**FRUIT FLY COMPENSATION BILL 1958**

**House of Assembly, 26 August 1958, pages 524-5**

Second reading

**The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Agriculture**) moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to provide for compensation for loss arising from measures to eradicate fruit fly.

Motion carried. Resolution agreed to in Committee and adopted by the House. Bill introduced and read a first time.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I move—

*That this Bill be now read a second time.* Its purpose is to enable the Government to pay compensation for losses arising from the campaign for the eradication of fruit fly during the period since the passing of a similar Bill during the 1957 session. Six proclamations relating to areas in the vicinity of Port Augusta, Croydon, Clarence Park, Edwardstown and Walkerville were issued during that period to prevent persons from carrying away fruit from the infected areas. Following the practice of other years, the Government proposes that compensation shall be given for loss arising from these measures, and is accordingly introducing this Bill.

The explanation of the clauses is as follows: —Clause 3 provides for compensation for loss arising by reason of any act of the officers of the Department of Agriculture on any land within the areas defined by the proclamations and provides also for compensation for loss arising from the prohibition of the removal of fruit from any such land. Clause 4 fixes the time limit within which claims for compensation must be lodged by February 1, 1959.

That concludes the Parliamentary Draftsman’s report. For the interest of honourable members, I might mention that on taking over the appointment of Minister of Agriculture I asked a question about fruit fly control the answer to which I thought might be relevant today. Not wanting to take anything for granted, I asked a question: What would have happened had the control measures been halfhearted

or not taken at all? Following that question, we studied the matter fairly closely and I have a statement from the Director of Agriculture that may interest the House. It gives an approximate reply to such questions and is as follows:—

1. Expenditure.—Details of yearly expenditure on fruit fly eradication are shown in the attached statement;—

To June 30, 1958, such expenditure totals £l,594 637-£l,194,182 on eradication measures and £400,455 on compensation.

An estimate of the loss which would have been sustained by the State if eradication had not been undertaken or half-hearted control measures employed must be speculative. However, if certain assumptions are made we can arrive at an approximate figure of the cost of letting the pest establish itself. It is reasonable to assume that in the absence of the measures taken since first discovery of fruit fly in 1947, the pest would have become completely dispersed and variably established in all fruit areas within about three years. Such circumstance would have led to the following consequences:—

*(а)* There would have been a complete loss of the New Zealand citrus export market by about 1950, and a further indirect loss to the citrus industry through depressed Australian prices arising from local marketing of unexportable quantities.

(b) Restrictions on the export to Victoria of citrus, tomatoes and other fruits. At a minimum, these restrictions would involve 100 per cent inspection and condemnation of the whole of any line in which infestation was found.

(c) Total exclusion by Tasmania of tomatoes and other fruits which we now export to that State.

 (d) Diversion of fruit from canning to dry­

ing in those districts where the pest was not controlled efficiently. No can­nery can take the risk of even odd pieces of maggot ridden fruit getting through to the canning line, because on cooking, maggots in the fruit emerge and float in the syrup.

 (e) Addition of onerous and costly control measures to the orchard programme with consequent increases in produc­tion eosts

(f) Necessity for home-gardeners to engage also in troublesome control measures, which in most cases would fail for mid-season and late-ripening fruits.

It is estimated that back yard fruit plantings in Adelaide and country towns aggregate the equivalent of 7,000 to 8,000 acres. Establishment of fruit fly would result in loss of much of this home production and because of increasing demand for commercially produced fruit, prices would inevitably rise. It is certain that dispersal and establishment of fruit fly in South Australia would have involved enormous direct and indirect losses to the fruit industry and to the community generally. Such losses could easily have amounted to several million pounds annually, representing over the last ten to twelve years a total loss of £30-40,000,000.

1. Fruit Fly in 1957-58.—During the year outbreaks of fruit fly occurred at Port Augusta and in the suburbs of Adelaide. These were all caused by Mediterranean Fly, not seen in South Australia since widespread suburban occurrences were eradicated about eight years ago. Queensland Fly, the species involved in Adelaide in past seasons, was not encountered last year. This changed pattern indicates that last year’s outbreaks were the result of introduction of infested fruit from Western Australia. It is also the first firm indication that recurring trouble with the pest is due to fresh introductions from outside the State, and not to carryover from local outbreaks. This pinpoints the importance of quarantine and publicity measures aimed at preventing the casual introduction of dangerous fruits by interstate travellers.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

**FRUIT FLY (COMPENSATION) BILL 1958**

**House of Assembly, 3 September 1958, pages695-703**

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 26. Page 525.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Edwardstown)—I support the second reading of this Bill, which provides for compensation of certain fruitgrowers. Costly road blocks have become necessary because some people are so unreasonable as to attempt to bring fruit into this State from infected areas in other States. I refer in particular to the road block at Port Augusta. As regards Croydon, Clarence Park, Edwardstown and Walkerville, I know something about the Edwardstown area and can assure the House that I am not satisfied with the position. Generally, there is a need for the department to make better provision for those engaged in the stripping of fruit in the affected areas . Although I realize that what I am about to say may be contentious and that it would be difficult to provide the same concessions or conveniences as those normally provided in industry, I should like the Minister to give some attention to improving the facilities and amenities for these people. I realize also that different conditions apply on different occasions as regards fruit retained by the householder. I think I am in a position to speak on this, having been in an area subjected to fruit fly control for four years, three of them consecutive. Generally, it occurs beyond a quarter-mile radius, but within a mile radius of the infected area.

I wrote to the Minister of Agriculture on January 31. I was not satisfied with the report I received from a certain resident close to the particular area where the fruit fly was found. Apparently when the householder was absent a request was made that certain fruit be left untouched in the hope that she could use it when she returned within the next couple of days. But, instead of that request being granted, all the fruit, including the citrus within her property, was stripped; yet next door nothing was done.

In the same street where the fruit fly had been found, fruit was hanging over the fence into the street a few doors away; yet the person who first complained had her fruit taken away, while almost alongside where the outbreak occurred fruit was hanging over the fence for weeks before it was taken.

I believe that, in all organizations employing labour, there is a foreman, or leading hand in charge. In this case, it is reasonable to assume that the appropriate leading hand would be available to supervise the personnel engaged. Later, I received a reply from the Minister, dated March 19, indicating that in Narkunda Street on January 18 apricot trees were inspected and the fruit stripped. Then on January 20 picked gangs were engaged to remove fruits susceptible to fruit fly. During the first pick, ripening fruit, including coloured citrus, was removed. I believe greater discretion could be used in stripping fruit. I give this illustration because people are at least entitled to have their cases heard by their representatives, though I do not want to go into too much detail. In some cases, it is a positive hardship on people to lose the fruit they are trying to grow. In many cases they go to the expense of engaging labour to keep their gardens in order. This sense of civic pride has to be recognized. It is not a matter of commercial value, but the compensation paid for the fruit in these cases will not compensate the people for the loss of fruit that has reached the ripening stage and could be used for jam-making, preserves, or as table fruit. That point should form the basis for discussion.

If there should be an outbreak of fruit fly in a particular area, my views would be in keeping with the general feeling amongst people. Let us take the first 100 or 200 yard radius, but first give the people an opportunity to take what fruit they can for jam-making purposes from the mature fruit. I will deal with the non-mature fruit later on.

Mr. Quirke—Can they not do that now?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—They have the right and I think the department would desire them to, but it seems that some miscarriage of justice has occurred somewhere, so that that is not done. I do not like to blame people for their misdeeds, but it comes back to the officers in charge of the gangs who indicate what is to be done within 100yds. radius of where the fly is found. They warn the people that if they have fruit they should use it. It is announced in the press and is meant to be known, but it is not always carried out. It is a question of trying not to pull somebody to pieces, but to get the department’s policy carried out. That has not been the case in the past. If we have to go to the extent of giving reasonable notice to surmount that hurdle and there may be a fear of certain animals kept by the householders, surely the department can decide on some other assistance with the right of entry without notices to “Beware of the dog. “ I wrote to the Minister regarding matters about which I was not satisfied and have received no actual reply, only an acknowledgment. That was in March. Inspectors sent to my place by the department told me that it would not be possible to make marmalade jam from my citrus fruit because it had not reached maturity. People may consider that they have been harshly treated if they are not allowed to keep their fruit for jam making

Mr. Dunnage—What do you suggest should be done with it?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—When the fruit fly is discovered those living within from 100 to 200yds. should be immediately notified that they may use the ripe fruit for their own purposes, but when the fruit is not suitable for jam making I agree that the department should dump it at sea.

Mr. Dunnage—They take it out to sea and dump it and when it is washed ashore they collect it and take it back to sea again.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Instead of erecting an incinerator of its own, the Unley Corporation, with which the honourable member has been associated for years, took its rubbish to an incinerator in Adelaide. Had it constructed its own incinerator it would then have been able to destroy the affected fruit found in its area. Most of Clarence Park is in the Unley Corporation area and for a number of years Clarence Park, Black Forest, Goodwood and Goodwood Park have been in the fruit fly affected areas. Fruit from these homes could have been destroyed locally if the Unley Corporation had erected its own incinerator.

Mr. Dunnage—What are we to do with the fruit now *1*

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I support the action taken by the department. I do not favour the suggestion that the fruit collected from the various affected areas be made into jam at the Yatala Labor Prison and then distributed to our mental and other Government hospitals. I think an improvement could be made in the amenities for people engaged in this work. People within a quarter-mile radius of an outbreak should be permitted to make fruit into jam. A more realistic approach should be adopted in relation to citrus fruit, which should be left on the trees until all stone fruits are used, and the method of disposal should be changed. I am not satisfied that the department has solved the problem by lure spraying to attract the fly. The spray now used on citrus trees, like the original spray, prevents breathing through the leaves, with the result that they shrivel and subsequently fall, but I have not noticed any such effect on stone-fruit trees. If the department can solve the problem of spraying, it will help people who grow their own fruit. I support the second reading of the Bill, because it provides for compensation to people who lose their fruit through stripping.

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens)—With great pleasure I support the second reading of this Bill, which provides for payment of compensation to people in proclaimed areas affected by the scourge of fruit fly. I am sure members on both sides will support the Bill, if only for that reason, for without it people could not receive the compensation to which they are entitled. I rise to speak also because Walkerville, which is in my electorate, is within one of the proclaimed areas.

I pay a tribute to the general public for its attitude on this matter. Fruit fly comees on people without any warning; overnight they can lose the product of their gardens orchards, and nothing can be done about it. Although some people buck against the regulations the great majority appreciate the true position and co-operate with the authorities. In fact, without the co-operation of the general public, the scheme might collapse. Most of the people in the affectedi part of my electorate are home gardeners, but one commercial grower is affected. This man’s livelihood would have gone overnight but for the able assistance given by the Hon. G. G. Pearson when Minister of Agriculture, and I sincerely thank him for his efforts. We must regard this matter from the State point of view, and try to appreciate what the position would have been if the department had not gone on with a vigorous campaign to eradicate fruit fly or confine it within set limits. We have all heard what happened in Victoria. New Zealand has absolutely refused to take supplies from Mildura and other affected areas, not only this year, but for some years hence. From this it can be seen what could happen if fruit fly touched our river areas. It is only due to the restrictive measures of the department in confining this scourge to certain areas that we are able to enjoy free marketing facilities, especially for the canneries. Canneries throughout the State employ thousands of people at peak periods, but if fruit fly became rampant not only would they suffer but thousands of people would lose seasonal employment. If only from that aspect the fruit fly campaign has been worth while. In the district of Hindmarsh a vigorous campaign is being carried out, and recently I saw a road block near Port Augusta put there to prevent diseased fruit coming from the western State. In his second reading speech the Minister stated that so far the scheme has cost South Australia £1,594,637, of which £400,455 has been paid in compensation to growers, the balance being eradication costs. That seems a large sum, but when we consider the disastrous results the State would have suffered if the scheme had not been carried out we realize that it has been money well spent. The Minister told us what the position would have been but for this scheme. For instance, we would have lost the New Zealand market, which is of prime importance. Because of the presence of fruit fly in Victoria that State has lost some trade with New Zealand, probably to the advantage of South Australia.

The fruit fly eradication scheme has meant that we can still export vegetables and citrus fruits to Victoria and other States. Many of our market garden products are exported to Victoria and Tasmania, and a valuable trade been built up. It is difficult to eradicate the fruit fly, but I hope that a remedy will be found. We are at least confining the fruit fly to certain areas, and until a remedy is found we should continue to confine it. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill, which will enable people to be compensated for loss of fruit, and I pay tribute to the Minister of Agriculture, and the former Minister, for then efforts and particularly to the general public for the way they have co-operated with the department, for without their co-operation the scheme must have failed.

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I support the Bill and endorse the remarks of the member for Torrens (Mr. Coumbe), who said many things that I was going to say. I express my appreciation for the way people in my district have co-operated in the scheme to eradicate the fruit fly, which has inflicted itself on the western suburbs for the first time. No one finds pleasure in losing his fruit, but people in Hindmarsh and Flinders Park particularly have willingly assisted departmental officers who have taken their fruit in an effort to save gardens in the metropolitan area and also commercial gardens. I agree with the member for Torrens that not only the commercial gardeners would suffer if the fruit fly became established. I have seen the damage caused by the fruit fly in Western Australia and Queensland, and I realize that if the fly became established in South Australia there would be no backyard gardens in the metropolitan area in a short time.

I congratulate the Minister of Agriculture and the department on the effective work done in my district. Departmental officers have shown residents the greatest consideration and given them the best possible advice. The work has been carried out smoothly, and I hope their efforts to eradicate the fruit fly will be successful. I do not hold myself out as an expert, but I wonder whether it would be possible to reduce the area being stripped. I understand that investigations along those lines are being carried out and I am confident that the department will reduce the area if it is possible. I believe that this year departmental officers have been far more considerate and have allowed people to retain fruit that is ripening, provided they do not dispose of it in other areas.

Mr. KING (Chaffey)—-I, too, support the Bill, which is of tremendous importance to my district and neighbouring districts on the Murray. Between Waikerie and Benmark private and Government capital invested in the fruitgrowing industry totals over £15,000,000. This includes money invested in orchards, vineyards, factories, irrigation works, and other activities associated with the industry. There are about 25,000 people dependent directly or indirectly on the income from that industry. According to the season and ruling prices that income is between £5,000,000 and £8,000,000 a year, which is a considerable contribution towards the State’s income, and it makes itself felt as the money passes through the community. I think the member for Torrens has adequately covered the effect the fruit fly would have on our markets if it became permanently established. Much of our fresh fruit is marketed in other States. I remember that back in 1938 I had to certify that a certain citrus shipment—and I handled many of them —was of fruit that was free from fruit fly and that no fruit fly was known to exist within a mile of the orchard in which it was produced.

The fruit fly is feared in all countries. The action that has been taken by the Government, with the support of people whose fruit has been stripped, and the careful way. the Department of Agriculture has carried out the scheme have resulted in the river areas remaining free of the fruit fly, although some infested fruit has been intercepted only a few miles from our borders. I hope the Minister will eventually establish permanent road blocks on the three main inlets into South Australia so that no fruit fly can be admitted to South Australia. This would be of great benefit to the fruit industry, and home gardeners would not be annoyed by seeing their fruit taken away for disposal at sea or in some other way.

I pay a tribute to the good-natured way in which metropolitan people have allowed their fruit to be stripped. In some cases it has taken place three or four years in succession and it must be most disheartening to see favourite fruit taken when it is just ready for the bottle. We hope the effort by the department will be successful and that the trials we have had to put up with will be worth while. People engaged in fruitgrowing in river districts are thankful for the prompt and effective action taken. They appreciate the way people in the metropolitan area have submitted to the regulations.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra)—I commend the Government for the persistent action taken in the attempt to keep down the fruit fly trouble. If it were allowed to spread to other fruitgrowing areas it could seriously affect our economic position. I do not know the basis on which compensation is paid. How does the scheme work? What is paid, for instance, for a patch of three or four dozen tomato plants, or the fruit taken from the tree? If the incidence of this fruit fly menace were to spread to the hills would the commercial growers there be entitled to compensation? We have already established a precedent by paying compensation for fruit taken from backyards. If these commercial growers in the hills had to be compensated the sum involved would be terrific. Would they be paid on the same basis as the growers of fruit in the metropolitan area or would some other scheme be adopted? I would like the Minister to explain the position. When an area is proclaimed under the Act and com­pensation becomes payable for the fruit stripped, why don’t the growers do their own stripping? When fruit is sold in a garden the customer does not pick it himself, but gets it after it has been picked and packed. Now it is only after the fruit is stripped that the compensation claim is submitted. Is there any check on the quantity of fruit stripped?

Mr. Dunnage’s proposal about the use of fruit stripped from trees was laughed at, but enormous quantities of it could be made into jam. Members should study the life history of the fruit fly. We should not believe that there is a possibility of infestation again when the fruit is washed on the beach after it has been dumped into the sea. The maggot in the fruit has to incubate in the ground for a period and it does not emerge as a fly until the next year. There is no danger from the fruit that is washed on to the beach and it is hard to visualize a better way of getting rid of the infested fruit. In the United States of America they have eliminated the fruit fly by proclaiming the whole area. All fruit is taken from it and this is done for several years in succession in the attempt to get rid of the fly. Here in South Australia a fresh infestation can take place at any time because of the importation of fruit from Western Australia and New South Wales. A friend of mine picked up some people at Outer Harbour and took them to the river districts. When they got to Nuriootpa these people said, "We will have some Western Australian fruit that we succeeded in getting past the inspectors.” My friend, knowing the danger, took that fruit into a nearby winery and threw it into a boiler. The fruit that these people were taking into the river district could have been infested, for the infestation at Port Augusta obviously came from Western Australia. I do not know how we can overcome this human frailty that causes people to attempt to sidetrack the regulations. What is being done is effective.

Before this legislation is accepted will the Minister outline the basis of compensation and indicate the Government’s attitude in relation to any infestation that took place in areas where fruit, is grown commercially? I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr. JENKINS (Stirling)—I support the Bill. It is primarily for the purpose of compensating those people whose fruit trees have been stripped and it is similar to previous legislation. The last paragraph of the Minister’s introductory speech indicates that the department has an appreciation of what is happening and how to deal with infestations. The Minister said: —Fruit Fly in 1957-58.-—During the year outbreaks of fruit fly occurred at Port Augusta and in the suburbs of Adelaide. These were all caused by Mediterranean Fruit Fly, not seen in South Australia since widespread suburban occurrences were eradicated about eight years ago. Queensland Fly, the species involved in Adelaide in past seasons, was not encountered last year. This changed pattern indicates that last year’s outbreaks were the result of introduction of infested fruit from Western Australia. It is also the first firm indication that recurring trouble with the pest is due to fresh introductions from outside the State, and not to carryover from local outbreaks. This pinpoints the importance of quarantine and publicity measures aimed at preventing the casual introduction of dangerous fruits by interstate travellers.

The member for Edwardstown (Mr. Frank Walsh) advocated that only ripe fruit be picked and the green left on the tree. I believe that would be a retrograde step, for some years ago when in Western Australia I visited the markets with the member for Gascoyne, who came from a fruitgrowing area, and he told me that the fruit fly infests the green fruit as much as the ripe fruit. Mr. Dunnage’s suggestion that the fruit be made into jam is as reasonable a proposition as the suggestion of the member for Edwardstown that it be used by growers whose trees were being stripped.

The total cost of eradication and compensation is £1,554,000, of which £400,000 represents compensation. I was told three years ago that fruit fly in Western Australia cost the export trade over £1,250,000 annualty, so we can appreciate that if we had not spent this money on eradication and infestations got out of hand it could easily cost us more than £1,500,000 annually. There are about 7,000 or 8 000 acres of home gardens in South Australia and if the fly got out of hand those gardens would be worthless. The general public appreciates the department’s efforts in trying to eradicate the fly not only for the good of the commercial grower but the home grower as well.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla)—I endorse what the previous speakers have said about the excellent work being performed by the department in combating the ravages of fruit fly and endeavoring to prevent its entry to the State. I believe that the notices erected on the roads regarding fruit fly could be improved in advertising value. Some have not impressed me by their appearance and I do not think they have had much impact on motorists travelling from one State to another. I feel that many people in other States where fruit fly is prevalent do not appreciate our concern about its possible entry here. I suggest that a much more effective advertising campaign could be carried out in other States with a view to informing the people generally of the importance of the matter to South Australia.

I do not suggest this is a new idea: it may have been thought of before; but the Agriculture Department might consider taking up this matter on a larger scale. It could have advertising slides in picture theatres in other States; a documentary film distributed for public screening and also for screening in interstate schools, and special tourist literature available to prospective visitors, to this State, emphasising what the fruit fly would do if firmly established here. In other words we should try to impress upon adults and children in all other States the importance of this matter to South Australia.

I believe there is widespread ignorance on the subject and possibly the persons concerned in the incident mentioned by Mr. Quirke smuggled fruit in partly because they didn’t realize the importance of the question here: they were acting in an irresponsible way mainly through ignorance. If advertising were carried out logically and thoroughly in all other States, although the campaign would cost money, it might result in considerable savings in the end. The prevention of fruit fly is expensive and I do not begrudge the expenditure because it is money well spent, but any method we could adopt to effect savings in that respect should be considered.

Although we have road blocks I am sure irresponsible people can get fruit through. That would not be at all difficult for a person determined to evade supervision at a road block. It seems to me impossible to guard against the entry of fruit at all roads leading into the State. We can guard the main roads but there are many minor roads and I am certain fruit comes through those channels. I have no doubt that deliberate smuggling goes on.

I suggest that this question of widespread advertising along the lines I have indicated be investigated with a view to being followed up if thought practicable. I can see nothing against it. I believe that if we really had a heavy campaign along these lines whereby both adults and children in other States were thoroughly educated, we could save ourselves much trouble and expense. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa)—I agree with all that has been said in favour of the fruit fly campaign and with the measures adopted by the Government to combat this menace. I found the speech of the honourable member for Whyalla very interesting. He advocated that publicity be given to the very great dangers inherent in a careless approach to eradication measures, and he urged that people should be educated on the dire need to keep out fruit fly. Publicity is of vital importance, and I fully endorse what the member for Whyalla said in that regard.

Many people do not realize just how important it is to this State to keep the fly out. The road blocks are most necessary, but they in themselves are not a complete guarantee that infected fruit or fruit which is susceptible to infestation does not get through into our State. The human factor comes into the matter, and that human factor can be assisted through publicity and advertising to make people realize the importance of abiding by our law against introducing certain fruits. Once we have had a publicity campaign on the importance of this subject, I would advocate that very little consideration be given to anyone who flouts the law and introduces fruit. Ignorance of the law is no excuse at any time, and this menace of fruit fly is so very great that I would like to see not only severe but vicious penalties imposed on any person so careless of his public responsibility as to introduce fruit which could lead to infestation in this State.

I agree entirely with the Government’s eradication measures. The amount of money expended to date is very minute compared with the ultimate good which would arise if we had complete freedom from this fly. The generous co-operation of garden owners who have lost their fruit in this campaign has been referred to. I look forward to hearing the reply of the Minister to Mr. Quirke as to what would happen if the fly became established in commercial fruit growing areas. it would be beyond the means of the State to fully compensate growers if that occurred. Although I admire the co-operation of those who have had the incidence of fruit fly in their areas, I think they are only doing their natural duty in co-operating to the full in keeping our State free of this horrible menace. I have much pleasure in supporting this legislation which compensates those whose fruit is being taken.

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray)—I support the Bill. I feel that all members are very conscious that fruit fly can be a great menace to our fruit growing industry. We realize that the Government, through the Department of Agriculture, has taken certain steps in an attempt to eradicate the fly that has come here from other States. Certain people have questioned whether the compensation is being overdone, but I imagine every person who loses fruit feels entitled to some form of compensation.

Every member who has spoken has been in favour of the precautions that have been taken. It has been suggested that the steps taken to police these precautions are not sufficient. I was particularly pleased to hear my colleague, the member for Whyalla, say that it was necessary to give added publicity to this menace. While returning here from Western Australia recently I was particularly pleased to hear continual announcements over the broadcasting system of Western Australia advising people of the urgent need to dispose of any fruit they had before entering South Australia. The person in charge on that occasion stressed the fact that South Australia was a clean State and that a very heavy penalty would be imposed on anyone guilty of bringing fruit into this State. I felt that that was something that could be emulated in other States.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—They have an officer on the train to advise passengers.

Mr. BYWATERS—Yes, and the same thing applies on the Melbourne express. Each morning an officer of the department boards the train at Mount Lofty and conscientiously approaches every passenger to explain the danger of fruit fly. I have known that man for many years and know him to be a conscientious officer and trusted servant of the Department of Agriculture. However, I point out that Mount Lofty is a long way from the Victorian border. Passengers disembark at Murray Bridge for refreshment, and if they have not otherwise been informed of the position they may be totally unaware that fruit fly exists. They leave the train to have breakfast and could dispose of fruit that was infested with maggots. Murray Bridge is very close to the fruit growing area of Mypolonga and the adjacent river areas where a good deal of fruit is grown, and I, like the member for Burra, wonder what would happen if an area comprising approximately 1,500 acres had to be declared a restricted area. The glasshouse business in Murray Bridge is rapidly developing and a number of growers in that area would be affected. I suggest to the Minister of Agriculture that if possible an officer of the department board the train at a point much nearer the border than Mount Lofty.

The officers in charge of road blocks are conscientious, but, as the member for Whyalla said, there is nothing to stop people from bringing in, in suitcases, fruit such as custard apples, a fruit particularly susceptible to fruit fly, or other types of fruit. These could quite easily be smuggled in without the officers of the road block having any idea of what was happening. More publicity needs to be given to this matter.

The honourable member for Ridley (Mr. Stott) asked the then Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Pearson, whether the Government would impose severe penalties, as suggested by the honourable member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke) a moment ago. I agree that severe penalties should be imposed on people who wittingly flout the regulations. On that occasion, the Minister said that he relied on co-operation rather than on trying to apply severe penalties. If publicity were given to this and, notwithstanding that, people flagrantly ignored the law, then they should be penalized heavily, because our fruit industry is worth a good deal to us. As was mentioned in the second reading speech of the Minister, we have spent £1,500,000 since the fruit fly first came to this State, but it has saved us in that time about £30,000,000 to £40,000,000. That money, I take it, represents the value of the actual fruit that would have been lost had these precautions not been taken, but that would be only a part of the whole picture because so many men and women rely on this industry for a living. The over-all picture cannot be painted in terms of pounds, shillings and pence because it would not be possible to estimate the total amounts involved. For these reasons I support the second reading.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Agriculture)—In closing the debate on this Bill, I want to make a few remarks on some points raised by honourable members. I should say, first of all, that I appreciate their comments generally and am glad to note their cooperation in supporting the measure without questioning its purpose. Some points I am unable to answer tonight, but I have made a note of them. I shall have to look up some old letters with which I am not conversant, in order to reply to members, so I shall not deal with them now.

The first point is the flight distance of the fly—in other words, the radius around a fruit fly area selected as the best possible distance, which it would not be safe to reduce. Nobody can be quite certain what the absolutely safe radius is. Early opinion was that it should be double the present mile radius, which, as far as we can judge, has proved effective because outbreaks have not occurred in any given area infested in the previous season. However, it cannot be established with any certainty. All we can do is use the best scientific opinion available in selecting a figure. So far, we believe the distance chosen has been effective.

As regards turning the fruit into jam, unlike many members I did not laugh when the suggestion was made. In fact, I do not think it is by any means stupid. While I do not agree that the suggestion is ridiculous, I do say that it is not a practicable proposition. The difficulty involved in making use of this fruit is that it can be classed in two ways. Firstly, there is the fruit stripped early in the campaign. As soon as an outbreak is discovered the gangs go into the area and strip the fruit

At that early stage in the campaign the fruit is highly dangerous as regards further infestation and must be disposed of as safely and quickly as possible. The experts all agree that the burial of the fruit is unsatisfactory. It is not safe because the fly can get out of the fruit and escape through the ground. By far the best method of fruit disposal so far devised is dumping it at sea. Early in the campaign infected fruit is dumped at sea as quickly as possible. There is no fruit stripped that is not dumped within 24 hours; in fact, it may be only a few hours before it reaches the bottom of the sea. I emphasize that a large percentage of that fruit stays there. Only occasionally a bag bursts and a few bits of fruit are washed up on the beaches after certain westerly gales. It is only a small amount and is attended to immediately. We have been unable to discover a better solution than that. A further point is that the fruit stripped is often immature and quite useless for jam-making or anything else. Again, it is so assorted and mixed that it would be impossible, even if all the other conditions were satisfied, to make practical use of it.

The honourable member for Burra asked two questions on compensation: first, concerning the basis of compensation; secondly, concerning the policy of the Government as regards compensation if there were a big outbreak of fruit fly in a fruitgrowing district. Each Bill dealing with fruit fly is self-contained and does not amend any previous measure. We have a compensation committee composed of Sir Kingsley Paine, Mr. A. G. Strickland who is head of the Plant Division in the Department of Agriculture and has been the direct controlling authority since the first outbreak in 1947, and Mr. Ragless, a private citizen. They are very experienced in these matters. Honourable members are aware that Sir Kingsley Paine has had extensive experience with Roval Commissions and has often been called upon to deal with relief funds.

Mr. O ’Halloran—He is a man of wide experience and great understanding.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—Quite so. I do not think any honourable member would suggest that we could appoint a better man. During a stripping campaign each householder who has his fruit or certain plants removed receives a receipt showing the quantity, and this receipt is attached to any claim made for compensa­tion. The committee gives these applications deep consideration and its members inform themselves of the prices of fruit and vegetables throughout the season from the various organizations and take into account the stage at which the fruit was stripped.. If it happens to be tomatoes, they take into account the date of planting and the time at which the plants were removed. A person who loses his tomato plants in December would suffer a greater loss than one who lost them in February or March. The committee is prepared to hear appeals, but it receives remarkably few. A claimant is entitled to bring witnesses or submit other evidence. I cannot recall a single instance of a man complaining to me about compensation received, therefore, the committee must be satisfying the claimants. The principle adopted is for the committee to assess the losses sustained and then pay 100 per cent compensation.

I cannot answer the question regarding what would be the Government’s policy if there were an outbreak in a fruitgrowing area. It would depend on how serious the outbreak was and the cost of dealing with it. I cannot commit the Government as to its policy on a hypothetical case. The matter would be considered after an outbreak had occurred. The very careful control methods adopted have so far protected our fruitgrowing areas.

Mr. Dunnage—What compensation is paid to people who lose other than fruit? One man had 19 peach trees poisoned. Would compensation be paid for that?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I heard the honourable member say on a previous occasion that he had received a letter from someone full of complaints, and on investigation I found that they could not be sustained. This matter has been given the most careful consideration by the best trained technical officers. It would be useless for me to examine the trees mentioned and try to arrive at the cause of their death when we have technical officers to do this. I am referring to the previous letter received by the honourable member.

Mr. Dunnage—Is compensation paid for other than fruit?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I have little confidence in the merits of the claim mentioned, knowing the history of the previous claim. Some honourable members have referred to road blocks. These are not and cannot be 100 per cent effective, but undoubtedly they have prevented infested fruit from coming in from Western Australia. We have another road block at Yamba, near Renmark, operating 24 hours a day. The number of roads leading to South Australia from Victoria present a most difficult problem. Several important roads leading across the border could be blocked, as they converge to a large extent on Tailem Bend, but the volume of traffic there is so great that the difficulties of establishing them would be immense. In winter, when the danger of infestation is at its lowest, the department is making careful inquiries into what could be done with road blocks somewhere in Victoria. I do not know if they would be practicable, but we are partly protected from Victoria by the vigilance of the Victorian authorities, who have road blocks in several parts of that State and are wide awake to the danger of infestation from New South Wales. In a sense, Victoria acts as a filter for New South Wales. We are giving attention to certain districts around Griffith in New South Wales with the idea of doing more to protect ourselves from that direction.

This matter is on the agenda for discussion at the Agricultural Council in Western Australia next month. It is hoped that road blocks can be established in New South Wales, which will assist us. I thank members for their co-operation in this work, and assure them that I will take up any complaint voiced.

At times I admit there must be cause for complaint, and every time one is received most careful consideration is given to it.

Bill read a second time.