

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.**

Thursday, November 12, 1953.

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

**QUESTIONS.****DEVELOPMENT OF ADELAIDE.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—A master plan for the development of Melbourne and suburbs has been prepared by the planning section of the Board of Works. A sub-leader in this morning's *Advertiser* stated:—

More than two years ago, in response to a widely-representative appeal for action in this matter, the Government set up a committee to report on the steps which could be taken to advance the project. That committee, of course, was not an expert committee in the sense that it could immediately begin the preparation of a master plan. Nor had it the authority to do so.

It then pointed out the committee advised the drafting of an overall plan, and stated:—

At that point, unhappily, progress seems to have stopped, except that reference has been made to requests for information from Treasury officers.

It pointed out the importance of an overall plan being devised rather than sectional plans by various local governing bodies, etc. Can the Minister of Lands say what steps the Government has taken since it received the preliminary report of the committee appointed two years ago to have a master plan devised for the development of Adelaide and suburbs?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have no further information at the moment but I will take up the matter with the Premier and bring down a reply next week.

Mr. PATTINSON—An expert committee appointed in 1951 reported to the Government in July, 1952, that a co-ordinated plan for the development of the metropolitan area was both necessary and urgent, and that existing legislation did not provide the necessary powers or facilities to produce such a plan. On October 13 I asked the Premier whether the report would be published and he said that he did not know it had not been published. Later he said that if it had not been released he would see that it was in due course. Will the Minister of Lands take up with the Premier the desirability of having it published? If the matter is of no moment to the Government it is to metropolitan members, including myself, who view with great concern the haphazard and happy-go-lucky expansion and development of their electoral districts.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I realize the alarm caused to the honourable member in not having the opportunity to peruse the report. I shall bring his request before the Premier with a view to its being published.

**TIME PAYMENT GOODS.**

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Can the Minister of Lands indicate the interest rate that the Government would consider to be excessive on time payment goods, and if such a figure can be arrived at is there anything in the Moneylenders Act to permit the pegging of interest rates thereunder at a rate considered to be non-excessive?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I will bring down a report for the honourable member.

**INDUSTRIAL GAS SUPPLIES.**

Mr. WHITE—There seems to be dissatisfaction in some places regarding the supply of industrial gas to persons in country areas who set themselves up in the business of welding and general repair work. Apparently there is only one firm that supplies this commodity in South Australia and it places its customers on a type of quota basis. Two cylinders of gas are supplied together which is necessary, of course, to enable the welding process to be carried out. It appears that they must return the empty cylinders before they can obtain further supplies of fully charged cylinders. This means that there are days when country welders are without gas supplies. Now that we are entering the harvest period in South Australian farming areas, there is a build up of welding work to be done in effecting repairs to harvesting machinery. These are repair jobs that need to be done without delay. Delay in these matters when crops are ripe can mean huge losses to primary producers and the country. In view of this will the Minister of Lands make representations to the firm concerned, Commonwealth Industrial Gas Ltd. of 90 Jervois Street, Torrensville, and ask that during the harvest period some preference in supply of gas be given to country welders who are engaged in doing repair work for farmers and if a better continuity of supply can be arranged?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yes.

**PORT PIRIE DREDGING EMPLOYEES.**

Mr. DAVIS—Some time ago I asked the Minister of Marine whether he would take up with the Mines Department the possibility of the hostel owned by the department at Port Pirie accommodating men doing dredging work.

Since then I have been informed by the men concerned that a certain number were accommodated at a hostel owned by the Broken Hill Smelters Ltd. As there are still a number without accommodation, will the Minister take up the matter with the Mines Department, if he has not already got a report?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I had a report on the matter, but as it seemed to coincide with the fact that the major portion of the men had been accommodated along the lines indicated it seemed that the importance of the question had diminished. As the honourable member said there are still men wanting accommodation I will take up the matter with the department and the honourable member to see what can be done.

#### HOSPITAL CHARGES TO PENSIONERS.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—An extract from the *Gawler Bunyip* of November 6 states:—

At the annual conference of country hospitals held in Adelaide on September 9 a motion was put to the meeting by Waikerie Hospital that all pensioner patients be requested to pay a portion of their pensions to the hospital in reduction of expenses of maintaining them whilst in the institution. Eventually a figure of £2 10s. per week was decided upon. The secretary of the Hospitals Department informed delegates that this resolution was quite in order and that country subsidized hospitals could and should make a charge to pensioner patients according to their means. It has been calculated that for the past 12 months ending June 30, 1953, the percentage of pensioner and public beds occupied at the Hutchinson Hospital amounted to 21 per cent; or in other words, every one in five patients admitted was either a pensioner or indigent, and occupied a free bed. The board of management of this hospital very carefully considered the position in September and came to the conclusion that as it could not expect any further relief from the Hospitals Department if it refrained from charging pensioner patients, it would have to fall in line with the other hospitals, and accordingly it was resolved that as from October 1, 1953, all pensioner patients admitted to the hospital be requested to pay £2 10s. per week out of their pensions to go towards the cost of maintaining them whilst in hospital.

I deeply appreciate the fine, self-sacrificing work done by country hospital boards and fully realize the difficulties that have forced them to take a step that they do not desire to take. Is there any provision in State social services whereby aged pensioners can receive hospital treatment within the limits of their meagre resources in country areas where there are only subsidized hospitals?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I will take up the matter with my colleague, the Minister of Health, and bring down a considered report.

#### PROPERTY PURCHASES BY NEW AUSTRALIANS.

Mr. DUNNAGE—I understand that many hundreds of New Australians are buying properties—land, houses and farms—throughout the State, which is a good thing. Has the Minister of Lands any idea of the number who have purchased land and houses throughout the State?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I saw a report recently of the number who had land transferred to them, but I have not the number of houses and other information the honourable member desires. The number of building blocks that have been transferred to New Australians was just over 12,000. I remember that only 50 to 60 New Australians had been refused transfers, for different reasons.

#### WALLAROO SHIPPING.

Mr. McALEES—On several occasions I have asked that more shipping be provided for Wallaroo, but so far little notice has been taken of my questions. Last week I said thousands of tons of calcines were lying at the Mt. Lyell Fertilizer works awaiting shipment, but that there were no ships to take it away. The Premier did not seem to know what calcines were. I am bringing this matter up because only a short time ago the Wheat and Barley Boards were complaining about the shortage of wharf labour in Wallaroo. Today the boards are silent. It is curious that not one line has appeared in the *Advertiser* about there not being enough work for water-side workers. Whether that is through the influence of the Wheat and Barley Boards or the Government I do not know, but the people in my district want to know what I am doing, as they think I am not questioning the Government on the matter. If it is the fault of the *Advertiser* I shall know how to deal with it.

Mr. Shannon—Question!

The SPEAKER—The honourable member must now ask his question.

Mr. McALEES—I am grateful to *Hansard* for correct reports of my speeches, and I send those reports to Wallaroo.

The SPEAKER—The honourable member is outside the scope of his question now.

Mr. McALEES—Is the Government responsible for keeping this matter out of the press, or has it anything to report about additional shipping for Wallaroo?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The Government appreciates the great zeal shown by the honourable member in the interests of his district. A similar question was asked yesterday and I said I would endeavour to get

the information for him. I took up the question this morning at the Premier's office and was assured that a letter had been sent to the Federal Minister for Shipping in Canberra, but so far no reply has been received. As soon as it is received I shall let the honourable member have it.

#### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY IN IRRIGATION AREAS.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Has the Minister of Irrigation a reply to the question I asked on Tuesday about the electric pumps breaking down at Cobdogla through lack of power from the Electricity Trust?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have received the following report:—

A report has been received by the department that in the Upper-River pumping stations supplied through the Electricity Trust's transmissions lines from Adelaide, electrically-operated pumps in operation were stopped in the early morning of Sunday, November 8, as under:—

Stopped 12.50 a.m. Restored 2.50 a.m.

Stopped 3.15 a.m. Restored 3.50 a.m.

The stoppages are reported to have been due to power failure in the trust's transmission lines lower down the line, caused by a possum. With regard to the private pumping installations, it is known to the department that on occasions in the Berri area settlers are unable to obtain sufficient power to run their pumps, but this is a matter concerning the local district council, who purchases power in bulk from the Electricity Trust and distributes it through its own reticulation system. Concerning the third point raised, very close co-operation exists between the department and the Electricity Trust. Except in cases of unavoidable power failure, no interference in supply is made by the trust without the department being informed beforehand of its intentions and, as far as possible, no work is carried out by the trust involving a closing down of power at any time when irrigation operations would be affected thereby.

#### LANDLORD AND TENANT LEGISLATION.

Mr. DUNKS—About a fortnight ago I asked the Premier a question about houses which had not been occupied since the original Landlord and Tenant Act was passed, but were now ready to be let, being exempt from the Act on condition that a lease was granted. Has the Minister of Lands a reply?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have received the following report from the Assistant Parliamentary Draftsman:—

There are a number of exemptions from control proposed to be made by clause 4 of

the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act Amendment Bill which are as follows:—

- (a) A dwellinghouse which is completed and is first occupied after the passing of the Bill will be exempt from the provisions of the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act. This exemption applies to any letting whether in writing or not and irrespective of the term of the letting.
- (b) If a house has not been let at any time between the passing of the Bill and 1st September, 1939, and no part of the house was so let, then any letting of the whole house is exempt. This exemption also applies to any letting written or otherwise and whatever the term.
- (c) If a dwellinghouse, irrespective of when it was built or whether it had been previously let, is let under a lease in writing for three years or more that lease is exempt. The definition of "dwelling-house" in section 4 of the Act provides that it includes any part of any premises leased separately for the purpose of residence. Thus, the term includes flats and any part of a dwelling-house separately leased and any lease for three years or more of a flat or a part of a house would accordingly come within the exemption.

#### RAILWAY DEPARTMENT APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. HUTCHENS—It appears that in appointments recently made in the Railways Department preference to returned soldiers and seniority have been ignored. Owing to the grave discontent and serious distrust existing in all grades of the railway service over the questions of appointments and promotions, will the Government institute a commission of inquiry into the manner and the method of promotion and appointment in order that in future, as in the not far distant past, trustful co-operation among officers may be established?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have full information on this matter. I heard it was to be raised; in fact I got an extraordinary telephonic communication to the effect that the Labor Party was to move for a Select Committee to inquire into it. I also saw letters in the press. The recommendation for this particular job was supported by the head of the department. An appeal was made and was disallowed, and I think the railwaymen, like good sportsmen, will accept the result. I think the railways are working very harmoniously, notwithstanding the fact that some people do not like the appointments made. For every one person pleased, obviously a number are not pleased. I have full details on the

case and if the honourable member wants to see them I will show them to him. I do not think there is a better, more contented or successful service in the State.

#### PORT AUGUSTA WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. RICHES—A cartoon appears in today's *News* which would indicate that the water supply in the metropolitan area is so bad that three persons, namely the Premier, the Minister of Works and the Leader of the Opposition have to use the one bath at the same time. Under the cartoon is the statement that there will be better pressures when Murray waters reach the city. Port Augusta already has Murray water but also has leaking pipes. The reticulation system was worn out 20 or 30 years ago. Can the Minister of Works say whether steps can be taken early this summer to give people at Port Augusta the relief they asked for last summer by the relaying of some of the mains in parts of the town where indisputably they are worn out?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have not seen the cartoon referred to, but it would take a very big bath to take the three persons referred to. I read in this week's Melbourne press that the Metropolitan Board of Works had stated that three years would elapse between an application for a supply and the delivery of even a gallon of water. South Australia has done more per head of the population than any other part of the world, as far as I know. Ninety-six per cent of the population has water under pressure, and almost every day and at any period of the day one can turn on a tap and get water under pressure. I also noticed that in Sydney, where a Labor Government has been in charge for a period of years, they have far more intensive restrictions than South Australia. The only disability here is that during peak periods of the day there are low pressures. A pipeline is only a means of transport for water, and if everyone wants to ride on the pipeline, or the railways or the trams, at the same time, obviously they will not be capable of carrying the load. A system that would give everyone a large supply at all times would be so costly that we would have none at all. It would cost millions of pounds to reconstruct the reticulation system in Adelaide and country towns to keep pace with the growing demand. I am astounded that the honourable member asked the question, because I do not think any part of the State has had better attention from either the State or Commonwealth Government than his district. There

are many places in the State without any water supply at all, including parts of Yorke Peninsula.

#### NURAIP RAILWAY CROSSING.

Mr. TEUSNER—Has the Minister of Railways a reply to my question of October 22 regarding the Nuraip railway crossing between Nuriootpa and Angaston?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Many similar requests have been made, and I am afraid that the Railways Commissioner is almost snowed under. However, as the question is of some importance I will make further enquiries.

#### TAXATION OFFICERS' ACTIVITIES.

Mr. TAPPING—Yesterday I received an authentic report that officers of the Taxation Department are visiting hotels and restaurants interviewing employees for the purpose of extracting details in connection with alleged tipping. I realize that this is a Federal matter, but, because South Australians are being embarrassed, it seems logical that overtures should be made in the interests of South Australians. Will the Acting Leader of the Government suggest to the Federal Treasurer that any interviews regarding taxation queries in South Australia be arranged at either the Taxation Office or the taxpayer's residence, rather than that the present practice of interrogating employees at places of employment be continued?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I will take up this matter with my colleague.

#### STEEL SUPPLIES.

Mr. STEPHENS—Some time ago the Minister of Works told members that restrictions on the use of water were necessary, not because of a lack of water, but because of the lack of pipes to carry it, and that if he were given the steel to make the pipes it would be possible to supply the water. Can the Minister say whether the Government or his department has done anything to procure steel for pipe making?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I do not wish to appear rude, but the honourable member's statement is not a fair summary of what I said. If the honourable member peruses the Loan Estimates he will see that much has been done by the Government and that millions of pounds have been provided to this end. Everything possible has been done and nothing more that the honourable member may suggest could be done.

## POTATO PRICES.

Mr. DUNKS—Is the Minister of Agriculture or the Government taking action to see that South Australian potato growers receive a price for their forthcoming crop equivalent to that which they could get in other States, so as to avoid the potato shortage experienced last year?

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—I expect that ample potatoes will be available in South Australia in the near future. I do not think there is a shortage at present, as supplies from Western Australia have supplemented local supplies. The honourable member should address his question regarding potato prices to the Minister in charge of prices.

Mr. SHANNON—In South Australia cherries are being sold for about £3 a half case, which works out at 3s. a pound wholesale. Will the Acting Leader of the Government take up with the Minister in charge of prices the possibility of the same ruling factor prevailing with potatoes as operates with cherries—that the price available for the product in the eastern States, particularly Victoria, shall decide the price in this State? In reviewing the ruling price for potatoes, will the Treasurer take into account what they are worth in other States so that South Australia will not lose valuable produce and, to replace it, have to import from other States inferior produce at a higher cost?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I am prepared to take up this question with the Minister in charge of prices, but I am not prepared to say that he will agree to the honourable member's proposal, for we are mindful of the extravagant prices paid for potatoes not long ago in the eastern States.

## KADINA SCHOOL TANKS.

Mr. McALEES—Has the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Education, a reply to my recent question regarding the installation of galvanized iron tanks at the Kadina primary school?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have written to the honourable member concerning this matter and I am rather surprised that he has not received my reply. He said in effect that the water from the mains was discoloured and that the children did not like it, but no complaints have been received other than those referred to by the honourable member. Certain encrustations which take place in steel pipes, due to an alteration in the pressure between summer and winter supplies cause some discolouration. It is mostly rust which doctors might prescribe in some cases to cure an iron

deficiency. The main may need cleaning out, and, if representations are made to that effect it will be flushed out so that this disability will disappear.

## PORT BROUGHTON RAILWAY MATERIALS.

Mr. HEASLIP—With the discontinuance of the Port Broughton railway line there will become available a quantity of iron rails and sleepers. These materials are greatly desired by country people and are almost impossible to secure from any other source. Can the Minister of Railways say whether, when that line is taken up, a reasonable quantity of the materials will be made available to people in surrounding districts?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—It will become a question of who needs the materials most: whether the railways should have them so that a service may be given to the people in the district or whether other people should have them. I will take up the question in the hope that a proportion of them can be made available locally and will do my best towards that end.

## BUDD CARS FOR MOONTA.

Mr. McALEES—The people in the Moonta district would appreciate a Budd rail car service. Can the Minister of Railways indicate the likelihood of such a service?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I have not the slightest knowledge of the matter. The term of the Railways Commissioner has seven years to run and, unless he becomes insane or insolvent or commits some serious offence, he cannot be removed from office. He does not consult me or anyone else in regard to time tables. If the honourable member thinks his district is worse off than any other, having in mind the overall position, I shall pass on his representations to the Railways Commissioner.

## FRUIT FLY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Consideration in Committee of Legislative Council's suggested amendment:—

Page 2 (clause 6)—leave out "or any proclamation made under that Act for the purpose of preventing the spread of infestation of fruit or vegetables by fruit fly between the passing of this Act and the first day of January, 1954."

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS (Minister of Agriculture)—I move:—

That the suggested amendment be agreed to. When the Bill was before the Council consideration was given to compensation being paid in respect of this year's stripping as well

as last year's, but it was never intended that the legislation should apply to this year's. As drafted, there was some confusion in the Bill, and the Government moved the amendment in the Council. The Parliamentary Draftsman reports:—

The object of the Council's suggested amendment is to strike out the reference to proclamations which may be made in future up to December 31 next in connection with the fruit fly campaign. Although words referring to future proclamations have been in the Acts since 1948 the actual practical effect of the law so far has always been that compensation in respect of each season's operations has been dealt with after the end of the season. Thus the claims for each season could be looked at as a whole and settled by the application of consistent values and principles of assessment. This year, however, owing to the appearance of the fruit fly very early in the season, if the reference in the Bill to future proclamations is retained, the Fruit Fly Committee may find itself dealing with compensation claims for last season's operations and part of this season's operations concurrently. In addition, some of this season's claims may come under the present Act and some under next year's Act. The provisions of next year's Act are, of course, not yet settled and cannot be known in advance, though no doubt they will provide for just compensation. The officers concerned in assessing compensation have advised the Government that the most convenient and efficient method of dealing with compensation is to handle separately the claims for each season after the end of that season, when the losses can be viewed as a whole and consistent assessments of compensation made. The Government has therefore decided to ask Parliament to limit this Bill to last season's operations, and the suggested amendment is solely for this purpose.

Suggested amendment agreed to.

#### TEXTILE PRODUCTS DESCRIPTION BILL.

In Committee.

(Continued from November 10. Page 1380.)

##### Clause 9—"Regulations."

The Hon. Sir GEORGE JENKINS—Progress was reported previously so I could get information about the interpretation of sub-clause (1) (b). For a reason which I will mention later the provision for exempting goods from this Bill is a very important one and should be retained. The 1944 Textile Products Description Act contained a provision for exempting textile products by proclamation. The provision in the Bill is that exemptions can be prescribed by regulation. From the point of view of Parliament, this should be a more satisfactory way of dealing with the problem than the method prescribed in the 1944

Act, because the regulations will be subject to the control of Parliament, whereas proclamations are not. The need for power to prescribe exemptions arises from the fact that in the absence of such a power every form of textile product, whether made from hair, silk, cotton, linen or other fibrous material, natural or artificial, will be subject to the labelling requirements of the Bill. But the Bill is only intended to deal with those textile products which are likely to be passed off as wholly or partly made of wool when, in fact, they are not so.

There are a large number of types of goods which, because of their very nature, are not likely to be passed off as wool and do not come into competition with wool; and there is no virtue in requiring such textiles to be labelled. An example of the kinds of textiles which will have to be exempted from the Bill can be seen by studying the schedule of exemptions in the Commonwealth Commerce Regulations. Among the exempted goods are included such things as handkerchiefs, men's collars, braces and belts, women's handbags and neckwear, muslin, babies' bibs, towels, face washers, canvas goods, artificial flowers, bandages, dressings and other medical and surgical goods, various forms of hat trimmings, jute products, cords, twines, lashings, hose and other similar articles. It will be quite clear that there is no point at all in bringing these things within the scope of the Bill. To do so would be to place an unnecessary burden on manufacturers and vendors and add something to the cost of the articles without any good purpose being served. I am sure the explanation will satisfy all members, and I ask them to pass the clause as it stands.

Mr. HAWKER—I am pleased to get the Minister's explanation, and I understand that manufacturers of goods exempted would not be allowed to brand goods "wool" or "part wool" if they had no wool in them. That is all I was worried about.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I wanted to be sure there would be no possibility of the spirit of the Act relating to the protection of producers and consumers of woollen goods being evaded as a result of the regulation-making power of this clause. I am quite satisfied with the Minister's explanation.

Clause passed. Bill read a third time and passed.

## SEWERAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 10. Page 1374.)

Mr. TAPPING (Semaphore)—As the Minister indicated, this is not a contentious measure, and merely seeks to correct the anomaly that power is given in the Waterworks Act to lease or sell land, but not in the Sewerage Act. I have never queried giving power to lease or sell land, but I am somewhat concerned that it might be used wrongly, though I do not suggest the Minister would sell or let land that might be needed for future development. I believe the Government should retain all the land at present possessed in order to meet future demands, such as for schools, and I am sure the Minister in charge would never sell such land. I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages without amendment.

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

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 11. Page 1429.)

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide)—At the adjournment yesterday I was dealing with clause 13 relating to right-hand turns against the red light. I understand that police constables on point duty do exactly what is proposed in the clause and wave traffic on when the road is clear. Under the clause it will be left to the motorist to decide whether the road is clear at places where a policeman is not on duty. Although most motorists will undoubtedly comply with this provision, I am convinced a large number will not worry about pedestrians, but leave it to the pedestrians to do the worrying. Every hour of the day in the metropolitan area one sees motorists being inconsiderate toward the rights of pedestrians, who sometimes have to run or jump out of the way of motorists, and if this provision becomes law, I feel sure that that will continue. I can picture other difficulties when motorists attempt to comply with the law. For instance, I can visualize a motorist, when making a right-hand turn against a red light in King William Street, finding himself on a tram line half way across the road with pedestrians in his path, and a tram approaching on the green light. The more I look at the clause the more confusion I think it will cause. I read that the Adelaide city council proposes to install special traffic lights if this part of the Bill becomes law. I suggest that in this event only one set be

installed as a trial before extensive and expensive alterations are made to the present system. To me the Bill signifies in many ways the inconsistencies of the Government and its supporters.

Under clause 9 inspectors are to be appointed to police the over-loading of vehicles. Necessarily the Act will apply to the whole State. During the debate I do not remember the Minister or any Government supporter pointing out the difficulties in this connection and referring to the huge distances travelled by heavy transports and the difficulty of communication between the city and the country. No mention was made of the policing of this clause. Every street and road in the State will have to be watched if it is to be properly policed.

Mr. Fletcher—That will be a job for the district councils.

Mr. LAWN—I cannot see that councils will be appointing inspectors.

Mr. Brookman—The roads will not be watched continuously.

Mr. LAWN—Inspectors will have to be sent at different times to places such as Bordertown, Mount Gambier, Port Pirie, Whyalla, Port Augusta and Peterborough. On the Scaffolding Inspection Act Amendment Bill the Premier said:—

We can have inspectors of every type inspecting everything, but all this would have to be paid for by taxpayers, none of whom I have met who desires to see an army of inspectors driving around at his expense.

The same argument could be advanced on this occasion and would be just as logical. If the proposal is a good one the clause will have to be policed without worrying about the expense. Probably the Government feels as I do that the expense involved may save the State a greater expense in repairing damaged roads. Yesterday, when I charged Mr. Pearson with saying that the provision requiring a motorist to stop before passing a stationary tram was unduly restrictive, he interjected "Don't try to be funny. I didn't say anything of the sort," but I point out that, according to *Hansard* he said "I am unhappy 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." Although I was relying on my memory yesterday, I quoted Mr. Pearson in all good faith, and *Hansard* proves my statement was correct. I listen to broadcasts made on behalf of the National Safety Council, and I trust that the *Hansard* reports of this debate will be forwarded to that council so that, when

planning future broadcasts, it may be aware of the opinions of the representatives of the people. I wish other members would listen to those broadcasts so that they might appreciate the necessity for this legislation in the interests not only of pedestrians but of motorists.

Mr. Macgillivray—Don't you think they listen?

Mr. LAWN—I don't know.

Mr. Macgillivray—Your statement may be quite unjust.

Mr. LAWN—Yesterday Mr. Pearson heard me say that obviously those broadcasts were a waste of time so far as he was concerned, yet he did not object, which seemed to indicate that he did not listen, and there may be other members who don't. Although supporting the second reading, I reserve my right to oppose certain clauses.

Mr. DUNKS (Mitcham)—The longer I am in Parliament the more I wonder whether the amendments to certain Acts are necessary. Every session the Road Traffic Act, the Local Government Act and many other Acts are amended, and I wonder sometimes whether we are not trying to mass-produce legislation, not by introducing new Bills, but by amending existing Acts. If somebody complains that one little thing is wrong with an Act, Parliament is immediately persuaded to adopt the suggestion of an authority such as the National Safety Council or the Police Department. I often wonder whether the whole thing is not linked up with the lack of something to do in Parliament, whether we do not feel it is incumbent on us to sit for half a year, very often late into the night, and whether it has not become an established fact that the Government or its departments must find certain amendments to recommend to Parliament. Further, I wonder whether the amendments are necessary or desirable or whether they make the law more effective. Some good amendments have been made to the Road Traffic Act, although others have done no good but have merely proved an embarrassment to road users, of whom there are more today than ever before. The greater the number of motorists and owners of motor vehicles the greater the number who will be embarrassed by this legislation. The Road Traffic Act as it stands today is perfectly satisfactory and there is not the slightest need to amend it; but now that this Bill is before us, instead of condemning it outright I will make a few suggestions to improve it.

Clause 5, which gives the Registrar power to disqualify a South Australian motorist if

he has been disqualified in another State, may have some worth. If a man is disqualified in another State, he has probably been found guilty of either driving under the influence of drugs or intoxicating liquor (which are in essence the same because both, taken in quantity, are poisons), or driving to the danger of the public. It should be a natural corollary that such disqualification should have Commonwealth-wide application, but the Commonwealth Constitution prevents interference by one State in the affairs of another, and I am inclined to think that is the reason why the Registrar is given discretionary power in clause 5.

Clause 9 deals with the overloading of vehicles, but I do not know whether this practice has been prevalent. In the days when steel tyres were the fashion the Width of Tyres Act covered this matter, and one might logically suppose there should be some sort of restriction on the weight carried by a motor vehicle. This clause provides that the driver of a vehicle found to be carrying an excess load must unload the excess weight, but this could mean great difficulty to the driver. I would have thought a conviction and fine sufficient. It may be said that a conviction for this offence is not enough and that the most effective deterrent is to require the driver to unload the excess weight, but such a load must be dumped at the side of the road and left there, possibly for a day or two, before collecting and if the load consisted of perishable commodities they might be worthless by that time. I think there could be a better way to handle this situation than that contained in this clause.

Clause 11 enables a motorist to turn right against the red light. I think most members will appreciate the great difficulty and responsibility of the driver. Unfortunately there are many drivers today who do not know what courtesy means. Their attitude is "Get out of my way, or else." However, from my visits to other States I believe lack of courtesy is worse there, particularly in Sydney. It has been said during this debate that because the right-hand turn against the red light is allowed in other States it should be adopted here, but that does not impress me at all. We are a sovereign State: a law unto ourselves within our own State.

Mr. O'Halloran—With certain limits.

Mr. DUNKS—I grant that, but as far as road traffic is concerned we are a law unto ourselves.

Mr. O'Halloran—Except that we have no control over vehicles registered in other States.

Mr. DUNKS—If we are going to make the right-hand turn against the red light a common rule for all States surely it should be done under Commonwealth legislation. Then road traffic signs and signals could be all under one control.

Mr. O'Halloran—Would you support giving the Commonwealth Government powers to make laws in that regard?

Mr. DUNKS—I think the honourable member knows I would not like to give the Commonwealth any further powers.

Mr. O'Halloran—The Commonwealth cannot make traffic laws.

Mr. DUNKS—No, and I do not suggest it should. It has been said that because Victoria and New South Wales allow the right-hand turn against the red light we should too, but it is dangerous. If we adopt the principle we shall soon see great confusion, particularly at the Rundle-King William Street and Grenfell-King William Street intersections. When a member drives along North Terrace on Saturday morning on his way to Parliament House he cannot make a right-hand turn at certain hours. He has to cross King William Street, make a U-turn, and then turn left down King William Road. The right-hand turn is not permitted at all main intersections at certain hours, and if we clutter up the Act by allowing a right-hand turn against the red light we shall strike further confusion and trouble. It may not confuse drivers who are conversant with the ways of the city, but a country driver does not know much about stop signs or traffic lights, and he may become a nuisance because he will observe the green light and stop on the red light before turning right. Someone may then pass in front of or behind him to turn against the red light. I do not look forward to this provision being inserted in the Act.

On several occasions I have spoken against any proposal to make motorists stop when stationary tramcars are loading or unloading passengers. There was not the same traffic congestion then and I did not think the provision was necessary, but I now think some alterations should be made to the Act. I usually stop when I see people about to alight from a tramcar. Sometimes I see motorists push through people getting off tramcars. Children and women with pushers have to get of their way. Again, this shows motorists' lack of courtesy. I will not be sorry if the clause is passed.

Mr. O'Halloran—You are the first Government supporter to support it.

Mr. DUNKS—I believe it is a good provision. I frequently travel along George Street, Parkside, which is very narrow. Until I represented that ward in the Unley Council about 16 years ago it was considered almost impossible to pass a stationary tramcar there. I persuaded the council to widen the street, but it could be widened only by about a foot. The tramway and electric light poles still take up a little of the footpath, and it would be too costly to move them. It is a dangerous street. I have been driving motor cars for many years and have travelled down that street time after time, but have never had the slightest trouble. I have never seen a motorist collide with someone alighting from a tramcar in that street. Whatever we do about the Road Traffic Act there will be some people in the metropolitan area or the country that will be penalized. It would be a good thing to give this clause a trial, for it would make motorists much more careful. Although many motorists are courteous a big proportion are not. One difficulty may be that a police officer would have to decide whether a tram was stationary or had just started to move. In the eastern States there is often a race by motorists to pass the tramcar before it gets to the next stop, and I recognize that that may happen here. On the Unley Road there are many tram stops, and the same applies to George Street and the Hyde Park Road, and it would be dangerous for motorists to speed up there to beat the trams.

Clause 14 is a good amendment, and I wonder why it was not considered when stop signs first came into existence. There were not nearly as many vehicles on the road then, and when the Police Department recommended the erection of many stop signs to the Unley Corporation I objected to some of them because they held up traffic. I am sure that members who have been held up for several minutes at an intersection sometimes regret we ever had any stop signs. However, they had to be erected because we could not rely on all motorists to give way to the man on the right. If all motorists observed that rule we should not need any stop signs. I invite any honourable member to drive with me down Hutt Street and into George Street, Parkside. We should have to pass the intersection of Glen Osmond Road with the Kingswood tramline. When approaching Adelaide from that intersection the driver has to give way to the traffic on the right, but the

traffic coming on his left forgets to give way. That is bad enough, but when travelling south it is infinitely worse. The driver then has to give way to traffic coming from Adelaide, but vehicles coming from Glen Osmond rarely recognize he has right-of-way. Vehicles coming from the hills often travel at 30 or 40 miles an hour and do not take the slightest notice of the fact that they have to give way to the man on the right at this intersection. I invited the National Safety Council to inspect that intersection some years ago. Officers of the Police Department also came out and we watched the traffic for about 15 minutes. They were all surprised at the number of vehicles that did not give way to the man on the right. The police officers said they would have to station a policeman there and control the traffic if they wanted to do anything about it, but I said it was not necessary and that if they stationed a man there for a certain number of hours each day and obtained convictions for not giving way the problem might be solved. It is rather a moot point whether we are compelled to give way to traffic on the right, or whether it is only when an accident occurs and we have not given way that we are liable. If the former provision is in the Act, it is poorly policed.

Another clause provides that after motorists have stopped at a stop sign they have the right-of-way over traffic on the left. When I told a friend about the proposed change he remarked that if the amendment is passed we may as well do away with stop signs. If members would like to study the existing position I refer them to the intersection I mentioned earlier, and the same possibly applies to many other intersections. In this instance a motorist travelling along George Street has observed the stop sign at Park Terrace. Another motorist on the right is approaching 100 yards away. I should think that any decent motorist in those circumstances would take his foot off the accelerator and give the other man a chance to move on, but there is no such thing as courtesy for the man waiting at the stop sign. Just as you are ready to move off another motorist 100 yards distant, but this time on the left, looms up, and like the other motorist, refuses to ease up.

Mr. Lawn—Motorists evidently are not very considerate?

Mr. DUNKS—I do not think there is a very great brotherhood among motorists. For years I have tried to be courteous to my fellow motorists and pedestrians. We are all

entitled to our place, but if we are not prepared to give way to the traffic on the right and observe the rights of pedestrians we are failing in road courtesy. If there is one danger spot to pedestrians in Adelaide I should say it is opposite the Railway Station. Some time ago it was suggested that a tunnel should be constructed for pedestrians. When motorists are proceeding along North Terrace in a westerly direction after having stopped at King William Street they generally travel at high speed, as it is downhill; instead of putting their foot on the brake they are inclined to accelerate. It would be a very good thing to erect stop signs near the pedestrian crossover opposite the railway station, both on the southern and northern sides. Policemen may be on duty there for certain hours of the day, but if stop signs were erected this law would apply at all times except when a policeman was on duty. They would remind motorists that it is up to them to steady down and give pedestrians a chance to cross.

I cannot agree with clause 10, which relates to reflectors on bicycles. I have heard members say that it was nothing to see people in the country riding bicycles without a rear red light. If that is so, the police are not exercising their duty. We have compelled cyclists to provide a front light and I understand also a rear light of a certain minimum diameter. If we now provide for rear reflectors many riders will say "It does not matter very much what the red light is like as I have a reflector." On one occasion I saw a motor car with one of those refinements on the back mudguards known as flaps to stop the mud from splashing, and in the middle of each was a small rear reflector. No doubt when purchased the reflectors were a glowing red and could be seen from a great distance, but on this occasion they were covered with mud and one had to look very closely to know what they were intended for. I believe there is some support for the provision of a reflector on the back of a cycle used in the metropolitan area, but many of those in the country would soon become covered with mud and thus be useless. For the time being let us stick to what we have today and forget all about reflectors. Because we have manufacturers anxious to sell their products, do not let us be influenced to favour rear reflectors which they want to dispose of. If we provide that this clause shall not apply to the metropolitan area, I do not care. On the other hand, if country people think they should have a red rear lights on bicycles, and a reflector, it is all right

with me. After observations over a number of years, I have noticed that it is the exception to see a bicycle without a red rear light of some sort. If it is not the right size and ineffective, it then becomes our problem. Having made our alteration, let us instruct the police to see that the law is observed. I intend to vote for the second reading because probably we shall be able to knock the Bill into shape in Committee. It is nearly time Parliament realized this is not just a place for fiddling with small amendments so that members shall have something to talk about. We should introduce amendments only when there is a clear indication that something is happening that is not in the interests of the community at large.

I trust that no more alterations will be made to this legislation than are absolutely necessary. I must refer to the motorist who believes that, merely because he is on the right of another vehicle, he must have the right of way, but, generally speaking, that applies only at intersections. A motorist wishing to turn to the right has not the right of way against on-coming traffic merely because he happens to be on its right. I must also refer to the congestion caused on King William Road just north of the intersection of King William Street and North Terrace. Every day that I bring my car into the city I drive out from behind Parliament House, and as I drive through the opening to enter King William Road buses waiting to go to northern suburbs, and parked on my right, so obscure my view that I have to move out slowly a considerable distance before I can observe the traffic going north. I consider buses should be compelled to stand back at least 10 yards from this opening. The same buses, when they return to the city, make a U-turn just before reaching the intersection referred to, which I consider very dangerous. I trust that some action will be taken to improve the position at this busy spot. I support the Bill.

Mr. STEPHENS (Port Adelaide)—I agree with Mr. Dunks that there are many small matters which could be cleaned up. I support the Bill and believe every member wishes to do something to make our roads safe. I trust that everything done with regard to this Bill will be done toward that end. This legislation can only be effective if properly policed, but I do not think it has been policed as well as it might have been. I do not say that the police are not doing their duty, but I feel we should have more traffic policemen. It

seems to me that their number has been greatly reduced, although that impression may have been created by the fact that they are not so conspicuous on their solo machines. The traffic law is often broken on the Tapley Hill Road by motor cyclists and cyclists riding machines not fitted with lights. On more than one occasion I have been almost on top of a cyclist before seeing him, and it cannot be said that I am a fast driver. Most drivers want to help in making our roads safe, and I do not want to see this legislation made so complicated that they cannot understand it. I cannot quite follow some of the provisions of the existing Act.

This legislation has been amended 20 times between 1934 and 1950 and is becoming a hardy annual. Most of the alterations have been necessitated by changing conditions. I regret that the Bill contains no provision compelling heavy trailers to be fitted with efficient brakes for this is the only State where such vehicles may be driven without such brakes. Only a short time ago the Uniform Road Traffic Code Committee asked for uniformity in Australian road laws, and the State Traffic Committee was requested to recommend a provision that brakes must be fitted on trailers. We should not wait for a bad accident before legislating in that direction. When a vehicle with a heavy load is towing a trailer which also has a heavy load, anything may happen when the trailer gets slightly out of alignment. A truck which carries 10 tons is usually fitted with braking power for only 10 tons and not for 20 tons. I am afraid that some day a vehicle drawing a loaded trailer through the hills will be pushed over the side of the road or into another vehicle. Parliament should not allow this state of affairs to continue, and I hope that in the near future the State Traffic Committee will recommend action in this regard. Years ago, in response to agitation on this matter, it was said that it would be impossible to fit brakes on trailers, but, after Mr. Justice Higgins in the Commonwealth Arbitration Court had said that, if trailers were not fitted with brakes they could not be used, brakes were immediately fitted on trailers in certain States. The law in this State should be brought into line with that operating in every other State, and it should be compulsory for heavy trailers to be fitted with brakes.

I do not object to the use of mechanical warning signs on motor vehicles, but some drivers, after putting the sign out, forget to take it in. I have followed from Port Adelaide to West Terrace a vehicle whose driver

put out the mechanical warning sign on turning from St. Vincent Street into Commercial Road and left it out all the way to Adelaide. If the mechanical sign is to be used it should be used only while the vehicle is turning and not be in effect a fixture, for that may result in a collision with a vehicle which, coming from behind, believes the front vehicle is about to turn.

Clause 3 refers to vehicles popularly known as "biddies" which are used on the Port Adelaide wharves, but I am satisfied that, when speaking on this clause, the Minister was not referring to "biddies." He was referring to what is known as a cargo truck, otherwise called a four-wheeler. It is a low vehicle, about one foot off the ground, with four heavy iron wheels. It is about eight to 10 feet long and about four feet wide, but a bidy is a two-wheeled vehicle with iron wheels and a heavy wooden frame. It is not used for general cargo, but to carry timber, bar iron, pipes, or things of that nature. It would be of no use for general cargo or bagged goods, for it would only hold about two bags. The Minister should consider striking out "bidy" and inserting "cargo truck." If he wants more information he should ring the manager of one of the stevedoring or shipping companies at Port Adelaide. I am sure he would then realize the mistake.

At present the minimum penalty for overloading is 2s. 6d. a cwt., and the maximum is 10s. It is proposed to increase the minimum to 10s. and the maximum to £2. I thoroughly agree with the amendment, for the present penalties are not a deterrent. Overloading ruins our roads, but offenders are not always caught.

Mr. Macgillivray—Someone has to shift the goods.

Mr. STEPHENS—Yes, but people should not be allowed to damage our roads unnecessarily.

Mr. Macgillivray—The railways and shipping companies cannot move all our goods. Who is left to do it but the road haulier?

Mr. STEPHENS—I have heard similar remarks from the honourable member before. Where would the people he represents be if it were not for the railways? They opened up the country. Half the country would be idle today if it were not for the wonderful work done by railways. A man overloading by 10cwt. for 200 miles would be paid a fair sum for carting the goods.

Mr. Macgillivray—He would get less than the railway charges.

Mr. STEPHENS—If he were caught he may be fined only 25s.

Mr. McAlees—That is not enough.

Mr. STEPHENS—Of course not. What a wonderful investment for him! The present small penalties only encourage people to overload, and I shall give the provision my wholehearted support. A carrier could afford to overload day after day, because the penalties are so low. Some members ask who would have to pay the fine, but the owner should be compelled to pay it.

Mr. Macgillivray—Who will pay it is the question.

Mr. STEPHENS—The owner should pay it. Section 89 says "Any person who drives or causes or permits to drive." We could follow the example of what was done some years ago when a driver was fined for driving a horse with sore shoulders. The employer would not pay the fine and the driver was gaoled. A deputation waited on the Minister and the Act was amended. Now, if a driver notifies his employer that a horse has sore shoulders and the employer forces him to drive both are put into the witness box and the employer has to take his share of the responsibility.

Mr. Fletcher—Supposing the driver did not notify the owner?

Mr. STEPHENS—I think the driver has to show he notified the employer. I realize the driver must obey the ordinary rules of driving, but when an employer forces him to overload the employer should accept responsibility and pay the penalty. I do not think any member would disagree with that. Clause 9 gives the police or an inspector power to direct a driver to reduce the load if it is 10cwt. or more above the weight allowed. This is a good provision.

Mr. Brookman—How will he unload a motor lorry?

Mr. STEPHENS—If the driver does not know how to get the load off the lorry he should not drive the vehicle. The honourable member is looking for excuses for the man breaking the law. I am sure he would not look for excuses for anyone breaking the law by trespassing on his land. I not only support this clause but would suspend the man's licence to drive for 12 months. We do that with drunken drivers.

Mr. Macgillivray—You are vindictive.

Mr. STEPHENS—The honourable member is very vindictive sometimes. He is always criticizing the railways, but I do not know how they have done him any harm. I hope

this provision will be carried and I congratulate whoever was responsible for having it inserted. It had the desired effect in Victoria. Many people will not observe the law unless heavy penalties are inflicted. Regulations are to be promulgated dealing with reflectors on bicycles. I hope the reflectors will be of sufficient size to be seen clearly at a distance of 25 yards. Some used today appear to be no larger than a threepenny bit. The matter of passing stationary trams has been dealt with fully and I shall have more to say about it in Committee. Within a few years we shall have no trams because bus services will be preferred, so anything we do now in regard to trams will be of a temporary nature. I am not satisfied with the position of the present "stop" signs. They should not be erected as a trap to motorists. A member in another place on one occasion said to his friends as he drove down North Terrace "I am going to break the law and I want you to tell me when I do so." Later he asked them whether they had seen him break the law, but they had not. He had not stopped at a "stop" sign at the Botanic Hotel corner. He knew it was there only because he had seen it a number of times. The others were not aware of it. When a sign is not in a

conspicuous position a motorist should not be punished for not stopping. One day at Gawler I approached a corner without knowing a "stop" sign was there and I did not stop until I suddenly saw it. I jammed on my brakes but I stopped just over the line and I was spoken to by a policeman. I was fined for the offence, although I did not notice the sign. It would be better if "Stop" were painted on the road in addition to erecting a sign. Often a motor vehicle is parked in a position which prevents the sign from being seen. There should be a condition that no vehicle can be parked within a certain distance of a sign. I support the Bill. The Government should listen to all suggestions made by members in order to make the legislation workable and more acceptable.

Mr. HEASLIP secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2).

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.41 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, November 17, at 2 p.m.