

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, August 17, 1955.

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

QUESTIONS.**FREE SCHOOL BOOKS.**

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I understand that the normal practice is to place the children of war widows on the free list for school books. I believe the Repatriation Department compensates the Education Department for that expenditure, but there seems to be hesitancy on the part of some teachers to place children on the list, as children are sometimes told to wait at the end of the line when they make their request or are deferred in other ways. Will the Minister of Education consider permitting these widows to purchase the books from the teachers and on production of a receipt to be refunded the costs in order to prevent the embarrassment that does occur from time to time?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes, I will be pleased to consider the suggestion and have it investigated to see whether it is practicable. I shall let the honourable member know in due course. I would like to add that I would be sorry if any war widow or other person were embarrassed by any action on the part of any teacher. I shall have the whole matter investigated from that viewpoint as well.

ATOMIC ENERGY FOR INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES.

Mr. TEUSNER—According to a report which appeared in the *Advertiser* earlier this month a conference of scientists was held at Geneva. It was stated there that tremendous advances had been made in recent times in the field of nuclear physics and atomic energy and Russia has had an atomic plant in operation since last year which produces 15,000,000 kilowatt hours of electricity. British scientists said that within the next 20 years most of Britain would be supplied with atomic energy for industrial purposes. I should like to know whether the Government is being kept informed of the latest developments in that field, and to what extent those developments will affect the plan for the provision of atomic energy in this State as previously outlined by the Premier. Will he also state whether the agreement for the sale of uranium made by this State provides for the reservation of such quantities as may be required for the State's own purposes?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The basic principles of the generation of electricity from nuclear energy have been known for a considerable period. The problem has been that no power plant established can efficiently use the fuel being provided. The inherent fuel value of uranium is very high indeed but some of the power plants which have been operating have possibly had less than one per cent of efficiency and consequently have been very wasteful of the raw material. The progress made has always shown that a more efficient use will be made and that better power plants will be developed. We were invited by the Commonwealth Government to nominate a representative at the Geneva conference and Mr. Huddleston, the assistant manager of the Electricity Trust, has represented the State Government and is fully informed of the latest developments. As far as I know the conference results at Geneva have tended to confirm the time table laid down in South Australia, which was that we would consider nuclear power after the Port Augusta electricity supply stations had been completed and after the necessity for additional stations became evident. That would mean we would begin to actively plan for nuclear power in this State somewhere in the early 1960's. That would be the normal stage of progress which would have to be achieved to logically follow the development now taking place at Port Augusta. As far as I know the present scientific advance would probably enable us to conform to the programme laid down some years ago as being the overall programme we would try to work to, and I think we can accomplish it. We have had the benefit of much information from abroad. Mr. Huddleston has been in very close contact with the subject for a considerable period, and was at Harwell. I believe he is thoroughly cognizant of all the developments taking place and is in a favourable position to advise us on our future planning.

Mr. DAVIS—As you know, Mr. Premier, the uranium treatment plant at Port Pirie was put into operation at midnight last Sunday. In view of the importance of that plant and its importance to Port Pirie, I should like to know whether there will be an official opening, and if so, when?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—A very large and influential party of overseas journalists, probably the most influential delegation of journalists ever to visit this State, is due to arrive later this year. The principals of many of the

most influential newspapers are coming to Australia and have expressed the desire to visit Radium Hill. The Government proposes, with the concurrence of members, to have an official Parliamentary inspection at Port Pirie at the time the visitors are there, which would enable members to meet these visitors. I agree with the honourable member that this is in many respects a unique plant of outstanding importance to the State, and it is fitting that members should have the opportunity to see and to get firsthand details of it: it is of great public interest. In replying to Mr. Teusner's question I did not mention one important phase dealing with the arrangements made with the Combined Agency to enable South Australia to be assured of uranium requirements for her own use in the future. The answer is that the contract made with the Combined Agency is for a limited period, but long enough to enable us to get our mines and associated works into full working order and amortize some, if not all, of the heavy expenditure incurred in their establishment. It will not be a long term contract and the uses for which we will require uranium will come in after the contract has been terminated.

COUNTRY ABATTOIRS FOR EXPORT MEAT.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Yesterday I questioned the Premier regarding the possibility of decentralizing abattoirs in this State and in his reply, dealing with the Noarlunga Meat Works, he said, "It is true that at the time it did not receive a licence from the Minister of Agriculture in this State." Was the licence refused by the Minister because he had no power under the Act to give a licence or because he thought it not expedient?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The licence was refused by the Minister, who has power under the Act to grant one. His reason was that the proposal did not conform to what I laid down yesterday. I told the honourable member that abattoirs, to give effective and efficient working, should be at least 80 miles apart. In my opinion, and in the opinion of the Minister, the Noarlunga abattoirs was not really a country abattoirs but, to all intents and purposes, a metropolitan one, and for that reason a licence was not granted. We desire to establish at various points in the State abattoirs which can give effective service and for that purpose I would consider it necessary to establish an abattoirs at Naracoorte or somewhere else in the Upper South-East. Already there is

one at Portland in Victoria. I also hope that one will be established at Kadina or Port Pirie in the north. One has already been established on Eyre Peninsula.

MARGARINE INDUSTRY.

Mr. BROOKMAN—Some days ago I noticed a report that the agricultural chiefs of each State are to confer on the margarine quota. As this matter has a vital bearing on the dairy industry in South Australia, can the Minister of Agriculture say what the conference is about?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—It is being held as a result of a decision made at a recent meeting of the Australian Agricultural Council, which was attended by my colleague, the Minister of Lands. Although the whole question was debated there, no decision was reached as to an increase in quotas, it being felt that that matter should be thoroughly examined by the Standing Committee on Agriculture, which comprises the Directors of Agriculture of all the States, plus Commonwealth representation. Its task is to examine existing quotas and see whether, by virtue of increases in population and other factors, there is justification for any increase in existing quotas, and if so, what the increase should be. No decision can be made until the receipt of its recommendations, which I imagine would have to go back to the Agricultural Council meeting before the respective States would act through their own Ministers. In any case, before action can be taken by any State the State Cabinet will have to examine the matter and agree with the recommendation, or disagree, as it is at liberty to do.

LANDS DEPARTMENT MAP PRINTER.

Mr. HUTCHENS—It has been reported to me that recently the printer in the map section of the Lands Department resigned from his position, and I understand that it is very difficult to secure an experienced map printer to fill his place. He was allowed to go following a request he made for unpaid leave. Can the Minister of Lands say whether those statements are correct, whether there has been any endeavour to fill the position, and if so, what are the prospects of filling it?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I am not aware of the position mentioned by the honourable member but if the printer has left I would say every endeavour is being or will be made to fill the position. However, I shall obtain a report.

NEW COUNTRY INDUSTRIES.

Mr. WHITE—Some time ago an offer was made to a firm of engineers in Murray Bridge to manufacture tillage implements covered by patent rights held by a firm operating in another State. I know that negotiations have been proceeding and that the Premier has some knowledge of this. Can he inform me what stage those negotiations have reached?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The industry is a fairly substantial one, and would give considerable support to local industry in the honourable member's district. The matter has been referred to the Industries Development Committee, and as far as I know the investigation is proceeding satisfactorily. This is one of three country industries that I believe will be established in South Australia. Negotiations are proceeding in regard to the other two concerns, one of which is in the member for Stuart's district at Quorn, and those negotiations are almost completed. The finance has been satisfactorily arranged (subject to the approval of the Industries Development Committee), and a conference has been held with the Commonwealth authorities, and I think nearly all the details in connection with the purification of barytes at Quorn have been tied up and, subject to the approval of the Industries Development Committee, I believe that industry, which is a substantial one, will go into operation. A still larger industry is to be established at Mount Gambier. The firm of Softwood Holdings Ltd. has been investigating for some time the establishment of a modern plant there and it has now informed me that it proposes to go ahead with their plans, which will provide for a mill to produce both hard and soft building board, a large modern sawmill, a new planing and kiln-drying plant, a plant for the preservation of timber under pressure in accordance with the latest overseas practices, and new administrative offices. The full programme that the company has announced will probably involve an expenditure of £1,000,000 and, in my opinion, it is another very important milestone in the industrial development of this State. The company has secured a 48-acre block adjacent to the area where the Electricity Trust is establishing a power plant, and the new board, planing, kiln-drying, and preservation plant will be installed on that site. This is a very substantial company which is at present operating 26 mills in the South-East and Victoria, and last year it treated 60,000,000 super feet of radiata pine and logs. The industry is being

established because it will be able to make efficient use of the waste materials of the total pine, including the bark. I am informed that the company has only been getting a recovery of about 40 per cent of the pine, but with the new plant it will get 100 per cent recovery of the tree, because all the waste products will be used for the production of the boards. I have seen samples of both the soft and hard boards and, in my opinion, they are at least equal to the best that is being offered on the Australian market, either from local production or from overseas.

Mr. RICHES—Is the company seeking Government assistance?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No, except that I believe it will be entering into certain arrangements with the Electricity Trust for the supply of heat and it will probably be making certain bark materials available to the trust for the purpose of raising steam, but it is not seeking direct assistance from the Government. However, I have assured the company that it can expect full co-operation from the Government in regard to any of the assistance normally supplied to industry.

PORT AUGUSTA-WOOMERA ROAD.

Mr. RICHES—I do not know whether the Government intends to take the journalists that will be visiting this State later this year to Woomera by road, but I strongly advise it not to do so. In view of the state of the road from Port Augusta to Woomera and the recent statement by the Minister of Works that completion of the road is a matter for the Commonwealth authorities, and the fact that his department is at present working on this road, I ask the Premier whether he will approach the Commonwealth for the necessary finance to put that road in trafficable condition?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have already discussed with the Commonwealth Government the question of roads in the honourable member's district and the Minister has pointed out to me that only a limited amount is available to him out of petrol tax, his share for the whole of Commonwealth purposes being approximately £800,000. I have asked him for a grant of £50,000 for this year and £50,000 for the following year for the purpose of putting a first class road between Port Augusta and Quorn in order to assist Quorn in the problem that confronts it following upon the diversion of the railway line from its present to the more westerly route, and I am certain that the Minister is very

sympathetic towards that request. Whether the Federal Cabinet will approve remains to be seen. As regards taking visitors by road to Woomera, the time allotted to this State is very limited and road transport would be impracticable.

VALUATION OF LOXTON BLOCKS.

Mr. STOTT—Some time ago I asked the Minister of Lands a question concerning the finalization of the valuation of blocks in the Loxton irrigation area and the Minister said that it was subject to negotiations with the Commonwealth. Has he anything further to report now?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I can only say that it is still with the Commonwealth and on several occasions since the honourable member first raised the question I have taken up the matter and have been advised that the Commonwealth will meet the State Ministers again with a view to finalizing the valuation.

CONTROL OF HOUSE AND LAND PRICES.

Mr. LAWN—Some time ago I received correspondence which I forwarded to the Treasurer drawing attention to some sales of homes. A particular instance was the purchase of two homes for a total of £600 which the purchaser subsequently offered to new purchasers at £1,400 each. In view of transactions of this kind will the Government consider re-enacting legislation which was upon our Statute Book controlling transactions in homes and land?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No. It is true that legislation was on the Statute Book and that the Government did attempt to maintain reasonable prices for land and buildings immediately after the war. The whole object of the legislation broke down, however, because purchasers themselves conspired to defeat it by indulging in all sorts of black marketing practices. Under those circumstances the Government believes it is not practicable to re-introduce the legislation, nor does it believe that it is desirable to do so.

PORT ADELAIDE WHARF FACILITIES.

Mr. STEPHENS—Some time ago we heard complaints that overseas vessels were to by-pass Port Adelaide for various reasons cited, such as poor harbour facilities, lack of adequate tug boats, the bad wharves and sheds and the slow turn-round of ships caused by the go-slow policy of the waterside workers. According to the *News* of August 6, however, Captain J. H.

Currie, master of the motor vessel *Chyebassa*, said that Port Adelaide's wharf labourers were the best workers in Australian ports. The report continues:—

"I had heard all sorts of things about Port Adelaide," he said. "I expected to be stuck up here for a couple of days. Instead of that, I am sailing early.

"The men worked happily and well. At one period they were shifting cargo at the rate of 23 tons an hour at one hook." The *Chyebassa*, which arrived at 8 a.m. on Thursday, sailed at 4 p.m. yesterday after loading 1,344 tons of wheat and flour for Persian Gulf ports. Captain Currie had a good word to say for the cargo shed at No. 1 Berth. "It's the best I've seen in any port in the world," he said. "You could play a rugby league match in that shed."

This captain, who has been all round the world, praised Port Adelaide, yet some people have criticized it adversely. Will the Minister of Marine see whether copies of the captain's opinion can be sent to some of the overseas shipping companies and exporters concerned to counteract the bad name that Port Adelaide and South Australia have been given?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Speaking generally, I would say that the point raised by the honourable member concerning tugs is not a valid reason why ships should by-pass South Australia; that was given as an excuse rather than a reason. At Government expense an alternative is provided, but it has rarely been called upon. Secondly, the wharf facilities and sheds are at least equal to those of any other port in Australia. Thirdly, whatever may be said to the contrary, the least reason for by-passing Port Adelaide is the wharf labour. Therefore, the three reasons given for by-passing Port Adelaide are not legitimate; the real reason is that it does not pay ships to call.

DANGEROUS ROAD BEND.

Mr. QUIRKE—Has the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Roads, a reply to my question of June 28 concerning a dangerous bend on the Main North Road between Rhynie and Undalya?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The Minister of Roads has supplied the following report:—

The Commissioner of Highways reports that the curve in question is sub-standard, having a design speed of approximately 32 miles per hour. As an immediate temporary safeguard, curve signs will be erected at either side of this curve and ultimately steps taken to widen the inside of the curve by six feet which would then give the curve a design speed of 50 miles per hour.

SOIL EROSION.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—On June 28 I asked the Minister of Agriculture a question concerning the key line plan of soil contouring to prevent soil erosion and he promised to obtain a report. Has he done so?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I have a report dated June 30 from the then senior research officer, Mr. Beare, who, I believe is now Conservator of Soils. It reads as follows:—

The book referred to by Mr. Macgillivray is obviously *The Keyline Plan* by P. A. Yeomans. The term "Key Line" derives from the term coined by Yeomans for a particular contour which he selects as the basis for his cultivation system. He argues that with all cultivation parallel to this line the water will be led away from the valleys towards the ridges. This will only be so in the type of topography he describes. Instances could be found where such cultivation would be straight up and down hill in places. In any case, the system would be far less effective in holding water on the slope than orthodox contour cultivation.

The book gives the impression that the system has been thoroughly tried on both cropping and grazing land. Yeomans writes, for example, of results to be obtained in three to five years on crop land. At the same time he does not record that the system has been used anywhere except on his pasture property near Sydney and this only since 1951 or 1952. The book was published in 1954. The system has never been mentioned in the *Journal of the Soil Conservation Service of New South Wales*, and it is doubtful if it is in use on many properties in that State. A few farmers in this State are known to be trying it.

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING HOURS.

Mr. WHITE—I recently received an inquiry from storekeepers at Mannum concerning special shopping hours for next Christmas. Christmas Day will fall on a Sunday and they seek permission to remain open on the Friday prior to Christmas Day. Last year the operation of the Early Closing Act was suspended for the Christmas period, but it was claimed by some storekeepers that notification of this was too late to enable them to make proper arrangements. That prompted Mannum storekeepers to seek notification of any alteration this year in August. Has the Premier investigated this matter and, if so, has he any statement to make?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The lateness of the proclamation last year was due to the late arrival of applications for a lifting of the usual conditions. They had to be examined before a proclamation could be made. This year the Government has already received some requests and the Department of Industry is

investigating them. I presume it will be possible for a decision to be made by Cabinet next week and an announcement made then. I will inform the honourable member as soon as a decision is made.

FINANCE FOR ROAD WORKS.

Mr. QUIRKE—Will the Minister representing the Minister of Roads ascertain how much was received from the various Commonwealth sources last year for country roads, whether that money was all spent, where was it spent and how much can be expected this year for the same purposes?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will get a reply from the Minister of Roads. The amount would run into millions and to indicate where it was spent would necessitate a schedule so long that it would be hard to find room in *Hansard* to print it.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORTS.

The SPEAKER laid on the table the following reports of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works:—Myponga reservoir and trunk main (second progress report); Onkaparinga Valley water supply (fourth progress); Enfield High School (interim); Brighton High School—new wing (interim); Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science—central sterilizing unit (interim); new Unley High School for Boys (interim); Royal Adelaide Hospital—McEwin Building additions (interim); Port Pirie Hospital additions (interim); Burbank railway (interim); and Supreme Court building—new wing (interim).

Ordered to be printed.

LOTTERY AND GAMING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Goodwood)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Bill inserts a new section 9A in the principal Act. Section 9 provides for exceptions from the Act in regard to lotteries and one of the exceptions relates, in effect, to art unions when the moneys raised are used for and in the interests of fine art. I regret that this Bill has been referred to as a "lottery" Bill. On another occasion I fully explained what I considered to be a lottery and this Bill does not contain any of the elements I then mentioned. I assure the Premier that it will in no way affect the finances of the State or assist in financing

such major works as hospitals. The Premier has said frequently that if there were a State lottery the revenue derived therefrom would result in a reduction in the Commonwealth grant.

I have a very high regard for those persons who accept the responsibilities of office in organizing sports such as football, cricket, baseball, hockey, basketball and others too numerous to mention. The secretary and other members of a certain management committee had to appear in the Police Court to answer charges under the Licensing and the Lottery and Gaming Acts. That committee, like many others, has one desire—to advance its organization to enable sport to be played and thus provide good entertainment, plus organized discipline for those taking part in games.

Let me take as an illustration a football club in my district for which I have a very high regard, and which has the use of an oval for which it pays the local council £5 a year. It has an A and B team and it is estimated that it costs £600 a year to provide uniforms, playing gear, transport, and insurance for players. In addition the club provides coaches and footballs to the primary schools at Edwardstown, Forbes, Ascot Park, and the Marion High School, and makes the oval available. I know that if the club were free from police supervision sufficient money would be raised to meet its financial requirements. Owing to a court action, the players are now paying their own insurance, and the club officials are at their wits ends to obtain financial assistance, and can only increase their revenue by increasing the list of vice-presidents. A person who may be engaged in a responsible position and become secretary of a football club or similar organization is called upon to make a special effort to get financial assistance either from the players or the community. If an attempt were made to run anything in the nature of a lottery, the secretary could be prosecuted for a breach of the Act. It is not fair to the secretary or the management committee that they should be so embarrassed in a Police Court action because they have unconstitutionally tried to raise money in the interests of amateur sport. If they do something contrary to the Act they can be charged in the Police Court, which is wrong in principle.

The painting, *Woman in a Landscape*, which I understand is still on view at the Art Gallery, is, I consider, a reflection on the feminine sex, as far as I know it. It may do any honourable member good to have a look at this

painting and then express his opinion whether it is really a true reflex of the feminine sex. According to the Act, if the painting were raffled and the proceeds used in the interests of amateur sport, it would not be an offence against the Act, which provides that the proceeds must be used in good faith for the encouragement of the fine arts. It is time the Act was amended. Proposed new section 9a provides that an application may be made by any club to the Chief Secretary for a permit to conduct a lottery the principal object of which is to carry on an outdoor sport or game and which makes no charge for admission to matches or contests, and does not derive any income from any such charge; and also any association or body of people carrying on a school or religious institution, hospital, or other institution to assist the sick, infirm, the aged or the needy so that such institution is not carried on for gain or profit to its individual members. It costs money to keep such institutions and homes going, and who are we to deprive the young of better equipment, school libraries, or to agree that the sick, infirm, or aged should be deprived of some comforts by refusing a committee this opportunity to raise funds to make their lot a little better?

Some people have already said that this Bill does not go far enough, whereas others contend that it will discourage people from making donations to assist charitable organizations, including the Adelaide Children's Hospital. If it were passed it would not be mandatory upon anyone to raise funds in the manner suggested, but the Act would then provide that any committee associated with the type of bodies mentioned in the Bill could make application to conduct a lottery to raise money to carry on its work. Much representation has been made to me, both by correspondence and interview, and I have been asked why I did not provide for a complete lottery on a basis similar to that suggested a few years ago. My reply has been consistent with my attitude on that occasion that whilst a member of the Opposition I do not intend to introduce a Bill to provide for a lottery. On this occasion I make a strong plea to the House to carry this amending legislation.

The *News* of June 25 contained an article under the heading "Charity Workers Doubt Value of Art Unions for Bigger Bodies" and portion of it said:—

Personal views of officers of Adelaide's two biggest charity organizations are:—The Public Relations Officer of the South Australian

Crippled Children's Association: "Art unions might benefit smaller clubs and charities who need to raise only £1,000 to £2,000."

The Public Relations Officer of the Adelaide Children's Hospital: "While there are a lot of things to be said in favour of legalizing art unions I am afraid that many people have an overrated idea of their value."

I do not say that they are the answer to a maiden's prayer: far from it. I would not agree to an art union being conducted in the interests of league football. The league makes a charge for admission to its matches which should bring it in enough money to cover the costs. When the league makes charges in this way it should have the responsibility of assisting the clubs which take part in its matches, instead of there having to be full-time secretaries of individual clubs. I mentioned this matter some time ago.

Mr. Lawn—What is the purpose of new section 9A?

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Take the Edwinstown Football Club, which has two teams playing A and B grade association matches. People attending its matches have to pay no admission fee, yet that club helps primary schools in fostering Australian Rules football. In my district it is difficult to find places where youth clubs can meet, but they are meeting and with some success. I cannot see why they should not conduct art unions. The money obtained would be spent in establishing youth clubs and purchasing necessary equipment, and they would be able to teach the need for discipline, and better discipline than we are having in this House this afternoon.

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

Mr. FRANK WALSH—As I said, it is difficult to find the necessary finance to conduct youth clubs that bring young children together and teach them the need of discipline, as well as the advantages of good citizenship and the bad effects of the bodge and widge cult. Community hospitals, the Crippled Children's Home, the Children's Hospital and many other worthy organizations would benefit if this Bill became law. They would not have to rely only on lotteries to raise funds because many charitable people would still make donations to them, and these contributions would still be allowable deductions for income tax purposes. I could take up half an hour setting out the various types of clubs and institutions that could come within the ambit of this provision.

The Bill provides that so long as the money raised from a lottery is put back into the club for its conduct, there would be no objections to the holding of a lottery. There is also a provision for the payment of a fee of £2 to the Chief Secretary on every application for a permit to conduct a lottery, but if the application is not granted one half of the fee is to be refunded. The measure contains penalty clauses, which I was advised by the Parliamentary Draftsman were necessary. It is also provided that there shall be no money prizes, but prizes could range from pin cushions to houses and motorcars. I have no objection to the size or value of the prizes, which is a matter for those conducting the art union.

The holding of art unions is in the interests of the community and I do not wish people who are at present conducting lotteries for charitable organizations to be forced to regard themselves as criminals. Parliament should make it possible for them to continue with their work without fear of a fine or court action. I commend the second reading.

Mr. TAPPING (Semaphore)—I support the Bill with a certain amount of reservation. I am impressed by the provision that no money prizes would be paid, but that instead prizes such as motorcars and other things could be won. I support the Bill because it will give some help to junior organizations. Football clubs have ways of obtaining revenue from gate money, but this Bill will provide for clubs that cannot charge admission fees, whether for football, baseball or basketball. The people conducting these sports find it hard to obtain sufficient revenue to meet their obligations. This Parliament and every organization in the State should do everything possible to help any sport that has as its purpose national fitness. In recent years the Commonwealth Government, whether Labor or Liberal, has made very heavy grants to fitness bodies to help them to build up the morale and health of people. In the last few years the State Government has also made a grant to the National Fitness Council. This measure links up with national fitness. The junior clubs are doing a mighty job and if they were put out of action through a lack of revenue it would impair national health. The cost of upkeep of an amateur body is tremendous because of the cost of grounds, affiliation fees and the purchase of sporting equipment, so it needs sound administration to meet all the demands. I ask leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT
(LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL FRANCHISE) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from June 29. Page 508.)

Mr. BROOKMAN (Alexandra)—The purpose of this Bill is to widen the franchise of the Legislative Council to be the same as that of the House of Assembly. The origin of this Bill is founded, I should say, on some portion of Labor policy which I believe is a shifting policy and one which is not fully revealed at any one time. Unfortunately, Labor's policy is very hard to ascertain. Some of it is readily given to us when it suits the Labor Party, but at other times we do not hear much about it.

Mr. O'Halloran—We cannot help your lack of understanding.

Mr. BROOKMAN—Many times I have asked to be told the full policy of the Labor Party on questions such as that now before us, but I have never been given a straight answer. Undoubtedly, it is Labor's policy to widen the franchise for the Legislative Council, but is that all the Party wants to do? I should say it is not, and I think members of the Opposition will admit that. In that case, would it not be far fairer to those who have to consider this legislation to be told everything that the Labor Party thinks about the subject rather than just a little at a time? I think when the member for Gawler (Mr. John Clark) spoke a few weeks ago he said that Labor members do not advocate the abolition of the Legislative Council, but a great many of them do. Members opposite have not yet come to any agreement on this question.

We hear only a little of Labor's policy at a time, and it is extraordinary how suitable to members opposite a little of their policy happens to be when it coincides with current political opinions, but often we are asked to forget some of the more sinister parts of Labor's platform. Sometimes Labor's policy is explained away as nothing more than some harmless phrases, or we are asked to forget it altogether. Such statements as the socialization of production, distribution and the means of exchange are interpreted in many different ways by Opposition members, but never as statements that are distasteful. Their interpretations make such statements sound most harmless and, indeed, moderate, though of course they are not.

Labor's policy is much like an iceberg: the one-tenth that can be seen does not look too bad, but the other nine-tenths, the sinister parts, are kept out of sight. I should like to know Labor's full policy instead of having to keep asking members individually what their own beliefs are. The member for Gawler (Mr. John Clark) said that Labor does not advocate the abolition of the Legislative Council, but the member for Port Adelaide (Mr. Stephens) does. He advocates not only the abolition of the Council, but wants to turn that Chamber into Government offices. He wants to abolish both State Houses of Parliament. The member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) also wants to do that. Are members opposite who have different views going to explain their attitudes or are they merely going to say that on this occasion they will touch up a few things about the Legislative Council and leave it at that? What does the Leader of the Opposition think about State Parliaments? We have not heard him say whether he would like them abolished. I do not think he wants that, but it would be interesting to learn Labor's real policy on this question.

The member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) certainly wants the Upper House abolished, for we heard a dissertation from him during the Address in Reply debate on this matter. I think we on this side of the House can be excused if our minds are somewhat confused about Labor's policy. It is hard to follow people who talk in a woolly manner and disagree with each other, but all the time pretend that they get on splendidly together. I am afraid members of the Opposition do not know where they stand on this subject. I should like to get a copy of Labor's platform, but it is hard to obtain. Members opposite never tell us what is on their platform. Unfortunately, it is kept out of sight until its objectives coincide with public opinion.

Mr. Travers—Socialization is their only plank.

Mr. BROOKMAN—Of course, they try to explain that away by saying what socialization means. Sometimes they say it means nothing more than the Government growing its own trees and operating its own mills, or making its own roads. At other times they say socialization means taking over the Broken Hill Proprietary Company or acquiring an industry when it suits them.

Labor members interjecting.

Mr. BROOKMAN—I am afraid that some members opposite may keep on interrupting me, but unfortunately they often say that members sitting behind the Government will not speak on certain matters before the House. However, when we do get up Opposition members opposite continue to interject and try to confuse the speaker. Their insincerity is patent. They are not doing themselves any good or preserving their dignity by shouting interjections, which is very rude. I am sure that some members opposite agree, by their silence and attention, that this is so.

At present no person under the age of 40 can be elected to the Legislative Council, but the Bill provides that a person may be elected if he is 21. There has been much talk about why this age qualification was ever introduced and it is pointed out that William Pitt the younger became Prime Minister of England at the age of 23. It is quite obvious that it was introduced into the Constitution to provide the maturity of judgment that an older man is likely to possess compared with a younger man. Who will deny that a man of 25 has less mature judgment than he will have when he is 30? We will find exceptions, but any man who has less wisdom at 30 than he had at 25 or 26 is going backwards. It seems to me therefore that the provision is wise and I would not like to disturb it. The exact age decided upon is not, perhaps, very important, provided it is a greater age than that prescribed for the adult franchise for this Chamber. Everyone knows that anyone who comes to this Parliament has much to learn, however much he has studied politics or knocked around the world to get experience; he cannot be a fully-equipped politician when he comes here. His judgment has to mature and his wisdom increase.

Several members of this House whose age is below 30 have been held up as patterns, and we have been asked why they could not become members of the Legislative Council. It seems to me that no great harm is done by their being prevented. In the course of a few short years they will become eligible for the Legislative Council if they wish to stand for election, but I doubt whether any one of those members would deny that by the age of 30 his wisdom will have been increased and he will have formed many opinions on subjects on which, perhaps, he had no opinion whatever before. We must not forget that a younger man has scarcely had time to form opinions on a great variety of subjects with which he may never have been confronted. In this Parliament we deal with all sorts of subjects from

the school-leaving age to notification of foot rot in sheep, from public finance to pawn-brokers, and hundreds of other subjects, and men below the age of 30 are scarcely likely to have opinions on all those subjects when they come here. If they do they are rather extraordinary. For that reason I say that this age qualification in the Constitution is by no means an unwise one.

When the framers of the Constitution gave adult franchise to the Lower House they recognized that it would have the ultimate power of government and hold the legislative initiative, and that in the ultimate result the Lower House could not be resisted by the Upper House. With that in mind they framed the Constitution in such a way that the Legislative Council would be a House of review, and that is why maturity of judgment is required instead of, perhaps, the greater fire of youth. I can see nothing whatever wrong with that. It seems to me to be a good bi-cameral system.

The property qualification was mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition. This has slightly similar premises for its introduction. Every adult has the right to vote in an Assembly election, but for the Legislative Council this right is restricted to certain groups of people, such as property owners, householders and those who have served in the armed forces. This provision makes for a more thoughtful vote for the Upper House. A hotly debated question may be carried sweepingly in the Assembly, and the present system gives a certain amount of time before it can be finally implemented, which, of course, is a sound reason, and is recognized as such by many Parliaments throughout the world. There are, of course, exceptions; whatever is done it can be said that a certain group is qualified to vote for the Legislative Council and another group is not, and days and days can be spent in pointing out how much more intelligent the latter are than those who are qualified, but I cannot see how it can be denied that, on the average, a more thoughtful and careful vote can be given by the persons eligible to vote for the Upper House than is given under the adult franchise for the House of Assembly.

There were one or two comments by previous speakers with which I did not agree at all. The Leader of the Opposition made rather an extraordinary remark when he said that Bills are introduced again and again in this Chamber in order to rectify drafting errors. I do not believe that. The two Bills mentioned

were the Local Government Act and the Land and Tenant Bill. Those Bills are continually brought back to us for consideration, not because of drafting errors, but because of changing conditions. The Local Government Act is one with which the people are closely concerned and it is constantly in use, and conditions are changing incessantly. Any suggestion that it is brought back purely because of drafting errors is quite wrong. Admittedly, drafting errors creep in, but I should say that the standard maintained in the drafting of statutes in this State is as high as in any part of the world.

The Legislative Council franchise could be altered in a dozen different ways; it could be widened to bring in adult franchise, but we might then get a situation which approximates that of the Senate, which in my mind is not a very satisfactory system. I do not believe that the Senate operates in as useful a way as our Legislative Council. Secondly, I suppose, we could make all sorts of provisions for elections; for instance, the system in New South Wales, where members of the Upper House are elected, I think, by a joint meeting of the two Houses. That seems an extraordinary provision, and, although it seems to work in New South Wales, we do not want it here. I do not believe the people want a change in the franchise for the Legislative Council. South Australians are proud of their State Parliament of which the Legislative Council is a part; they do not groan under an unfair Constitution as we are frequently told by members opposite. They are amongst the happiest and freest people in the world and the least agitated on matters of franchise. No-one can deny that our legislative processes in this State are conducted with dignity, absolute integrity and sincerity, and at least a fair amount of wisdom. For those reasons I believe the people are closely bound to the present constitutional position and I therefore oppose the Bill.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood)—The honourable member who has just resumed his seat made a number of interesting remarks about Labor policy, but he seems to have taken little trouble to find out what that policy is despite the fact that a copy of it, autographed by the Leader of the Opposition, has been given to a Government member.

Mr. Brookman—Do all your members agree on it?

Mr. DUNSTAN—Yes, and the policy of the Labor Party concerning the Legislative Council, as laid down in the official platform, is that if there is to be a second Chamber in South Aus-

tralia it shall be a House of review and not a House of property, that it shall be a second Chamber elected on a democratic franchise, but constituted in such a manner that it may give second thought to the legislation of the popularly elected House of Assembly. The member for Alexandra (Mr. Brookman) said that if a person is over 30 years he has a maturity of judgment, but with great respect to members of the Upper House the only maturity that I have been able to find there is that of a rather over-ripe cheese. There is no reason whatever why a person under 30 should know less than a person over 30 about matters mentioned by the honourable member. He referred to the school leaving age and foot-rot in sheep, and, although I must confess that I know very little about the latter subject, I dare say a number of members of the Upper House know little about it either. Why should this arbitrary age of 30 years be taken as that at which added discretion is suddenly given to people? Some members in this House have not yet attained the age of 30, for instance the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse). I have little doubt, however, that he has considerably greater maturity of judgment than some members of the Upper House. True, he may be nearer his first birthday than some of them, but he is farther away from childhood because, although he is only a little distance from his first childhood, he is considerably farther away from it than some honourable gentlemen in another place are from their second childhood.

Mr. Brookman produced an extraordinary argument about the property qualification and said that if a man happened to have property that gave him some added intelligence; but although it may be a very intelligent thing to own property—it is probably quite a good idea—that does not mean that people who do not own property have not as much intelligence as those who do. Indeed, many people have inherited property and done nothing whatever towards acquiring it.

Mr. Hutchens—Many university professors and lecturers have little property.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Yes, and it must be remembered that in South Australia there is no educational qualification as there is for the franchise in some other States. The most illiterate person who has inherited a piece of property may vote for the Legislative Council; indeed, according to Mr. Brookman, the mere possession of that property bestows upon him greater intelligence than that of a university professor or lecturer who owns no property.

The Hon. M. McIntosh—Tenants and ex-servicemen and women may vote for the Legislative Council.

Mr. DUNSTAN—That is so, and I believe that they should be able to; but there are many other people who should be able to, but cannot vote. Why should they have to own property to get a vote? I can point to many intelligent people in my district who have no vote for the Legislative Council, and there are many other South Australians in that category. Why should they be excluded from voting for the Upper House? Is it so that the Legislative Council shall be a thoughtful Chamber?

Mr. Hutchens—Why should a minister of religion be denied a vote?

Mr. DUNSTAN—Exactly. The reason for the property qualification is not to make the Legislative Council a thoughtful Chamber, but to make it a property Chamber and to ensure that it is not a House of review. The mature and thoughtful Mr. Brookman knew so little about the Constitution that he did not even know that the Legislative Council is not a House of review but a House of veto. Why is the property qualification provided for Legislative Council electors? Purely and simply so that the elected representatives in the Legislative Council, representing property, shall have the power of veto over the popular legislation of this State. It is not true to say, as Mr. Brookman said, that the express wishes of this House, which is elected by the people, prevail under our Constitution. They do not prevail! For instance, it was the express view of the people of South Australia during the term of office of the Gunn Government that they should have a democratic franchise for the Lower House in this State and a constitutional majority passed a measure providing for one vote-one value and proportional representation; but that was vetoed by the Upper House. There was no prevailing of the popular will on that occasion, and that sort of thing has occurred during the whole of the history of this Parliament since 1856. The Upper House is a property House designed expressly to protect property against the popular will.

Mr. Lawn—It represents interests as against persons.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Yes, it represents not the people but accumulated wealth. So far from the Act providing that the will of the Lower House shall prevail, section 10 states:—

Except as provided in the sections of this Act relating to money Bills, the Legislative Council shall have equal power with the House of Assembly in respect of all Bills.

Therefore, although the Legislative Council represents only a tiny minority it can say "No" and there is an end to it. That is not democracy. I realize that Mr. Brookman will promptly say, "What does democracy matter? After all, the people of South Australia are not agitated and in my view they have the best Government possible." South Australians, however, do not hold that view, and it is not true to say, as the honourable member says, that they are not agitated about this matter. They are agitated because the least agitated people in South Australia are the honourable gentlemen of the Legislative Council. It has been said—and quite rightly I believe—that for much of the time some honourable gentlemen there do not do terribly much except sit and listen to their arteries hardening. But when a matter of property or accumulated wealth is brought forward or there is a move to give to the ordinary people and not the wealthy a measure of social justice, then how active do these members of the Legislative Council become? If members opposite believe that democracy should prevail in South Australia and that there should be a House of review—and that is what the member for Alexandra advocates—what harm would there be in giving all the people a vote for the Legislative Council the same as was given them in Victoria with the acquiescence of a considerable body of the Liberal and Country Party? It is strange that Victoria is so rarely mentioned by members opposite when constitutional questions are debated here.

Mr. Jennings—That represents too much reform.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Yes, and too much attention to Liberal principles which seem to be so absent from the minds of members opposite when any question of electoral reform arises. If every person who was entitled to vote for the House of Assembly was entitled to vote for the Legislative Council as they should be, then that would still be a House of review because only half of the Legislative Council retires at each election. Consequently that House would be in a position to give second thoughts to the views of members elected at one election in this House. That is the most power that any House of review should have but apparently members opposite do not want a House of review or anything in the nature of a House of review as exists in England. Admittedly, in England the members of the House of Lords are not elected, but they do not have the powers of our Legislative

Council. The House of Lords can delay measures from the Lower House for 12 months to give the Lower House second thoughts. In South Australia a tiny majority of the community may say "No" to the rest of the community and there is the end of it. That was the purpose of framing the Legislative Council in this manner and it becomes obvious if we examine the origin of the Legislative Council.

The first Constitution Bill was introduced in 1853 and provided for a Lower House elected on a property franchise and an Upper House which was nominated. In order to ensure that the property franchise House had the power there was a provision in the Bill that the Lower House—the property House—without the consent of the Upper House, within a limited period of time, could change the constitution of the Upper House without its consent. Then the Lower House was to have the power to be able to say to the people "We, the property owners, shall decide what shall take place." When that Bill did not receive the Royal Assent a sop was given to the populace. Provision was made for a popularly elected Lower House—and in those days it was elected by one vote one value and not under the gerrymander we now have—and a property elected Upper House. There was no provision that the Lower House could determine the constitution of the Upper House. The property elected House—the Upper House—was to have absolute power under the Constitution. That is what members opposite are trying to retain today—a rule not of the people by the people for the people but a rule of the people by property for property.

Mr. CORCORAN (Victoria).—I support the Bill which provides for the abolition of the property qualifications now applying to electors of the Legislative Council and for the abolition of the requirements that a member of that House shall be at least 30 years of age. The member for Alexandra referred to Labor policy as a shifting policy, hard to follow and understand. It is not difficult to realize why the Party he represents is eager to cling to the prevailing system so far as the Legislative Council is concerned. That system has kept his Party in control of the State Parliament. He can support that system but he should not try to lower the prestige of my Party which stands before the people of this State with no apologies for what is bound up in its policy.

We seek to remove the property qualifications and establish the Legislative Council on the same basis as this House. The Council is actually the House of Caesar and is

elected by about one-third of the people who elect the members of this House. It can nullify our efforts and is not representative of the people. There is nothing wrong or shifty about our proposals. It does not matter what legislation is introduced by the Leader of the Opposition or any member of the Labor Party, it is always opposed by members opposite. The Premier has already spoken around and about this Bill at length but he said nothing to justify his opposition to it. He has passed judgment and, so far as he is concerned, it stands condemned. We know what will happen to it, but we will fight on. The State platform of the South Australian Branch of the Australian Labor Party contains the following:—

Constitutional and Electoral Reform—to provide equitable electoral boundaries, with one roll for all Parliamentary elections; retention of compulsory enrolment and voting, with adult franchise for both Houses of Parliament; the elections to be held under the system of proportional representation; and effective deadlock provisions on the lines contained in the British Constitution.

It is hard to understand how objection can be raised to the Bill. Many women who reared sons who went to the war and died for this country are not permitted to vote for the Legislative Council. If a woman owns a house both she and her husband are entitled to vote for that House, but if the husband is the owner the wife does not have that privilege. My Party is opposed to that system and will continue to make efforts to have the position altered, despite the Government Party's effort to suppress us. We know that the Government has 21 members in this House and my Party only 14, and it is not our fault that we have not succeeded. Members opposite cannot tell me anything which justifies opposition to the democratic principle of one vote one value. There is not the slightest doubt that the present voting system is responsible for giving the Government Party a majority in the Upper Chamber. We have no apologies to make for introducing this Bill, because it is democratic, and while the House which controls the destiny of the State is elected by only one-third of the voters who elect this House, no-one can justifiably argue that the system is right. A man is not qualified to stand for the Legislative Council until he reaches the age of 30 and Mr. Brookman has endeavoured to justify that provision, but failed miserably. I hope this House in its wisdom will consider the time now opportune for this practice to be abolished, support the Bill and thus remove the numerous anomalies referred to.

Mr. DAVIS (Port Pirie)—I support the Bill. I have listened with much interest to previous speakers, and was particularly astounded by the arguments submitted by the member for Alexandra. I was surprised to hear his reasons for opposing the measure.

Mr. O'Halloran—They were not reasons; they were excuses.

Mr. DAVIS—He certainly gave no sound reasons. I support it because I am democratic and believe that every person over 21 who has the right to help decide who shall enter this Chamber should have an equal right regarding those elected to the Legislative Council. Mr. Brookman said that a person should be over 30 before being eligible to become a member of the Legislative Council, but he does not have to hold similar qualifications to be able to vote for that House. He mentioned mature minds, but some persons' minds never mature. One man can have more wisdom at 21 than another at 60. We are in need of young men in Parliament, but we are told that until a person reaches a certain age he should not be eligible for the Legislative Council. Mr. Brookman says a man under 30 is too young, so I raise the question what age should a man be before he is allowed to enter Parliament.

Mr. Hutchens—Shouldn't the criterion be ability to serve?

Mr. DAVIS—That is all that is needed. Mr. Brookman did mention that returned soldiers without property qualifications were given the right to vote for the Upper House. Then they did not consider whether or not his mind was matured. Perhaps they thought that because he was a returned soldier his mind had matured more than had that of the man who stayed at home. Despite the fact that a man made sacrifices to defend his country he could not, on his return, contest a Council seat, although he had the right to vote at a Council election. Is a man or woman with property more intelligent than the man or woman with no property? If I had to leave my home tomorrow and board, I would not be considered sufficiently capable to contest a Council seat, yet I would be good enough to sit in this House. One member of the Council said that that place had decided to reject legislation that seems to be assured of passing this House. Does that show that the minds of Council members are mature and that fair consideration is to be given to legislation passed by this House? I cannot see any difference between voting for Assembly and for Council elections. Every person over 21 should have the right to vote at Council elections. I was astounded to hear

the Premier say it was not desirable to have two Houses elected on the same franchise, but he did not make his statement very clear. We have class legislation in this State and the position should not be allowed to remain. The present system is wrong and not democratic. Members opposite should realize that our move is in the best interests of the people and they should support the Bill.

Mr. JENNINGS secured the adjournment of the debate.

PUBLIC WORKS STANDING COMMITTEE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

MOTOR VEHICLES REGISTRATION FEES (REFUNDS) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from June 30. Page 526.)

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY (Chaffey)—I suppose the oldest member in this place has never had to address himself to a measure similar to this Bill. Since I have been here I have not had to support such a measure as this, which is the aftermath of legislation passed last session at the urgent request of the Government, and supported by the Opposition, to deny certain people in this State the protection of the courts. As far as I know, that has been the policy supported mainly by the Communist Party in Australia. The Communists have always argued that Parliament should be supreme and above the courts. For some hundreds of years in England it was accepted that the King could do no wrong, and last year a so-called Liberal Party in South Australia put forward the view that our Parliament could do no wrong, therefore there is no appeal to the courts for the protection of those mentioned in the legislation. That is a state of affairs that would have turned the Liberals into a high state of anger when I first came into this House yet now we find them accepting it without question. Fortunately, there were three members of this Chamber who saw the futility of this type of legislation and drew the attention of the Government to it. They went so far as to divide the House on the matter.

The honourable member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) admitted that this type of legislation was contrary to everything that he, as a Liberal, ever stood for and he would have opposed it 10 or 15 years ago, but he, like all Government supporters, has been broken on the political wheel and is no longer an identity or an individual but simply a pawn

in the schemes of the Premier. I do not suppose there has ever been a leader of a so-called Liberal Government who has gone so far away from Liberal principles as our present Premier has done. I am not one of those who do not have some regard for his ability. I believe he has ability and an attention to duty second to none in the Commonwealth. Hitler had just the same attention to duty in Germany and Mussolini in Italy, but where are they today? What has happened to them? Why has it happened to them? That is the important thing. What has happened to them is going to happen to the Premier of South Australia as surely as night follows day, because he has surrounded himself with "yes" men, and if there is anything that a responsible man cannot afford, it is to have "yes" men around him. I have no hesitation in suggesting that the Premier was warned what was likely to happen in this communistic attempt of his. Australia is a democratic country and will not tolerate for all time this attempt to deny rights to these people.

Not only was the Premier deluded by his own supporters, but he was supported by Her Majesty's official Opposition. Only one person spoke from the Opposition benches and only two from the Government benches, one of whom opposed the Bill but, due to the political set-up, voted for it. I refer again to the member for Onkaparinga. One of the leading members of the legal profession in South Australia today, the member for Torrens, also supported the Premier. His reason was that it would save the hauliers from wasting money in fighting this case. That is an extraordinary argument for a lawyer to advance, because lawyers live on people fighting cases in court. It seems very funny that he should put up this argument when the hauliers were fighting to save their own money. I would rather suggest that the hauliers knew what was good for them and where they should spend their money. The Leader of the Opposition, who I take it spoke on behalf of his Party as a whole, said he was not a lawyer and did not know the rights and wrongs of the case, but that he would support the Premier. I do not know whether I am right or wrong, but I imagine that he visualized that the Premier was taking a high jump and felt that this matter would be a political noose. Perhaps that interpretation is not correct, but it is justifiable, because it is rather unusual to find that a Leader of the Opposition can be so solidly behind the Government in such an important matter to deny some people the protection of the courts.

The Premier was probably as weak in his

arguments as anyone else. He said in the first place that the Government did not intend to take any hurried action until the High Court decision, yet within a few days he rescinded that statement. He stated that his Government was forced into action because the road hauliers had declared war on the Government, surely the most extravagant and incorrect statement ever made by a Minister of the Crown. That statement was not correct and I challenge it entirely. I have been associated with certain aspects of road haulage and as far as I can make out there was no attack on the Government, the hauliers being just as much at sea as every citizen of South Australia at that time. They were worried, they did not know what would be the effects of all these attacks on their livelihood, and they were prepared to sit quietly hoping for the best, yet the Premier said that they had declared war on the Government and his Government perforce was forced to take drastic steps. He pointed out that there were certain hauliers who had obeyed the law and paid the fees requested. As a matter of fact, it was not the law at all, because it was invalidated; that is the crux of the matter. The Government has done everything in an endeavour to put hauliers off the road except by open and fair competition, and nobody would object to competition.

When we find Government after Government making rules and regulations and imposing higher charges on road hauliers, all the time making invidious distinctions and penalising private enterprise, it is time we decided whether we should hand over the transport system of Australia to the socialistic railway system which is losing millions of pounds every year, or allow private enterprise an opportunity to compete fairly with the railways.

Senator McLeay (Federal Minister for Transport), in a public statement, said there was no doubt that certain men (meaning the State Premiers) were legislating to drive private enterprise out of Australia's transport system. If private enterprise can compete with the railways to the benefit of Australia's economic position why not allow it a fair chance to do so? If it cannot compete let us stamp it right out. We must examine the question of transport from the point of view of economic value, not with preconceived political ideas. It is not sufficient to say that socialism is the answer to Australia's transport problems. Both Liberal and Labor members of this House have decided that road hauliers will not be given a chance to

compete fairly, that they must be subservient to the railways, irrespective of whether the railways provide all the necessary services.

Mr. Riches—That is not a fact.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Both Liberal and Labor members say that the socialistic concern must be protected willy-nilly because the people of South Australia have spent millions of pounds on the railways. They say that despite the advances of science and the development of road transport they must support the railways. They might as well argue that because many companies spent much money in installing certain machines 40 or 50 years ago those machines must be kept in production and that modern factories should not be allowed to produce goods by modern methods. I stress that I am not opposing the railways as such; I oppose them because they do not do their job. If the railways, without the support of the taxpayer, can supply cheaper transport than road hauliers, let us keep them. The trouble is that all members here, except the four Independent members, think that whatever is socialistic is good. The fact is that both the railways and the road hauliers are essential to Australia, and all I ask is for a fair deal for both. The railways should be allowed to provide the services they are competent to provide: in fact, they can do many things more efficiently than road hauliers; but in many ways road haulage is more efficient because modern road transport is of more recent development than railway transport.

Mr. Riches—This legislation merely provides that road hauliers shall pay for the upkeep of the roads they use.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—The fact is that road users, whether they be road hauliers, primary producers, or private citizens, all pay for the roads, under the petrol taxation system, according to the use they make of the roads. A road haulier may have a vehicle with a petrol consumption of eight miles to the gallon, a private citizen a car that runs 30 miles to the gallon, and a motor cyclist may get 60 miles to the gallon. Through petrol taxation they all pay roughly according to the damage done to the roads. According to the last annual report of the Highways and Local Government Department, for the four years ended June 30, 1954, the Commonwealth Government derived about £111,000,000 from petrol taxation, but 47.3 per cent of that sum went into consolidated revenue, the rest being allocated for the upkeep of roads. This is a special sectional tax inflicted on motor

users presumably for the development of the roads, yet the Commonwealth Government takes practically half of it for different purposes altogether. Can anyone suggest that the road user is not playing his part?

Mr. Davis—That is one thing on which I do agree with you.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—In that case I am afraid I must be wrong. I shall have to re-organize my thinking.

Mr. Frank Walsh—How do you know we would get any more if it were amended?

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I do not. In reply to a question some time ago the Premier informed me that last year the whole basis of the petrol tax had been altered, but this is what I would like to know. In his official position as Treasurer he has been attending Loan Council meetings for many years—

Mr. Fletcher—And he has been successful.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Not in this matter. Why has he, as Treasurer of the State of South Australia in conjunction with his fellow Treasurers, agreed that they should get only 52 per cent of the total moneys collected in petrol tax while 47 per cent goes back to Commonwealth revenue? This is a racket of the first order; class legislation. The only people affected are the motorists, and they give the money quite willingly, I think, on the assumption that it is going to provide better roads for them. That is one reply to the member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) who said that the motorist is not playing his part in road costs.

Mr. Riches—I said the road hauliers.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—I have already pointed out that the road haulier pays in accordance with his usage of the roads because he gets only six to eight miles to the gallon whereas the ordinary motorists gets up to 30 miles to the gallon and the motor cyclist 60.

The SPEAKER—The people mentioned in this Bill are those registered also in another State.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—That is quite true, but the Leader of the Opposition twitted me with being very pleased because the Premier is being forced to refund this money to the people who paid it. I wonder whether those who are supporting this Bill, namely, the Government and its supporters and Her Majesty's official Opposition, know where this £9,000 will go. The member for Port Pirie pointed out that it would be futile to hand the money back to the road hauliers because they have already passed on that cost to the consumer, which is quite right. No businessman ever shoulders his own costs; of necessity business costs are

always passed on to the consumer. If this £9,000 is handed back who will get it? It will be a Christmas gift to the hauliers and will not go to the consumers, which brings me to another point.

In Brisbane recently certain road hauliers, evidently in fear and trembling of what Governments can do—because, do not forget, hauliers have a great deal of money invested in their plant—agreed to help the Government in raising further money per medium of a tyre tax. In my opinion if it is inflicted the road hauliers will not pay, as the consumers will have to bear it.

The SPEAKER—The honourable member must not develop that too far because that is a new tax whereas this Bill refers to the refund of a tax.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—Under your direction, Sir, I will leave that aspect and deal for a few moments with the charges of the Leader of the Opposition. He said, in effect, that the railways cannot compete with road hauliers because the railways have to pay for their own railroad whereas road hauliers do not pay anything for the roads, and that the railways are therefore handicapped, which I consider to be an entirely fallacious argument. I went to some trouble to see how true that statement was and I found that for once in his political life at least my friend, the Leader of the Opposition, made a statement that could be entirely misleading should this Chamber be silly enough to believe it, because at no time in recent years have the railways ever been able to carry their own costs which have had to be met by the users just as much, and in some cases more, than the clients of the road hauliers. We find that the railways are piling up millions upon millions of losses. For instance, in 1946-47, in round figures, the railways made a nominal loss of £1,500,000. As the years went by the losses became more until in 1950-51 the loss was nearly £3,000,000, and in 1951-52 they achieved an all time high with a loss of £5,000,000 that the taxpayer, which includes the motorist, had to pay for losses on railways that refused the right of competition. Would anyone suggest that that was a fair crack of the whip? Further, less than 300,000 income tax payers in this State had to make up the deficit of £5,000,000 in this one department alone, therefore how can it be suggested that the Railways pay their way, particularly when it is remembered that many of those taxpayers are denied the opportunity to use the railways? The Auditor-General's report for the financial year ended

June 30, 1954, contains the following statement:—

The financial accounts as submitted by the Railways Department are in conformity with law and parliamentary decisions, but they do not reveal the actual annual financial result from the point of view of the State for the following reasons:—

- (a) Commencing with 1949-50 contributions have been made from Consolidated Revenue towards the working expenses and debt charges of the Railways, thus reducing the annual deficit shown by Railway accounts.
- (b) The annual debt charges on £4,467,000 of loan funds, repaying accrued depreciation on rollingstock and certain expenditure on the relaying of permanent way up to June 30, 1927, are not included in the Railway accounts (Funding Loan Act, 1927).

The following statement shows the financial loss to the State on the undertaking for 1953-54, when those items are taken into consideration:—

| | £ | £ |
|--|------------|-----------------|
| Surplus as disclosed in Railways Department Revenue Account . . . | — | 515,957 |
| Contributions by State Treasurer towards— | | |
| Working expenses . . | 3,200,000 | |
| Debt charges . . . | 800,000 | |
| Debt charges on account of loan expenditure on accrued depreciation of rollingstock and relaying of permanent way— | | |
| Interest | 93,085 | |
| Sinking fund . . . | 68,627 | |
| | | <hr/> 4,161,712 |
| Loss for the year . . . | £3,645,755 | |

Despite these figures there are still some people who have the audacity to say that the railways pay their way. Indeed, they would have been out of business years ago had not the taxpayers, both those who used the railways and those who could not, contributed toward the deficit.

Mr. Shannon—It is also true that the State would have gone out of business had it not been for the railways.

Mr. MACGILLIVRAY—My point is that both road and rail transport is needed in South Australia, but I argue against those advocates of railway transport who would like to put the road hauliers out of business. The Commonwealth Minister for Transport has said that there are people in State Governments who would drive the road haulier out of existence tomorrow, and I have no difficulty in believing that. Labor men who give lip service to the fact that they represent the working classes overlook the fact that more people are employed

in road transport than in the railways. The railways system is an anachronism and a relic of a bygone age. Its use has entirely disappeared, yet we allow the railways to carry on as they always have. It is time we put a stop to the vendetta against road hauliers.

Last session the Government introduced certain legislation against the advice of the only people free from political control—the Independent members. We told the Government what would happen, and it has happened. An Act of Parliament was passed which has proved a disgrace to the State and which has lowered the political dignity of this Parliament in a way it has never been lowered before. There has never been another attempt to deny to the community the protection of the Courts in the way that was done last session with the support of both parties, and the members of those parties must bear the responsibility for that Act.

The \$9,000 involved under the Bill is a fleabite in the finances of this State; I am glad that it is to be paid, but I deplore the necessity for its payment. I gladly support the Bill, which is an attempt to overcome a grave injustice to a valuable and hard-working section of the community—the road hauliers. By the very introduction of this Bill the Treasurer admits that the stricture placed last session on our citizens' approach to the Courts was wrong and of no value. I hope that he will be big enough to remove that Act from the Statute Book because it is a black mark continually besmirching the good name of South Australia. It is an Act that could only get the support, knowingly, of the Communists, because it is definitely Communist legislation and seeks to put Parliament and the Crown outside the control of the Courts. The Act takes us back to the time when the King could do no wrong, because it denies people the protection of the Court. I am sorry to see that the Premier has the urge to run to the law as soon as any of his decisions are overruled. It is a wonderful thing for the lawyers and for the Premier provided someone else foots the bill. In this case, it will be the unfortunate taxpayer. If that were all it would be enough, but what is more important is the principle behind it, the principle that provides, in effect, that Parliament will immediately deny recourse to the courts to anyone who challenges the right of Parliament to inflict duties on him with which he does not agree. Surely no-one with even a semblance of liberalism in him would condone that? Surely the Leader of the Opposition would not support it? The

least we can do is allow people to go to the courts and let the courts decide whether a wrong has been done. A thief or murderer can get protection and have a lawyer to state his case to the courts, so the road haulier in South Australia is treated worse than the lowest criminal. I am horrified and ashamed to think that this Parliament has degenerated as it has. I have been here 18 years and if anyone asked me what was the most important thing that had happened here in that time I would say, "The deterioration of the Liberal Party." I have watched it decline and today there is not a voice prepared to speak for Liberal principles. The member for Onkaparinga did, but then voted against his own words. I think that is a deplorable state of affairs.

Mr. SHANNON secured the adjournment of the debate.

PETERBOROUGH WATER SUPPLY.

The SPEAKER laid on the table the report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works on the Peterborough water supply, together with minutes of evidence.

Ordered that report be printed.

DRAUGHT STALLIONS ACT REPEAL BILL.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN (Minister of Agriculture) moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—

That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to repeal the Draught Stallions Act, 1932-1934, and for incidental purposes.

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

DAIRY CATTLE IMPROVEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN (Minister of Agriculture), having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Dairy Cattle Improvement Act, 1921-1940.

Read a first time.

TOWN PLANNING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer), having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Town Planning Act, 1929.

Read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.6 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, August 18, at 2 p.m.