

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.**

Wednesday, November 11, 1953.

The **SPEAKER** (Hon. Sir Robert Nicholls) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

**QUESTIONS.****MEDICAL BENEFITS SOCIETIES.**

**Mr. FRANK WALSH**—The following is an extract from a letter I have received from the Underwriting and Insurance Company Proprietary Limited of Melbourne:—

The law as it stands adequately controls organizations registered under the Commonwealth Life Insurance Act, and those "approved" under the Commonwealth Health (Hospital and Medical Benefits) Regulations, but any organization not so registered or "approved" and which is entitled to operate in your State is not subject to any control or supervision and, presumably, so long as it conforms to the requirements of the Companies Act, can operate as it sees fit.

The letter goes on to say that the problem of the adequate control of such organizations has been effectively dealt with by legislation in Victoria and that it is quite competent for the South Australian Parliament to pass legislation on the matter if it desires. Can the Acting Leader of the House say whether the Government has received a request similar to that contained in this letter? If not, I am prepared to hand it to the Minister so that the Government may consider the introduction of legislation similar to that introduced in Victoria to control medical benefits organizations not registered or approved under Commonwealth legislation with a view to safeguarding the interests of subscribers to those organizations.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—If the honourable member will hand me the letter I shall be pleased to take up the matter with my colleague, the Minister of Health, and bring down a report as soon as possible.

**ROYAL PROGRESS.**

**Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS**—Can the Acting Leader of the Government say whether the committee arranging the Royal Tour is satisfied that all the people expecting to line the route of the Royal Progress will be accommodated? If not, will the committee consider the continuance of the route down Gouger Street to West Terrace, instead of turning into Morphet Street, so that the space for sight-seers may be increased by several hundred yards while increasing the time of the journey by only six minutes?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The most careful consideration has been given to the route of the Royal Progress, but, as the honourable member has mentioned this matter, I will take it up with the appropriate authorities and later advise him of their decision.

**Mr. O'HALLORAN**—Has the Acting Leader of the Government a reply to my recent question regarding the reservation of space for members of the Justices Association wishing to view the Royal Progress through Adelaide?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Space has been made available for members of the Justices Association. I have a rather lengthy letter on this matter and I shall be happy to make it available to the Leader of the Opposition.

**WALLAROO SHIPPING.**

**Mr. McALEES**—Recently I asked the Premier a question regarding shipping at Wallaroo, and the Premier promised to make inquiries. As a number of waterside workers are receiving only attendance money, can the Acting Leader of the Government say whether steps are being taken to ensure that more ships call at Wallaroo in the near future?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have no further information on this matter, but I know that considerable quantities of grain have been carted from the eastern side of Spencer Gulf to Wallaroo. I will remind the Premier of his promise.

**KNAPSACK PUMPS ON LOCOMOTIVES.**

**Mr. MICHAEL**—I have received a letter from the Lower North Fire Fighting Association stating that it has received advice from the Director of Emergency Fire Services that the Railways Commissioner regrets being unable to agree to a request that knapsack pumps be provided on railway engines to be used by crews in preventing the spread of fires adjacent to railway tracks. The association is perturbed by the Commissioner's decision and has asked the member for Gouger and myself to bring this matter again to the notice of the Railways Commissioner. Will the Minister of Railways take up this matter with the Commissioner to see whether his previous decision can be reviewed?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Yes, I shall be glad to do so. The crews are equipped with fire fighting material. I emphasize that in the great majority of cases the only real fire break is made by the department; therefore perhaps it is not regarded as being within its province to also fight fires which occur adjacent to the railways. We all appreciate

the work done by the Fire Fighting Association and I shall be glad to collaborate with it and the Railways Commissioner to see if it is possible to arrive at a type of fire fighting equipment which would be acceptable to the association and the department. I know there will be the full co-operation of the Railways Commissioner and his staff.

#### GERMAN RAILWAY EMPLOYEES.

Mr. JENNINGS—I understand that a large number of Germans employed by the Railways Department are under contract for two years, and that in many cases the contract period has almost expired. I have been told by constituents of mine employed in the railways, particularly in the locomotive running staff, that there is a great deal of dissatisfaction in the department at the moment because the German workers are demanding extra overtime, saying that otherwise they will leave the service when the contract period is ended. I understand, too, that in order to placate them the department has given them extra overtime to the disadvantage of Australian workers. Will the Minister of Railways have the matter investigated and issue an instruction that all overtime is to be equitably shared?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—It is not within my province or that of this Parliament to issue directions on this matter. The employment of all men, under the Act, is the province of the Railways Commissioner. I would be astounded to find that any preferential treatment had been given to these people, but if there is a suggestion of it I will use my influence to see that it is not done in future.

#### SCRAP STEEL EXPORTS.

Mr. STEPHENS—In this morning's *Advertiser* under the heading "Ban on Export of Steel Scrap Urged" there is a report that the Associated Chambers of Manufactures suggests a complete embargo be imposed on scrap steel exports. This is similar to what happened a few years ago when the waterside workers were opposed to the export of scrap steel to Japan, and were threatened with gaol because of it. The report said:—

If the Minister of Customs is unaware of the heavy export shipments over the past few months it can be understood that the present situation is one in which he is not able to comment . . . Most of the steel was returned to Australia as structural metal and galvanized iron.

It is not often that this body is right in what it does in the interests of South Australia. I often regard its actions as being in its own interests, but on this occasion it is doing something for South Australia. The Minister of

Works told us the other day that if more steel were available in South Australia we would get more water. The people are waiting for steel and for galvanized iron. Will the Minister in charge of the House ask the Commonwealth Government to prevent the export of this material so as to provide work for South Australians, supply galvanized iron to those waiting for it, and provide the Waterworks Department with steel to manufacture pipes?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The honourable member suggests that the body concerned is never right. I ask him in this instance to again accept that its statement is not right.

#### TANUNDA RAILWAY BRIDGE.

Mr. TEUSNER—Has the Minister of Railways anything further to report regarding the question I asked earlier in the session regarding the erection of an overhead railway bridge at the Tanunda railway station, which had been promised some time ago? Has consideration been given as promised and when is the work likely to proceed?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Obviously thousands of pounds are involved and as I do not see the details of the Estimates after they are approved by Parliament I do not know what the programme is in that direction. I shall follow the question through and bring down a reply early next week.

#### POST-POLIOMYELITIS TREATMENT.

Mr. FLETCHER—Has the Minister of Lands a further report following on the question I asked on October 27 about post-poliomyelitis treatment, particularly in country areas?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have received the following reply from the Director-General of Medical Services:—

A part-time physiotherapist is employed at Mount Gambier hospital and it is respectfully recommended that the writer of the letter to Mr. Fletcher be advised to apply at the Mount Gambier hospital for physiotherapy treatment.

#### GALVANIZED IRON SUPPLIES.

Mr. PEARSON—Some time ago I asked a series of questions regarding the supplies of galvanized iron in South Australia. Has the Minister in charge of the House the further information the Premier said he would get?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have a reply from Mr. Pollnitz, too long to read now, but there are one or two points which most members would like to hear. It says that following on personal representations made in August, shipping allocations have been much better in the last two months. Seven ships

carrying 34,000 tons of steel products arrived here from Newcastle and Port Kembla. Included in the cargoes was the following galvanized iron—corrugated roofing iron 1,615 tons, other types 991 tons, making a total of 2,606 tons. Of the total, 2,081 tons were delivered in October and 525 in September. The October deliveries included 661 tons of galvanized iron, of which 321 tons was roofing iron, shipped from Sydney. Two further ships are scheduled to leave Newcastle for Port Adelaide in the very near future. As can be seen from the figures I have quoted, the October deliveries of galvanized iron were good, but they represent only a small proportion of outstanding orders, which now amount to about 16,000 tons. If any member would like to read the full report I should be happy to let him have it.

#### OLD LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BUILDING.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I congratulate the Minister of Works and his department on the wonderful work being done in bringing out the finer points of the building adjacent to Parliament House known as the old Legislative Council building. When admiring this fine old building from the opposite side of North Terrace it seemed to me that the slate roof was in poor condition. Does the Minister intend to have the roof repaired? This beautiful building is an example of the pre-concrete age and the time when tradesmen took a pride in their craft, so I hope it will be preserved for the sake of future generations.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I thank the honourable member for his complimentary remarks and agree with him that it is a beautiful building. Unfortunately, age has diminished some of its beauty and destroyed it in some respects. The roof is a very virile subject at the moment, and I am afraid the timbers are not as good as the slate above. The question may be resolved in the next day or so, and investigations are being made to see whether it is possible to renovate the roof. I have suggested spraying a little slate colouring over it to harmonize it with the rest of the building. The question of putting men on it to treat or restore the roof is now under investigation. The renovation of the roof has not been overlooked because it is part and parcel of the general renovations. I think the public generally would agree that the workmen have done a good job. It is not completed yet, and it is hard to judge a thing that is only half finished.

#### THE SAVINGS BANK OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

#### HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

#### MAINTENANCE ORDERS (FACILITIES FOR ENFORCEMENT) ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

#### ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2) (GENERAL).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 10. Page 1371.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—Bills dealing with road traffic matters are becoming more important as the years roll on because each year there is an increase in the number of people directly involved in the principal features of road traffic legislation. About one person in four in this State owns a motor vehicle, and I think about 50 per cent of the adult population are directly concerned in the ownership and control of a motor vehicle. In his second reading speech the Minister intimated that the Bill was based partly on the recommendations of the Australian Uniform Road Traffic Code Committee, and thus represented an attempt to bring about uniformity throughout Australia. This is desirable because many persons drive not only in their own State but in others. During my recent overseas tour I had an opportunity to view traffic conditions in various countries, and was very thankful I was not called upon to drive a motor vehicle in some of them, because there the rules of the road and the traffic code are very dissimilar to those in operation in South Australia. In some countries I had difficulty in getting into a motor vehicle on the correct side. Where the rule of the road was "Keep to the right" I almost invariably tried to usurp the driver's seat. Fortunately from the point of view of my own health and the good of the vehicle, I was not permitted to do so, but had to sit on what is the driving side in Australia and leave the driving to someone who understood the traffic conditions. There have been a number of road accidents to New Australians in the last year or two, somewhat out of proportion to their numbers. I am sure many were not due to carelessness or lack of competence on the part of the drivers, but happened because in the short time they

have resided in Australia the New Australians have not thoroughly assimilated our traffic code.

The SPEAKER—Order! I ask honourable members not to converse loudly.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Efforts are being made to make them more proficient in the English language and to teach them our way of life so that they can become, as I believe the great majority of them will, good and useful citizens. I have suggested to the Government that on the general question of drivers' proficiency there should be practical driving tests before a licence is granted or renewed. Consideration might be given to that aspect, particularly in association with the position of New Australians. If they had to pass a practical driving test they could be trained in our traffic code, and perhaps a considerable number of accidents involving much pain and in some cases death could be avoided. I regret that the Government has not seen fit to include in the Bill provision for drivers' tests on the wider scale I suggested previously, and hope that speedy and mature consideration will be given to this question, because I believe compulsory practical drivers' tests would minimize the accident ratio considerably.

Mr. Pattinson—In saying "speedy and mature consideration," has not the honourable member used contradictory terms?

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I have been wondering whether this Government is capable of giving mature consideration to any problem, and whether its actions are not rather motivated by considerations of political expediency rather than the best interests of the greatest number of people. If Standing Orders permitted, I could refer to a Bill I introduced this session. I am sure that the honourable member who corrected me did not give mature or full consideration to the justice of the principles I sought to establish. The idea of a uniform traffic code for the whole of Australia merits the support of all members. In his second reading speech the Minister referred to the recommendations of the Uniform Traffic Code Committee and said:—

A number of the recommendations for uniformity have been endorsed by the State Traffic Committee and some of these are included in this Bill. Although several authorities have made recommendations on which this Bill is based, it should be pointed out that everything in the Bill has been considered by the Government and approved by it for submission to Parliament.

That committee's recommendations for uniformity were placed before the State Traffic Committee, which evidently endorsed some of

them, and other authorities have requested other amendments to the law, and all these matters have been considered by the Government, some of which were approved and embodied in this Bill. I think it would have been wise if the Government, in submitting the Bill, had indicated the number of recommendations made by the Uniform Traffic Code Committee, the number of its recommendations which had been approved by the State Traffic Committee, and the number approved by both bodies and finally by the Government and embodied in this legislation. It seems to me that, if we are to achieve uniformity, we should have regard to the recommendations of these advisory bodies, but how can Parliament do so if it is not told of all their recommendations? Finally, we should be given good and sufficient reasons for not implementing them, for if we do not implement them uniformity will never be achieved. How can it be achieved if we are not prepared to accept all the recommendations of those bodies seeking uniformity or if, in failing to accept them, we do not furnish good and sufficient reasons for rejecting them?

I see very little to object to in the Bill, and the various amendments, most of which are minor, will probably be accepted by the Committee. Clause 5 provides for the disqualification in this State of a driver licensed in this State who has been disqualified in another State. It is proposed that the Registrar shall have a discretionary power to impose a similar disqualification upon that driver, but one would think, if we are to have uniformity, that, if the driver is disqualified for a period from holding a licence in another State, a disqualification for the same period would automatically apply in this State. We have not been told what is the position in other States or whether there is good reason why the Registrar should have this discretionary power. I feel that the Registrar should be told by the law to do one thing or the other and that the discretionary power should remain only if a good reason is advanced for its retention. I submit we have not been given such a reason.

Clause 10 provides for the use of reflectors in addition to the rear lights on bicycles. A few years ago the use of a reflector was made compulsory, but subsequently it was provided that a rear light be fitted instead. A certain period is to be given for the owners of bicycles to fit reflectors conforming to a specification and pattern laid down by regulation, but is it necessary to insist on a rear

light as well? Experience in the use of rear lights has shown that many are neither efficient nor effective. I wonder whether it would not have been advisable to abolish the rear light and concentrate on a type of reflector which in my opinion would afford a greater safeguard to the cyclist from traffic approaching from the rear than does the rear light. In this connection a legal question crops up which I am not competent to discuss. In the event of an accident where a man is riding a bicycle fitted with a reflector and his rear light is not burning, will he be guilty of culpable negligence in an accident for damages or will the court be satisfied merely because his reflector is in the proper position?

Mr. Pattinson—He will have to have both.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Then it is imposing a little too much on the cyclist, because the provision for a reflector will probably create in the minds of the many cyclists who are not particularly learned in the traffic code the idea that a rear light as well is unnecessary. The provision for both is likely to lead to confusion. However, it will have to be experimented with, and, as this legislation is a hardy annual, we may later find the Government seeking to abolish the provision requiring rear lights.

The Bill provides that the driver of a vehicle at an intersection controlled by lights may complete a right hand turn so long as he does not interfere with other drivers or endanger pedestrians who are lawfully crossing the road when the green light is in their favour. This provision will lead to a speedier flow of traffic and probably be beneficial, but it will have to be carefully policed in order to protect pedestrians. I am not happy about the way traffic at intersections is policed. As I understand it, the law provides that, where a vehicle approaching an intersection has difficulty in or would create a danger by stopping at the stop line when the amber light appears after green, the driver may proceed across the intersection. Apparently the Act contains no provision imposing on that driver a responsibility to have regard to pedestrians who are probably crossing on the opposite side of the intersection, and I have frequently seen motorists, particularly drivers of heavy vehicles, engaged in the practice of beating the lights. They do not appear to have much regard for the safety of pedestrians crossing the street, who have to depend on their dexterity to avoid accidents. I cannot find any provision expecting them to be more careful in

future. In the past the police have not paid sufficient attention to this type of traffic. I do not say that it is an offence, because it is provided for in the Act, but surely the driver should have more regard for the rights of others. In Committee I shall move an amendment to ensure that the driver crossing an intersection shall have some regard to the safety of pedestrians, as is now provided for the driver turning to the left or right at intersections where traffic control operates.

The next important amendment deals with the prevention of drivers passing stationary trams. This has been a live subject in the Labor Party in recent years. At various meetings there have been resolutions favouring amendments to the law, but up to the present nothing has been done. The Labor Party is pleased that at last the Government is doing what the Labor Party has advocated for many years. All other States have the rule now proposed for South Australia. I know the traffic conditions in other States and if the rule operates satisfactorily in Sydney there is no reason why it should not operate successfully here. The next important amendment deals with drivers who must stop at compulsory stop signs. It is proposed that in future where a sign is erected at an intersection the driver wanting to cross must give way to the traffic on the right, and that the old rule dealing with traffic from the left will still apply. That is a wise provision; I do not think Parliament intended otherwise. I am concerned about the vehicle which stops at a sign and instead of proceeding across the intersection desires to turn and join the traffic proceeding from the left. The position is clear where the driver wants to turn left. By exercising due care the driver should be able to do satisfactorily what is proposed.

Another important provision deals with the penalty for damaging roads. The present fine of £20 is to be increased to £50. In addition, it is provided that compensation may be awarded to the body controlling the road which has been damaged. At present compensation is obtained only through a separate action. I am concerned about the equity of the proposal. Should we permit a fine and compensation to be dealt with at the same time? A small fine might meet the case where only slight damage is done to a road, but where there is substantial damage, and I know that it has happened through the rank carelessness of drivers, it becomes more a matter of providing adequate compensation. Probably a small

fine could be imposed to complete the conviction and the person responsible for the damage to the road could be ordered to pay adequate compensation. I want to see the road restored to its original state.

Mr. Quirke—It would not cost much on some roads.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—That is so, including most of the roads in my area. It would be difficult to assess the damage done to an already bad road. I often wonder how many of the potholes I see on the miles of roads I travel on in the north have been caused through the use of pneumatic tyres. They apparently develop as mushrooms do, from some kind of seed or spawn. I think probably the first bump sets the wheels spinning, which tears out the light and fine materials in the roads, and a number of pot holes become established. Often councils with their limited resources lay a good road between a series of pot holes, but I am concerned about the real damage done to a good road. Not long ago a man damaged about 60 miles of the Main North Road between Gawler and the other side of Clare when he dragged a trailer with a broken axle over it and made an appreciable dent in the middle of the road. I understand he had to pay fairly adequate compensation to the Highways Department. That is a principle that should be established rather than punishing people by heavy fines. The majority of the clauses are good, and I support the second reading.

The SPEAKER—The scope of the discussion on this Bill is that disclosed by the various clauses, but it is fairly wide. Members may have noticed that the Leader of the Opposition had some latitude, but from now on the debate must be confined to the clauses in the Bill.

Mr. CHRISTIAN (Eyre)—This Bill, like a number of others we are getting nowadays, seems to be the result of the work of an outside committee whose findings and recommendations the Government accepts and introduces in legislation. I never feel quite sure whether the Government is completely in favour of outside committees' recommendations, or whether it simply throws them into the ring and says, "There you are; you can accept them or do what you like with them." I do not wish to disparage the work of these outside bodies because I am aware of the valuable work done, for instance, by our State Traffic Committee, of which the member for Glenelg is chairman. This committee has brought forward valuable recommendations

from time to time, but this Bill does not include merely the findings of our committee, but a number of matters recommended by the Australian Uniform Road Traffic Code Committee. I believe this is a Commonwealth body with representatives from the various States. I have no doubt of its good intentions and that the committee is imbued with the idea of promoting safety on our roads, but we can go a little too far in regard to uniformity. Uniformity of road traffic rules or codes can become a fetish. Conditions vary from State to State and from capital to capital, and there are tremendous differences between conditions in country and metropolitan districts.

Mr. Pattinson—There is no virtue in uniformity merely for the sake of uniformity.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I thoroughly agree. One need only recall the war days when uniformity in regard to conditions and restrictions applied throughout the Commonwealth, when everyone was placed in a straight jacket regardless of the necessity for anything of that kind, or of its fairness or the way it reacted on different communities. Excessive restrictions were imposed on individual liberty. For instance, all shops had to be closed at 6 p.m. That completely disrupted the community and social life of our country districts, but it had to be observed because it was the law of the land. That kind of uniformity is neither necessary nor desirable, or in the interests of the people. Let us consider the proposal to make motor vehicles stop when passengers are getting on or off tramcars. This is perhaps desirable in the eastern capitals, though I doubt whether it is at every tram stop there. The traffic thins out considerably in the outer areas of those cities, so the necessity to stop at every tram stop vanishes. Conditions in Adelaide are totally different from those in Melbourne or Sydney, for we have not the same density of traffic. Adelaide sprawls out far more, so we do not need to have the same rules in this regard. If it is necessary to legislate for compulsory stops here it should be confined to certain areas and not made a general rule. I realize that general rules are easy to apply and police, but they are totally unnecessary and far too restrictive. Therefore, I am opposed to accepting willy nilly any provision that is recommended purely on the score of uniformity. We should apply our own practical common-sense to our problems rather than be guided by well-meaning committees from other States who do not know the conditions here. Of course,

it makes it easy for the motorist who drives to other States occasionally, because he need not bother to learn any new traffic rules, but should we consider him more than anyone else? After all, the vast majority of South Australian motorists do not drive in other States. They are concerned only with our own laws, and they are the people we should consider most. Have we any information or statistics about the principal causes of fatalities and serious accidents? Have we any statistics to prove that fatalities have occurred as a result of motorists not stopping when passengers are getting on or off tramcars?

Mr. Pattinson—There have been instances, but I do not know how many.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—If there are special danger points that require this safety provision let it apply there. We recognize the principle of using special devices at special points. For instance, we have signs at dangerous intersections and at many railway crossings, but to make motorists stop at every tram stop because an accident occurred at one or two will not meet the problem.

Mr. Stott—There would be great queues of motorists along the Main North Road at about 5 p.m. every day.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I know what may happen because I travel over some of our suburban highways, but where the road between the tramway and the footpath is narrow motorists stop as a matter of course when passengers are getting on or off tramcars, so there is no need to make it compulsory in those instances. Compulsory stops are not necessary where there is no great danger or lack of room. Making the rule universal will tend to slow down the general clearance of traffic from the city and the metropolitan area. Further, I have noticed that in Melbourne motorists speed up considerably to get to the point where the tram stops before the tram gets there, to avoid having to stop, and you see a procession of motor vehicles going along at tremendous speed, therefore we shall probably cause greater danger to the public through these excessive speeds than exists at present. We have already a very safe rule whereby the motorist is required to slow down to six miles an hour when passing a stationary tram, and if it were adequately policed I think we could eliminate practically all danger to pedestrians alighting from or boarding trams. I entirely agree with the Leader of the Opposition that we should have greater regard for the safety of pedestrians, and also that the motorist should shoulder full

responsibility at intersections and turns, and at all times have regard to the safety of pedestrians. Unfortunately, there are a few motorists who think they have discharged that obligation fully when they loudly toot their horns, and then go their hardest across an intersection or around a corner. The motorist should give way to the pedestrian rather than attempt to force his way through a stream of persons who happen to be crossing the roadway. They have as much right to the use of these intersections as vehicular traffic. In Committee I hope something will be done to modify this too restrictive provision.

There is another clause to which I take very strong exception, although I am prepared to accept a few others. Clause 17 should be carefully considered. The Minister said:—

Clause 17 provides that vehicles are not to be driven on roads with pneumatic tyres inflated to more than 100 lb. per square inch. The object of this is to protect the roads. Ordinary pneumatic tyres are not inflated to a pressure as high as 100 lb. per square inch but the Highways Commissioner has been informed that a new type of steel cord tyre is coming into existence in some parts of the world which is used at pressures in excess of 100 lb. per square inch. Tyres of this kind do a great deal of harm to road surfaces and it is desired that their use shall be prohibited.

Does the Minister know of his own knowledge that these tyres do a great deal of harm to road surfaces, or does his informant know? Has he seen the effect on the roads of such tyres? They are in use not only in other parts of the world, but also in South Australia, and are a wonderful improvement on the ordinary canvas carcass tyre. The inner structure is composed of a kind of steel mail impregnated with rubber, and having the usual rubber tread, and I am informed they will last about four times as long as any ordinary canvas cord tyre and can be retreaded anything from 12 to 24 times. This is the type of tyre which we have been looking for. Are we not all sick of having to buy new tyres after a few thousand miles?

Mr. O'Halloran—Would they be of any use on ordinary motor vehicles?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I do not know about motor cars, but they are suitable for commercial vehicles. Are we to prohibit any new development which is an improvement and will lessen the cost of transportation? Today, if a commercial vehicle blows out a canvas tyre, bang goes from £30 to £60. A set of tyres for a big commercial vehicle today runs into hundreds of pounds. Admittedly, the new type tyres are more costly, but it

would be an advantage to use them because of their longer life. The ordinary tyre can be retreaded perhaps once or twice, whereas the others can be retreaded more than a dozen times, and thus the owner gets his money's worth. The new tyres are capable of carrying the heavy loads required of commercial vehicles these days. This House should do nothing to prevent the use of some new and superior development. The Minister's statement suggests to me that someone is interested and has had the ear of the Minister's advisers. Would it not be too far-fetched to assume that the manufacturers of the ordinary canvas tyre are not much interested in this matter? Obviously, they would not like to see a tyre on the market which will replace their product or greatly diminish their sales. Because commercial motor owners would not have to buy the new tyres so frequently they would be a great advantage to them, and their costs, which are already high enough, and will be higher when the new registration fees are imposed, could be lowered. These people are looking for improvements which will cheapen operations, and anything which cheapens transportation should be welcomed by this House and not prohibited or retarded. Who can assure me that a pressure of 100 lb. to the square inch in a tyre will injure roads or do more harm than solid rubber tyres? We do not prohibit the use of solid rubber tyres, and we still have vehicles on the roads with such tyres, although in order to discourage their use they have to pay a 50 per cent higher registration fee. Are not the authorities who have this matter in hand seeking an easy way out and shirking their responsibilities by refusing the new tyres? It would appear that there is something sinister behind the move to prevent their use, and unless I can be assured that they are seriously damaging to roads I will not vote for this clause. I think it would be a grave injustice on those pioneers who develop something new and superior and are prepared to try it out, and probably cheapen transportation costs. With those definite reservations, I do not oppose the Bill.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—I support the measure, but protest against the procedure which the Government seems prepared to adopt with many such Bills. This Bill makes substantial alterations to the law, which have already been considered by committees not for weeks, but for months, but members of the House are asked to discuss them and reach a decision within a few hours. I suggest that

the Government is not giving the House a proper opportunity fully to consider some of the matters contained in the Bill. I am uneasy about two clauses, and in their present form I intend to oppose them. The Bill was introduced only last evening, and members have not had an opportunity to make up their minds whether the findings of the committees which advised the Government measure up to their own experience or not. In introducing the Bill, the Minister gave the House very meagre information on several of the clauses. The matter referred to by Mr. Christian is one. There may be very good reasons why the tyres referred to should not be permitted on our roads, but I think the House is entitled to something more than a bald statement that they may interfere with the surface of roads. On that statement we are urged to prohibit these new type tyres. If it can be shown that they would interfere with the roads in any respect I would support the Government in banning them. It is wrong to allow heavy transport to tear up roads which, with normal use, would last a couple of decades or more. They were put down at heavy expense to taxpayers.

Mr. Macgillivray—How will country people get their goods without road transport?

Mr. RICHES—I do not think the Act will interfere if it is properly policed. Goods can be taken to the country without damage to the roads. It is the abuse I object to—the overloading and the overspeeding. Neither is necessary in taking goods to the country. Like other honourable members, I have followed road hauliers and noticed their heavy loading and excessive speed. There is nothing in the Bill designed to correct that practice, which is becoming more prevalent every year. I have seen bitumen roads that have been down only 12 months, and should have stood up to wear for a couple of decades but for excessive speed and overloading, and then the repair gangs come in. I admit that only a few of the hauliers are to blame. If the ordinary motorist is to be taxed to provide these roads, this House has a duty to see that they are not torn up by abuse.

Mr. Macgillivray—Usually the roads are too light for heavy traffic.

Mr. RICHES—I have seen good roads broken up by heavy vehicles. In my district a bitumen road constructed 25 years ago between Horrocks Pass and Port Augusta has never been topdressed, but it has spoon drains over which heavy vehicles cannot speed. This Bill provides for more policing and control

over loading than has been the case hitherto, but it does not go as far as I would like. This is one of the most important aspects of this legislation. The interests of the people generally should be protected and no citizen should be given the right to abuse facilities. This Bill gives a police officer or some other authorized person the power to require a road haulier to reduce his loading where it is proved that it exceeds the permitted loading by more than half a ton. The Minister said that the provision for a reduction of excess loads on the lines of that proposed in clause 9 is reported to be effective in Victoria. I have felt very strongly on this matter since, some time ago, I saw the road hauliers tearing up the bitumen road between Moorlands and the Victorian border. The repair of that road has cost money which should have been spent in other parts of the State.

Mr. Christian—We could adopt another good Victorian provision regarding speeding.

Mr. RICHES—I was impressed by the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition on his return from abroad when he said that in both England and America the speeds of heavy traffic were severely restricted. We must face up to that problem. We cannot hope to provide roads comparable with those in countries where bitumen is more readily available.

Mr. Christian—In Victoria transport vehicles must check in at every country town.

Mr. RICHES—I do not know whether that is necessary, but some action should be taken to curtail the speeds of those vehicles which are tearing up our roads. The Bill gives power to certain authorized people to require the unloading of excessive loads, but I wonder why that power does not extend to the point where the whole of the excess load must be unloaded instead of permitting a half ton over the maximum to remain on the vehicle. The Minister said that a road haulier could be ordered to unload the whole of the excess load, but the Bill gives him the right to carry 10cwt. in excess of the maximum load.

Mr. Macgillivray—Who will be responsible for policing that provision?

Mr. RICHES—It will only have to be enforced two or three times before carriers will become aware that they cannot get away with carrying excess loads. We cannot afford to permit hauliers to carry excess loads if roads worth millions of pounds are being torn up by their vehicles, and action should be taken to prevent that practice. Clause 11,

which allows motorists to turn right at intersections where street lights are installed, does not impress me. The safety of pedestrians is at stake, and in every case where a decision must be made between the safety of the pedestrian and the convenience of the motorist, I am always on the side of the pedestrian. I do not relish crossing roads where motor vehicles are turning to the left, yet many people older than I must cross at such intersections. I have helped elderly people in difficulties at intersections, and this provision will make such crossing more difficult for them. The inconvenience which may be caused motorists who are required to bank up a little does not outweigh the inconvenience and danger which faces pedestrians at those intersections. Although I have not travelled interstate as much as some other members, my experience of traffic in Australian cities leads me to believe that a blind person can walk along Adelaide streets and travel in our trams in greater safety than in any other city.

Mr. Quirke—He could do better in Sydney.

Mr. RICHES—I have done a good deal of jumping away from traffic there, but in Adelaide a blind pedestrian may move about our streets with the utmost freedom. However clause 11 will make that more difficult. Our traffic may be slower in Adelaide, but I am more interested in safety than in speed. The Minister delivered his second reading explanation on this Bill only last evening and members have not had much time to consider it. Unless some good reason can be shown for clause 11 I will oppose it. I favour the compulsory stop where people are alighting from trams. Mr. Christian said no record of accidents caused by motorists passing stationary trams had been supplied, but I remind him that this reform has been asked for year after year by suburban people using our trams. This matter has been discussed and this provision has been asked for annually by Labour Party conferences for some years, and I am not impressed by the argument that we must wait for deaths or serious accidents before acting in this direction. The traffic in Sydney is no slower than in Adelaide, yet there a motor vehicle is not permitted to pass a stationary tram. In Sydney I was impressed by the provision of zones along which pedestrians had the right of way notwithstanding the direction from which the traffic was coming.

The remaining clauses of the Bill seem to be fairly clear and straightforward. In Committee members should consider Mr. O'Halloran's suggestion for the abolition of rear

lights on bicycles, for reflectors could replace them to the advantage of both cyclists and other road users. Further, in many cases that would have the effect of giving a brighter front light, since today many bicycles are fitted with a generator which supplies current to both front and rear lights. I support the amendment foreshadowed by Mr. O'Halloran regarding the obligation of a motorist crossing an intersection to have regard to the safety of pedestrians. With the exceptions I have indicated I support the Bill.

Mr. QUIRKE (Stanley).—This Bill makes some additions to the rules and regulations controlling motorists. There is a growing idea that once a man possesses a motor car, or more particularly a heavy transport vehicle, somehow or other he changes his status in society and it is necessary, for the wellbeing of other citizens, that he shall be regulated and controlled and, if necessary, by taxation and regulations forced off the roads. I am getting tired of the attitude adopted towards the transport driver who does a good job for the community. I stand for the truck haulier who travels over long distances with heavy loads. If he did not do the job it would not be done because all the goods now transported by road could not possibly be carried by our broken-down railway system, which would be choked in a week. If all the Electricity Trust material were placed on the railways it could not be moved, and no-one knows that better than the trust. Road transport is becoming part and parcel of our transport system, and instead of doing all we can to impede its progress we should accept it and do all possible to assist it.

There is a provision preventing motor vehicles from passing stationary trams. The fetish for uniformity can go too far. Such a fetish would jam the traffic on the Enfield and Prospect Roads to a greater extent than we have ever had. Let me illustrate what happened recently. A motor coach was travelling behind a tram on the Main North Road. The coach could not pass the tram because of the vehicles parked on the left-hand side of the road. Every time the tram stopped the coach stopped, and soon there was half a mile of vehicles behind the tram. Frequently it is impossible to pass a tram on that road because of the haphazard way in which vehicles are parked. What happened to that motor coach often happens to motor vehicles when they try to pass trams. The same thing happens on Prospect Road. It is said that in Sydney vehicles cannot pass stationary trams,

and that does apply in George Street, but what about Castlereagh and Pitt Streets? In those one-way streets if the driver of a vehicle wants to pass a stationary tram he can do so by going around it on the right-hand side and not keeping to the left. That is not possible here. We have double tram tracks in some narrow streets and if the proposal is adopted there will be much congestion. I am opposed to the indiscriminate application of the rule. There may be places, such as in front of the Adelaide Children's Hospital, where vehicles should not pass a stationary tram. In Sydney different rules apply in different places. At one time of the day it is possible to make the inside turn to the right, but at other times a vehicle must keep to the left and wait until the traffic constable directs the driver to make the turn. Unless a driver knows all the rules he can get into a hopeless position when driving in Sydney. To make the proposal general in Adelaide would slow down traffic. It is necessary to speed up traffic in order to get it away from the city, and there should be no obstruction by having to stop before passing a stationary tram. Portion of Clause 12 says:—

For the purpose of this section a tram-car shall be deemed to be stopped in the course of a journey if it is stationary at the terminal point where the journey commences or at the terminal point where the journey ends or at any intermediate stopping place.

Does that mean that at the Enfield tram terminus, where there is often a tram stationary for a few minutes prior to moving off according to schedule, every motor vehicle must stop? If that is so, it is a ridiculous provision. Imagine the flow of traffic from the north passing the terminus and having to stop whilst the tram is stationary. Imagine the position with the outflow of traffic when there is one stationary tram at the terminus and another on the loop. It would mean that traffic from the city would have to stop before passing one stationary tram, and traffic from the north would have to stop before passing the other. I cannot imagine anything more ridiculous; that is, if my interpretation of the provision is correct. Am I correct in my interpretation? One honourable member says "No," but it is not clear to me. I shall await an interpretation from the Minister. It is not proper to make all motor vehicles stop at stationary trams. It may be all right at a few places, which could be indicated with signs, as is done in other capital cities.

Another important matter deals with the off-loading of excess loads. A haulier may

arrive at a certain point with half a ton too much, and he may be told to take it off. It would be a punishment for him, because often to take half a ton off means taking off the whole load and rebuilding it. Where are the off-loaded goods to be put—alongside the fence or in the paddock? It may be a precious load of Scotch whisky. I do not like the provision and will not agree to it. It is another thrust at the road haulier. It is a stupid proposal, which I will not support. Much has been said about the road haulier who cuts up the road. I have said before that we must build roads to take heavy loads which cannot be handled by the railways. The Main North Road has stood the wear and tear of 20 years, including the terrific impact of the war-time traffic, and it is still a good road. It was built on a macadam road with 6in. spalls as a foundation. It will still be a good road when the modern skin roads, called bitumen roads, have gone. Those roads have only a bitumen surface on rubble, and sometimes it is nothing more than sand. They will not take the continuous fast motor traffic. We should build roads that will take heavy loads. We cannot stop the modern trend towards the greater use of road transport.

The provision to allow a motorist to complete a right hand turn against the red light is an excellent one. The onus is on the driver to proceed safely, and this provision will do much to clear traffic more quickly. I agree with the member for Stuart that there may be some danger to pedestrians. He mentioned that the pedestrian has right of way at pedestrian crossings in Sydney. One person walking over such a crossing has right of way against the traffic unless he motions motorists to proceed. Usually pedestrians signal a stream to move on and cross when it clears. Many motorists here ignore the rights of pedestrians when turning to the left at an intersection by tooting their horn and making them jump in every direction. Motorists should wait until pedestrians have moved on before attempting to turn to the left. They would have plenty of time to make the turn.

Mr. Dunks—But the red light may come on by then.

Mr. Brookman—You should see the congestion at the intersection of King William and Rundle Streets.

Mr. QUIRKE—If motorists turn slowly the pedestrians will give way, but those that keep the horn blaring to make people jump out of the road adopt the wrong attitude. Motorists

turn left slowly in Sydney and the same idea should be inculcated into motorists here.

Mr. Jennings—Some turn at 20 miles an hour.

Mr. QUIRKE—Yes, particularly taxi drivers. That practice should be stopped. The traffic would not be held up. At present a motorist waiting at a stop sign has to give way to traffic on both his right and left. Someone has at last recognized his unfortunate plight. The motorist attempting to cross the intersection of King William Street and South Terrace from east to west at 5 p.m. has to wait a long time before getting an opportunity to proceed. A weakness of the clause may be the question of who shall give way when he moves off and gets to the centre of the road. In other cities he would nudge into the traffic and, after allowing one car to pass, go forward. Other traffic then goes behind him, and this applies to the traffic on both his right and left. When all road users recognize this practice there is little congestion. At the King William Street-South Terrace intersection a motorist proceeding east to west would have to give way to the traffic on his right before moving forward, and that may take five minutes at a peak period, but who will give way when he gets into the middle of the road? He may be stuck there and probably hunted off by a tramcar, but the clause is a step in the right direction because motorists will not be completely immobilized at stop signs.

I do not know what is behind the provision to limit the maximum tyre pressure to 100 lb. The member for Eyre said there might be something sinister in it. Perhaps someone has realized that a very high pressure tyre may run others off the road and therefore it must be banned. I think it may be another weight regulating medium. If a tyre is run at a pressure below that recommended it will soon be ruined, but how will the provision be enforced? If the pressure were 90 lb. at the beginning of a trip on a hot day the pressure would be up to 110 lb. after covering 50 miles on a bitumen road. Someone may then test the tyre, but will the built-up pressure be accepted, or will the tyre be allowed to stand in the shade for some hours to let the pressure drop? At one time it was suggested that tyres should be deflated when they built up high pressures, but we know that is dangerous. If tyres are deflated under a heavy load they will soon blow out. Again, the inspector's tyre gauge may be faulty. Who will test the gauge? I will not vote for such a silly provision. There is neither rhyme nor reason in it.

What is the use of passing legislation that cannot be enforced? I do not agree with the penalties being imposed on the transport driver who is keeping our life streams of commerce moving. Without him we should be jammed hopelessly in our tracks. I will not support any provision to limit the pressure of tyres, but some clauses will receive my support.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Goodwood)—I am not happy about clause 11. To allow drivers to complete a righthand turn against the red light may cause much confusion particularly to persons who may be experienced drivers but without the same nerve as others. I appreciate the attempt to alleviate traffic congestion, but I think to allow motorists to proceed against the amber light, as well as the red, would be better because they would have more time. Let us assume a driver going in a northerly direction desires to make a righthand turn at the King William Street-North Terrace corner to the east. If motorists could proceed on the amber light they could also proceed on the green light and the following amber light, if necessary. There has been much debate on clause 9 relating to the question of overloading of motor vehicles. Supervision is not always possible to keep a check on the weights carried. It may appear drastic to suggest that some portion of a load should be unloaded when a vehicle is over-weight, but it is the responsibility of the person supervising the loading to have same idea of the weight. We should try to conserve our roads by preventing over-loading and excessive speeds. Clause 10 relates to the attachment of red reflectors at the rear of push cycles in addition to a light. I agree that this is a useful safety precaution.

Much controversy has taken place on the clause relating to motorists having to stop before proceeding past a tram loading or unloading passengers. This practice was first suggested in the interests of blind people and related particularly to blind persons catching trams near the Royal Institute for the Blind at North Adelaide. There is much to commend this provision, but one important feature must not be overlooked. I trust that councils will provide prohibited areas for at least 50ft. on either side of tram stops to prevent motorists from parking in these areas. The moment a tram stops passengers should immediately proceed to the footpath on the left, and as soon as it moves off motor vehicle will then be able to proceed. Pedestrians who desire to cross to the right side of the thoroughfare should extend a courtesy to motorists and

allow them to proceed without further interruption. If a prohibited area were provided at each tram stop as suggested, it would be a protection for tram passengers and would help the flow of motor traffic. Unley Road is one of the busiest arterial roads in the suburbs, and here great inconvenience is caused to motorists because parking is allowed on both sides. The position in King William Road is even worse, but much of this inconvenience could be overcome if prohibited areas were provided as I have suggested.

If motor vehicles are required to stop before passing a tram which is loading or unloading passengers there will be additional wear on the brakes and additional fuel will be used. Reference has been made during the debate to the suggestion that tyres with a 100 lb. pressure to the inch should be prohibited. Pneumatic tyres were first introduced as an improvement on solid rubber tyres, and bitumenized roads also came into the picture. The heat of the sun affects the surface of these roads and if solid tyres are used they leave their imprint on the road and deleteriously affect it. I assume that tyres with higher pressures would be more heavily constructed than those now in use, but I cannot imagine that it would be a pleasure to ride in a modern motor car with a set of these tyres, because one would get a rather rough trip. It is a question of preserving the roads against damage. I intend to support the second reading, but emphasize that councils have an obligation to provide prohibited areas on either side of tram stops in order to prevent pedestrians against oncoming motor traffic, but a tram having stopped it is the duty of passengers to make way for motorists as soon as possible.

Mr. BROOKMAN (Alexandra)—I am well aware that this Bill is second in popularity only to the Budget and that each honourable member has ideas which he desires to present. However, it should not be discussed at length in the second reading stage because it is largely a Committee Bill. For that reason I shall not speak at length on the second reading. I am not in favour of the clause relating to motorists stopping behind stationary tramcars. One reason given by the Minister for the introduction of this clause was that of uniformity of traffic laws throughout the Commonwealth. That is undoubtedly a good objective if it is possible of achievement, but I cannot see that we need feel bound to achieve uniformity particularly in those matters which have little relation to the

laws of another State. For instance, I see no harm if we differ from Victoria in this matter, for the only result will be that a few Victorian motorists may stop unnecessarily behind stationary tramcars. Consequently, I do not think that uniformity of traffic laws is a sound reason for this provision. Another speaker said it would probably cause speeding by motorists attempting to beat the tram to the next stop, and that could be dangerous, particularly where cars are parked along the kerb, leaving little room for traffic to pass the tram.

The compulsory use of reflectors on bicycles is a wise provision, and I do not share Mr. O'Halloran's fears that it will lead a cyclist into bad habits by inducing him not to use a proper light. As far as I can see a large percentage of country cyclists do not use lights on their cycles at night, although that may not apply in the city. Offenders in this regard are occasionally caught in the city, but rarely in the country. This failure to use lights on cycles results in danger on our roads, and I feel an added safeguard in the form of compulsory use of a reflector is a good thing.

The prohibition of the inflation of tyres to a pressure of more than 100 lb. to the square inch is something that has been sprung on us and about which we do not know very much. In these matters it is wise to find out the facts from research, but I do not know what research has been done into the damage caused by tyres of certain pressures. Perhaps some has been done in America, but I do not know of any in Australia. Occasionally, when this legislation is being discussed the Minister will give the House a little information which shows that vehicles loaded to a certain weight cause more damage to certain roads than vehicles carrying lighter loads. Sometimes in discussions with road experts we gain snippets of information on the subject, and at other times people talk about the results of tests carried out in America, but these are merely snatches of conversation and we have not any informative documents on the subject. Probably, if we were interested enough to write to the United States, we would learn more about it, but the information could be supplied to us without having to go to that trouble. In considering legislation we usually get a full background of the facts connected with it, but in this case we are merely told that tyres inflated to a pressure greater than 100 lb. to the square inch are so injurious to roads that they should be prohibited. A

type of tyre recently brought on to the market will probably exceed that pressure, but we do not know its exact effect. We have merely the Minister's statement that any pressure over 100 lb. is not good for the roads. It is up to the Government to provide a little more information. Previously this session I have stressed the necessity of the Government's finding out the facts and then making them available to members considering legislation, but in this case they have certainly not been made available. I do not know at this stage whether to oppose this provision, and I would like more information on it. I support the second reading.

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I, too, support the Bill. The necessity for uniformity of traffic laws and assistance to road hauliers has been mentioned in this debate. I am not prepared to argue whether uniformity is a good thing in every case, but it is generally a good idea to get as near as possible to uniform traffic laws, especially in these days of improved transport facilities when times of travel between capital cities have been greatly reduced. Mr. Quirke's most convincing argument was his illustration of what has happened in Sydney, where there are different laws for different parts of the city. He said that if a driver was not acquainted with all those laws he would be in difficulties, and surely that statement supports the case for uniformity. Mr. Quirke said that he wished to defend the interests of road hauliers who, he claimed, rendered a necessary service. I believe they do, but this Bill protects road hauliers, for every provision which it has been claimed will adversely affect them has been introduced for the purpose of keeping the roads in such a condition as to enable road hauliers to traverse them safely and speedily; therefore I am prepared to support the Bill. A question which exercised Mr. Quirke's mind was whether an authorized officer should be given the power to compel the driver of an over-loaded vehicle to unload the excess weight, but that is the only effective way to stop overloading. If this provision is enforced, the person who offends will overload only once.

Mr. Macgillivray—Who will be responsible for goods off-loaded at the side of the road?

Mr. HUTCHENS—The person responsible for the overloading and for bringing the goods to that point. If he defies the law no penalty is too great, for he is guilty of an act which will cause discomfort to other road users.

Mr. Macgillivray—Would the driver or the owner of the vehicle be responsible?

Mr. HUTCHENS—I am not an authority on the law, but this provision will prevent overloading. A driver will be able to refuse to overload his vehicle.

Mr. Macgillivray—And get the sack for refusing to do his duty?

Mr. HUTCHENS—Those points will doubtless be sorted out, but the fact remains that this legislation prohibits overloading. If a man is sacked for refusing duty, he would have a good case in the court against his employer. I trust this provision will be enforced, because for far too long our roads have been torn to pieces by overloaded vehicles. During my time in business I knew of three-ton lorries carrying loads of up to five tons, and any thinking person will realize the risk taken by the drivers of such vehicles. I would not favour cyclists being involved in additional expense unless it were in their own interests, and the provision for the use of reflectors on bicycle will greatly reduce the risk of accident. As a cyclist I have ridden behind other cyclists, but have been unable to see them until I was almost on top of them, merely because their rear lights were not functioning. Such lights have a habit of cutting out because of faulty connections, and this constitutes a menace not only to the cyclist but to other road users; therefore, I support this provision. Drivers of motor vehicles are to be compelled to stop when approaching stationary tramcars. A great deal of debate has taken place on this point. Recently this House discussed the finances of the Tramways Trust. This legislation will help the trust to run to the timetables and provide an effective service, and is long overdue.

Mr. Pearson—It will not help the motorist to run to a timetable.

Mr. HUTCHENS—That is so, but I place greater importance on human life than on time, because it is better to be a little late than dead on time. This legislation will provide protection to people alighting from or boarding trams, and will also afford some protection to the motorists because even a careful motorist can be involved in an accident if he fails to see someone alighting from a tramcar, and would have to suffer the unpleasantness of a court case although he may not have been in any way responsible. The alleged long lanes of traffic at tram stops are an exaggeration. Members have seen this provision operation in other States, and that has not happened there.

It must be remembered that the trams will not be stationary for so long. At one time I was employed as a tramways conductor, and I know that some of my colleagues often called out to people to hurry off the trams. This excited the passengers and probably caused them to take longer to alight, whereas if they were handled gently they got off more quickly. This legislation, apart from providing greater comfort to tram passengers and protection to the motorists, will protect human life and limb. The Bill provides for increased penalties for people who fail to stop after an accident. This is a necessary provision, and I trust it will be enforced. Clause 11 refers to right-hand turns, and merits a great deal of consideration. Although I have been approached by people who are strongly opposed to this provision, I feel that it is fair and reasonable, and I point out to those opposed to it that the motorist is not compelled to move, but the onus is entirely upon him, and if he meets with an accident it is his responsibility. The pedestrian will not be endangered, and I think the people who are worried about this proposal will agree with it after it has been tried.

Mr. Broekman produced quite a reasonable argument regarding clause 17. I have discussed this matter with an engineer who assured me that a tyre containing a pressure of over 100 lb. would be dangerous and would have the same effect on the roads as a steel wheel of the same width. That is all the information I have been able to obtain about it, and I would like more. If this provision will prevent further damage to our roads, which are in a pretty sad state, I feel it is important. I support the Bill.

Mr. PEARSON (Flinders)—I agree with other members that there is not room for much debate on this Bill at this stage, but there are one or two observations I desire to make now because they would perhaps not be strictly in order in Committee. The primary purpose of this legislation has been and still is the safety of human life. A few moments ago the member for Hindmarsh asserted that the provision relating to compulsory stopping at stationary tramcars would enable trams to run on time, and I made an observation by way of interjection, which he immediately answered by saying that he was more concerned about the safety of human life than arriving on time. I agree with that, as all members do.

Mr. O'Halloran—The reference the honourable member made was to a motorist running on time.

Mr. PEARSON—I did observe that the motorist would be seriously inconvenienced by this proposal, and I will enlarge on it later. There is not very much substance in the argument frequently used in this Chamber by members on both sides, on all types of legislation, that we should endeavour to be uniform with other States. We are, I fear, often led along these lines merely for the sake of argument.

Mr. Lawn—Does that statement relate also to the Wheat Stabilization Bill?

Mr. PEARSON—In the last two or three days the member for Adelaide has introduced all sorts of irrelevancies by way of interjection.

Mr. Lawn—That is not irrelevant.

Mr. PEARSON—It is irrelevant because, as the honourable member knows, the two matters are entirely different.

Mr. Lawn—But you were speaking generally.

Mr. PEARSON—Perhaps I was, but the member has attempted to introduce irrelevancies into the debates, and has stretched his comparisons to such an extent that they become somewhat laughable. We should study legislation of other States, not for the purpose of falling into line with it, but to extract the best features from it. Would the people who say that motorists should be compelled to stop at stationary trams consider that we should adopt the same rule regarding stop signs as applies in Melbourne? No-one answers me.

Mr. Dunks—The stop signs are not observed in Melbourne.

Mr. PEARSON—No, they are not.

Mr. O'Halloran—That is not a question of law, but of administration.

Mr. PEARSON—It is a question of law because, as I understand the position, a motorist is not compelled to stop at stop signs in Melbourne. They are intended to draw attention to the fact that if vehicles are approaching from the right one must stop, but if the road is clear one is perfectly within the law in proceeding. I suggest that members opposite would not be happy to adopt that provision here.

Mr. Hutchens—Would you like it here?

Mr. PEARSON—No, I would not.

Mr. Hutchens—Do you acknowledge that there are different types of stop signs?

Mr. PEARSON—Yes. I am not saying that I advocate the same law in this State, but I mentioned this matter to draw attention to the fact that there are things we desire and therefore advance the argument of uniformity,

and others in which we do not desire uniformity and then are strangely silent. The debate on this Bill has shown that it meets with general approval. Clauses 9 and 17 each deal with the same matter, and have both been referred to freely. One of these deals with the compulsory unloading of excess weight from vehicles, and the other with the maximum pressure that is permitted in a tyre. It must necessarily be this State's policy to construct the greatest road mileage possible within the limits of our financial resources, and the time is approaching when we will have to lay down a policy which clearly defines the relation between the size of vehicles we will permit and the cost of roads necessary to sustain such vehicles. In other words, we may have to say that to build a road which will carry any known vehicle will cost £20,000 a mile, whereas to build a road which will sustain a vehicle of defined size will cost only half that amount. In my view it would be better to construct twice the mileage and, providing the roads are properly sealed and constructed, we should lay down some definite restriction as to the size and weight of vehicles we permit to run on them. I believe it is inevitable that this will be our policy, because we cannot expect to construct the thousands of miles of bitumen roads required in this State if we endeavour to build roads to carry any known type and weight of vehicle.

Mr. O'Halloran—No country in the world, except South Australia, is trying to do that.

Mr. PEARSON—I do not know that we are trying. The clauses relating to the treatment of our roads are quite relevant, and if we provide that a vehicle shall carry no more than a certain weight, then we are entitled to compel the driver of a vehicle to unload his surplus weight. By the same token I believe that the clause relating to the pressure of tyres has a similar purpose. The Bill provides for a maximum pressure of 100 lb. merely to protect the road surface. The old Act dealt with the days of iron tyres and it was said that a vehicle must have a certain width of tyre to carry a certain weight. I think the Bill carries a similar thought into the pneumatic tyre field. Either a vehicle must be undershod or the tyres over-inflated, and if the clause is passed the owner of the vehicle will be compelled to fit larger size tyres and inflate them less. I know nothing of the tyres mentioned by Mr. Christian. If we introduce tyres which will cause damage to our roads it is better to curtail their use now, and inform the designer that we are not prepared

to go on with them, instead of allowing them to come into general use and then later place a prohibition on them. Mr. Hutchens referred to reflectors on the rear of bicycles. I support the clause. I live in the country and do not drive at night in the city and suburbs as much as some honourable members. Most of us who drive at night in the city and suburbs when lights are reflected on the wet streets, and when there is reduced street lighting visibility and moisture on the windscreen feel uneasy.

Mr. O'Halloran—And are forced to dip lights.

Mr. PEARSON—Yes. All these things contribute a great deal to the uneasiness. It is incumbent on the cyclist to protect himself by having an effective reflector.

Mr. O'Halloran—Should he be compelled to have both light and reflector?

Mr. PEARSON—Both are provided for in the Bill, which I think is proper.

Mr. O'Halloran—We should have one or the other.

Mr. PEARSON—I prefer the reflector. On many of the lighting sets used on bicycles the rear lamp has a globe of only small candle-power, and it rests on the speed of the cyclist as to whether sufficient light is shown. As Mr. Hutchens said, the light tends to dim down. It is extremely hazardous to drive a motor car in the city and suburbs at night. The clause says that the reflector must be of a size, shape and pattern prescribed by regulations. I hope that the regulations will require a reflector of an adequate size.

Mr. Dunks—Does not the rear light on a bicycle at present have to be in accordance with regulations?

Mr. PEARSON—I do not know of a regulation, but if the matter is covered the regulation is honoured more in the breach than in the observance because frequently cyclists do not have an effective red light at the rear. For a long time I have felt that women who walk on streets at night subject themselves to the serious danger of accident. Black has always been the symbol of mourning in our civilization, and I thought that when women wearing a black top coat or dress go out on winter nights and walk on roads, with possibly no other colour showing, it is extremely difficult for the motorists to see them until within the danger distance. It has been suggested that the women should wear something white. Advice has been given to this effect, and I have suggested elsewhere that it may be a good idea if women wore an ornament on the belt of their black dress or top coat.

Mr. O'Halloran—What about carrying a white flag as a sign of surrender?

Mr. PEARSON—Fashion will determine whether my suggestion is acceptable to women. I am not trying to be funny, but I believe that if people adopted this suggestion it would mean the saving of a number of lives. I am not happy about the provision compelling motor vehicles to stop before passing stationary trams. It tends to be restrictive in its operation, and on the facts it is unnecessary. Today Mr. Christian asked how many accidents had occurred through the lack of legislation compelling motorists to stop when approaching stationary trams. By way of interjection he got the answer "There have been a number," but I have yet to see where an accident has occurred under those circumstances. If the death roll on our roads was critically examined it would reveal that only a small percentage of the accidents where fatalities occur are within the boundaries of the city and suburbs. By far the worst accidents involving fatalities occur on the open highway.

Mr. Christian—And at railway crossings.

Mr. PEARSON—Perhaps, but in circumstances to which this clause has no relation. We are all concerned about the death roll because we may be involved in it at any time. We ought to have at heart the well-being of people. We should be factual in our approach to these things. There are no figures to prove or disprove my contention, but from observation I suggest that the majority of the accidents do not occur under circumstances relating to this clause. Why put thousands of people to inconvenience every day for a reason which in my opinion is not valid? Reference has been made to what happens in Victoria. I have frequently seen long streams of traffic in Victoria delayed not for one or two stops but for miles because a heavy vehicle is first in line behind a tram and has not the acceleration or manoeuvrability to pass it. On one occasion I had to travel almost the entire distance from Melbourne to Essendon behind a tram. Why should we have this if it cannot be shown on the facts to be necessary? If it can be proved necessary I shall be happy to change my views. I believe the South Australian motorist is particularly careful in observing the safety of persons getting on and off trams. I have often noticed cars stopping at the rear of stationary trams—although the law does not require it—particularly during peak periods when groups of persons are alighting at stops. If that courtesy

exists—and I know it does—why do we propose to irk certain people who are already being particularly careful?

Mr. O'Halloran—The trouble is caused by a motorist who passes a tram at 20 miles an hour.

Mr. PEARSON—Such motorists are exceedingly rare.

Mr. Shannon—In any case they are breaking the law.

Mr. PEARSON—Exactly. There is a section in our legislation relating to dangerous driving, and instead of trying to tie everything up and get every stitch in place it is better to rely on such a section, and thereby invoke the common-sense and decency of the motorist instead of hemming him in by legal technicalities. I believe much better results would be achieved by passing legislation which relies on the decency of the individual. I shall refer to these clauses in Committee. Generally speaking, the Bill is a good one and I support the second reading.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—I support the second reading but to save time will not refer to all clauses now but wait until the Bill reaches Committee. I do not believe that we should copy every law applying in other States. It is not in the public interest at all times to have uniformity of legislation between the States. One could refer to electoral laws, marriage laws and divorce laws. It is desirable to effect uniformity as far as possible, but I do not believe that because New South Wales has certain legislation we should automatically adopt it. I remind some Government members that when they were discussing the Constitution Act Amendment Bill introduced by the Leader of the Opposition they advocated the retention of our present electoral laws because they were similar to laws operating either in some other State or in some other part of the world. If Government members criticize the desirability of uniformity they should be consistent. Clause 5 provides that the Registrar of Motor Vehicles "may" suspend or cancel a driver's licence if he has been disqualified in another State. I do not understand the necessity for the word "may" and suggest that "shall" is preferable.

Mr. Dunks—There may be something in our law to prevent the use of the word "shall."

Mr. LAWN—I understand that the State has sovereign powers and can pass any laws within the ambit of its Constitution and I see no reason why we should not provide that

any person who has had his driver's licence cancelled in another State "shall" not obtain a licence here. When Mr. Hutchens was referring to clause 9 Mr. Macgillivray asked who would be responsible if a driver were forced to unload any excess weight from his vehicle. That is an interesting point. I have frequently experienced conflicts in law and I instance that persons in this State are compelled by law to attend for jury service, and whereas this does not affect the annual leave of some, persons working under Commonwealth Arbitration Court awards lose their annual leave if they attend. I have consistently and exhaustively canvassed this matter before the Arbitration Court but have failed. The employee is entitled to a fortnight's annual leave, but if he loses one day more than the 14 days allowable for sickness he is deprived of  $\frac{1}{2}$  of his annual leave for that day's absence. He does not lose  $\frac{1}{365}$  of his leave, but  $\frac{1}{2}$  of his 80 hours' annual leave. Employers' representatives have argued that a workman should go to work at 7.30 or 8 a.m. and work for half an hour, then go home and change to attend the court for jury service. They have got away with that argument before the Arbitration Court, but they show an unreasonable attitude in expecting workmen to go to work for 15 minutes or half an hour. That shows how tough they are before the Arbitration Court and in their dealings with their employees. The question of who is responsible for the excess tonnage on motor vehicles is somewhat similar.

I shall be interested to note the effect on the person forced by an inspector to unload. This provision involves the question of who is responsible for overloading. It is the responsibility of the employer to see that his employees comply with the law, but employees should not have to know every detail of the law, particularly the laws of other States about the carriage of goods. A driver should be required to know only the ordinary traffic laws of the State in which he resides, not the intricate details such as those contained in clause 9, or the detailed rules of other States. If a load has to be carted to another State the employer should only allow the load prescribed by that State. It should be his responsibility to see that the vehicle is not overloaded. No employer should have the right to penalize an employee for overloading under those circumstances. If the driver were sacked he would lose his annual leave, accrued sick leave, and any long service leave and superannuation rights, but I think in such

an instance the employee would win a case for wrongful dismissal.

Mr. Macgillivray—Who would be responsible for the goods if an inspector forced the driver to unload?

Mr. LAWN—The employer should be. If the carrier carts the goods free of risk it would come back to the point raised by the member for Chaffey that the person who sends his goods by road would have to accept the risk, but employers' representatives on the other side of the House say we can rely on the discretion of employers, and that they would not overload their vehicles. I listened with interest to the member for Flinders when he spoke on clauses 10 and 12. He instanced a man driving a motor car on a wet night, with bad visibility and street lighting, and with water dripping down the windscreen. If the driver was uneasy he should have stopped. He suggested that pedestrians should wear white apparel and that they should give way to motorists. Again, he said it would be unduly restrictive on motorists to make them stop at tram stops.

Mr. Pearson—Don't try to be funny. I didn't say anything of the sort.

Mr. LAWN—The honourable member said that clause 12 would be restrictive on motorists.

Mr. Pearson—You have coupled up what I said on clause 10 with what I said on clause 12, but there was no connection.

Mr. LAWN—Then I am making the connection. The honourable member said pedestrians should wear white clothes.

Mr. Pearson—I said it would be a good idea.

Mr. LAWN—And then the honourable member said it was restrictive that a motorist should have to stop at a stationary tram. The honourable member wants pedestrians walking

on roads at night to wear white clothes rather than that there should be any restriction placed on motorists. This would apply to women with children in pushers. The city wage-earner has not enough money to buy the special clothing to meet the requirements set out by the honourable member. He said that he was not joking. To me it is not a joke.

Mr. Pearson—I said that they should wear something white at night.

Mr. LAWN—If the honourable member is uneasy when driving a motor car he is a menace to the public and should be prohibited from driving in such circumstances. Safety comes first. I have listened to numerous broadcasts by the National Safety Council appealing to motorists to show courtesy to the public and not to try to save a few seconds, because it might result in the death of someone, and now the honourable member comes here and in effect says that the council is wasting its time in broadcasting such messages. I am opposed to clause 13, which relates to right-hand turns against the red light, but I appreciate the intention to clear traffic. The clause provides that the motorists must accept responsibility for avoiding a collision with pedestrians. In other words, they must see that the roadway is clear before moving on. The intention is all right. When a constable is on duty and the road is clear he will wave the motorist on. That practice works well. However, I am certain, especially after hearing the member for Flinders, that some motorists will not look to see if the road is clear of pedestrians. I ask leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.35 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, November 12, at 2 p.m.