we have expanded industry so much that from time to time it has become incumbent upon the Government, trade unions and employers to seek amendments to the Industrial Code. That is why we have the Bill before us. Some matters which should be included in it are not there. However, the amendments that are in it have been agreed to unanimously by employees and employers. Although the exigencies of industrial expansion demand that certain matters be considered, this Bill is a milestone in the advance being made to cover industry in South Australia, and makes the position far better than it was prior to 1890.

After that 1890 measure was introduced, a State Conciliation and Arbitration Act was passed in 1894. It came into operation on January 1, 1895, but there was not a great need for it, nor was much use made of its provisions. Mr. Justice Bundey was appointed the first President of the State Board of Conciliation, and members were also appointed. Not long afterwards the board investigated an industrial dispute between Mr. Alexander Dowie and certain of his employees. Mr. Dowie conducted a business of tanners and furriers. He dismissed all his employees and then successfully contended that as there were no relations between them and himself there could be no dispute between them. Of course, that sort of thing could not happen today. Under our present industrial set-up we have an Industrial Court under a President, and there can be two Deputy Presidents, but one of the members of the court must have had a legal training. A Board of Industry has power to fix the State living wage. Since the advent of the Commonwealth basic wage South Australia has not had a living wage for some years. The State has a wages board system and there is no limit to the number of boards we can have. On each wages board are representatives of the employees and representatives of the employers, with an independent chairman. This completes my brief history of industrial relations in South Australia.

Although what we have had in the past may have been sufficient to meet the exigencies of the period, we have now reached the stage in our economic advancement when the position must be altered in many ways so that our industrial conditions can become comparable with the more heavily industrialized States. I join with other members in accepting the Bill's proposals, which have been unanimously agreed to by employees and employers. Although the Bill does not contain all that we desire, I hope that soon further amendments will be made to the legislation so that we shall have one of the most modern Industrial Codes in Australia.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY (Central No. 2): We have had a brief outline of the origin of the Industrial Code from the Hon. Mr. Bardolph, but it is more complicated than he has given honourable members to understand. The Industrial Code was passed originally in 1920 and at that time it was thought to be the last word in relations between employer and employee. Since then many amendments have been made and conditions have been changed in an endeavour to keep step with the country's developing industry and to satisfy the demands of the employees in their arguments for better wages and conditions.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph: That applies more to the employers' making industry stable.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY: Arbitration courts were set up for the purpose of satisfying the contending parties so that they should come to satisfactory agreements both as to working conditions and as to hours to enable our industrial development to proceed. There is, of course, another party in these relations, and that is the general public. The original legislation of 1920 produced a Bill that was an arrangement not between employer

and employee but of thoughtful ideas that the Parliament of that day thought should govern labour conditions in South Australia. The Hon. H. Homburg was the Minister who took that Bill through Parliament. It occupied a great deal of time and engendered a considerable amount of agitation and discussion.

This Bill seeks to amend the Code. It is the first major amendment since 1920 and there are some 35 pages of amending legislation. The original Bill had well over 100 pages relating to arbitration courts, wages boards and the Factories Act. So Parliament has over the years sought to satisfy both sides and at the same time to protect the public in regard to the prices of the commodities that are manufactured. I think there has been a change in attitude since the original Bill was introduced, inasmuch as this Bill is the result of conferences between the two contending parties. That is a good way to settle some matters, but I am always a little concerned about Bills and agreements made between interested parties.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph: Why?

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY: Because there is always a third party, and that third party is the public of South Australia in this case. In matters of this sort, I should like an expression of opinion from not only the interested parties but also the public—either from the Government or from the public—when a Bill of this nature is being introduced. I do not care whether it is a Liberal Government or a Labor Government in power: every responsible Government should seek to improve conditions between employer and employee to aid the progress of industry and keep prices competitive. I see a danger in just the interested parties introducing a Bill to Parliament and asking us to accept it. In this case it has been argued throughout that the two parties are happy, so the public should be happy too. That is an easy way out, but I think the economy of the country is a little more important than that because, considering the importance of the arbitration court and the matters it has to consider, I regard it as one of the most important things that control and govern our industrial development and its maintenance. Consequently, I hope that in the future, when this Act or any other Act is to be amended, we shall have expressions of opinion from the public as well as from the interested parties.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: Is not this purely and simply a machinery Bill?

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY: Yes. It should be merely an expression of opinion of the conditions under which the court should act. We had yesterday a grudging approval of the Bill by the first speaker. Today the Hon. Mr. Bardolph approved it but said nothing much in favour of it or against it.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph: I approved it.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY: But I maintain that the arbitration court should receive much attention from the responsible authorities in Australia, for ultimately it may be on those grounds that the future prosperity of this country will rest. I point out, too, the change that has taken place in arbitration cases since the 1920 Act. At that time the Government concerned had wages boards for Government employees, but it had to lay the document on the table of the House before the wages were approved, for the simple reason that the authority of the Government had to be obtained before the wages were paid. That has long since gone, and today I am afraid we do not regard the work of the arbitration court as seriously as we should. I feel that this Bill is quite acceptable and I accept it; I have no objection to it at all. It is only a machinery Bill on which the arbitration court and the wages boards have the authority to make awards. That machinery is passed over to the court. Having passed that authority to the court, it is to the court that we should look for the decision, not from either party or from Parliament. But what do we find? In this State under this legislation I have no complaint to make, but arbitration courts and wages boards are common throughout Australia. They are to be found in New South Wales and in all other States. Having passed legislation to transfer the necessary authority from Parliament to the courts, there are some Governments that still enact industrial provisions themselves and have placed on the Statute Book a number of important industrial decisions made by Parliament and not by the courts. For instance, the 40-hour week was decided by the New South Wales Parliament; long service leave was decided by that Parliament; and there are other examples.

The Hon. F. J. Potter: And equal pay.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY: And equal pay for the sexes was decided by that Parliament. If we pass to the courts this authority, at least all the parties should be prepared to accept their decisions. I do know that Parliament has the authority to do anything in industrial matters. I think that in asking

Parliament to make decisions on this matter when the court is sitting cuts across the function of the court and upsets the economy of the country, which I regard as serious. I am glad to say that does not occur in South Australia, but the results of Parliamentary action in other States have affected our courts as well as the Commonwealth court. The position is aggravated and the court itself is sometimes compelled to grant what one of the major States has obtained not by arbitration, not by considering the effect on the economy of the country as a whole, but by a decision of Parliament. As a result I maintain that Parliament today cannot satisfactorily consider the question of arbritration and conditions in industry.

I hope that this amendment to the Code will be given effect to as it applies to employers and employees and I am sure that they will use it for the purpose for which it is intended. I think the relations between employer and employee in this State are much more satisfactory than in some other States. I have no great opposition to the conditions set out in the Bill or to the existing conditions and I hope that in the future this Bill will satisfy both sides and enable the court to work satisfactorily in the interests of the third party in all these matters—the general public. I accept the Bill and hope that it will be effective legislation. I support the second reading.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Central No. 1): I support the second reading. I, along with my colleagues, intend to vote not only for the second reading but also for the passing of the Bill. The Hon. Mr. Kneebone has been accused, I think on two occasions, of perhaps speaking with his tongue in cheek when he supported this Bill. This was evident from a remark made by the Hon. Mr. Potter during my colleague's speech.

The Hon. F. J. Potter: I did not say that. I said he was pretty lukewarm. It is not the same thing.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I may be accused of doing the same thing. What Mr. Kneebone said was that the Bill itself did not go as far as he would like it to. I am of the same opinion and I say that quite unreservedly. Certainly the Bill does not go as far as we—and I speak for the trade union movement—should like it to. The fact that there has been total agreement between the parties who considered the provisions of the Bill does not mean, as Mr. Kneebone himself pointed out, that those provisions are totally satisfactory. There are provisions in the amending legislation at the moment to which one could object. There is amending legislation in relation to restrictions upon the weight that women, and especially junior girls, are allowed to carry which one could criticize.

The Industrial Code has always contained a section in relation to an employee who breaches an award, order of the court or determination. Under the provisions of the Code a conviction for such a breach could carry a maximum fine of £5 for an employee and £100 for an employer. The clause in the Bill concerning this matter increases the maximum fine for an employee from £5 to £50 and, in the case of employers, the fine has been reduced from £100 to £50. Certainly this has equalized the position, but where is the justification for the amendment? One could argue very forcibly that that is a reduction of 50 per cent on the one hand and an increase of about 250 per cent on the other hand.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: It has been said that the increase from £5 to £50 is due to the decreased value of money.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Yes, but we have the reverse effect in the case of employers, where the fine has been reduced from £100 to £50. Can we say that that is because of a devaluation of money? However, this point was agreed by the parties at the conferences which were held from time to time and which lasted for some considerable period before final agreement was reached. It is admitted that many parts of the Code over the years have become antiquated and that there should have been a revision long ago. We in the Labor Party have moved amendments from time to time relative to the Code but, because we did not have the numbers, we have been defeated. Now there has been a revision of the Code by interested parties and we find that many of the sections that are no longer applicable and are in fact redundant have been removed from the Code altogether. No-one can say that there are no considerable improvements in this Bill.

However, it is a machinery Bill because the Code itself has established certain provisions and machinery. The Hon. Sir Frank Perry has mentioned the economic position in relation to industrial awards, but I cannot entirely agree with his reasoning. He intimated there were other interested parties such as the general public who should have been considered. I point out that a large section of the general public was represented by the Trades and Labour Council, the Chamber of Manufactures and the Employers' Federation in the negotiations which took place. In addition to this the interests of the Government were being adequately safeguarded by the Department of

Labour and Industry itself through Mr. Lindsay Bowes, who was present at all the conferences and gave advice on certain matters.

The Code itself sets up the necessary machinery. For instance, it sets up the Industrial Court in this State which we know as our arbitration court. The Code also provides the authority for the court to deal with industrial matters: the court can determine disputes and has the power to determine the hours to be worked and the hours that constitute a week's work; it also has the power to determine the conditions of employment and prescribe the wages to be paid for services rendered by an employee. The Code gives the court the authority to do all this. The Code also establishes the principles (which have operated in this State for as long as I can remember) of the conditions of a wages board whereby it is not arbitration as we know it: it is purely and simply conciliation. The authority for establishing wages boards is contained in the Industrial Code. When the parties cannot agree, the Code gives authority to representatives of employees and employers to appear before the Industrial Court for the appointment of an independent chairman to determine matters before the board. I have had considerable experience with wages boards and invariably the parties agree because one side or the other gives something away. Often the chairman is not required to give an arbitrary vote on a matter, which is solved by the representatives coming to an agreement around the table.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry referred to the legislation overriding tribunals and said that everything should be left to the court. I point out that in the final analysis these matters are determined by the Commonwealth Arbitration Court, or a similar State court. The set-up in other States is different from ours. The honourable member said that the Government of the day determined the position. I say that that is not so and that the court determines it. To illustrate his point the honourable member referred to the New South Wales Labor Government's introducing a 40-hour week, thereby completely taking away jurisdiction from the courts. I emphasize that that Government introduced a 40-hour week for State employees only, and that this did not apply to other employees. The matter was referred by the unions to the Commonwealth Arbitration Court, and the weekly hours were determined by that court for all organizations under its jurisdiction. The only Government that would have the authority to direct the Commonwealth Arbitration Court would be the Commonwealth Government and in this instance it certainly did not give any direction.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry said that State legislation overrides the Industrial Court. I point out that long service leave in this State was determined not by the court but by Act of Parliament and that all employees working under State awards were covered. This was first done by industrial legislation, although it was not acceptable to either employees or employers. Nevertheless, it was introduced in Parliament and carried and applied to all employees under that determination. One does not always agree with the interpretation the court places on powers vested in it by the Industrial Code. I have expressed the opinion in the Industrial Court that it does not have the power under the Industrial Code to do certain things. As an illustration, the Code states that any employer having 20 or more employees can approach the court, or 20 or more employees themselves can approach it regarding wages and conditions. I had a case in the Industrial Court, when I was actively associated with an organization as its secretary, where one employer who employed two employees applied to the court for an award and the court held that it had authority to make the award. I challenged the decision and said that it did not have the jurisdiction to do so under the Industrial Code. The President said that it did. I could have appealed to a higher court on a point of law but the decision was that the Code says so.

Another instance in which I did not agree with the court concerned its actions in relation to employees' representatives on a wages board. Here again, the Industrial Code lays down that there shall be *bona fide* representatives of employees employed in the industry concerned and the same position applies to employers. The Code provides that one representative need not be a *bona fide* employee of the industry concerned. This allows a union official to be appointed as a representative on the wages board and also an employer to have a representative from the Chamber of Manufactures. In the instance I am referring to a dispute arose about the appointment of employees' representatives and the court removed the secretary of the organization and appointed in his place a full-time university student either as a *bona fide* or *non-bona fide* employee of the industry concerned. I argued that I could not see how a full-time university student, and a junior at that time, could represent employees on a wages board about which he knew nothing. That was the action

of the court which was given power under the Industrial Code.

There are many clauses in the Code with which one could disagree and which could have a better effect, for instance, on the working conditions or on the employment position generally for both employees and employers. However, this Bill is the result of very lengthy discussions between all parties concerned. Finally they were able to report to the Government that unanimous agreement had been reached. Under these circumstances the Government then determined to introduce the Bill now before us. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 5 passed.

Clause 6—"Amendment of principal Act, section 5."

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Minister of Labour and Industry): I move:

In paragraph (*f*) to strike out "crane or hoist" and insert "crane" or "hoist".

This is a drafting amendment.

Amendment carried.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE moved:

In paragraph (*j*) (2) to strike out "employes" and insert "employs".

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 7 to 137 passed.

Clause 138—"Amendment of principal Act, section 324."

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: I move:

To strike out "Section 324" and insert "Sections 324 and 325"; to strike out "is" and insert "are"; and at the end of the clause to insert "in each case."

The clause will then read:

Sections 324 and 325 of the principal Act are amended by striking out the word "lift" therein and inserting in lieu thereof the words "crane or hoist" in each case.

I can assure the Committee that these amendments are merely drafting.

Amendments carried; clause as amended passed.

Remaining clauses (139 to 165), schedule and title passed.

Bill reported with amendments; Committee's report adopted.

RIVER MURRAY WATERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 5. Page 1438.)

The Hon. L. R. HART (Midland): I rise to support the Bill. On the question of water storage and reticulation the Government of this State has a very proud record. Through its progressive and long-sighted policy almost all the people of South Australia receive an adequate water supply at a rate cheaper than that of any other mainland State and, furthermore, there have been no restrictions on the use of water in South Australia in recent years. This has been achieved notwithstanding the fact that South Australia is the driest State in the Commonwealth. It is only natural that the Government should look ahead to the future needs of the State in relation to its water storages. As most of the possible water catchment sites suitable for storage have already been exploited, the River Murray becomes the logical site for future storage and Chowilla offers the best site for storage of the dimensions required to ensure that our future needs are adequately provided for.

Before South Australia can construct a dam at Chowilla it must have the concurrence of the States of New South Wales and Victoria. It is necessary to amend the River Murray Waters Agreement Act, to which New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and the Commonwealth Government are signatories. It is pleasing to note that agreement has been reached by all parties concerned and this Bill allows that agreement to be put into effect. Obviously, the construction of the Chowilla dam will be a major undertaking requiring the best possible equipment and technical knowledge. We often hear of suggestions of the necessity to keep intact the Snowy Mountains Authority with its vast amount of knowledge and huge store of equipment. No greater opportunity exists for the useful employment of the human and material machinery of the Snowy Mountains Authority than that offering at Chowilla.

The storage of approximately 4,750,000 acre feet of water at Chowilla will allow the continued expansion of industry in South Australia, both secondary and primary, for at least the next quarter of a century. It will supply the water needs of a population of up to 2,000,000 people. Many people these days seem to derive great satisfaction from indulging in flights of fantasy on the question of developing the north of Australia. It may be that this development is necessary, but let us not neglect the development of many fertile areas in our midst which will only require finance in amounts that we can afford.

The River Murray area offers great scope for development; favoured by a suitable

climate it is ideal for many classes of irrigated crops. Some caution, however, should be exercised as to the types of crop grown. Over the years produce peculiar to the River Murray districts has suffered from the effects of greatly fluctuating prices due largely to overproduction in the area and in other parts of the world. It is therefore necessary that we should make an intense study of both present and future market needs and potential before becoming involved in substantial capital investment.

The tourist industry along the Murray Valley is of great value to the district. The responsible authorities are very conscious of this and do all in their power to promote this attraction. The completed Chowilla storage, which will be of great length—about 102 river miles—will add to the scenic attraction of this area. I have been referring largely to the benefits to be derived by the River Murray areas as a result of this Bill. Equally important is the assurance of an adequate supply of water to a large part of South Australia for both domestic and industrial purposes. The impact of this on the economy of the country could well be as great as, if not greater than, it will be on the River Murray area itself. Mr. President, I am pleased to be associated with this important piece of legislation which will go down in history as a monument to the foresight of the Premier of South Australia, Sir Thomas Playford. I support the second reading of this Bill.

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

EXCESSIVE RENTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.38 p.m. the Council adjourned until Thursday, November 7, at 2.15 p.m.