HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, November 24, 1953.

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

PAYMENT OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended to the House the appropriation of such amounts of the general revenue of the State as were required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

ASSENT TO ACTS.

His Excellency the Governor intimated, by message, that the Governor's Deputy had assented to the Health Act Amendment and Maintenance Orders (Facilities for Enforcement) Act Amendment Acts.

QUESTIONS.

RADIUM HILL WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Can the Premier say what progress has been made with the laying of the pipeline from the Umberumberka Reservoir to Radium Hill to provide a reticulated water supply to that town and whether the project is sufficiently advanced to enable any water to be piped to the town?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I understand that the line has been completed as far as the New South Wales border and the workmen are now constructing the line over the border. It becomes necessary now to conclude an agreement with the New South Wales Government. I have signed the copies of the agreement and Parliament will have the matter formally submitted to it, perhaps this week, but in the meantime the field has had relief from one of the railway dams, from which the town has been supplied for domestic purposes with the 6,000,000 to 8,000,000 gallons that were in it. I understand that no carting of water is taking place at Radium Hill and that construction of the pipeline generally is progressing excellently.

HOUSING TRUST TWO-STOREY HOMES.

Mr. DUNKS—The press recently published a plan and an article relating to a new type of house with solid construction for the ground floor and timber frame above it, and giving the dimensions of the bedrooms upstairs as 7ft. x 7ft. Can the Premier say whether this plan complies with the Building Act, and, if not, does the Government intend to amend the Act to allow private enterprise to build on the same principle?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The question is a technical one, but I will obtain a report from the chairman of the advisory committee. I have no doubt that this construction complies with the Act, but I will check that before making a positive statement. By Act of Parliament the Housing Trust is not compelled to adhere to the Act, but in fact it makes a practice of adhering closely to it.

SMOKE FROM OSBORNE POWER HOUSE.

Mr. TAPPING—An extract from a letter I have received from Mr. G. A. Mason, Port Adelaide branch secretary of the Government Workers' Association, states:—

> The smoke from the Electricity Trust, Osborne, is causing considerable discontent amongst my members at the coal handling plant owing to the fact that any westerly wind is causing smoke to billow over the plant, thereby creating a very low visibility. Hatchmen on occasions have used battery torches as signals for the crane drivers while discharging colliers. Harbors Board pilots have also complained because they cannot see the lead lights in the river at night and have to steer by compass. Visibility on these occasions has been nil.

Will the Minister of Marine treat this matter as urgent and call for an inquiry and report forthwith?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Inquiries and investigations have been proceeding for a considerable time. Obviously, as we consume more coal, whether Leigh Creek or other, there will be more smoke and sometimes less visibility. We have read in the newspapers today, and on every day for at least a week, of the number of deaths caused in London by smog, a combination of smoke and fog. The fact remains that the conditions are as stated. It has been suggested that the disability occurs through the increased use of Leigh Creek coal. Various remedies have been suggested, but an effective one is not easy to find. One suggestion is to cease using Leigh Creek coal. The use of more Maitland coal would probably reduce the evil but by no means eliminate it. It has also been suggested that pilots should stop their ships when visibility is poor. Ships coming to Australia are often delayed by weather conditions and other causes, and it does not appear to be ultra-important that once they enter the river they should have entry to our port without any inconvenience. I assure the honourable member that the matter is one of live interest between the Electricity Trust and the Harbors Board, both of which are using all their ingenuity to overcome the disability. The condition arises

because Port Adelaide is becoming more and more an industrial area and more fuel is being used. I am not in any way depreciating the disabilities: they are real. As early as possible I will bring down the result of the deliberations of the Electricity Trust and the Harbors Board.

NORTH UNLEY WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. DUNNAGE—Some time ago I spoke to the Minister of Works about the poor water supply position at North Unley, due to old pipes. Has he a reply to the request then made?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I am pleased to be able to say that, following upon the honourable member's representations, remedies are being applied in his district by the relaying of 42 chains of 8in. main in King William Road in lieu of the existing 4in. main; in addition, 34 chains of 6in. main is being laid to replace the existing 3in. main. I should appreciate it if members would inform me of any other disabilities that they know exist. Members opposite know that definite action has been taken to remedy defects brought under the notice of the department. If members do as I have suggested I shall be happy to confer with them; otherwise the department is compelled to use a good deal of guess work as to the worst affected areas. In some instances private installations have been at fault, in others the department's installations, and sometimes both. We are doing our best to assure a reasonable supply to everyone rather than a magnificent supply to some and none to others. This also applies to country areas. On the Estimates this year we have £150,000 to replace old mains, and it will be applied wherever it is ascertained that improvements are required. I have asked the department not to wait until complaints come in, but to ascertain so far as it can where disabilities exist.

FLUORINE TREATMENT OF WATER

Mr. HUTCHENS.—The following was broadcast by the Australian Broadcasting Commission on November 15:—

An American Professor of Dentistry—Dr. Basil Bibby of the University of Rochester—arrived in Sydney today under the Fulbright Scheme. He was invited by the Australian Dental Associaion to advise on preventive dental care. Dr. Bibby is recognized as a world authority on the use of fluorine in domestic water supplies. He said today he thought the two best ways to insure better teeth among Australians were to regulate the consumption of sweets and sugars and to introduce fluorine into the drinking water of the community. He said: "Five communities in America and Canada have had fluorine in the water supply for six years. This has resulted, so far, in a known reduction of between 45 and 60 per cent in dental decay in children, and 33 per cent increase in the number of children with no tooth faults." Dr. Bibby added that the cost of introducing fluorine into the drinking water in Australia would be about 6d. per head per year.

Can the Minister of Works say whether the Engineering and Water Supply Department has considered having fluorine added to South Australian water supplies, and if so, what was the outcome of its investigations? If it has not considered the matter, will the Minister have investigations made, and, if possible, adopt the suggestion of the authority quoted?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will bring down a full report. In keeping with the prestige of our engineers, we have one of the highest authorities on water treatment in the world. Mr. Hodgson (Engineer for Water and Sewerage Treatment). His work on the subject is regarded as a text book.

BITUMEN SUPPLIES.

Mr. WHITE—Those of us who are associated with local government know that the very high price of bitumen is a burden to many district councils and all municipal councils. The supply is not plentiful. It has been suggested that the reason is that the Commonwealth Government is not issuing import licences for this essential road-making commodity because it is believed that Australian refineries can meet the demand. New South Wales and Victoria have refineries so that this matter would not affect them. I believe Western Australia and Queensland will have refineries in the near future so that they would have supplies at reasonable cost. As there is no indication that a refinery will be established in South Australia it is apparent that local governing bodies in this State will be placed at a disadvantage regarding the supply and cost of bitumen. South Australia will have to pay freight charges if bitumen is supplied from other States. In view of this, will the Premier make representations to the Commonwealth Government to see if import licences can be issued to bitumen users in this State, or, failing this, that some freight concession can be given on bitumen brought to South Australia from refineries in other States? Our nearest refineries would be in Victoria and the freight charge a ton is approximately £8.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The question of bitumen supplies has been receiving the attention of the Government for a considerable time. Its cost has increased greatly since the war and is now out of all proportion. There has been no actual shortage of bitumen but the costs throughout Australia are very high and quotations by tender have not succeeded in making better prices available. It is doubtful whether the refineries in other States would be able to contribute much to a solution of the problem either generally or in this State. The question has been discussed with representatives of the new Western Australian project, but at the moment I believe the bitumen produced there will be insufficient for the requirements of that State. Although the Government has been seeking a solution for more than six months, up to the present none has been found. The exorbitant price is a problem, especially as the Government believes the only solution of the road problem is to seal the roads as soon as they are put into good condition, for a sealed road will remain in good condition, whereas any other type of road surface goes into sand and dust within a few weeks. Therefore the Government is anxious to get bitumen because of the big roads programme with which it desires to proceed.

FRUIT JUICES FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Education a reply to my recent question regarding the issue of fruit juices as an alternative to milk for school children, especially in those parts where milk is difficult to provide?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—No. As indicated in my previous reply, I thought this was an idea worth following up, but the matter is not one within the control of State authorities. I sent the question on and I understand an inquiry has been made in Canberra. As soon as a reply is received I shall be glad to let the honourable member have it. His representations will not lose weight through lack of my support.

GALVANIZED IRON SUPPLIES.

Mr. HAWKER—As there is an acute shortage of iron suitable for curving for water tanks in South Australia, can the Premier say whether there is any likelihood of iron becoming available for this purpose in South Australia?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I recently made a report available to members on the likelihood of galvanized iron generally becoming available in the State and pointed out that orders were now in hand for 18,000 tons compared with 1,400 tons when building material controls ceased to operate. When those controls operated the Government saw to it that supplies of iron were conserved for essential purposes. On two occasions I personally visited a tank maker in the honourable member's district. On the first occasion I found he was up against it for supplies of tank iron, but the second time he informed me he had ample. While control was in the hands of the Government it was able to give some preference to essential users, but it is impossible to have control and free marketing at the same time. The view was expressed on a number of occasions by members of Parliament that all controls should be lifted, and they were lifted. Now there is a shortage of some of those materials and the Government has not the power to control their distribution. I think it will be a considerable time before the position becomes righted by Australian production alone. The Commonwealth Government may make available additional import licences if consumers are prepared to pay the world parity price, which is about £110 a ton compared with £65 a ton Australian.

NEXT SESSION OF PARLIAMENT.

Mr. STOTT—After Her Majesty the Queen opens Parliament next March, will this Parliament immediately deal with ordinary business, including Bills, or is a short session intended, with an adjournment until about the end of June?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It is intended that Her Majesty will open the session of Parliament next year, but that it will be adjourned immediately after the opening and before regular sittings commence. Possibly next year it may be necessary to commence the sittings considerably earlier than normally. I am not sure on that point, but there are a number of Bills and other matters now receiving the attention of the Government which may not be finalized in time for this session but which it may be desirable to deal with reasonably early next year.

Mr. Stott—Parliament will not deal with ordinary business in the March session?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The time of the adjournment will depend on the amount of business then available for consideration.

KNAPSACK SPRAYS ON LOCOMOTIVES.

Mr. MICHAEL—Has the Minister of Railways a reply to my recent question regarding the carrying of knapsack sprays on locomotives?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—As a similar question was previously asked by Mr. Goldney, I am sure he will pardon me if I answer both questions now, for both came from the Lower North Fire Fighting Association. The Railways Commissioner reports:—

The request that knapsack sprays be provided on locomotives has been made on a number of occasions in recent years, but has been refused for the following reasons:—When a train is stopped on a main line it must be protected against other train movements by the fireman going forward and the guard going back along the line each displaying a "stop" signal. These members of the train crew must, with detonators and fuses take prescribed steps to protect the train while the engineman must not leave the locomotive. If this rule which is essential to safeworking is not to be infringed, the only occasions on which any of the train crew would be available for fire protection would be if the fire occurred on double track territory where the fireman is not required to go forward, or when there is an assistant guard on the train. The rule, therefore, greatly restricts the occasions on which any member of the train crew would be able to help in fire fighting, and it is to be remembered also that very few enginemen are aware that a fire has started after the passage of their train. Under the circumstances, I regret being unable to agree to the request.

Both honourable members will agree that the first essential is the safeguarding of lives and under the circumstances it would not be feasible for any member of the train crew to leave the train to assist in putting out a fire, even if he were aware that the fire had been started by the train. It would probably have passed before the crew knew there was a fire. I think the reply is adequate but, if necessary, I will take the matter further.

SHORTAGE OF WATER.

Mr. STEPHENS—My question relates to the water restrictions in the metropolitan area, particularly in my own district. I understand that the shortage of water is not the result of any shortage in reservoirs but of pipes to take the water to residences, and that this position is due to a shortage of steel to make pipes. Can the Minister of Works indicate the position in connection with supplies of steel to make water pipes, and has the position improved in the last six months?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—At the outset I would say that there is no shortage of water or pipes, if reticulation pipes are referred to. Certain areas are affected because, through unexpected prosperity due to the great popularity of the Government, many people have decided to live in South Australia and establish their industries here. Therefore, some people have been asked to use water only in certain periods for gardening. There is no restriction on the use of it but during certain hours hoses cannot be used. From this morning's *Advertiser* it will be seen that the same position applies at Alice Springs, and it applies permanently in some Labor Government States, but it applies only occasionally in South Australia. The Government foresaw the possible position and about six or seven years ago to meet the extraordinary demands, asked Parliament to make funds available, following on a report from the Public Works Committee. The Government used every penny and every ounce of steel that could be obtained towards the fulfilment of its desires. The chart I have seen shows that few people are short of water. Last Friday, despite the fact that it was a relatively cool day, the consumption was only 1,000,000 gallons short of the record for the State. The people are getting water, but some have to wait a little longer for it than would be the case if we did not have so many new homes. The question is, are we to supply the new homes? If we are, then pressures will be reduced in some areas. The South Australian Government has done what no other State Government has tried to do, kept pace with every requirement, with the inevitable result that some people during some parts of the day cannot get water. In Melbourne people have to wait three years before getting a water supply. Here everyone who wants a supply gets it. If the honourable member can give me details of any real case of hardship we will try to remedy it. Few people are suffering any real disability or inconvenience. If they are, then it is probably the result of some defect in their own service, or in the pipes leading thereto, and if that is the position we will do our best to deal with it.

CONSTRUCTION OF ROADS.

Mr. CORCORAN—A letter I have received from the Minister of Local Government, dated November 19, states:—

Referring to your remarks when debating the Budget, the total mileage of declared main roads is such that the immediate reconstruction of many of them at present is impossible. Therefore they must be maintained by other methods to provide at least a reasonable running surface. Whether this work can be classed as a waste of money is a matter of opinion, but no alternative method exists with the funds at present available or becoming available. The sealing of a road does not reduce the maintenance costs. Intensity of traffic is the economic reason for a bituminous surface and this

volume of traffic results in the necessity for increased maintenance, both in amount and cost per square yard.

I am concerned about the statement that the sealing of the road does not reduce the costs of maintenance, and the reference to the immediate reconstruction of roads. It would convey to some people that I said it could be done immediately, but I want to correct that impression, because I suggested the work might be carried on over a period of years. I cannot concur that when a road is sealed the same costs of maintenance apply as with an unsealed road. Can the Minister enlighten me in regard to the matter?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The purport of my reply to the honourable member was that the cost of maintaining roads is not necessarily reduced by sealing it, unless in the reconstruction the foundations are strengthened. If that is not done it is cheaper to grade the road. If the honourable member wants further information about any particular road I am prepared to give it. Generally, unless the foundation is good it is a waste of money to seal a road, and there are no savings in maintenance costs.

TIME PAYMENT GOODS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked on November 12 about interest rates on goods purchased on time payment?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A report I obtained from the Crown Solicitor states:—

There is no provision in the Money-lenders Act, 1940, pursuant to which rates of interest may be pegged. Hire-purchase transactions may be reopened by a court, either in proceedings taken in the court in respect of any matter arising out of the transaction, or on the application of the hirer if, in the opinion of the court, the instalments are excessive, or the other charges and expenses are excessive or the transaction is harsh and unconscionable; see section 40. In such cases the court may grant relief to the hirer. The Act does not state what rate of interest would be excessive. That is a matter for the court, and the court's decision would depend upon all the circumstances. Persons whose business is that of money-lending must be licensed under the Act, but it is significant that the definition of "money-lender" in section 5, excludes a person or company *bona fide* carrying on business not having for any of its principal objects the lending of money, in the course of which and for the purposes whereof, he or it lends money at a rate of interest not exceeding 12 per cent per annum. What rate of interest is excessive in a hire-purchase transaction depends upon numerous circumstances, and it is not possible to lay down a rate which should apply to all such transactions.

AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION FROM ENGLAND.

Mr. BROOKMAN—I have asked several questions this session about the practice adopted by the late Sir Charles McCann (Agent-General) of writing to the Government Produce Department regular letters upon agricultural and marketing conditions in England. They were released in the press and this was a good way of getting the latest information on agricultural developments quickly from England to this State. The Premier said in reply that it was the desire of the Government to comply with my request for this practice to be resumed by someone at South Australia House. Can anything be done to help us keep abreast with overseas agricultural developments?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think I promised the honourable member last week that I would have something for him today on this subject, but I found that the officer to whom the matter had been referred, the Director of Agriculture, had gone overseas to attend a conference. I am not sure whether he made a direct approach to the Agent-General, so I instructed my secretary to prepare a letter for me to send to the Agent-General in order to give effect to the honourable member's wishes.

TAPLAN WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. STOTT—Has the Minister of Works anything further to report in reply to my question about the inadequate water supply in the township of Taplan?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—It is not a question of lack of water, but of some people having to wait a little longer to get adequate pressures than they would otherwise have to. I said before that the first priority is to extend water supplies to those who have none, rather than give a full pressure to those who already have some. I followed the question further and found, as the honourable member knows, that the growing requirements of the district have resulted in the existing mains becoming inadequate. A preliminary report I have read indicates that improvements can be made in this area. The matter is under investigation and the earliest opportunity will be taken to improve the supply, in keeping with the requirements of other areas. We will improve supplies wherever possible to those who have to wait a little longer for water than they think they should. I will bring down the details of our proposals in the next few days.

HOUSING TRUST RENTS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Premier a reply to my question of Thursday regarding the fixing of Housing Trust rents?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Chairman of the trust reported as follows:—

As groups of rental houses are completed it is the practice of the South Australian Housing Trust to estimate the cost and to fix the rents acording to the cost. The last few years has been a period of rapidly rising costs and thus the cost of the same type of house built at different times differs appreciably. This has produced the result that the rents for the houses differ. The rent charged for the standard five room semi-detached brick houses of the trust now being completed is £2 9s. per week. It is hoped by the trust that building costs will remain more or less stable, in which event there will be no need to charge a higher rent for houses completed in the future. Up until a short time ago the rent charged for houses of this type then being completed was £2 5s. per week and the range of rents charged for the houses of the type now being built is £1 15s., £1 17s. 6d., £2 5s. and £2 9s. per week. It would, of course, be possible to keep down the rents of the latest houses by increasing the rents of the earlier houses from time to time. This would involve successive increases in rents of the earlier houses as more and more of the houses were completed at the later higher costs. However, the trust does not consider that such a course would be desirable. It considers that rent increases should be required from its tenants as little as possible and only when economic conditions make them absolutely necessary.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Would that report indicate that it is not the trust's policy to proceed with the averaging of rents as in the past?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No. I do not regard the report as being a statement by the trust to apply for all time. As I read it, the trust's policy is not to alter rents frequently or for light causes. It will be necessary from time to time for the trust to make averaging adjustments; otherwise, for example if prices rapidly decreased, particular tenants might be charged rents completely out of line with the average charged to the community as a whole. Under the circumstances Parliament has given the trust power to deal with the matter. What the report says is that at the moment the trust does not believe further averaging is desirable, and that in general practice averaging should not be undertaken except when there is fairly wide disparity in prices. It does not believe that rents should be increased except in very necessary circumstances, and with that principle I am in entire accord.

BUDD RAIL CARS.

Mr. McALEES (on notice)—

1. Is the South Australian Railways Department building rail cars similar to the Budd cars operating on the Commonwealth Railways?

2. If so, how many are being built?

3. Is it anticipated that the introduction of these cars would speed up the rail services on country lines?

4. Is it intended to place one of these cars on the Adelaide-Wallaroo service?

5. When is it estimated that the first cars will be available?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Railways Commissioner reports:—

1. Yes.
2. Fourteen railcars and 11 passenger trailers.
3. Yes.
4. Yes.
5. The first unit is expected to be in service by the end of June next.

BROKEN HILL HIGHWAY.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (on notice)—

1. Has the project for the deviation and realignment of the Broken Hill highway at the railway crossing south of Nackara been completed?

2. If so, what was the cost of this work?

3. If not completed, what is the estimated cost of this work?

4. Is the moving of a short section of the railway line included in the project?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The replies are:—

1. No.
2. *Vide* No. 1.
3. £5,000.
4. No. Adjustments to guard fences and cattle pits are estimated to cost approximately £50.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (on notice)—

1. Does the Highways Department intend to make a cutting 6ft. deep in the hill near the store post office and the hotel at Oodlawirra where the Broken Hill highway passes through the town?

2. Would such a cutting cause inconvenience to local people?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The replies are:—

1. No.
2. Yes.

BLOODHOUNDS AS TRACKERS.

Mr. BROOKMAN (on notice)—Is it the intention of the Government to consider the use of bloodhounds by the Police Department for finding lost persons?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government does not intend that bloodhounds should be used by the Police Department.

LEAVING HONOURS CLASS, WHYALLA.

Mr. RICHES (on notice)—

1. Has the Education Department considered a proposal to establish a leaving honours class at the Whyalla technical high school?

2. If so, what is its decision?

3. Has a survey been made of the district to determine the necessity for such a class?

4. If not, will such a survey be undertaken?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—A survey of the number of students likely to be available for such a class has been made and shows that the numbers likely to be available in the next few years are far too few for the establishment of such a class.

OPPORTUNITY CLASSES WHYALLA.

Mr. RICHES (on notice)—

1. Is the Education Department aware of the desirability of establishing an "opportunity" class at one of the Whyalla primary schools?

2. If so, what action is being taken to establish such a class?

3. Is there any likelihood of such a class being established as from the first term in 1954?

4. Is a teacher qualified to teach such a class already stationed at Whyalla?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Evidence before the department does not indicate that there is greater need for the establishment of an opportunity class at Whyalla than in any other part of the State. Courses of training for teachers of opportunity classes are conducted from time to time, and the qualified teachers are sent where the need is greatest. Accordingly, there is no present intention of establishing an opportunity class at one of the Whyalla schools.

VACANT RAILWAY HOUSES.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (on notice)—

1. Are a number of railway houses vacant in Peterborough at present?

2. If so, how many?

3. Why have these houses not been let to railway employees living in the town who are experiencing housing difficulties?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Railways Commissioner reports:—

1. Yes.

2. Six.

3. Traffic and Mechanical Branches are below strength. Two cottages are being held for the Chief Mechanical Engineer (one fitter and one welder), one traffic cottage to be occupied this week and three being held for enginemen to be transferred. These three cottages will be vacant for at least a fortnight, but suitable enginemen are at present being sought in Adelaide for transfer to Peterborough.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (on notice)—

1. Are any railway houses available in the metropolitan area for employees who are transferred from country areas?

2. If so, are any of these houses vacant at present?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Railways Commissioner reports:—

1. No houses available at present, but policy has been to allot certain of the houses constructed in the metropolitan area to be available for employees transferred from the country. As soon as these houses are ready for occupation the vacancy, together with the house, is advertised throughout the railways.

2. No.

HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION FOR AGED PERSONS.

Mr. LAWN (on notice)—What is the present number of inmates in South Australian mental institutions?

2. Of this number how many, in the expert opinion of the Superintendent of Mental Institutions, come within the category of mentally and physically infirm consequent upon advancing years?

3. Is it the intention of the Government to take any steps to provide infirmary accommodation, other than in mental institutions, as recommended by the Superintendent of Mental Institutions?

4. If the Government does not intend to take remedial action what are its reasons for disregarding the report of the Superintendent?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The replies are:—

1. 2,486 certified mentally defectives, 26 voluntary boarders and 13 under criminal law.

2. Perhaps 500.

3. Government has taken action to provide accommodation for aged and senile patients through increased admissions to Northfield wards following decrease in the incidence of poliomyelitis and further by accommodation released through the erection of new wards to cater for infectious cases.

4. *Vide* No. 3.

HOYLETON ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

Mr. GOLDNEY (on notice)—Will the Hoyleton electricity extension group receive any benefit from the subsidy scheme now being considered by the Electricity Trust?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This group will be considered under the subsidy scheme.

PROGRESS OF PUBLIC WORKS.

Mr. LAWN (on notice)—What stages of construction have been reached in the following public works recommended by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works:—(*a*) New nurses' quarters, Parkside mental Hospital (recommended on March 15, 1948); (*b*) New female treatment block, Parkside Mental Hospital (recommended on August 17, 1949); (*c*) Northfield Mental Hospital additions (recommended on March 18, 1952); (*d*) Male tuberculosis block, Parkside Mental Hospital (recommended on April 10, 1952); (*e*) New men's admission block, Parkside Mental Hospital (recommended on June 25, 1953).

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD.—The replies are:—

(*a*) New Nurses' Quarters, Parkside Mental Hospital.—Construction of building complete. Painting and built-in fixtures and fittings 90 per cent complete. Should be ready for occupation early in new year.

(*b*) New female treatment block, Parkside Mental Hospital.—Erection of building complete—now at plastering and ceiling stage. Should be ready for occupation a little later in the new year.

(*c*) Northfield Mental Hospital, additions—The additions comprise the following:—(1) New residence for medical officer. Contract let to J. J. McCarthy, approximately 75 per cent complete. (2) Building a staff dining room. Tenders have been received and are now under consideration. (3) Building women's tuberculosis block. Contract let to Martin Building Contractors Ltd. (4) Wards for 80 senile men, 80 senile women, and 50 children of each sex—working drawings in hand. (5) New main boiler house. Contract for steam generating plant let to Babcock and Wilcox of Australia Pty. Ltd. Plans for the boiler house will be put in hand as soon as details for the installation are available. (6) New main kitchen. Working drawings 80 per cent complete. (7) New laundry. Plans are being drawn.

(*d*) Male tuberculosis block, Parkside Mental Hospital.—Plans drawn and bill of quantities prepared. Writing of specification almost completed. Tenders to be called shortly.

(*e*) New men's admission block, Parkside Mental Hospital.—Working drawings are 90 per cent complete.

SEWERAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

TEXTILE PRODUCTS DESCRIPTION BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

HARBORS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) moved:—

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Harbors Act, 1936-1950.

Motion carried.

Resolution agreed to in Committee and adopted by the House.

WILLESDEN SCHOOL.

The SPEAKER laid on the table the report of the Public Works Standing Committee on the Willesden primary school, together with minutes of evidence.

Ordered that report be printed.

STAMP DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the Hon T. Playford and read a first time.

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

Mr. PEARSON moved—

That it be an instruction to the Committee of the whole House that it has power to consider a new clause relating to traders' plates.

Motion carried.

In Committee.

(Continued from November 18. Page 1546.)

Clause 10 passed.

Clause 11—"Interpretation of traffic light signals."

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Although uniformity in traffic laws is desirable and some more experienced motorists would be able to complete a right hand turn in accordance with the provisions of this clause, other motorists, not so experienced, could get into trouble. The freedom of the motorist to turn right at an intersection should be confined to that period during which either the amber or the green light is showing in the direction in which he wishes to proceed. Were members of the State Traffic Committee and representatives of tramway employees, particularly tram and trolley

bus drivers, unanimous in their desire for this provision? When the provision enabling motorists to turn to the right from the centre of the road was introduced, considerable difficulty was experienced by many motorists. Even today many mistakes are made when making the right hand turn and the position would be further complicated if motorists could proceed against the red light. Did the police and the committee agree on the proposal and were the interests of tramway employees considered?

Clause passed.

Clause 12—"Stationary tram cars."

Mr. HAWKER—I move—

To delete "(*a*)" prefacing paragraph (*a*) of subsection (1) of new section 126a, with a view to deleting the whole of paragraph (*b*).

This is a contentious amendment, and it is difficult to give adequate information to members. Mr. Heaslip said that he had been informed by the Tramways Trust that from February 1, 1951, to June 30, 1953, 26 people had been injured in boarding trams and 29 in alighting from them. I have received information regarding the position in New South Wales and Victoria, where it is compulsory for motorists to stop when approaching stationary trams. In New South Wales between July, 1951, and June, 1953, one person was killed and 32 injured by vehicles passing stationary trams. In Victoria in the same period four persons were killed and 126 injured when alighting from stationary trams, and two killed and 88 injured when boarding them. Reducing these figures to a common factor, in Sydney there were two accidents per 100,000 people over the two years, 12.6 in Melbourne, and 10 in Adelaide. This information in itself does not convey much, and there may be different methods of compiling statistics. I have never liked driving in Melbourne because of the narrow streets. Just prior to a tram stopping motorists accelerate to pass it. If the proposal were adopted here there would be difficulty in our narrow streets. As drawn, the clause will hold up traffic without creating additional safety. Now some people alighting from a tram and wanting to cross to the right hand side of the street stand in the centre of the street and wait for the tram to go on. Under the new proposal that would add to the congestion. I think it would be safe if motorists were permitted, after stopping, to pass a stationary tram at not more than six miles an hour.

Mr. SHANNON—I oppose the amendment because I do not think it will achieve what Mr. Hawker desires. When persons alight from a tram and stand in the centre of the street prior to crossing to the right hand side careful motorists wait until the way is clear. Some tram passengers are not as road-conscious as they should be, and whilst they stand in the centre of the street, under the proposal the motorist would not be permitted to proceed. If a motorist sees any danger of hitting a person standing on the street in this way and he proceeds he is liable to be charged with driving without exercising due care. I discussed the matter with the chairman of the State Traffic Committee, because I wondered whether the provision would hold up traffic unduly. I do not think it would, and the committee has recommended only what is done now by almost every motorist. If vehicles are not permitted to park at tram stops congestion will be reduced. The figures quoted by Mr. Hawker are not convincing. An analysis of them would suggest that the proposal which Mr. Hawker wants to delete should be retained. Local conditions, besides administration, come into the picture. I would have thought that adverse figures would come from Sydney, where the traffic is so dense, but that is not so. Taking into account all the factors, the State Traffic Committee is not wide of the mark in recommending that we fall into line with other States. I do not believe in uniformity for uniformity's sake, but we should learn from the experience of other States with greater traffic problems than we have. This provision works well there, so we should give it a trial. I have seen what happens in Melbourne and its suburbs, when motorists often speed to pass a tramcar before it stops. Sometimes this endangers the public, but if those charged with the supervision of traffic laws in Victoria were more meticulous in seeing that the law was obeyed those breaches would be prevented. It is dangerous for motorists to pass a tramcar when passengers are getting on and off, so we should accept the clause. We have tried other innovations regarding traffic matters, and they have worked well.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I support the clause as drafted. I am not accepting it simply for the sake of uniformity, but for the protection of people who must use public transport. Years ago it was rare to see a motor car in South Australia that was registered in another State, but now we see many. Confusion arises because the drivers do not know they can pass

a stationary tramcar in this State at up to six miles an hour. The motorists following expect them to pass the tramcar at the normal speed, and this sometimes makes it difficult for following drivers to avoid accidents. The difficulty will be overcome when tramcars are eliminated, but while they remain it will be necessary to retain this clause. It is proposed that motorists must stop when a tramcar stops to pick up or put down passengers and remain stationary until the roadway between the tram and footpath is clear. The amendment would provide that a person, having stopped his vehicle, could then proceed. However, he could not proceed with safety in any event unless the roadway were clear. If he proceeded while people were trying to leave or join a tram he would probably be guilty of an offence under another section of the Act and could be charged with dangerous driving. We should not increase the difficulty of interpretation, which might be responsible for the higher accident ratio in Victoria, where traffic lights are apparently ignored to some extent. There is also the possibility that the rule regarding stopping at stationary trams until the roadway is clear to pedestrians is not as vigorously enforced there as in South Australia. The position would be much the same under the clause as drafted as it would be if the amendment were carried, with this difference that the driver of the road vehicle would have a clear knowledge of what his duty was when approaching a stationary tram. Most people would do the right thing, but there is always the small minority who have no regard for the safety of others.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—The Committee has to decide who has the right of way on the road when passengers are joining or leaving a tram. Under the amendment a motor car must stop before it reaches a stationary tram, but it could then proceed at six miles an hour while passengers were crossing to or from a tramcar. It would lead to conflict as to who had the right of way. I know Mr. Hawker's amendment is not designed to push pedestrians off the road. At a terminus where a number of people may be getting on or off a tram there might be some hold up of road traffic. If that is the case he is trying to meet, the fact that there are a large number of people crossing the road makes it necessary to establish who has the right of way in the circumstances. Because of the desirability of uniformity my view is that we should stick to the clause as drafted. It clearly indicates that the pedestrian has the right of way. If the experiment reduces the accident rate it will be an advantage, but if it proves detrimental the Act can be further amended. The Committee would be well advised to stick to the clause.

Mr. HEASLIP—As I indicated in my speech in the second reading debate, I intend to oppose the clause, as I cannot see that it will help pedestrians or the flow of traffic. I gave statistics included in reports of tramways and police officials covering accidents to people boarding or leaving trams. The reports did not say that all the accidents were caused by motorcars; a number could have been due to people slipping when boarding or leaving a tram. In the 55 accidents reported in two and a half years no one was killed, although in the other States there had been fatalities. It would appear that the object of introducing the clause was to attain uniformity, but if it is passed the position will be far more confusing than now. A motorists could, under certain circumstances, pass a stationary tramcar, whereas under others he would have to stop. I cannot see that that is uniform. A tram may have been stationary at a terminus for half an hour, and yet under the clause a motorist could not pass it without first stopping. I can see confusion arising if interstate drivers are allowed to pass a tram at a safety zone and yet have to stop when a tram is stationary at a terminus. Any motorist proved to be driving through a crowd of people alongside a tram would be liable to prosecution irrespective of his speed, so the motorist's speed in passing a tram is not important in that regard. Under clause 11 it is left to the individual to proceed at his own discretion, but this clause seeks to take away that discretion, and if uniformity is to be maintained this clause should be eliminated In its present form the clause will stop the flow of traffic and will mean congestion on our roads.

Mr. PATTINSON—I oppose the amendment. The clause has been recommended by the State Traffic Committee, and it is the prerogative of the Government to reject or accept the recommendations of that committee. In this case it has accepted the recommendation, but the final responsibility for either accepting or rejecting this clause rests with Parliament. It has been said that we should not agree to uniformity simply for uniformity's sake, and I agree with that contention. Traffic laws, which must be understood and obeyed by some hundreds of thousands of people, should be constant, but I do not think we should oppose

a change if we consider it is good. We should have regard to the greatest good for the greatest number. The proposal in this clause is not new, for it was before the committee in 1939, and came before it intermittently during the whole term of chairmanship of the then member for Burnside, now Mr. Justice Abbott. It was before the committee when I first became chairman in 1947, and the committee again held it up for several years, although it had been recommended by every other State and had been brought before the South Australian Government by deputations as early as 1939 when the Hon. R. S. Richards introduced a deputation. Since then it has been requested many times by the Australian Labor Party. There is no great desire on the part of the committee to recommend the clause, but we took the view that South Australia could not hold out against it any longer. We do not feel that we can be the only State right and all the rest wrong.

I commend the honourable member for Burra for his assiduity in obtaining certain figures, but I consider they are disastrous to his case. Those pertaining to Sydney with its 2,000,000 people, topographical difficulties and road problems are remarkable when compared with figures for smaller cities. The honourable member talks about safety at the greatest speed, but which is more important for the great mass of South Australians—safety or speed? The members who are trying to break down the provisions of the clause are not those who live in the metropolitan area but those who are concerned with traffic coming into the city from the country, whereas city members are concerned with the safety of metropolitan pedestrians and road users. In this State on occasions we are inclined to favour the interests of motorists, but it is time we had a look at the safety of pedestrians. If it means only a little inconvenience and slowing down, the clause will do much good in helping to maintain the low percentage of road fatalities in this State.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—All members are imbued with the need to preserve the safety of pedestrians in the metropolitan area, but we must also consider the congestion which could arise from the implementation of the clause. Instead of the present flow of traffic there would be congestion, banking up and speeding between stops which may be seen every day in Melbourne. Those features could be a far greater factor in militating against the safety of the community than any other existing factor. Despite the speed limit of 30 miles an hour, our city traffic is cleared reasonably well and there is no danger except that caused by the few road hogs who will create danger under any law. Until the existing law is effectively policed they will be a menace, but this clause does nothing to deal with them. How often do we see that type of motorist speeding past a stationary tram? Most motorists observe the canons of safety to the utmost, and at dangerous spots they stop before passing trams because, imbued with the spirit of decency, they require no law to make them do so. We want not more laws but more effective policing of existing laws. Some members have said, "Let us try out this new law," but once it is on the Statute Book it is there permanently, for every restriction that has been imposed on the motorist has remained, it being a popular practice to restrict the motorist. No Government will lift the restrictions imposed on motorists in the past, and if we adopt the proposal in the clause it will remain. Under it at every stationary tram, even if there is only one person crossing to or from the tram the motorist must stop, and it will mean his stopping and starting at practicaly every tram stop on his way in or out of the city. There may be a distance of 30ft. between the tram and the footpath, yet the motorist must stop. I suggest that we are going too far in forgetting local conditions. Let us have the provision for dangerous areas, but why have it for all areas, when there is no necessity for it? We should not be absurd with our legislation. Some members are obsessed with the idea that it is a simple matter to make motorists stop when aproaching a stationary tram. Of course, it is not so easy to police a system of stopping at danger points.

Mr. Shannon—How would you decide the danger points?

Mr. CHRISTIAN—It could be left to our traffic authorities. We should not have our motorists stopping willy nilly everywhere when there is no danger to pedestrians. The congestion caused by the proposal could be a greater menace to pedestrians than we have at present with our reasonable clearance of traffic.

Mr. MICHAEL—In the second reading debate I said I did not think it was necessary for a motorist to stop when approaching a stationary tram, but I also said my view would be influenced by the discussion in Committee, and after hearing it I intend to stick to the clause. Mr. Christian has painted an unreal picture. A motorist would not have to stop if there were no people getting on or alighting from a

tram. He would have to stop only when he caught up to another tram where there were people alighting from or boarding trams. I am now convinced that the danger of congestion under the clause will not be great, and I have been impressed by the figures quoted regarding the position in other States.

Mr. HAWKER—I gave the figures knowing that they were not very conclusive, but I thought it best for the Committee to have the information. I am sorry that Mr. Pattinson brought up the matter of city *versus* country, because I do not think it comes into this debate at all. We should only consider the pros and cons of the amendment. We want the maximum safety associated with the quick clearance of traffic. The banking of traffic creates a danger, which my amendment would overcome.

Mr. WHITE—It is important that we should try to make our traffic laws as uniform as possible. I have driven a motor vehicle in Melbourne, and because in South Australia we are not compelled to stop at a stationary tram I got into trouble several times, and no doubt my experience has been the experience of other visitors to Melbourne. I am satisfied to accept the opinion of the State Traffic Committee, the members of which have made a long study of our road problems.

The Committee divided on the question "That '(*a*)' be deleted"—

Ayes (8).—Messrs. Brookman, Christian, Dunnage, Goldney, Hawker (teller), Heaslip, Macgillivray, and Quirke.

Noes (26).—Messrs. John Clark, Geoffrey Clarke, Corcoran, Davis, Dunstan, Hincks, and Hutchens, Sir George Jenkins, Messrs. Wm. Jenkins, Jennings, Lawn, McAlees, McIntosh, Michael, O'Halloran, Pattinson, Pearson, Playford (teller), Riches, Shannon, Stephens, Tapping, Teusner, Frank Walsh, Fred Walsh, and White.

Majority of 18 for the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. HAWKER—I ask leave to withdraw my amendment to leave out the whole of paragraph (*b*).

Leave granted and amendment withdrawn.

The Committee divided on clause 12—

Ayes (26).—Messrs. John Clark, Geoffrey Clarke, Corcoran, Davis, Dunstan, Hincks, and Hutchens, Sir George Jenkins, Messrs. William Jenkins, Jennings, Lawn, McAlees, McIntosh, Michael, O'Halloran, Pattinson, Pearson, Playford (teller), Riches, Shannon, Stephens, Tapping, Teusner, Frank Walsh, Fred Walsh, and White.

Noes (9).—Messrs. Brookman, Christian, Dunnage, Fletcher, Goldney, Hawker, Heaslip, Macgillivray, and Quirke (teller).

Majority of 17 for the Ayes.

Clause thus passed.

Clauses 13 to 16 passed.

Clause 17—"Maximum air pressure of tyres."

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I do not know whether the Government has gathered any further information on this clause since I spoke on the second reading, but my ideas have been completely confirmed by discussions with people in the tyre trade. I am satisfied that steel mesh tyres are here to stay. The prohibition contained in the clause is a retrograde step and will result in withholding from the owners of commercial vehicles an improved tyre. I have been informed by the South Australian agents of this class of tyre that they are not high pressure tyres, except those used on heavy earth-moving equipment. I have also been informed that the steel mesh tyre flexes as readily as the fabric tyre and does not damage the roads. These tyres have been used in other countries. A man living in my district took out a patent for this type of tyre 30 years ago, but the tyre industry was not interested in it. Now European manufacturers produce it, and it is the truck owners' dream. The clause is absurd and I hope it will be defeated.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The honourable member said most of these tyres are not high pressure tyres. If that is so, they will not be prohibited by the clause. It is easy to say they are used in other countries, but they have large populations and revenues for road maintenance. The miles of road per person that must be provided there are much less than in this State. Entirely different roads would have to be constructed to stand up to types with pressures of over 100 lbs. We had to make special laws to make the use of steel tyres uneconomic because they damaged the roads.

Mr. Shannon—And we did the same to prevent the use of solid rubber tyres.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. We put economic sanctions against them which did in fact prohibit them. They were not banned by law because they were in use, and to stop them immediately would have been a hardship. However, these new tyres are not yet in use. This measure has been introduced as a result of

recommendations made by the State Traffic Committee, a body composed of people closely associated with motoring.

Mr. Macgillivray—Isn't it a policemen's organization?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—There is only one police officer on it. If we permit high pressure tyres on our lightly constructed country roads, a large proportion of which must remain so for many years for economic reasons, they will cause very much damage. I ask the Committee to consider this matter carefully so that nothing will be done to introduce a new weapon to destroy our roads, especially because it has been considered by people with the highest qualifications in transport matters who are in favour of the limitation. It is easy to say the new tyres will be a motorist's dream, but if that is so the Royal Automobile Association and other such bodies would not be in favour of prohibiting them. It has not been possible to obtain information from all over the world on their effect on roads, but even had that been done it would not help, because in the United States of America, for instance, there are thousands of miles of heavily reinforced concrete roads that would stand any amount of almost prohibitive traffic without any subsidence.

Mr. O'Halloran—What would these roads cost in our money?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—What would they cost in registration fees! If registration fees had to be increased to meet that cost, half the motorists would be driven off the road.

Mr. Fletcher—That might not be a bad idea.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That is not intended; what is proposed is to prohibit a type of tyre inflated to a pressure of over 100 lb., because they would be detrimental to road development and the standards we hope to set up. I ask the Committee to adhere to this clause.

Mr. HAWKER—While I am not altogether against the clause, I feel there is some danger in it. I made inquiries from two of the main rubber companies, and discovered that they manufacture tyres to be inflated to 90 lb. pressure. It must be realized that although the pressure may be only 90 lb. when starting off on a cold morning, it is very easy to add a further 15 to 20 lb. because of heat engendered after being on the road for a short time, and this would be a breach of the law.

Mr. Shannon—It is easier to let the air out than put it in.

Mr. Christian—That is the very thing you must not do.

Mr. HAWKER—Because we have tyres of 90 lb. pressure already on the road, I think the 100 lb. proposed is a little close to the mark. I believe one carrier is already using steel cord tyres. Although I am not prepared to sanction something which will cause our roads to be knocked about, I feel that the Committee should consider people who may unknowingly over-inflate tyres, especially in view of the fact that the gauges in use are by no means accurate.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have discussed the matter raised by the honourable member with operatives of vehicles using that type of tyre, and have been informed that drivers have express instructions to examine them at least every half an hour because of possible damage owing to over-inflation combined with heavy loads.

Mr. Quirke—Who gave that information?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Two interstate carriers. These instructions particularly apply to drivers of semi-trailers because if one tyre of a double set bursts, immense damage is done to the unit. On hot days these people should take the precaution of checking tyres a couple of times. Nobody need exceed 100 lb. pressure under modern conditions with modern tyres. If members want good roads and the best value for the money spent on them, they must see that the money is spent wisely.

Mr. BROOKMAN—Every member of this Committee is anxious to see that unnecessary damage is not done to our roads, but probably no member has seen one of these tyres. Nothing is known about them here except the limited information provided by the Premier when introducing the Bill, when he said that steel cord tyres do a certain amount of damage to the roads. The Committee has been hardly used on this subject because it has not sufficient information, and extra pains should be taken to provide it. The honourable member for Eyre raised a good point. It has been said that with tyres inflated to a pressure of over 100 lb. great damage would result to the roads, and I ask what factors come into it; we all know the weight does, but surely the width of tyres has an affect, too. It seems to me that the arbitary statement that because tyres exceed 100 lb. pressure they must damage the roads is not correct, because tyres larger in diameter bearing the same pressure and carrying the same load would do less damage than

smaller tyres. Arguments similar to these have been used time and time again to block innovations. However, I do not suggest that the Treasurer is attempting to block the use of these tyres for any reason other than he stated. Perhaps when semi-trailers and other large vehicles were first used here the same fears were expressed. For these reasons I suggest that the Committee could be given more effectual information about the real affects of these tyres.

Mr. HEASLIP—In my speech on the second reading I said I was not prepared to support this clause unless I obtained sufficient information to convince me of its necessity, and I have not obtained this. In effect, this clause limits the load by pressure of tyres rather than weight. It would be better to limit the weight of loads than to limit tyre pressures. The conventional tyres of 90 lb. pressures can build up to over 100 lb. pressure on a hot day. The worst thing to do to a tyre which has built up a pressure is to deflate it because deflation breaks down the cords. If pressure is released the heat will built it up until ultimately the tyre is ruined. The Premier said he had not had time to make world-wide investigations about the effect on roads of steel cord tyres, and until that information is obtained I shall oppose the clause.

Mr. SHANNON—I cannot understand why the members for Alexandra, Eyre and Rocky River want to wait until information is obtained about steel cord tyres before they support the clause. Until that information is obtained I suggest we play safe. If Mr. Heaslip wants to protect the roads in his district he should not take the risk of permitting the use of tyres which may cut roads to ribbons.

Mr. Heaslip—They may cause less damage than conventional tyres.

Mr. SHANNON—That is problematical and until we know positively whether they will cause damage we should act conservatively and not take risks. Mr. Stevens, a member of the State Traffic Committee, has had great experience in the cartage of goods on roadways and if he thought this an unwise provision he would not have supported it. Surely it is a safeguard. I believe he is Federal President of the Road Hauliers Association and he would not be a party to any stupid amendment of our traffic laws. Although I think the approach to the problem of the effect of hot weather on orthodox tyre pressures is different from what the Premier suggested, road users have informed me that on hot days they commence their journeys with lower pressures than their tyres are capable of holding.

Mr. Heaslip—What is the recommended pressure?

Mr. SHANNON—Although the recommended pressure is 90 lb. they realize that on a hot day they will not have to travel more than half an hour before the pressure builds up to between 95 to 105 lb.

Mr. Macgillivray—And while that is happening they are ruining their tyres.

Mr. SHANNON—I do not agree with that. My information is from persons with a knowledge of the matter. We took action to prevent damage from the use of solid tyres on our roads, but if the fabric of a tyre is sufficiently strong an air pressure could be created which could cause the tyre to have the same effect as a solid rubber tyre. The clause would not be unfair to road hauliers and would meet their requirements.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Some members have suggested that they have not received sufficient information to enable them to form opinions about some provisions in the Bill. The State Traffic Committee has thoroughly examined these matters and has made recommendations which are the basis of this legislation. In the last two days I have discussed road transport, road traffic, and road charges with several transport associations. I discussed the matters with the Royal Automobile Association of South Australia, South Australian Country Roads Goods Service, Yorke Peninsula Carriers Association Incorporated, Eyre Peninsula Transport Association and the South Australian Road Transport Association. My discussions with the Royal Automobile Association related to the question we are indirectly discussing at present—what can be done to improve our roads. Discussions with the other associations commenced with relation to charges for road usage, but broadended into discussions of all road matters, including the damage caused by heavy, fast-moving vehicles. Our roads are not adequate to carry the present transport and the upkeep costs are so exorbitant that there is not sufficient money to enable us to undertake new development. Some roads, on which large amounts have been spent, have not stood up to the hammering given them by heavy, hard-tyred, fast-moving vehicles. Members recently supported increasing the penalties on people causing damage to roads and I would have thought that, to be consistent, they would support a provision to control the use of new types of tyres which might cause

the damage we are endeavouring to prevent. It is true that we have a load weight, but an axle weight of eight tons is totally different on a balloon tyre to one on a steel cord tyre. In the circumstances, I thought members would have been inclined to tighten the law rather than to loosen it. I intend to stick to the clause as drafted by an expert committee after it has considered all the facts.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—We find that about half the Committee is blamed because they have done nothing more than ask for factual information on the clause. I have always understood it was the Committee's function to investigate every angle of a clause and not to vote for it until satisfied that it would do what members thought it would do. The Premier knows nothing whatever about heavy hauliers and their desires as to tyre pressures. I suppose that no district in South Australia has more road haulier problems than the river areas. During the harvest a major portion of the grape crop is carted to the Barossa district, and inspectors hold up carriers to see that they are not carrying overweight. In the earlier days it was the practice to test tyres when a vehicle had been on the track for about half an hour and then to lower the pressure. As soon as the air cools, instead of the tyres having the pressure expected it is from 10 to 20 lbs. less, and the driver has no means of putting the pressure back, finishing the journey with under-inflated tyres.

Mr. Pearson—How many of these trucks have not their own air pumps?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I should not think that one in a hundred has one. The Premier said that during the past week he had discussions on transport problems with various transport associations and one might have assumed they had given him information on this subject which would be of benefit to the Committee, but so far as I know the matter was not even mentioned, as he did not tell us anything about it. If the Premier had obtained from the Commonwealth Government the amount to which this State was entitled for expenditure on roads and bridges there would be no complaints about the types of tyres used. From time to time he tells us about the effect of heavy traffic on certain roads, but they were cheaply constructed and never suited to heavy traffic. No one in his senses would blame hauliers for the damage. At the time he had in mind there was a railway strike and roads carried loads for which they were never intended. The road haulier should be sympathized with in being asked to operate over such miserable roads to the benefit of the State's economy, and often to his own detriment. The position is different with roads which have been reasonably well constructed. That applies to the road on the south side of the River Murray which has been functioning for about 15 years, and on which upkeep has been only nominal. It carried traffic from not only country areas, but from Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria, and, except for filling in a few potholes, the State has been involved in very little expense. If we make a good road, we can almost forget about it for about 20 or 25 years.

We have heard the argument that the State Traffic Committee, a responsible body, has advocated this provision and therefore we should accept it. That is one of the most miserable arguments that could be advanced. Let us consider the great authorities who tell Parliament what it should do. First is the Commissioner of Police, whose function is entirely different from that of road hauliers; his duty is to administer the law. Then there is the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, who is merely an office man and knows nothing in particular about the affairs of road hauliers. Another member is the Chief Engineer and General Manager of the Tramways Trust. Could one imagine anybody less suited to belong to a State Traffic Committee than this gentleman, whose experience on traffic matters is limited to the city of Adelaide?

Mr. Shannon—He has some of the heaviest hauling vehicles on the roads.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—But his experience is limited to passenger transport within the metropolitan area, and yet he is put on a committee to say whether people at Barmera, Oodnadatta, Mount Gambier or on the West Coast are entitled to use certain forms of transport. The next member is the Chairman of the Insurance Underwriters' Association, whose function in life is to get the biggest premiums possible out of those he insures, but he should not decide what should apply to transport in country areas. The city is already well provided for; we, who represent country areas, have different problems. The next member of the committee is the Chairman of the Transport Association of South Australia, Mr. Stevens. He is the one member of the committee so far mentioned who knows something about the problems of country carriers, but we are not told whether he opposed this or any other clause. The next is the secretary of the Royal Automobile Association, whose function is entirely different from that of Mr. Stevens. I do not know

whether the R.A.A. has any responsibilities to the road hauliers, who are represented by Mr. Stevens, and it is possible that the secretary of the R.A.A. would not consider tyre pressures from the same point of view as other problems; therefore, it cannot be considered an expert on that matter. Another member of the committee is the secretary of the Transport Workers' Union, and he may be an authority.

Mr. O'Halloran—He knows a great deal more about it than you do.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I am prepared to accept that, and therefore Mr. Stevens and he may be the only two members possessing expert knowledge on this matter. The deputy chairman is the Parliamentary Draftsman and the chairman the member for Glenelg. I do not think they would set themselves up as authorities. Their job would be to hear the evidence and submit a report.

Mr. Shannon—Their legal training would help in that respect.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Yes, but there is not one man on the committee who could have spoken with real authority on this matter. It would have been better to wait until we knew something more about this matter before introducing such a provision. I ask members to oppose the clause.

Mr. QUIRKE—I, too, oppose the clause. If it is aimed at a particular type of tyre why isn't that tyre banned if it is considered necessary to go that far? I understand that at Woomera the pneumatic tyres mentioned by the member for Burra register a pressure of 120 lb. day after day in hot weather, and no thought is given to deflating them. From the Premier's remarks I take it that this clause is aimed at something in the nature of a solid tyre, but we have not seen that type of tyre and I object to passing legislation on hearsay. An ordinary pneumatic tyre, originally inflated to 90 lb. and used on a bitumen road in hot weather, would eventually subject the owner to a penalty under the clause. If anyone can prove that the tyre mentioned by the Premier will have the effects of the solid tyre which has been taxed off the road, then it should be taxed instead of this provision being introduced under the guise of excess pressure.

Mr. PATTINSON—This clause is not new, nor are its provisions confined to this State. They are based on the recommendations of an expert committee, the Australian Motor Vehicles Standards Committee, and were recommended as early as July 27, 1951.

Mr. Quirke—What is the purpose of that committee?

Mr. PATTINSON—It was set up by the Commonwealth Government under the supervision of the Commonwealth Minister of Transport to advise the States on minimum vehicle standards in the best interests of the motoring public and taxpayers. The State Traffic Committee had a conference on August 3, 1951, with members of the Standards Committee and some representatives of industry. Those attending, besides the members of the State Traffic Committee, were Mr. T. G. Paterson, Commonwealth Director of Road Transport, Department of Shipping and Transport, Mr. G. N. Pockett, Technical Officer of the Commonwealth Department of Shipping and Transport, Mr. L. G. Neilson, Executive Engineer and Service Manager for Australia of the Ford Motor Co. of Aust. Pty. Ltd., Mr. J. F. Lawson, Executive Engineer of General Motors-Holden Ltd., Mr. D. Pittman, representative of the Australian Road Transport Federation and President of the N.S.W. Master Carriers' Association, and Mr. W. A. Copsey, Rolling Stock Engineer of the Municipal Tramways Trust. Some members may agree—and I do not violently disagree—with the contention of the member for Chaffey that members of the State Traffic Committee know nothing about transport or traffic, but no member would have the temerity to say that the gentlemen I have named know little or nothing about it, for they are some of the ablest technical brains in Australian transport, who originally drafted the recommendation upon which this clause is based and which was sent by the State Government to the State Traffic Committee? The conference to which I have referred was arranged, and two of the men who were most zealous in seeing that we recommended some minimum vehicle standards in this State were two very able and practical men, the executive engineers for the Ford Co. and General Motors-Holdens. Almost two and a half years ago this expert committee recommended that these standards be introduced in this State, and I got more information from that conference than I have gained either before or since. This proposal was contained in almost a volume of recommendations for minimum standards. If the State Traffic Committee is expert on any matter, it is on knowing how much or how little the Parliament will swallow in one session; that is why we make haste slowly in this State in regard to transport and traffic matters. The

committee took a long time before recommending the proposal, so much that three other States accepted it and it became law. The States which do not have State Traffic Committees are usually two or three years ahead of South Australia in transport and traffic reform. In connection with motor vehicles stopping before passing stationary trams we are about 15 years behind other States. There was a request by the Victorian Country Roads Board, dated October 30, 1952, to a conference of the Commonwealth and State road authorities for the amendment to become law in all States. It was considered by the States still lagging, and the South Australian Minister (Hon. M. McIntosh) called for a report on January 7, 1953, from the Commissioner of Highways (Mr. Richmond), who strongly supported the recommendation of the Victorian Country Roads Board, and gave his reasons. The State Traffic Committee was still not satisfied, and delayed further a decision on the matter. It called Mr. Richmond to give evidence on March 6, 1953. Through indisposition I was not present. Mr. Bean (Parliamentary Draftsman), acted as chairman, and he and other members of the committee questioned Mr. Richmond, who was asked to give his reasons for recommending the 100lb. pressure limit on tyres. He said:—

The pressure in a tyre has a normal reaction against the road. Generally speaking, the higher the pressure the greater reaction against the road surface or bridge. Few tyres have been made to operate at a pressure greater than 70lb. The ability of a tyre to stand the load on the vehicle is governed by the fact that it is made to be inflated to a pressure of 70lb. If the extra weight goes on the tyre it immediately deflects and the 70 lb. still holds because there are more square inches over which it is placed.

He also said:—

Three other States have already taken steps in this direction. The provision in New South Wales is ordinance No. 30 (*d*) under the Local Government Act, section 5 (1) (*c*). In Victoria it is governed by the Motor Car Act, section 32 (*i*) (*j*). In Queensland it is regulation 71 (*e*) under the Main Roads Act. They all impose a maximum of 100 lb. I believe New Zealand has a similar provision. I think that in the United States of America the maximum pressure is 100 lb.

Mr. Bean asked, "Would such a restriction have the effect of prohibiting the use of big vehicles now on the road?" and Mr. Richmond, an unbiassed witness, replied "I do not think so because as far as I know they are not equipped with tyres that can withstand a pressure of 100 lb." Then Mr. Stevens said, "I have been told that heavy duty tyres may build up to 100 lb. pressure after a long trip on a hot day." and Mr. Richmond replied, "I do not think they would build up to that extent, and if so they would not be affected by this proposal." Then he told Mr. Bean that there was nothing wrong with the use of steel cord tyres if the pressure were kept low. Mr. Bean asked "Then we should not prohibit the use of steel cord tyres *per se*?" and the reply was, "No. The point is that the maximum pressure allowed should be 100 lb. I think that is a recommendation of the Commonwealth Transport Advisory Council," I give this evidence for the information of members.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—We are indebted to Mr. Pattinson for the information on this matter, but why was it left until now? I had to go on the information given by the Minister in his second reading speech, and he said that the provision aimed at the prohibition of steel cord tyres. Would that not cause a member to ask the reasons for the prohibition? Until Mr. Pattinson gave us the information we were in the dark as to what was in the minds of the experts when they recommended a maximum pressure of 100 lb. to the square inch. I am pleased that the proposal does not aim at the prohibition of the tyres mentioned. From information received today it seems that most of the tyres on ordinary commercial vehicles will not be affected because the tyre pressure does not exceed about 70 lb. However, tyres on larger and heavier vehicles, such as earth-moving equipment and road graders, have pressures exceeding 100 lb. to the square inch. Are the tyres mentioned to be prohibited on these slow-moving vehicles? They will not do more damage to the roads than other vehicles. I am informed by the manager of the South Australian agents who import the tyres that the Victorian Country Roads Board uses them, as does the Tasmanian Hydro-Electric authority. They tried the ordinary tyre but got only 300 miles; with the other tyre they got 12,000 miles. In the interests of cheap transportation we cannot afford to be without new improved tyres.

[*Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.*]

Mr. CHRISTIAN—It was suggested that I did not read the Minister's statement correctly or misinterpreted it. He said:—

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. If that does not refer to steel mesh tyres I do not know what it does refer to.

The Hon. T. Playford—It refers to tyres of more than 100 lb. per square inch pressure.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—But it does not say that. However, I accept the assurances of the Minister and the member for Glenelg, who is chairman of the State Traffic Committee, that the clause is not aimed at the steel mesh tyre.

The Hon. T. Playford—It is aimed at tyres inflated above a pressure of 100 lb. to the square inch.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—That is now clear, but it was not in the Minister's statement, which dealt with the steel cord tyre. The inference was that these tyres were inflated to a pressure greater than 100 lb. I have been told by the South Australian importers of these tyres that the ordinary truck tyre of 7.50 or 8.25 will run at a pressure of 65 to 70 lb., so owners will be able to use steel cord tyres, but the tyres on heavy earth-moving equipment, road graders and carry-alls usually exceed 100 lb. The question arises, should we prohibit the use of these tyres on these vehicles? I do not think we should. I am not satisfied that high pressure tyres do the damage assumed, for we have had no evidence to that effect. When only hard pressure tyres were used on motor vehicles we did not have corrugated roads. The corrugations came after the advent of the balloon tyre, when speeds were higher and loads heavier. Perhaps the low pressure tyre has greater suction on the road and causes as much damage as the hard tyre. Corrugated roads must be graded frequently, and this is costly. What remedies have we applied to minimize the damage caused by balloon tyres, high speeds, and heavy loads? In this Bill we are adopting new methods to combat overloading, but nothing is being done to restrict speeding. Representatives of motor manufacturers would naturally desire to safeguard their products. High pressure tyres would shake any vehicle to pieces on corrugated roads, and those representatives would desire to prevent damage to vehicles. The experts that believe high pressure tyres damage roads may have had that at the back of their minds when giving their opinions. We have no real proof about the effect of these tyres. Is there any evidence, or only supposition?

Mr. Quirke—Only supposition.

Mr. CHRISTIAN—I do not like legislating in the dark; I want to be sure of the facts. We have only the experts' opinions. On our dirt roads the low pressure tyre may do more damage than the high pressure. Unless the contrary is proved, I am not satisfied about the clause.

Mr. QUIRKE—Like Mr. Christian, I know that the expert can very often be wrong, as many of them will agree, but much happens before they are proved to be wrong. I have a vivid recollection of damage to the road surfaces of this State and other parts of the Commonwealth because experts were wrong. More than 20 years ago experts said that every garden should be ploughed twice a year to keep down weeds. This was done in the Clare district, and as a result the surface soil was washed into the river. The experts of today advise us to keep a green cover on vineyards. I am not satisfied that high pressure tyres cause more damage to road surfaces than low pressure tyres, because the latter are flat on the road and as they are driven along create suction on the surface. On floating surface roads these tyres spurn the metal and fling it behind them, whereas the high pressure tyres will not do this to the same extent. I agree with Mr. Christian that this wholesale condemnation on a purely suppositious argument means that the experts may be wrong again. I am convinced that unless opposition is raised to a measure in this House no information will be provided because it was not until after many hours of debate that the member for Glenelg produced the evidence that members were endeavouring to extract during this debate. Although this evidence was available, we were expected to pass the clause without query simply because the Traffic Committee recommended it. This Committee does not necessarily follow the recommendations of any other committee of standards, but must make up its own mind. That is what I have done. I am not convinced that this is a good enactment and that the purpose for which it is intended will be achieved, because I do not think a hard tyre will do as much damage as a low-pressure tyre; certainly it will not on loose surfaces. The member for Eyre said that an instrumentality in Tasmania obtained 300 miles from one tyre on certain equipment, whereas with the new tyre 12,000 was obtained. Why should we prohibit the use of these tyres on any sort of equipment merely because they contain more than 100 lb. pressure? They could not cause damage to country roads that are not bituminized and have no sealed surface

yet the saving brought about by their use would be tremendous.

Mr. RICHES—In supporting this clause, I do not want to be thought to be out of step with country requirements. I represent a district which has probably a greater mileage of roads than any other district represented in this House, and I have observed motor traffic over a number of years. In my district much money has been spent on roads. In some instances they have stood up to the traffic, whereas others constructed equally as well have not. Although I do not claim to be an expert, I know that roads have not been torn up by Morris Minors or Ford Prefects, and I believe this Committee has a duty to the motoring public to bring about an improvement to the roads in view of the increased registration charges. Three other States have already adopted this restriction, and I do not think we are able to claim that we can build roads better able to stand up to heavy traffic than Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, or America. Until such time as we know that high pressure tyres will not adversely affect roads, I am prepared to vote to save them, because I have seen much damage done and money spent on repairs that should have been spent on the outback roads. If improvements are not effected, the Government will hear more from this quarter next year.

Mr. FLETCHER—I thank the chairman of the Traffic Committee for the evidence he produced. The Premier said that we are setting a standard in South Australia that he hoped would be adopted throughout the Commonwealth, and on the evidence given by Mr. Pattinson it appears that this provision has been adopted by the other States. A thing troubling local government bodies today is whether a limit is going to be placed on the speed and load of motor transport. They build roads to take loads of 15 to 20 tons and soon after their completion they may be required to carry loads of 30 to 35 tons. Although I agree largely with the remarks of the member for Eyre about high pressure tyres, we do not know whether they will do the damage that is claimed; I do not think they will. The tyres of graders and other machinery used on roads are usually of a greater circumference and I suggest they would not do the damage that a vehicle equipped with a smaller circumference tyre would do. In the old horse and buggy days the waggons with steel tyres caused considerable damage to roads but the vehicle with the shorter couplings played far more havoc than those with bigger couplings. The further the wheels were apart the less damage was done. Some of the vehicles used today in carting from quarries would cause untold damage to roads. No sooner would the front wheels dig into a pot hole than the rear wheels would follow and ultimately a drain or gutter would be created in the road. It was my intention to oppose this clause but after hearing the evidence presented by Mr. Pattinson I am quite happy to support it. We are still in the experimental stages and it remains to be seen whether high pressure tyres will do the damage that is claimed.

Clause passed.

Clause 18 passed.

New clause 2a—"Duty to register."

Mr. SHANNON—I move to insert the following new clause:—

2a. Subsection (5) of section 7 of the principal Act is amended by adding after the word "implements" in paragraph (*c*) thereof the words "or drawing a registered trailer between two or more portions of a farm occupied by the owner of the tractor."

This provision is designed to legalize a practice which is fairly common throughout the State. A farmer's property may be dissected by roads and separated into two or more portions and it has been customary for him to use his tractor to tow a trailer, which is normally used behind his truck for carting produce to market and for other purposes, to that portion of his farm away from the homestead. He can load the trailer with superphosphate and draw it behind the tractor to his paddock. If he is not permitted to use his tractor to draw a trailer it is necessary for the load to be carted in the farm truck and obviously another driver is required. However, on small holdings one man frequently does all the work. I do not suggest that the trailer should not be registered. It would be unwise to provide for that, because the trailer may frequently be used behind a truck for carting produce to market.

Mr. O'Halloran—It will be drawn by an unregistered tractor?

Mr. SHANNON—Yes. At the moment it is not necessary to register tractors provided they are used for specified purposes. A tractor can be taken to a village for repairs, or to a railhead, provided it is within a 15-mile radius of the farm. This problem arose in my district because farmers used their tractors to tow trailers to portions of their property separated by a road and the local police officer advised them that they were committing a breach of the traffic laws and that he would have to take

action in respect of further breaches. I believe the officer himself suggested that the Act be amended in the way suggested because he realized that they were used for a legitimate purpose. The operation must take place between portions of a farm The trailer could not be drawn from one man's farm to another. As far as I can see there are no loopholes which might render the privilege open to abuse.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The amendment raises two or three questions upon which I will require more information. In the first place an unregistered tractor will be drawing a registered trailer between two portions of a farm. I do not know what the definition of "two portions of a farm" may be. One portion may be at Lameroo and the other at Loxton.

Mr. Shannon—It says, "farm occupied by the owner."

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—In my own district a farmer had one block of land at Golden Grove and another at Black Hill, which is in Mr. White's district.

Mr. Shannon—Which did he occupy?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—He occupied both. He lived in one but visited the other to perform his farming operations.

Mr. Heaslip—There is a 15-mile limit on the distance a tractor can travel.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—That is a matter I desire to check. The second point is that it has been a feature of our law in recent years that every vehicle upon the road must carry third party insurance with the exception of tractors which are permitted to tow implements because implements are slow moving in nature and cannot be drawn at more than five to seven miles an hour. However, a tractor drawing a trailer could travel at high speed. I want to know whether the tractor and trailer will carry third party insurance.

Mr. Stephens—The speed of the tractor would decide the speed of the trailer.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes, but some light tractors are frequently used by carriers to draw trailers and can be driven quite rapidly. They can be seen almost every day on the Port Road. Therefore, the fact that a trailer is drawn by a tractor does not necessarily mean that it will be drawn at a low speed. I do not know whether the honourable member proposes to allow tractors on the road without a third party insurance cover. I would not oppose a reasonable proposal to allow a man owning a farm to carry his goods across the road in a trailer to another part of his farm without having to register the tractor, but a distance of 15 miles is quite appreciable.

Mr. SHANNON—I regret that I omitted to refer to section 7 (5) of the principal Act which I suggested be amended. It refers to four specific reasons why Parliament has allowed an unregistered tractor to move from one farm to another area provided the distance does not exceed 15 miles. The provision is as follows:—

A motor tractor shall not require registration under this part or insurance under Part IIA. . . . for all or any of the following purposes, namely:—

(*a*) removal of the tractor to a workshop for repairs, or return of the tractor to the farm from a workshop where repairs were carried out;
(*b*) delivery of the tractor to the farm upon the acquisition of the tractor or delivery of the tractor from the farm upon the sale or the disposal thereof;
(*c*) drawing farm implements;
(*d*) proceeding to a place where farm implements are to be attached to the tractor for removal, or returning after delivery of farm implements.

My amendment applies particularly to paragraphs (*c*) and (*d*). Frequently a farmer buys another section some distance away from his headquarters, and works the two as one farm. Under the Act the distance a tractor can cover without registration is limited to 15 miles. Possibly a distance of five miles would be ample to meet requirements under the amendment. I have adopted the same words as appear in the original Act, namely, "driven on roads within 15 miles of a farm occupied by the owner of a tractor. . . ." At the moment all the four movements referred to are excluded from the need for the tractor to be registered or insured. I think it wise that the provision suggested should apply to a registered trailer. If a man backed a trailer into another vehicle on the road and caused damage or injury, I do not know what the legal position would be. Under my provision a trailer would have to be registered and insured.

Mr. FLETCHER—I support the amendment. It would result in a benefit to settlers at Eight Mile Creek who have been allotted blocks of high land on another estate on which they will grow hay and other fodders. They have to travel distances varying from two to 14 miles. On their return home at night they would load their trailer with hay or other fodder.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—At first sight the amendment does not appear very dangerous, but the more I consider it the less inclined I am to support it. A number of light, fast tractors are used for gardening and on farms

and some of these properties are contiguous to areas where there is a great deal of fast traffic on main roads. I have in mind part of my electorate which adjoins that of the Premier where two or three schools are in close proximity to gardens where tractors and trailers are used. Normally hazards exist on the nearby main road which one would wish to avoid, and it would be most dangerous to give a blanket authority for anyone to use an unregistered tractor with a registered trailer in such places. I should think that the insurance on the trailer would be no protection either to the owner of the tractor or to a third party if the tractor were the contributing cause of an accident. If the trailer broke away and caused damage the owner and the third party would be protected, but if the tractor were uninsured the owner would be liable for any damages awarded against him. If tractor owners in a body were to say, "We will accept the whole responsibility for any accident which may occur" then perhaps something could be said for the amendment.

Mr. STOTT—The idea behind the amendment is worthy of consideration. Section 7a of the principal Act relates to permits for the use of tractors and other vehicles without registration, and among other things provides:—

(1) The registrar may at his discretion without fee grant to any primary producer who owns a tractor or unregistered motor vehicle a permit to drive that tractor or motor vehicle along any route specified in the permit for the purpose only of enabling the tractor or motor vehicle to be used in connection with the working of two or more separate parcels of land worked in conjunction with each other by that primary producer. Any such permit shall be subject to such conditions as the Registrar thinks proper. The Registrar shall not grant a permit for a tractor under this section unless the tractor is equipped with pneumatic tyres or other tyres which, in the Registrar's opinion, will not cause undue damage to roads.

(2) Any such tractor or motor vehicle may be driven in accordance with the terms of that permit granted under this section without registration.

(3) If any tractor or motor vehicle for which a permit is in force under this section is driven on any roads otherwise than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the permit the person driving the tractor or motor vehicle shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a penalty not exceeding twenty-five pounds.

Mr. Shannon—Is it possible to get a permit for a trailer under that section?

Mr. STOTT—I think the amendment should be to section 7a. I am doubtful about the risk involved if a trailer is attached to an unregistered tractor. Could not the Registrar be given power to issue a permit, as under section 7a? If a registered trailer is attached to an unregistered tractor, which will be responsible for any accident and how will a third party be covered? For those reasons I submit the issue of a permit would be a better provision.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Another anomaly in the amendment is that it applies only in cases where the owner lives on the farm, whereas many reputable farmers may have their sons in occupation. Further, if a farmer has two properties and lives on one, he may use his unregistered tractor to draw a registered trailer to the other property, provided it is not more than 15 miles away, but he cannot do so if it is further away.

Mr. Shannon—I do not ask for that.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—We should try to be consistent in the application of all our laws.

Mr. O'Halloran—Strictly speaking, on your arguement we should remove the concession altogether.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I think there is some merit in Mr. Stott's suggestion that a permit should be applied for. Almost daily the Registrar recommends the issue of a permit for this type of vehicle where there is a consistent use of a road, and it is granted. As I read the amendment, a farmer would not be confined to the carting on his trailer of produce from his farm, but could cart other commodities if he desired. I think the best words in the amendment are those which limit its operation to a certain distance, but 15 miles is excessive, for very few farms more than 15 miles apart are worked as one proposition.

Mr. Heaslip—There are some.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Then, if they use more than 15 miles of road, they should be prepared to pay registration fees.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN—Order! I suggest we hear one speaker at at time.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The distance of 15 miles is excessive. If the provision is to apply it should apply equally to a share farmer and to any other person working under equal conditions.

Mr. Shannon—It would only apply to the share farmer if he owned the tractor.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. In principle I do not object to the amendment if satisfactory safeguards can be provided. If the word "owner" comes out, I think it is improved.

Mr. Stephens—Is the new clause open to abuse?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I would not say that, but I think the distance should be limited to not more than 10 miles.

Mr. HEASLIP—I support the clause. The speed of the tractors has been questioned, but most farm implements have rubber tyres and are pulled by tractors at speeds of up to 15 miles an hour, whereas most trailers which would be towed under this new clause would have steel tyres and be incapable of travelling at anything like 15 miles an hour. Because of the decreased speed of the tractor and trailer used together, the danger would be reduced. The trailer would be registered and would be covered for third party risk. A permit system similar to that suggested by Mr. Stott would be unworkable, for, the day after an application had been made to the Registrar for a permit to take a trailer from one property to another, a sudden change in the weather might mean that a farmer would have to break the law to take the trailer along the road before receiving his permit.

Mr. Stott—A permit is for six months.

Mr. HEASLIP—Why is it necessary to renew these permits? I have known of no accidents caused by implements towed by tractors from farm to farm. This new clause merely seeks to allow farmers to tow behind their tractors a registered trailer which is already covered for third party risk. If there is any risk it is with the tractor, not the trailer. A distance of 15 miles has been mentioned. Some members apparently do not know that many farmers in the northern areas have two farms about 10 miles apart. I have farmed on properties 12 miles apart, and I could not cart hay from one farm to the other. Over the weekend there was an instance where a farmer with a paddock across the road wanted to cart hay from it to his homestead by using a trailer, but he could not do it. I support the clause.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I move:—

To amend the new clause by striking out the words "occupied by the owner of the tractor".

This broadens the position. A distance of 15 miles is mentioned in the Act and there has been no complaint regarding it, so it would be unwise to include another distance. The operation of the provision will be watched closely and, if it is abused, in next year's amendments of the Road Traffic Act there will be a clause dealing with it.

Amendment carried; new clause as amended inserted.

New clause 4a—"Traders' plates."

Mr. PEARSON—I move to insert the following new clause:—

4a. Subsection (14) of section 27 of the principal Act is amended by adding at the end thereof the following proviso:

Provided that a motor vehicle having a limited trader's plate attached thereto may be driven on a public holiday when proceeding, for the purpose of display, to an exhibition or show held on such public holiday, or when returning from such an exhibition or show.

In this State several agricultural societies hold their shows on public holidays, some of them on Labor Day. Distributors of motor vehicles are obliged, if they desire to put their vehicles on a stand for display purposes, to take them to the grounds on the morning of the show and take them away the same night. Two types of trader's plates are distributed—general and limited. We have increased the fee for a general plate to £16 and for the limited plate to £2. The latter may not be used on a Sunday or a public holiday, which means that the distributor, in order to get his vehicles to the show for display on the public holiday, must obtain a sufficient number of general plates, register the vehicles, or take them to the ground on the day prior to the show and return them on the next day. The new clause permits this to be done on a public holiday. The acceptance of the new clause will not result in any loss of revenue to the State, but it will be a help to people carrying on business in a legitimate way.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I do not oppose the new clause, but presume it will be subject to the provisions of sections 17 and 18 of the Act, which require the trader to prove that the vehicle is being used in a *bona fide* way.

New clause inserted.

New clause 15a—"Stopping near tram stops."

Mr. FRED WALSH—I move to insert the following new clause:—

15a. The following section is enacted and inserted in the principal Act after section 136 thereof:—

136a. (1) If any person causes or permits any motor vehicle to remain at rest on any road so that any part of the vehicle is within fifty feet of any post indicating a tramway stopping place, he shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) Subsection (1) of this section shall not apply within that part of the City of Adelaide which is bounded by North, South, East and West Terraces.

Earlier I said I was not altogether convinced of the efficacy of motor vehicles being required to compulsorily stop when approaching stationary trams, but in order to achieve uniformity I supported it. Now that it is compulsory for this stop to take place, it is all the more necessary for the new clause to be accepted. In the suburbs there is no provision for general banning of parking at tram stops, and this causes difficulty. Because of the narrow space between parked cars and the tram it is difficult for motor vehicles to pass, and if the proposal is accepted, for at least 50 ft. from the tram stop sign the space will be clear and the motorist will be able easily to see pedestrians leaving the footpath to board a tram, thus providing greater safety. Councils sometimes restrict car parking near tram stops, but usually at the corner of a street. My amendment is particularly necessary for the Henley Beach Road, Unley Road, and the Main North Road between Medindie and the Northern Hotel. It will provide for greater safety and impose little hardship on motorists. It will not apply to bus stops because buses pull to the side of the road for passengers to get in or out. Also, it will not apply to the city because trams run down wide streets and traffic lights or police on point duty are a safeguard.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have much sympathy for the proposal and there is no doubt that some such rule should apply in many narrow streets in the suburbs, but there are hundreds of places where there is no necessity for the rule. If the amendment is carried parking will be prohibited at tram stops for 100ft. The owners of many properties would not be able to park their cars in front of their houses or businesses, even for the purpose of loading or unloading goods. This matter should not be dealt with in the Road Traffic Act because councils have convenient methods of making by-laws or proclamations to prohibit car parking. They know the varying traffic conditions in their districts. The honourable member exempts the city of Adelaide, but he knows that similar conditions apply in many suburbs. This question is not new to the State Traffic Committee. I believe it has looked at it on several occasions but always concluded that it was a matter for local councils rather than a blanket rule such as that proposed. I suggest that the honourable member do not press his amendment, but that the question be referred to the local government authorities in the metropolitan area. If he desires I will see that it is forwarded to them officially for consideration. A letter could be sent to the Municipal Association stating that this matter had been raised in Parliament and views had been expressed that action in some instances was necessary for the safety of the public. That would achieve what the honourable member desires without imposing a rigid rule over the whole of the metropolitan area, in many instances where it would not be necessary.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I agree in principle with what the member for Thebarton has sought to establish, because that is a very sound practice indeed. However, like the Premier, I have some doubts as to how it should be done. I do not know whether the mover will accept the suggestion that this matter should be referred to the local governing authorities. Personally I have not very much faith in them because they have had the opportunity to do this through the years and, with one or two notable exceptions, have failed to do anything about it. I doubt therefore whether they will do anything in the future even though the Premier may write a letter intimating the views expressed in this Committee and urging that something should be done. Local governing bodies have been given powers that have not always been exercised, and there is no uniformity of practice. Today we accepted the principle that vehicles should stop while trams are stationary for the purpose of picking up or setting down passengers, and one of the objections raised to this practice was that sometimes tram passengers are dilatory in reaching the footpath. Because this Committee has accepted compulsory stopping at tram stops an amendment such as this is more imperative now than before, because if we allow motor vehicles to park opposite tram stops it will be more difficult for tram passengers to reach the footpath and will thus delay the clearing of the roadway. The suggested distance of 50ft. on either side of the tram stop notice may be too great, but a reasonable distance could be provided without interfering with anybody's business rights, or the opportunity of taking delivery from vehicles. I think this amendment is sound, but I would like in addition some references to local governing bodies, and I think the Traffic Committee should have a good look at this proposal so that it could be embodied in the amending legislation which, to everyone's great delight, the Premier has promised for next session.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I hope that local governing bodies will co-operate, but there is an element of doubt, particularly when we know that they have not implemented other powers

which have been given in the past; for example, power to reduce the height of hedges at corners. I hope that this debate will lead to a review by the Tramways Trust of the positions of its tram stops, with a view to giving the right of access to business premises as the Premier desires. The main aspect of the amendment, however, is that as we have now provided for the compulsory stopping of vehicular traffic it is most desirable that passengers should be required to proceed to the footpath immediately in order to allow vehicular traffic to proceed. This amendment would be a safeguard, but if we leave it to someone else to implement it I do not think we will get anywhere.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—Like the Premier, I think the intention of the member for Thebarton is good, but I see a further grave difficulty as the amendment may not mean that only 100ft. of the roadway must be kept clear of parked traffic, because if there is a narrow cross street at right angles to the tram stop this would be included, and also the other side of the street, so up to 200ft. of road space could be taken. Another difficulty is that no motor vehicle may be at rest within 50ft. from an indicated tram stopping place, which means that no car can draw up within 50ft. of a stationary tram because if it did so it would be at rest within the meaning of the new law. This is a matter for councils and I approve of the suggestion that it be referred to the Local Government Association. There are many complexities which I feel sure were not appreciated when the provision was introduced.

Mr. LAWN—One of the main reasons for providing that a motor car must stop behind a stationary tram was overlooked and that is that it was designed to afford safety to pedestrians boarding or alighting from a tram and crossing to the footpath. Many pedestrians have missed trams because of the flow of traffic. In view of that provision this new clause is necessary because it will ensure that the pedestrian will be enabled to cross without being obstructed by a parked car. I suggest that if councils were interested in this proposal they would have considered it years ago.

Mr. John Clark—Some corporations have introduced such a by-law.

Mr. LAWN—Then that supports this proposal because apparently some have no desire to introduce such a provision. Both the Premier and the member for Burnside suggested that the distance of 50ft. would have to be doubled and the member for Burnside suggested it could become 200ft.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—It could, because it could extend to both sides of the street. If there were tram posts on either side of a cross street each post would represent a distance of 100ft.

Mr. LAWN—The distance could perhaps be reduced.

Mr. O'Halloran—It should be at least a tram's length.

Mr. LAWN—That is the point I am trying to make.

Mr. Fred Walsh—You could get a double tram.

Mr. LAWN—I suggest that a distance of 30 to 40ft. would meet the position and if words were included to the effect that the distance should be measured in the direction from which the tram would travel it would overcome the difficulties mentioned by the Premier and the member for Burnside. I support the new clause.

Mr. SHANNON—The sole purpose of the new clause is to provide for the safety of those mounting or alighting from trams, but principally those crossing from the footpath to join a tram. I support the clause but I disregard the contention of the member for Burnside that the distance could be extended to 200ft. It is equally important that safety provisions should apply on the left-hand as well as the right-hand side of a road. If there were tram stops at an intersection on either side of a road this amendment would be just as desirable. Most main roads leading to the city are too narrow and are not adequate for present-day traffic needs. Goodwood, Hyde Park, Unley and Glen Osmond Roads are narrow and the only road of adequate width south of the city is the Parade.

Mr. Hutchens—Henley Beach Road is another narrow road.

Mr. SHANNON—That is one of the worst roads. That applies also to roads to the north. I can visualize a person running a little late and about to join a tram when there are two or three vehicles parked near the stop post. The position could arise of a motorist about to proceed past a stationary tram and a person running into his vehicle. We have to guard against that kind of thing. I see much merit in providing a space of 50ft., not only on the approach side of the tram, but also on the other side. I support the amendment.

Mr. STEPHENS—I also support the new clause. I visualize what will happen now that we have provided for compulsory stops by motorists at stationary trams. Without the

new clause the position could arise that a person could not reach the footpath from a tram because motor vehicles were in his way. The amendment will overcome that position. At Port Adelaide more than 50ft. is set aside at bus stops where a motor vehicle may not pull up, and the same should apply to tram stops. I have travelled along Unley Road, and when I see a tram is about to stop I generally pull up because I am afraid that someone will jump in front of my car when alighting from the tram. I have seen elderly people and young women with children unable to move to the footpath after alighting because of passing motorists. In the interests of safety a prior right should be given to pedestrians.

Mr. TEUSNER—I intimated in my speech on the second reading that there was considerable merit in the amendment. When speaking on this problem a few years ago during a debate on the same Act I stated that there should be an amendment to prohibit the ranking or parking of cars at tram stops, and my view is still the same. I realize that many councils have introduced by-laws to deal with the matter and notice that Prospect and Enfield roads have prohibited areas at certain tram stops, but that does not apply at North Adelaide. I am prepared to support the amendment, but perhaps the distance stipulated by Mr. Walsh is a little too great. In view of the amendment already carried providing that motorists shall stop before passing stationary trams, it is all the more important to have this amendment. Once there is a cessation of movement of passengers to or from a stationary tram a motorist can move on. If motor vehicles were allowed to be stationary in an area adjacent to a stationary tram car, it would be more difficult for an oncoming vehicle to observe whether people, particularly children, were about to leave the footpath to join the tram. In view of the danger which is apparent and real if an amendment of this nature is not carried, I support the amendment.

Mr. QUIRKE—Although in full sympathy with the idea of reserving an area at a tram stop, I incline to the view that this should be a matter for the local council, because I foresee a number of complications arising from making such a law applicable to every stopping place. There are places on Prospect Road where the tram stops opposite shops, and alternative arrangements would have to be made for the loading and unloading of vehicles at such points. Local conditions may require the distance to be varied from 50ft. I am inclined to leave this matter to councils which, although not active in the past, would probably act if directions were given from this House.

Mr. Stephens—What if they did not act?

Mr. QUIRKE—They are their own authorities. I do not like the idea of saying that councils are completely useless and that we must do this for them, because I do not believe that. Even if it operated, the amendment would still be useless if vehicles on the other side of the 50ft. were allowed to park as far as they liked from the kerb, as they do today. The distance of 2ft. from the kerb, which is taken up by many cars on such a congested road as Prospect Road, is 18in. too great, for 6in. should be the absolute minimum allowed.

Mr. HAWKER—This amendment goes a great deal too far. It is quite reasonable to ask that a clear right-of-way be given from the tram stop to the pavement so that people alighting from and boarding trams do not have to dodge through motor cars ranked at the kerb, but the determination of such right-of-ways should be the responsibility of the local council. That would apply particularly on a narrow road such as Prospect Road, but in a wide street such as Ward Street, North Adelaide, it would not matter one hoot. Each case should be treated on its merits and not by a blanket provision such as this amendment. I cannot see why, as has been claimed, this provision becomes any more necessary because clause 12 has been passed, for, before passing a stationary tram, every motor vehicle must stop until passengers finish alighting from and boarding a tram and the road is clear. The whole necessity for this provision has disappeared, and it should be left to the local councils to act where it is considered necessary.

Mr. MICHAEL—In principle the amendment has much to commend it, but it is too rigid to make it apply to all tram stops. The matter should be left to local councils to determine. The member for Port Adelaide said that nothing had been done by local councils in the past, but this Parliament has not discussed this matter previously, therefore the fact that councils have done nothing about it proves nothing. The honourable member said that safety zones had been provided at bus stops only after the Tramways Trust had asked for them, but probably if the Trust referred this matter to councils something might be done. There may be places where

the provision of the zone mentioned in the amendment is unnecessary and others where a zone of 20ft. is sufficient. I believe in giving the local councils as much power as possible, and, if it were left to them, each case could be decided on its merits. The clause is too rigid and the matter should be left to councils.

Mr. DUNNAGE—In Unley when there is a complaint about this matter an inspection is made and if necessary the council creates a prohibited area. I know of an instance where a carrier has to stop in front of his place of business in order to load and unload, but under the proposal he could not do that. The council considered the position and decided not to establish a prohibited area there. On both sides of the Unley Road there are five tram stopping places within the council area and under the clause there would be 1,000ft. of prohibited area. Along the Kingswood tram line parking is not permitted, yet under the proposal the council would have to establish a prohibited area. It is difficult now for the Unley council to police its traffic rules, and the acceptance of the clause would necessitate more policing. Last night the council decided to appoint part-time inspectors to help in this matter. Councils are best able to decide where prohibited areas should be established.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I support the clause. Mr. Dunnage suggested that the matter should be left to councils, but at the same time he pointed out that the Unley council has been considering the matter of prohibited areas for some time, but finds difficulty in policing it. The reference of this matter to councils would be an easy way to forget it. It is a good proposal and will provide more space to enable motorists to see clearly people alighting from or boarding trams. The proposed space of 50ft. is not too great. Along the Port Road in the council areas of Hindmarsh, Woodville and Port Adelaide there are much larger prohibited areas for bus stops, and there have been no complaints, yet it is said that carriers will have difficulty in loading and unloading in front of shops if prohibited areas are established. I urge the Committee to consider the safety of human beings; if they do I am confident they will support the clause.

Mr. DAVIS—I first thought I would oppose the clause, but after the Premier suggested that the matter be referred to the Municipal Association I decided to support it, for if it were sent to that body it would be sent to the graveyard.

The Hon. T. Playford—The association will be interested in your views.

Mr. DAVIS—I have given them, though there may be some improvement now because I have been appointed to the executive. The new clause is necessary for the safety of the public. Perhaps a distance of 50ft. on each side of the tramcar seems too much, but it is only the frontage of two homes. People wishing to get on or off a tramcar should be fully protected.

Mr. FRED WALSH—I appreciate the Premier's offer, but I cannot agree to his suggestion to refer this matter to the Municipal Association. Sympathy without help is like mustard without meat. The Premier said this question should not be dealt with in the Road Traffic Act, but I could quote several provisions that should not be in it. However, they have been placed there to make them specific laws. I do not desire to criticize councils, for I have every confidence in councils in my area. Councils endeavour to do what they believe to be in the best interests of their districts generally, but business interests may influence them in deciding whether to ban the parking of motor cars at tram stops. This may be the cause of their not proclaiming prohibited areas in certain localities for they have had this power 45 years. Moreover, the position has been more acute until recently because tramcars are gradually being eliminated. The member for Burnside tried to give the impression that motorists would have to stop 50ft. from the rear of a tramcar when it stopped, but that is ridiculous.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—Why didn't you say "park" or "rank" instead of "remain at rest"?

Mr. FRED WALSH—I obtained the assistance of the Parliamentary Draftsman in framing this clause, and I am prepared to back his expert knowledge against that of the honourable member. If the honourable member is in sympathy with the proposal he should move to amend it, instead of opposing it. The Premier said that councils are more familiar with traffic conditions in their areas than we are, but the clause will apply mostly to main roads, with which we are almost as familiar as councillors. We must take this matter up because councils have failed to do so. In many places where councils have banned parking near tram stops the distance is greater than 100ft., but little hardship has been imposed on loading or unloading goods. I refer particularly to the Port Road, and Hindley and Rundle Streets. Much has been

said about the powers of councils, but they have not the power to erect stop signs without the approval of the Police Department. On one occasion a stop sign was erected near the western approach to the Hilton Bridge, and after vehicles stopped there they could turn into the stream of traffic from Railway Terrace into Hilton Road without breaking the law. The council subsequently suggested the sign should be placed on the corner of the intersection, but the police strenuously opposed it for some time, and agreed only after a long time to move it. Even if councils use their powers in the way the Premier suggests, they still have to obtain the approval of the Police. I feel there is no need to amend the clause because 50ft. on either side of a tram stop is reasonable in view of the length of the double trams used on the Henley Beach and Glenelg lines and sometimes on the Kensington Gardens line during the busy periods of the day. I appeal to the good sense of members of this Committee to accept the amendment.

Mr. STOTT—The suggestion to leave it to the councils does not impress me because we know from experience that what one council will do another will not. I think the honourable member is going too far in suggesting 50ft. We have already made it compulsory for traffic to stop at stationary trams and the amendment involves a space of 50ft. each side of a tram stop, making 100ft. in all. On narrow main roads, such as the Enfield Road, there is the danger of someone running out between vehicles, which we should try to obviate. As the length of a tram is 35ft. I think it would be wise to keep 35ft. clear of traffic so that people could go to and from the kerb.

Mr. Shannon—If you made it 25ft. each side of the post I might agree with you.

Mr. STOTT—That is not much longer and it would meet with my wishes. I move—

To delete "fifty" with a view to inserting "twenty-five."

Mr. FRED WALSH—I did not expect the clause to be accepted as introduced. I appreciate the arguments produced against the distance provided and I am prepared to accept the amendment.

Question—that the word "fifty" be struck out—carried.

The Committee divided on the question that the word "twenty-five" be inserted in lieu thereof—

Ayes (18).—Messrs. John Clark, Corcoran, Davis, Fletcher, Hutchens, William Jenkins, Jennings, Lawn, McAlees, O'Halloran, Riches, Shannon, Stephens, Stott (teller), Tapping, Teusner, Frank Walsh, and Fred Walsh.

Noes (17).—Messrs. Brookman, Christian, Geoffrey Clarke, Dunnage, Goldney, Hawker, Heaslip, Sir George Jenkins, Messrs. Hincks, Macgillivray, McIntosh, Michael, Pattinson, Pearson, Playford (teller), Quirke, and White.

Pair.—Aye—Mr. Dunstan. No—Mr. Travers.

Majority of 1 for the Ayes.

Amendment thus carried.

The Committee divided on new clause 15a as amended—

Ayes (18).—Messrs. John Clark, Corcoran, Davis, Fletcher, Hutchens, William Jenkins, Jennings, Lawn, McAlees, O'Halloran, Riches, Shannon, Stephens, Stott, Tapping, Teusner, Frank Walsh, and Fred Walsh (teller).

Noes (17).—Messrs. Brookman, Christian, Geoffrey Clarke, Dunnage, Goldney, Hawker, Heaslip, Hincks, Sir George Jenkins, Macgillivray, McIntosh, Michael, Pattinson, Pearson, Playford (teller), Quirke, and White.

Pair.—Aye—Mr. Dunstan. No—Mr. Travers.

Majority of 1 for the Ayes.

New clause as amended thus passed.

New Clause 18a.

Mr. TEUSNER—I move to insert the following new clause:—

18a. Section 179 of the principal Act is amended by striking out the words "improved main" in the second line, and by inserting after the word "road" in the second line the words "or to any bridge, culvert, guard fence or post on the road, otherwise than by reasonable use thereof."

The section would then read:—

If the driver or person in charge of any vehicle causing damage to any road or to any bridge, culvert, guard fence or post on the road, otherwise than by reasonable use thereof does not forthwith give to the road authority in whose area the damage has been caused notice of that damage, with full particulars of any damage to the surface of the road or to bridges, culverts, guard fences or posts on the road, he shall be guilty of an offence.

The new clause seeks to make it incumbent upon the driver or person in charge of the motor vehicle, where damage has been caused to an improved main road or other road, to give notice of any damage to the road authority in whose area the road is situated. Section 161 of the Act defines an improved main road as

"any main road within the meaning of the Highways Acts, 1926-1935, which has been formed, metalled, or gravelled, or which has any prepared surface, and includes the shoulders and drains thereof, and any bridge, culvert, guard fence, or post thereon." Pursuant to section 30 of the Highways Act the Governor, on the recommendation of the Highways Commissioner has power to issue a proclamation to declare any road a main road. My amendment proposes to include any roads situated in a local governing area and to make it obligatory for notice of any damage to be given to the local authority. In view of the amendment to section 178 already agreed to, pursuant to which a magistrate or justices of the peace have power, when dealing with an offender, to award compensation in respect of damage to roads or erections on roads, it is desirable that this amendment should be agreed to, because then a council would be able, at the hearing of any prosecution launched under section 178, to assist the court by bringing before it evidence as to the cost of repairs to the damage done.

Mr. STOTT—When travelling along the North Road a few months ago I noticed that for a considerable distance damage had been done to the surface by an iron tyred vehicle. In such cases how is the culprit to be caught and the position policed?

Mr. TEUSNER—Such a case is at present covered by section 179. If the person were detected a prosecution could be launched against him; otherwise no action could be taken.

New clause inserted.

Title passed. Bill read a third time and passed.

LOTTERY AND GAMING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to increase the number of days on which trotting meetings may be held in certain defined country areas, which are designated in the Bill as the South-East and the Murray area respectively. Under section 21 of the Lottery and Gaming Act as it now stands, a total of 60 days are available for trotting meetings held in country areas other than Eyre Peninsula. Eyre Peninsula has a special allocation of 20 days which is not affected by this Bill. The 60 days available for country areas generally are divided among 10 country clubs. Although the Act permits any country clubs to hold trotting meetings on not more than 11 days in any year, no club has, in recent years, received an allocation of the maximum number of days allowed by law. The actual allocation of days for trotting meetings for 1954 is as follows:—

Gawler	10
Strathalbyn	8
Victor Harbour	8
Mount Gambier	5
Barmera	4
Port Pirie	9
Clare	4
Kapunda	4
Kadina	7
Snowtown	1
Total	60

In addition, one charity meeting is to be held at Mount Gambier and one at Port Pirie. The allocation in 1953 was approximately the same as that fixed for 1954. Thus, under the allocations now being made, the 60 ordinary trotting days at present provided for in the Act are all allocated, without any club having received the maximum number of days allowed by law.

In recent years the South Australian Trotting League has on several occasions asked the Government to introduce legislation for increasing the number of days available for country trotting meetings, by making a special allocation of days for towns in the South-East and in the Murray area. The league points out that a trotting club cannot carry on with reasonable success unless it can race on several days in each year; and as the statutory number of days are already allocated, no new clubs can conduct races without depriving existing clubs of some of their days. There are not sufficient days available by law at present to allow all the clubs to function satisfactorily, apart altogether from the question of granting days for new clubs.

The Government is informed that proposals have been mooted for new clubs at Renmark, Loxton, Penola, Peterborough and Wilmington, but the difficulty is that new clubs cannot be given a reasonable number of days for meetings without taking them from a pool which is already too small for the demands which are being made upon it. Although it is not the Government's policy to encourage an excessive amount of trotting, the Government considers that as far as possible equal privileges in this matter should be granted to the various parts of the State. In 1950

Parliament allocated 20 days for Eyre Peninsula which, no doubt, will all be used in due course, and the Government takes the view that similar allocations would be justified for the South-East and for the Murray area.

This Bill carries the decision of the Government into effect. It defines the South-East so as to include Mount Gambier, Naracoorte, Millicent, Penola and Bordertown; while the Murray area will include Waikerie, Pinnaroo, Renmark, Barmera, Loxton and Lameroo. It is proposed that each of these areas will be able to hold up to 20 trotting meetings a year in the aggregate. In pursuance of the Government's policy not to encourage mid-week trotting, the Bill also provides that all of the additional meetings must be held on Saturdays or public holidays.

A further amendment of the law is also made as regards the days on which meetings may be held in the country area covered by the general allocation of 60 days. The Bill provides that at least 10 of the meetings held on these 60 days must, in future, be held on Saturdays or holidays. As a result of the days proposed to be made available to the South-East and the Murray areas, it will be possible for the days now used by Mount Gambier and Barmera to be allocated to other clubs. The Government considers that the additional meetings held by other clubs on the days so made available, ought to be held on Saturdays or holidays and not as mid-week meetings. This will be secured by a provision in the Bill that in future at least 10 of the meetings held by country clubs who share the quota of 60 days, must be held on Saturdays or holidays.

Mr. John Clark—Will night trotting at country towns such as Gawler be affected?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I fancy Gawler already has 10 days allocated, and its maximum under any circumstances could be only 11, so it will probably not be one of the beneficiaries under the Bill. A number of clubs have only four days allocated and one has only one day, and I feel that, as a result of the Bill, the Trotting League will make the re-allocation to those clubs which have not at present a sufficient number of racing days allotted. The Government is firm in its view that there shall be no encouragement of mid-week trotting meetings. If there is any suggestion to have 10 mid-week meetings the Government will drop the Bill. The Government is not at variance with the trotting people in this matter.

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

SUPREME COURT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to alter the pension scheme for judges of the Supreme Court. This scheme was inaugurated in 1944 and is, on the whole, similar in principle to the other schemes then in force under the laws of the Commonwealth and other Australian States. Under the scheme a judge who has served for 15 years and who retires at age 70 or through incapacity is entitled to a pension of half his salary. If he retires for either of these reasons with less than 15 but not less than five years' service, he is entitled to a pension of three-tenths of his salary with an additional one-fiftieth for every year of service in excess of five. If he retires with less than five years' service or for any reason other than because he has reached the age of retirement or has become incapable, he is entitled to a refund of contributions. No benefits are provided for widows of judges. The scheme is contributory, a judge paying £80 a year.

Originally, pensions were to be calculated on the salary received by a judge at retirement. However, in 1947, when judges' salaries were raised, it was provided that for the purpose of fixing the rate of pension the salary of the Chief Justice at retirement should be taken to be £2,500 and of a puisne judge, £2,000. Since 1947 judges' salaries have been further increased without any alteration in this provision. Because of the decreased purchasing power of money the Government has recently given careful consideration to the question whether the present provisions are now adequate. It appears that the provision requiring 15 years' service before a full pension can be paid is proving unsatisfactory. Because of their ages on appointment no less than four of the present judges can never qualify for the full pension and, no doubt, unless the scheme is altered, some future judges will suffer the same disability. Further, since 1944, the Commonwealth, Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania have made provision for pensions to be paid to widows of judges and the Government considers that it would be equitable to introduce a similar provision here. In addition, because of the increases in salary which judges, in common with other sections of the community, have been granted since

1944 it is appropriate now to alter the provision which declares that judges' pensions are to be based on their 1944 rates of salary.

For these reasons the Government has come to the conclusion that it is desirable to introduce a somewhat different and more liberal scheme. Accordingly, this Bill provides for a full rate of pension to be paid to every contributing judge regardless of his length of service, but at the same time for contributions to be paid at rates varying in accordance with the age of a judge at the time of appointment. Furthermore, the Bill provides that the widow of a contributing judge will be entitled to a pension at half the rate of the judge's pension. The Bill also deals with the point which I mentioned earlier and provides that pensions will, in future, be based on the rate of salary at retirement.

The details of the Bill are as follow. Clause 3 amends section 13b of the principal Act to raise the pension of a judge now in retirement to the proposed new rate for puisne judges, namely, £1,625. This is done in accordance with the generally accepted principle that on increase of pensions existing pensioners also enjoy the benefit of the new rate. There is only one judge at present in retirement. Clause 4 amends section 13c of the principal Act to provide that a judge who has attained the age of 65 at the time of his appointment may not elect to contribute for a pension. As judges will, in future, be entitled to the full rate of pension whatever their length of service, the Government considers that it is reasonable to place a judge outside the scheme if his service will necessarily be less than five years. Clause 5 re-enacts section 13d of the principal Act. New section 13d lays down the scale of contributions under the new scheme. The percentage of salary contributable ranges from 5 per cent payable by a judge who is under 55 years of age at the time of his appointment to 8.3 per cent payable by a judge who is 64 years of age at the time of his appointment. It should be noted that it is expressely provided by the section that existing judges are not required to pay any additional sum in respect of any period prior to the passing of this Bill.

Clause 6 re-enacts section 13e of the principal Act. The new section provides for the benefits to be received by judges and their widows under the new scheme. Briefly, the section provides as follows:—

1. A judge who has contributed and who retires on reaching the retiring age or because of incapacity will be entitled to a pension equal to half of his salary at retirement.

2. The widow of a judge dying before retirement will be entitled to a pension equal to a quarter of the salary of the judge at the time of his death.

3. The widow of a judge dying after retirement, the judge having retired because he has reached the retiring age or because of incapacity will be entitled to a pension equal to a quarter of the salary payable to the judge at retirement.

4. If a judge retires otherwise than on incapacity, or before the age of 70, or dies before retirement and does not leave a widow he or his personal representatives will be entitled to a refund of his contributions.

Clause 7, by enactment of new section 13ea, enables a judge contributing under the present scheme to elect to continue to contribute under that scheme. Clause 8 makes a consequential amendment to the principal Act.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

At 11 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, November 25, at 2 p.m.