**VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT BILL 1954**

**Legislative Assembly, 5 October 1954, pages 874-5**

Second reading

**The Hon. C. S. HINCKS (Minister of Lands)—**I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time. Section 23 of the Vermin Act provides for the imposition of penalties upon owners and occupiers of land who fail to destroy vermin upon their land as required by the Act. Subsection (2), which was enacted in 1945, imposes penalties on owners or occupiers who fail to destroy rabbit burrows when required to do so by notice given by the council under section 2-2a. The penalty in each case is the same. For a first offence the section provides for a minimum penalty of £2 and a maximum penalty of £5; for a second offence the minimum penalty is £5 and the maximum £20; and for subsequent offences the minimum penalty is £20 and the maximum penalty £50. The Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association has asked that these penalties be increased. The association states that it frequently occurs that fines of £2 or £3 are imposed for breaches of this Act and points out that, under existing conditions, this is not a sufficient deterrent to secure that landowners will comply with the duties imposed upon them by the Act.

Accordingly, the Bill provides that the penalties under section 23 are to be as follows. In the case of a first offence, the minimum 'penalty is to be £5 and the maximum penalty I £10. For a second offence the minimum penalty is fixed at £15 and the maximum at £30. In the ease of a subsequent offence the minimum penalty is to be £25 whilst the maximum penalty is left at the existing amount of £50. It should be borne in mind that section 75 of the Justices Act authorizes a court to dismiss a complaint or to inflict a nominal penalty in the case of an offence of a trifling nature and, in the case of a first offence, to reduce the amount prescribed for the penalty for the offence in question.

Mr. O ’HALLORAN secured the adjournment of the debate.