

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.**

Thursday, November 17, 1955:

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

**BUSH FIRES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.**

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

**ASSENT TO ACTS.**

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the Gas Act Amendment, Wheat Industry Stabilization Act Amendment, and Y.W.C.A. of Port Pirie Incorporated (Port Pirie Parklands) Acts.

**QUESTIONS.****RAILWAY FIRE BREAKS.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Some days ago I referred to the need for additional fire precautions to be taken along the Cockburn railway line in view of the bounteous crop of feed that had resulted from the recent favourable season. Has the Minister of Works a report following on his promise to take up the matter with the Minister of Railways?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Yes. The Railways Commissioner advises that arrangements have been made for vegetation to be cleared inside railway fences, by means of a grader, between Nackara and Cockburn and on the Radium Hill spur line.

**GRASSHOPPER INFESTATION.**

Mr. HEASLIP—Over the week-end I was in my district and, despite all the efforts of individual landholders in combating grasshoppers, they appear to be more prevalent than they were seven or eight weeks ago. I saw them yesterday just hatched, and in the hopping and flying stages. It appears that, despite all their efforts, the landholders cannot control the grasshoppers. Farmers are now ready for harvesting and will not be able to continue to spray. I understand the Government had aeroplanes spraying yesterday in the Wilmington, Terka, and Melrose areas. Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether spraying has been effective and, if so, could it continue in the area I have mentioned in an attempt to control the grasshoppers in the future, because if that is not done all past efforts will have been wasted? If nothing had been done in the area everything would have

been eaten out, and that will still be the position if nothing further is done.

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I do not think, generally speaking, that the position is quite as grim as the honourable member has painted it. We must still look at the picture more broadly than from the purely local standpoint. I agree that one serious feature of the infestation has been the continuous hatching of fresh batches of grasshoppers after every small shower of rain, and we have had a series of them this summer. It is possible that, following on yesterday's rain, we shall have further hatchings. Although many farmers will shortly be harvesting they should not let up in their efforts to combat the plague on their own holdings. I know that will be difficult, but it can be done because we occasionally get a day or two when harvesting cannot be carried on, and an hour or two spent on spraying will be very useful. I was on the West Coast recently and we had to do spraying where we discovered hatchings. We got busy with a boom spray and effected a good kill; and farmers generally will have to face up to their responsibilities in that direction. My department is now engaged in widespread operations to augment the efforts of landholders. I think we have four large boom spray units and one wind-blast unit operating in various parts of the State, apart from the two dozen or so army jeeps which are still working effectively. Only this morning I authorized the use, for experimental purposes, of a new sandblasting machine of the effectiveness of which my officers have great hopes; so it will be understood that departmentally we are taking up the slack wherever we can with such equipment as we have been able to muster, quite apart from our aerial activity. Reports on the recent aerial spraying at Koomooloo indicate that it was very effective and that a large percentage of grasshoppers were killed. That was the first real attempt at aerial spraying of hoppers on the wing. Today's bulletin on the campaign states:—

Excellent results have been obtained from both the water based and dieselene based mixtures of dieldrin used from aircraft in killing grasshoppers.

We employed both mixtures because we wanted to ascertain which was the more effective for low-flying attacks, and the results show that water, which is obviously the cheaper method, is quite as effective as the oil emulsion. Therefore we shall continue with that method. The bulletin continues:—

Both mixtures were used at Thistlebeds station and the adjoining stock route (near

King's Well) earlier this week and Mr. G. Young, who has been observing results, is enthusiastic about the kills. Both mixtures have been equally effective. Aerial spraying continued yesterday at Terka, south of Wilmington, and a further 200 acres were treated. With more aircraft becoming available, greater areas of flying swarms will be treated. Mr. W. H. Brownrigg, District Agricultural Adviser, said today that ground spraying in the district council areas of Loxton, Waikerie and Brown's Well have been effective in reducing hopper numbers. Damage has so far been confined to pastures, and as harvesting is becoming general, cereal crops will probably be reaped without loss.

#### KADINA RAILWAY PLATFORM.

Mr. McALEES—Kadina is one of the busiest places outside the metropolitan area and many people travel to and from it by train, particularly since we have had the "bluebirds" on the line. I have been requested by many people at Kadina and by travellers to ask the Minister representing the Minister of Railways whether a platform could be installed at the Kadina railway station to make it easier for passengers to get in or out of the train. A train often arrives at night time and frequently elderly people have to climb down the steep steps.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I will take up the question with my colleague.

#### PORT PIRIE BLOCKS SCHOOL.

Mr. DAVIS—I have received a letter from a resident of Port Pirie Blocks who at one time was a member of the Port Pirie Blocks School Committee. He states:—

In response to several requests, I recently made a census of the area to determine the number of children of schoolgoing age living therein. The number of children living in the area who will be attending school in February, 1956, will be at least 20, and there are at least 13 not old enough to attend school. On behalf of all parents concerned, I earnestly appeal to you for your co-operation in endeavouring to have the school re-opened.

The letter also states that the school children will have to travel by railcar to the Solomon-town school. This is most inconvenient, and they often suffer as a result of bad weather. About two years ago I approached the railway authorities with a view to having a shelter shed built at a siding there, and I received a reply that it was not the department's policy to build shelters at sidings. Will the Minister of Education consider re-opening the Port Pirie Blocks school, seeing that the number of children there has increased owing to the families that have settled in that district?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be pleased to have the whole matter investigated

and have a proper census taken of the children likely to attend the school if it is re-opened. If the honourable member will let me have the letter and any other information it will be helpful, and I shall have inquiries made as soon as possible. However, there is a wide diversity of opinion amongst country people concerning the consolidation of schools, the closing of small schools, and the transport of country children to and from area schools or other centrally situated schools. I have found during the last year or so that the most effective method of determining the matter is to call a meeting of the parents concerned to get an expression of their views in the presence of the district inspector and an assistant superintendent from head office. This particular matter has not come under my notice, but I shall be pleased to investigate the matter. Without prejudging the issue, my opinion is towards the continuance of the smaller schools where it is convenient for them to remain open.

#### WHEAT HANDLING LICENCES.

Mr. BROOKMAN—In his second reading explanation of the Bulk Handling of Grain Bill earlier this session the Minister of Agriculture said:—

Clause 33 empowers the company to handle bagged wheat and also bulk grain other than wheat, but does not give the company any exclusive rights in respect of these commodities. Later, in another place the clause was amended to further safeguard other receivers of wheat by inserting the following subclause:—

The company shall not receive any bagged wheat except at a place where no licensed receiver or other wheat merchant is carrying on the business of receiving wheat.

In accepting that amendment the Chief Secretary said:—

The Bill does nothing to wreck the existing marketing system, and any change should be subject to the minimum dislocation.

Since then John Darling & Son have been informed by the Wheat Board that they will not be licensed this season at Ardrossan, and the reason given is that a request of the State Minister of Agriculture justifies this attitude by reference to section 33 of the Bulk Handling of Grain Act. Does not the Minister consider that the action of the Wheat Board is contrary to the real intention if not also the legal meaning of the legislation, which specifically states that the bulk handling company shall not receive any bagged wheat except at a place where no licensed receiver or other wheat merchant is carrying on the business of receiving wheat?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—I do not think it is in any way contrary to the intention of the Act. I am well aware of that intention because I had a good deal to do with the framing of the legislation. I have prepared a statement arising out of the discussions to which the honourable member has referred, and it is as follows.

Section 33 (1) of the Bulk Handling of Grain Act empowers the S.A. Co-op. Bulk Handling Co. to receive and handle bagged wheat. This is as the section stood originally, and the intention was that as bulk facilities were installed the Company should be enabled to also receive such possible small quantities of bagged wheat as might be delivered because the silo was for the time being full, or the wheat was too inferior to be mixed with the rest. Also it was envisaged that ultimately when the system was practically complete there would remain some outports and a few other places where receivals were small or intermittent and it would not be worth while for a licensed receiver remaining in business to handle the bagged wheat offering. By providing that the company could handle it meant that farmers would not be left without a service.

Subsection (2) of section 33 was added as an amendment at the request of a representative of a licensed receiver to ensure that merchants would not be forced out of business from the inception of the company beginning to operate in the State, but could continue to handle bagged wheat until bulk facilities were actually provided. The expressed desire was that merchants should be enabled to gradually liquidate their handling activities as the programme of bulk facilities proceeded. It is reasonable therefore that the Wheat Board should license the company to handle overflow quantities of bagged wheat at places where bulk installations are operated as otherwise such wheat must carry extra charges incidental to two licensed receivers being involved in its handling. Merchants now licensed to receive bagged wheat must eventually lose their business of handling bagged wheat as bulk handling progresses. This has inevitably been the case in other States as the figures of bulk *versus* bagged wheat handled in those States show:—

	Bagged wheat. Bushels.	Bulk wheat. Bushels.
17 Pool—		
West Australia . . . .	Nil	36,161,000
Victoria . . . . .	1,692,000	50,520,000
18 Pool—		
West Australia . . . .	Nil	30,624,000
Victoria . . . . .	1,422,000	45,004,000

Mr. Brookman—Isn't it a fact in New South Wales no bagged wheat is handled by the bulk handling companies?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—In both the eastern States, although the bulk handling concerns are operated by State instrumentalities, neither has the right to handle bagged wheat; nevertheless, the only bagged wheat handled there is where there are no bulk handling facilities. Where those facilities exist all the wheat is handled in bulk.

#### NARACOORTE RAILWAY STATION.

Mr. CORCORAN—Has the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Railways, a reply to my question of November 8 concerning the Naracoorte station building, and the approach to the station and the refreshment rooms?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—Through my colleague I have received the following reply:—

The Railways Commissioner advises that an area between the station building and the narrow gauge track does flood to a depth of 4in. under the worst conditions, and that steps are being taken to improve the drainage of this area. No proposals for the building of a new station at Naracoorte have been considered, but minor alterations and additions to the accommodation have been approved.

#### QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HOLIDAY.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I understand that about this time of the year, or perhaps a little earlier, it is usual to proclaim the date of the Queen's birthday holiday for the following year. Can the Premier say whether the Government has considered proclaiming that date, and if not, when may we expect it to be announced?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—It has always been the practice in this matter to have uniformity between the States, and only this week I received from the Commonwealth Government a communication advising the date on which it desires a proclamation to be made. I think it was June 4.

Mr. O'Halloran—It is usually the second Monday in June.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—At any rate, it was the normal date, and if it was not proclaimed this morning, it will be proclaimed next week.

#### PRICE RISES.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier any information concerning a question I asked recently relating to the prices of commodities in the various States?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This question relates to the interim retail price index figures and not the "C" series index quarterly figures. It is understood that the Commonwealth Statistician is now conducting two surveys in relation to (1) the "C" series index on which quarterly cost of living figures are based, and (2) the interim retail price index which embraces a wider field of commodities for the same quarter, but at present is apparently only used as a guide for comparison purposes. The statement that this interim index shows that retail prices are rising more quickly in Australian smaller capital cities, Perth, Hobart and Adelaide, than in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, does not mean Adelaide prices are higher than those in the larger cities. If Adelaide is to be bracketed with Hobart and Perth where, since the abolition of price control, prices have spiralled, it is only natural to assume that an average of these smaller cities when compared with the average of the three larger cities would show an adverse position in regard to Adelaide. This, however, would not be the true position as there are many cost of living items which are cheaper in Adelaide than in any other capital city. Regarding rents it is known that these have increased in all capital cities, but it must be borne in mind that the percentage increase in rents since 1939 is by far the lowest of the four components in the index—foodstuffs, clothing, rents and miscellaneous items.

#### OPENING OF NEW TOWNSHIP, ELIZABETH.

Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS—Has Cabinet considered the erection of a monument or plaque to commemorate the opening of the new town, Elizabeth?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Government has not taken any action in this matter. I understand the Housing Trust is considering this proposal which, I think, has been ventilated in the press. If any action is taken it will be by the Housing Trust.

#### BURNING OF SAWMILL WASTE.

Mr. CORCORAN—Yesterday, speaking on the Bush Fires Act Amendment Bill I referred to regulation 12 of the Act. The South-Eastern Fire Fighting Association at its last meeting in Naracoorte suggested that the regulation be amended to prohibit the Conservator of Forests or his authorized representatives from authorizing the burning of waste except on lands controlled by him. As the regulation stands, I understand the

Conservator of Forests or his representatives can override decisions of the district council on this matter. The Minister made no reference to this regulation yesterday; nor did I expect a reply then because my query was not relevant to the amending legislation. Has he any information on this matter now?

The Hon. A. W. CHRISTIAN—Regulation 12 gives the Conservator or his representatives the sole right or power or authority of issuing permits for the burning of sawmill waste. I would assume that, generally speaking, that is as it should be so long as the mills are adjacent or near Government forests. I agree there may be an anomaly in this provision as it affects a mill in a distant part of the State not near any forest. I will certainly have the matter examined to see whether district councils should not have the right to issue permits, rather than the Conservator of Forests, in areas far removed from the Conservator's own forests and mills.

I remind the honourable member that district councils could assume, under by-laws, wide authority concerning the disposal or treatment of mill wastes. Late last year I obtained an opinion from the Crown Solicitor on this matter. He advised that under section 669 (7) (1) and section 670 (5) of the Local Government Act, a municipal council or a district council may make by-laws for the prevention, suppression and speedy extinguishment of fires. In his opinion this power would authorize a municipal council or district council to make by-laws providing, (a) that sawdust should not be permitted to be accumulated or kept at any mill except in accordance with conditions set out in the by-laws (under that power they could prevent the accumulation of these immense heaps of sawdust that we see in some mills); (b) that if the town clerk or district clerk, as the case may be, should be of the opinion that any sawdust had been accumulated or was kept at any mill or place so as to create a risk of fire, he might, by notice in writing, direct that the sawdust be removed or disposed of in a manner and within a time to be specified in the notice; and (c) that if any person accumulated or kept sawdust otherwise than in accordance with the by-laws or failed to comply with the terms of a notice in writing given by the town clerk or district clerk, he should be guilty of an offence. In view of that and the rather controversial question as to whether it should be permissible to burn sawdust at all, I suggest that councils, by by-law, could deal effectively with the problem.

**OIL REFINERY FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA.**

Mr. STEPHENS—About June last it was stated that land was available in South Australia for the erection of an oil refinery. Can the Premier indicate whether a refinery is to be established in South Australia and, if so, where?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The establishment of an oil refinery is a major project and subject to a considerable amount of negotiation. A powerful international company has examined the position as far as South Australia is concerned and submitted a long list of questions concerning available facilities and other particulars which would govern their decision. That information has been collated and, as far as I know, forwarded overseas for the ultimate decision upon the establishment of an oil refinery which will be made by the parent company overseas. I was told when the information was requested that no decision could be reached on the matter at the earliest before the beginning of December. Whether or not the decision will be favourable to us I cannot say. I believe the information provided by the State was satisfactory. I do not think we failed to give any necessary information or support. Birkenhead was the site proposed for the refinery.

**TIMBER-FRAME HOUSES.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Premier obtained a report regarding the prices to be paid for the purchase of the timber-frame homes being built for sale under the latest timber-frame housing programme of the Housing Trust?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received the following report from the trust:—

The prices charged by the South Australian Housing Trust for the timber-frame houses being built under its sales scheme vary according to the design of the particular house and the cost of the land on which the house is situated. At present timber-frame houses are being sold at prices ranging from £2,760 to £3,020. It is usual for the purchaser to finance the purchase largely by means of a first mortgage from a lending institution. Where the purchaser's deposit is insufficient to meet the gap between the purchase price and the first mortgage the trust will, in approved cases, assist with the second mortgage, which is granted for the same term as the first mortgage and at 4½ per cent interest.

**NARACOORTE-KINGSTON RAILWAY BROADENING.**

Mr. CORCORAN—Present indications are that the broadening of the railway gauge

between Naracoorte and Kingston will be proceeded with after the broadening of the line between Millicent and Mount Gambier is completed. Would the Minister of Works ask the Minister of Railways whether it is intended to proceed with the Naracoorte-Kingston broadening immediately the other work is completed and when it is expected that the work will be in full swing?

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—The honourable member has asked several questions, some general and some specific. In regard to the latter, I will get a full report from the Minister of Railways. Speaking generally, the Government and the department intend to proceed at all possible speed to complete the work.

**ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (GOVERNMENT VEHICLES).**

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 15. Page 1577.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—It is fair that we should accept the principle set out in the Bill. When road revenue is derived principally from taxation levied on motor vehicles, the vehicles owned by the Government and semi-Government instrumentalities should contribute to the road revenue at the same rate as private citizens. The acceptance of this principle will result in an additional £80,000 being available for expenditure on roads that are used by both Government and private vehicles. I support the second reading.

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

**LIBRARIES (SUBSIDIES) BILL.**

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 15. Page 1579.)

Mr. JOHN CLARK (Gawler)—I oppose the Bill. With other members, I have long looked forward to the introduction of a Bill on libraries, but I am very disappointed with this measure. I have always been a lover of books, and I believe the only way to extend the reading habit is by a system of free libraries so that everyone can obtain the books he needs, but this Bill will not bring that about. As far as I can see, it only proposes to subsidize libraries run by municipal or local government in council buildings furnished by councils. There will be a pound for pound yearly subsidy, provided certain conditions are complied with. Before a subsidy is paid the

Libraries Board must give a report on the worthiness of the library to be subsidized. Again, the subsidy will not be paid unless a substantial proportion of the library is of an educational or literary nature and that the library is available to the public by the payment of fees or subscriptions. The Libraries Board may set up a lending service to libraries subsidized under the legislation, and the cost of this service is to be provided out of money supplied by Parliament for the purpose. Some members may ask whether an improvement in our libraries or the library system is necessary. Let us see what experts on libraries have had to say on our library system. The Munn-Pitt report of 1935 slated Australian libraries. It was prepared by two experts from the United States under the auspices of the Carnegie Corporation. It caused a tremendous flutter in the dovecotes, but that was only temporary, and not much has been done in regard to libraries in the 20 years since that report was made. Speaking of South Australia, the report stated, amongst other things:—

The Institutes Association of South Australia is the most highly organized and fully-developed library association in Australia.

Although the institute system with its subscription fees is entirely out-of-date from an overseas viewpoint, it is almost universally accepted in Australia as adequate to the need.

What were the results of this Munn-Pitt report? I believe there was an attempt to put some of the recommendations into effect. In 1937, almost certainly as a direct result of the report, Dr. A. Grenfell Price presented his report of an inquiry commissioned by the South Australian Government into the system of management of libraries maintained or assisted by the State. It was an excellent report. He did not altogether agree with the Munn-Pitt report, but in essentials he did. He stated:—

It shows clearly how far Australia has lagged behind some other English-speaking countries in library development.

He said that in 1937, and we are still lagging. I hoped that the Bill would attempt to catch up the lag, but it does not. However, Dr. Grenfell Price's excellent report had some results, though not to the extent it deserved. In 1938 the Hon. S. W. (now Sir Shirley) Jeffries, who was Minister of Education, introduced the Libraries and Institutes Bill. It lapsed, but a similar Bill was passed in 1939, and it contained some of the reforms that Dr. Grenfell Price advocated. Some of the provisions were intended reforms that did

not have any tangible result, but the legislation contained some valuable provisions, particularly those concerning the country lending service of the Public Library, and the appointment of the Libraries Board. Both have done excellent work within the limits allowed them. The Minister's second reading speech in 1938 contained the following remarks, and he was prophetic when he said this:—

In other parts of the world such as Great Britain and the United States of America there are great systems of free libraries. It will probably be many years before South Australia can hope to emulate these examples, but in the meantime there is much that can be done to improve our existing library services.

That has proved to be the case because, although this Bill was passed in 1939, nothing has yet been done. I believe the purpose of this Bill was to do something on those lines, but if it does anything, it is only in a negative way and amounts to very little. I am afraid it provides only a drop in the ocean and will make little or no difference, whereas all people interested in libraries had been hoping for much more. I have obtained opinions from people experienced in modern library practice, and none has been enthusiastic about the Bill. One gentleman gave it lukewarm support, and the rest opposed it. What has happened to the original draft of this Bill which, I believe, was even printed? This measure is only a mutilated and highly censored form of what we were led to expect. Why? I am sure the members of the Libraries Board, who are vitally interested in this measure, would also like to know the answer.

More recently (in 1947) Mr. Lionel R. McColvin, city librarian of Westminster, England, and honorary secretary of the Library Association of Great Britain, wrote a book entitled *Public Libraries in Australia*, which was published by the Australian Council for Educational Research. He carried out his work at the request of the Australian Federal and State Governments with the idea of helping to modernize Australian libraries; but again, unfortunately, although valuable recommendations were made by this experienced librarian, apparently little notice was taken of them. Speaking about South Australia, Mr. McColvin said:—

There is only one way to give people proper public library service, that is to establish public libraries administered by local authorities with the support of the State.

Some members may say that that is being done, but it is not. Admittedly, in a minor way the Bill could be described as a distant relative of

Mr. McColvin's suggestion, but it is very distant. Mr. McColvin's conclusions, with which all members interested in this question will agree and which were made after a long and exhaustive study of Australian library facilities, are as follows:—

For reasons already discussed it is manifestly essential that all the people of Australia shall enjoy full and free access to books and related materials through a nation-wide system of public libraries, efficiently and economically organized and administered, and properly related to social, economic, cultural, and educational life and institutions. This involves:—

(a) The establishment of public libraries, with the necessary service points in all parts of the country.

(b) Such co-ordinating and grouping of local services as will ensure economical operation.

(c) Staffing by a sufficient number of qualified librarians.

(d) The provision of sufficient book stocks at all service points and the machinery for interchange of stocks and for keeping stocks up to date and constantly changed and refreshed.

(e) Machinery supplementary to (d) above for supplying to individual readers more specialized material and also for providing general material for people who, living in relative isolation are out of the reach of normal service points.

(f) The stimulation and maintenance of local interest so that local services may be related to the maximum with local needs.

(g) The support of the State Governments to make possible adequate provision and to stimulate and assist development on sound economical lines.

Nothing is accomplished by Governments bringing out experts at great expense and then ignoring their findings; yet in what way does this Bill implement those important and unchallengeable recommendations? The most recent view by an overseas authority was given in 1952, when Mr. E. Hugh Behymer was sent from America at the request of the Library Association of Australia by the United States Educational Foundation. He held seminars on library development and practice, and I have taken the opportunity to read a report of the discussions. He drew interesting conclusions and made timely recommendations on libraries. Among other things, he said:—

At the present time, with the taxing authority in the hands of the Federal Government, the development of a co-ordinated programme of library service would be reasonably simple. The Federal Government through the establishment of the Australian Broadcasting Commission has evolved a pattern which could be followed.

That is a most interesting suggestion, but obviously the gentleman, experienced though

he was in library management, knew little about the tactics and attitude of the Federal Government on this question or how hard it was to get money from it, particularly when it was unsympathetic, to assist education in any shape or form. Be that as it may, his recommendations deserve close study. He advocated an independent Federal Government agency whose responsibility would be to co-ordinate the library resources of the nation and assist library expansion. Federal assistance would be most welcome to enable desirable library reforms to be made, but I think we can put aside that idea, at any rate as long as the present Commonwealth Government remains in office. All my authorities show that much needs to be done to give our libraries the opportunity to do properly what they are at present striving to do voluntarily; but will this Bill help? We have been told that the main principle embodied in it is that libraries sponsored by district councils will be assisted by subsidy, but the number of such libraries may be counted on the fingers of one hand. They are the only ones to be helped under this Bill, unless the many institute libraries throughout the State are supposed to be taken over by district councils.

Mr. Dunstan—Even then they would not get any real assistance from this Bill.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—That is so. Most people know the problems facing those who try to run a library. They are in a serious dilemma because if they do not purchase enough new books they will not hold their present subscribers, let alone get new subscribers; and if they do not get new subscribers they will not have the money to buy new books. Further, to buy new books their subscriptions must be high, and this discourages subscribers. What can they do? We must remember that institutes are subsidized only on the value of their subscriptions. The only answer to the problem is to make provision for free libraries. I have quoted overseas authorities, but let me now refer to the comments of possibly the best available expert in South Australia—Mr. Brideson, the principal librarian of the South Australian Public Library. He has prepared a report relating to free libraries, based on an inspection of council-operated free libraries in Queensland and on discussions of the problem with librarians from all States at the Brisbane Conference of the Library Association of Australia. He suggests three ways of establishing

free libraries throughout the State. His first suggestion is:—

Free libraries in selected centres throughout the State, financed by the Government and operated by the Libraries Board without assistance from the councils, such libraries operating as branches of the Public Library of South Australia.

He favours this method and states:—

From the economic, administrative and library efficiency points of view, branches of the Public Library of South Australia in well selected positions throughout the State would be the best scheme.

I think members will agree with that. His second proposal is:—

Free libraries operated jointly by the Libraries Board and the local councils, the latter arranging or contracting with the board for library service; the book stock and the professional staff being supplied by the board.

His comment on this scheme is:—

If the board and the Government feel that councils should bear portion of the cost, then I recommend the second scheme, namely, libraries jointly financed by the board and the councils, the latter contracting with the board for library service; professional staff and book stock being supplied by the board. I must point out, however, that there are weaknesses in the scheme.

His third proposal is:—

Council-operated free libraries, the necessary funds coming from council rates plus a Government pound for pound subsidy paid through the Libraries Board of South Australia.

That scheme is substantially adopted in this Bill. Concerning it, Mr. Brideson said:—

This method is being used in the eastern States where local government is more developed than in South Australia and the centres of population much larger. It is being found even in these States, however, that very few councils have sufficient population to run an independent library service. Councils are now being urged to co-operate with neighbouring councils to form regional library services. Because of the distribution of population and the undeveloped nature of local government here, council-operated free libraries cannot be recommended for S.A. Such a scheme in my opinion would result in a poor library service of limited educational value staffed largely by untrained personnel.

The cost would be high and the efficiency and effectiveness low for the following reasons:—Buying, cataloguing and processing of the books by individual council libraries would cost at least 20 per cent more than if this were done centrally. The choice of books to the readers would be small being limited to the council's book buying budget. A centrally administered scheme based on the Public Library of South Australia would make the bookstock of the whole State available to readers anywhere in the State. Professional staff could not be efficiently and economically employed. In a State-wide scheme one pro-

fessional officer could superintend a number of small libraries. In the eastern States the smaller councils, even if able to pay the necessary salary, cannot get professional librarians because the absence of avenues of promotion does not make positions attractive. I could not recommend the third scheme that is the council operated free libraries, financed by rates and subsidies by the Treasury through the Libraries Board.

I cannot possibly support this Bill. I believe it should be withdrawn and a complete investigation made of modern library practice. The best experts available should be consulted and a new Bill drawn up incorporating what is considered—by those who know much more about library management than we—best for the institution of a free library system. Although there is a wealth of expert advice on the subject the Government has ignored it. Mr. Brideson recounted three schemes. The first he recommended; the second he is lukewarm about and the third he does not like at all; but notwithstanding his expert opinions the third is incorporated in this measure. I desire to see the best type of free libraries established, in accordance with the best modern ideas. I am not criticizing those who have put so much unselfish and sincere work into running libraries under the gravest difficulties. I commend them for what they have done, but we must not be blind to the fact that our present system leaves so much to be desired. The public is entitled to the best, but this Bill will not provide it. It is of infinitesimal value. There are dozens of institute libraries, but few are council-owned. I doubt whether councils would want to take over libraries. They would have to strike special rates to pay for them and that would mean higher rates within their areas, which they do not want. I can recall instances where councils have passed control of libraries over to institutes or independent committees. They have been glad to get rid of them and would not want them back. Libraries will not be subsidized unless they are council-controlled or sponsored. If they are not, then this measure will cost the Government nothing.

Mr. O'Halloran—I should think that is what is intended.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—I have been trying not to be party-political in my remarks, but the Leader's inference is hard to escape. This Bill achieves little or nothing and I cannot support it unless it is amended to include the best system. I do not think it could be so amended. It should be scrapped, not with the idea of holding up library improvement and



progress, but because it does not advance library progress. I appeal to Government members not to support this measure as a start to improving our libraries with the object of improving it further next year or later. If each year a Bill improved the system to the same degree as this Bill improves it, our libraries would still require improvement in the year 2000. This is an important matter because the cultural development and reading habits of our people are involved. Members know how easy it is to get rubbish to read, but how difficult to get something worth reading. I oppose the Bill.

Mr. PEARSON (Flinders)—I listened with interest to the remarks of the previous speaker, who, from his point of view, advanced logical and, to a degree, convincing argument. I must also accept some of his superior knowledge in this matter and regard his remarks as coming from someone who knows more about libraries than I do. The burden of his complaint in opposing the Bill seemed to be that because it did not do everything he could not be satisfied with it. Many people write reports and express their thoughts in writing, and they are considered experts because they are most enthusiastic about these things. I suppose it is only natural that only those who are enthusiasts should write reports and express their thoughts in writing, but though they may be experts in the field of books they may not be experts in the field of administration, and *vice versa*. I do not want to criticize the people quoted by the honourable member because I am not capable of doing that effectively. He said that we should set out a policy of having absolutely free libraries, but I cannot agree with that. Mr. Dunstan seems to be disgusted at my remarks, and I imagine that he would be. Some people think we should not have to pay for any of the things we want. I entirely disagree with such an attitude.

Mr. Dunstan—You think we should be charged for our education?

Mr. PEARSON—We do a lot of things because we have grown into the habit of doing them.

Mr. Dunstan—You say that we should be charged?

Mr. PEARSON—The honourable member should not read that into my remarks. Some people pay for their education. The honourable member did, as I did. I suggest that the education he paid for, or someone made a sacrifice to pay for, is appreciated. We value

the things that cost us something; we utilize properly, carefully and to the full the things we pay for.

Mr. Riches—People who get their education free when they cannot afford to pay appreciate it.

Mr. PEARSON—If the cost is made prohibitive some people are excluded from enjoying the benefits of education. I do not know of a charge by any library that is beyond the capacity of a person to pay. That charge cannot be laid at the door of the Institute libraries, community libraries, or libraries under the sponsorship of district councils. People are too prone to think that a charge of 4s. a quarter by a library is far too much, yet will spend two or three times that sum each week on the pictures or some other form of entertainment. I do not criticize people who go to the pictures. I went myself a good deal up to a few years ago; we should keep things in their proper perspective. Why grizzle about a little expense in order to become a member of a library? I do not believe in providing people with something entirely free when they would value it more if they had to pay a little for it. That is what I think about free libraries and a lot of other free things these days. A book is a valuable thing. If a library has to provide books that are costly the readers should take care of them. The books should be read and not abused. They should be returned to the library in the condition in which they were taken out.

Mr. Dunstan—That happens in public libraries.

Mr. PEARSON—To a large extent it does, but the position would be safeguarded more if people were taught to value something for which they had to pay a little. That has never been denied. I do not think there is as much in the cry for free libraries as appears on the surface. It has an appeal because something for nothing always has an appeal. Somebody has placed in my hands a well-composed statement on this matter which suggests that constantly thinking about something for nothing has all sorts of results, and in some cases leads to crime and in others to pure laziness. In others, people succumb only to the extent of acquiring a general disposition to be irresponsible or lazy, the reasons for which they never seem quite able to understand; they know they are constantly hoping that somehow, somewhere, sometime a ship will come into port. The large majority of

people seem to suffer little or no personality damage through indulging in the human past-time of hoping to get something for nothing, but that generally ends in undermining the individualism and self-respect of the community. Perhaps I need not have developed this point so far, but it is an important consideration when we commence talking about giving people everything for nothing. Mr. John Clark set out the proposals in the Bill, but they do a little more than he admitted. There is a tendency to look at these things from the point of view of one's experience and surroundings. I am inclined to look at the Bill from the point of view of what it could do in providing some sort of library service for people in outlying areas. In my electorate there are three institutes and each has a library operating under conditions laid down by the Institutes Association, and each is working successfully in its own sphere. They are situated in the more populous towns and do not exist in hamlets and villages. It is to these smaller places that the Bill offers a good deal of hope. It provides that the Government will subsidize on a pound for pound basis such libraries as are sponsored by councils, and in whom the councils show sufficient interest to cause them to measure up to certain standards.

Mr. Riches—It does not say that.

Mr. PEARSON—I assure the honourable member that it does.

Mr. Riches—You won't find "sponsor" mentioned anywhere.

Mr. PEARSON—I looked at the Bill before I commenced to speak and I do not think I am wide of the mark. Clause 2 says:—

... district council will in premises under the care, control or management of the council, maintain and manage a library.

If my interpretation is near the mark it could be in premises which the council approves and supervises, and I think sponsors. That is the first thing the Bill sets out to do. It is impossible to establish an interest in a library if there is no interest there. Nothing the Bill or the institute can do can make people read books, and to put books where they will not be used will be a waste of money. Where the necessity exists for the establishment of a small library the Bill provides an avenue of assistance, and it is real assistance because there is no limit. The Bill provides that whatever the council spends will be subsidized pound for pound by the Government. The size of the library depends on the interest

displayed and it is up to the people in the locality. The second proposal in the Bill, and I think the most important, is set out in clause 3, as follows:—

The Libraries Board of South Australia may establish and carry on a service for lending books to libraries subsidized under this Act and may, with the approval of the Treasurer, determine the conditions on which books will be so lent.

That is the crux of the Bill. Everybody knows that books are costly, and to maintain an up-to-date selection of books requires a constant turnover in books and the expenditure of a good deal of money. The books in greatest demand are invariably the best sellers for the time being. To provide any sort of up-to-date service much organization and expenditure of money are required. If the Libraries Board wants to help in this matter—and I am sure it does—this clause provides the means. The board will be able to assist smaller communities that cannot maintain adequate libraries from their own resources. A community of, say, 300 people could not hope to maintain an up-to-date library of fiction, let alone of books for reference. The Bill provides the means whereby the whole resources of the Libraries Board can be made available, without cost, to small communities. Books may be circulated and later returned to the Libraries Board or sent to another library. That is the most valuable provision of the Bill. The fact that it is there must remove many of the objections that the member for Gawler (Mr. John Clark) raised. His main objection was the limitations he read into the Bill. We should not throw the Bill into the waste paper basket, but use it to the best advantage.

Mr. Jennings—What for?

Mr. PEARSON—For the purpose for which it was designed. I am convinced that in the community in which I live it will serve a valuable purpose. I support the Bill.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood)—The Bill is an utterly useless piece of window dressing. It will serve no purpose at all.

Mr. William Jenkins—You have no consideration for many other people.

Mr. DUNSTAN—I have, as I shall show soon.

Mr. Pearson—Not everybody lives in Norwood.

Mr. DUNSTAN—That is true, but I will show that many recommendations from institutes, including those in the honourable member's district, have sought reforms. The free

libraries movement is an old one. Many people, including some who have been members supporting the Government, have tried to bring to this State a system of library services which has been operating elsewhere for many years. South Australia is the most backward State in the Commonwealth in the provision of library services. The Premier often says we cannot have this, that or the other service suggested by members because the non-claimant States do not have it and we should be at a disadvantage before the Grants Commission if we instituted it here. He cannot claim that on this occasion because the free library service has been operating in other States for many years; in fact, all the non-claimant States have it. We have a valuable institution which apparently breeds irresponsibility by letting out its books free to an irresponsible public, according to some members opposite. Apparently the member for Flinders (Mr. Pearson) does not think that is a good system. He thinks we should charge for books that are lent.

Mr. Pearson—I said there was nothing wrong with a small charge.

Mr. DUNSTAN—The honourable member said that giving people something for nothing breeds irresponsibility. That was the basis of his argument, and if that is his view he can hardly agree with the system employed by the Public Library. Apart from the Public Library there are only the institute libraries to cater for the reading public. However, there are very few institute libraries that are performing a proper library service, and that would be admitted by the officers of practically every institute. One institute has a good turnover and a valuable collection of books and is able to pay its way. That is the Glenelg Institute Library, which is able to pay its way because it can rely largely on the support of a holiday population, and that puts it in a different category from other libraries. An examination of the books of institutes shows that the institutes system is steadily running down. There are few that are not in substantial decay, and few give anything approaching a proper library service. In Norwood we have an institute that was established towards the end of the last century. It has a valuable building that was donated by Sir Edwin Smith. It has about 16,000 books, but only 500 subscribers out of a population of 16,000 in the district. A similar picture can be painted in regard to almost any institute. The institutes are not serving nearly a sufficient proportion of the population. Few

have an adequate stock of books. They are financed by subscriptions and some receive small grants from local councils. Some occasionally raise money by public functions and, for the rest, there is a 5s. in the pound subsidy from the Government, through the Institutes Association, upon the subscriptions raised, but on none of the other income. This has had the result that most institutes have continually found difficulty in making ends meet. They have been forced to pay low salaries to librarians, few of whom have been trained for their job, though some are rendering a valuable service to the community.

Let us examine the system elsewhere. We do not need to go far to draw upon the experience of other States that have resolved to give proper library services to their citizens. Libraries are an essential part of the education system. They are not an entertainment handed out like a picture show. Libraries are essential, and a reading public is essential for the maintenance of any satisfactory democracy because they are essential for the dissemination of views and opinions and to keep readers' minds sharpened. It is apparent that members opposite think that education ends when a person leaves the primary school or at the age of 14, because little is being done to foster adult education.

Mr. Millhouse—That's an exaggeration.

Mr. DUNSTAN—No. This State does not give a tithe for adult education of what any other State gives. The Premier is not interested in adult education. Why does not the Government want the people to read and improve their knowledge after they have left school? The Government is not interested in having an informed public opinion. All political parties in other States believe in fostering library services and adult education, and they have instituted some form of free library service outside the metropolitan areas. Officers and members of the Institutes Association and the Libraries Board have visited other States to examine their systems. Some have gone overseas to investigate free library services. Free libraries do not result in irresponsibility or reading for entertainment. They have resulted in an enormous increase in the number of people who read regularly. At Norwood we have an institute library with a borrowing public of about 500. What is the position in Box Hill (Victoria), which is similar to Norwood, but has a beautiful free library catering for adults and children? It has fiction, educational and art books; it runs art exhibitions; it is a centre

of adult and juvenile education; it has a number of activities such as discussion and play groups that are valuable community activities. In Box Hill 38 per cent of the population borrow from the library. Contrast that with the 500 borrowers out of a population of 16,000 in Norwood. Further, that has been the experience wherever a free library system has been established; once a proper free library service is available in a community there is an immediate enormous increase in the reading public. That is what libraries are for; they are not established to maintain an entertainment service of the kind referred to by the member for Flinders (Mr. Pearson) for which a fee should be extracted. Rather are they there to get people to read, to express opinions, to sharpen their minds with the reading matter provided, to improve them so that they are no longer members of a mass society in which they go home at night and, after reading parts of the newspaper and listening to "Dad and Dave" on the radio, go to bed with the fowls.

Mr. Millhouse—That is an exaggeration.

Mr. DUNSTAN—If the honourable member went round the suburbs canvassing in the evenings as much as I do, he would know how many people do that. They are not being provided with the stimulating facilities that come from educational facilities and proper libraries. Those facilities are essential in any modern urban or rural community, especially in the latter which is shut off from many of the social facilities enjoyed in the city.

Mr. O'Halloran—In fact, many people in rural communities spend much money that they should not have to spend on obtaining reading matter.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Yes. This matter has been exercising the minds of members of the Libraries Board and Institutes Committee for many years, and last year the matter was brought forward at the annual meeting of the Institutes Association by Mr. Skipper, a member of the Institutes Board and also of the Libraries Board. The Minister of Education was present at that meeting, and Mr. Skipper outlined the scheme existing in other States under which State Governments and municipal councils co-operated to establish free library services. He mentioned the difficulties and disadvantages arising from some hastily implemented schemes, but overall he proved to the satisfaction of that meeting, which was

most representative of institutes all over the State, that such a scheme would be beneficial. Indeed, with only one dissentient that meeting endorsed his scheme and asked the Government to implement it, but time went on and, when I asked the Minister of Education what was being done, he said a scheme was being considered and a recommendation might be made to Cabinet later. I asked further questions and received the same reply. Later, during the debate on the Estimates, the Treasurer told me that a Bill would be introduced; but when it was introduced it was not a Bill for free libraries at all, but some extraordinary legislation.

The member for Gawler (Mr. John Clark) pointed out that the Libraries Board also took a hand and had before it the recommendation of the Principal Librarian. It discussed the various schemes fully and came to a recommendation; a Bill was drafted and printed in the Government Printing Office on October 3 this year. That Bill gave full effect to the recommendations of the Institutes Association's annual meeting. The Libraries Board wanted this scheme, which was the best that could be arrived at from the experience in other States. What was that experience? That small libraries cannot be satisfactory in a sparsely-settled area such as South Australia because they have too little money at their disposal and tend to provide too few books and an inadequate staff.

Therefore, what is the lesson to be learned from the experience of other States? We should establish regional libraries with a bookmobile service to supply country libraries with books. District councils should be asked to co-operate in the establishment of these regional libraries, which would be staffed at the top by an officer under the Libraries Board, a trained librarian. Under him and subject to his direction and advice would be other persons who at present comprise a vast staff of untrained librarians in institute libraries all over the State. Under the scheme they would receive some part-time training and have expert direction in the choosing of, caring for, and cataloguing of books. That scheme was outlined in the proposal advanced by the Libraries Board and in the Bill drafted by the Parliamentary Draftsman. It provided that not only any municipal body but any association could submit to the board a proposal for the establishment of a library, and the proposal would include the price of the building to be used, the amount the council

or the association could provide and that anybody else, other than the Treasurer, would provide, the amount the council, association or any other person would undertake to contribute towards the cost of the books comprising the initial library, and the amount it would undertake to contribute annually towards the management.

Such a proposal could be submitted by any two or more councils or associations, and the important point was the establishment of the original libraries staffed by expert trained officers. The board was to consider the proposal and to consult the council and association or other councils or associations to arrive at a satisfactory scheme for a particular area, and if it was satisfied that somebody other than the Treasurer would contribute 50 per cent of the initial cost, that the council or association would contribute at least 25 per cent of the cost of managing the library at the time of its establishment, and that the area proposed to be served by the library would be such that it was economic, a library would be established. The scheme could be recommended to the Treasurer, and if satisfied with it, he could approve it. Once approved, the scheme would become binding on the parties to it and then a satisfactory library service would be set up in the area. It would be clear that 50 per cent of the establishment cost and up to 75 per cent of the running cost would be borne by the Treasurer. Further, these would be free libraries.

That was the scheme approved by the Libraries Board, but somewhere along the line the Treasurer went off the rails because he has introduced an extraordinary Bill that was not asked for by anybody or recommended by any expert. It does not provide for a free library service; in fact, it will achieve little because today practically all these local libraries scattered all over the State are run by committees under the Institutes Association and receive grants based on subscriptions.

What faces such bodies under this Bill? They may continue under the old Institutes Association scheme, or alternatively, they may transfer their buildings to the local council, for which transfer they will have to get the approval of the Institutes Association. Then the council may apply to the Treasurer who may grant up to the amount contributed by the local council. He does not have to give a pound for pound subsidy; there is no guarantee that he will, because although the Bill states that 50 per cent shall be the maximum, no minimum is stated. The council must take

the library over and then apply to the Treasurer for a grant. The Treasurer will then decide what the grant shall be. It is stipulated that the library shall be available to the public, but there is no stipulation that the library shall not charge; therefore, it may still charge a subscription. If we went to the Kensington and Norwood Council and asked it to take over the maintenance of a library building, for which it would get a grant, and then later came to the Premier for a grant, we would not be better off than under the present scheme. Under the Libraries Board's scheme we would have to approach the councils of Kensington and Norwood, St. Peters and Payneham, and suggest that they combine in establishing a central library and branch libraries managed by experts supplied by the Libraries Board, which would assist in training the staff. That would provide a proper library scheme.

The scheme under the Bill will not help in any way. I have tried to find a way of amending the Bill to get what we want, but I cannot see any. If the Bill does pass it will be an obstacle to our getting what we want. It does not go any of the way towards our getting a proper library scheme. Members of the Libraries Board and the Institutes Board would rather have nothing than have this measure on the Statute Book. They regard it as an obstruction to gaining a proper library service. No-one can suggest that the Government has not had proper and adequate advice how to get a proper library service. It has had the expert opinion of Mr. Brideson and members of the Libraries Board. It has also had the Munn-Pitt report and a report by Dr. Grenfell Price. The alternative before this House is to accept the measure as a sop in the pretence that it will go along the road towards our getting an adequate library service. If we reject the Bill we say to the Government, "Go back and take the advice of people who know something about this matter." The Premier does not seem to be at all interested in libraries. I do not know that he reads anything except reports submitted to this House and books on cherry picking and orchid growing. The people require good books on education and art, but this Bill will do nothing for them. The Premier proposes to put the legislation on the Statute Book without intending to institute an efficient and proper library service.

Mr. BROOKMAN (Alexandra)—I listened with interest to the remarks of members opposite and in some respects I agree with what they said. There seems to be some justice

in their criticism of the Bill, but I deplore much of what they said. Obviously it was political propaganda. They include it in all their speeches. They say they do not want to be political, but then they blame everybody, including the State and Federal Governments. I cannot see that politics have much relation to a Bill to establish libraries.

Mr. Dunstan—They ought not, but unfortunately they do.

Mr. BROOKMAN—The honourable member can see politics in anything. I strongly object to some of the criticism levelled at the Bill. The honourable member brought in the matter of adult education and everything else that suited his argument. He said the Government did not favour adult education because it did not want well-informed people in the State. I do not know what the honourable member wants. Probably he wants an adult education service to teach people about socialism. Perhaps he would like us to have only books by Marx and Engel. The honourable member is more politically inclined than the Premier will ever be. The accusation that politics are associated with this Bill is not at all justified. The two Opposition members spoilt what could have been good speeches by making underhand illusions. Mr. Dunstan said that libraries should be established for purposes of education. They may be there for that purpose, but they are established largely for entertainment purposes.

Mr. Dunstan—I said they should be there not merely for entertainment.

Mr. BROOKMAN—The honourable member and other members use the very fine Parliamentary library for entertainment purposes. We should give people good books in order to entertain themselves whilst reading. He said that members of the Libraries Board would rather not have this Bill. Only a small number of people are concerned. If it is necessary to have the opinions of people we should either quote their names or not give their opinions, preferably the latter. I would not be a bit surprised if some of the members of the Libraries Board are not at all pleased at being quoted in their absence, so to speak, by Mr. Dunstan in his enthusiasm.

The Bill is not what it could be, but I support it, for it will be a start along the road to our having a useful library system in the future. It is a new step, the first of its kind ever made in this State. If we spend enough money we could, of course, get the libraries suggested by Mr. McColvin and

in the Munn-Pitt report, and the one presented by Dr. Grenfell Price. This financial year our Treasurer has budgeted for a deficit of about £750,000, and that does not give him much room in which to manoeuvre in establishing free library services. We should allow the proposed system to continue. If it grows everything will be all right, but if it does not we can seek to improve it. If this legislation proved later to contain deficiencies, and I think it has a few, it could be amended. We cannot expect to have a complete library service introduced immediately. It is unreasonable to ask for one at present. Mr. John Clark gave some possible ways of establishing library services. The first was that the Libraries Board should control the whole system and have no competition from local government bodies. The second was a joint system operated by the Libraries Board and the local government bodies, in connection with which the councils would raise some of the money and contract with the board in the running of the libraries. The third was roughly what is incorporated in the Bill. I do not think the measure will cost the Government a great deal. The cost of a completely free library service could be fairly considerable. I have been informed by people who know that it is possible to get up to a maximum of 8s. per head of population in library expenditure. With a population of about 750,000 the expenditure would be about £300,000 per annum and that is too large a figure for us to consider, in view of the expected deficit of £750,000. Mr. John Clark wants the first scheme, but he cannot have it. If we could afford it we could adopt the second scheme, but as the Treasurer thinks we cannot we must adopt the third scheme. It is not proper to say that we should not have any scheme at all. The attitude of opposing the Bill out of hand is stupid and irresponsible, and I deplore it. I am sorry that members opposite who know something about libraries have adopted that attitude.

Mr. John Clark—It is time you stopped using "stupid" about members on this side of this House.

Mr. BROOKMAN—As long as the honourable member is in the House I am tempted to use that word. Some other States have good free library systems, but they are expensive and some have serious deficiencies. We are not yet in a position to rush in with a free library system. For some years I have been associated with organizations that have been interested in the formation of a free library

system. We have approached various authorities on the subject and on one occasion I attended a deputation that asked the Premier for a free library system. I agree with the views expressed in the report by Mr. McColvin and with other reports by experts on this subject. I shall quote from a report made by Mr. G. Pitt, who was formerly our Principal Librarian. In 1948 he visited England and America to investigate libraries, and his report stated:—

... 996 persons in a 1,000 can reasonably be said to be within reach of books. Of the millions who live in London there is not one who needs to go more than half a mile to reach a public library.

That is a desirable state of affairs, but obviously one that will be difficult to attain in South Australia. However, it impressed me as being something to aim at, and I believe that we shall eventually have a free library system and that it will be a good one. The move for a free library system began when the Munn-Pitt report was made in 1935 and shocked the whole library movement and all those interested in library services. Then came the report by Dr. Grenfell Price, and later that of Mr. L. R. McColvin. Both of those experts advocated free library services. If they are not free they will not attract everybody, and we should do all we can to put books in front of the people freely so that they will be borrowed frequently.

Mr. Riches—The Bill does not provide that.

Mr. BROOKMAN—I know, and that is a deficiency in the legislation. Furthermore, we must have trained librarians. We cannot expect people who are handy with a vacuum cleaner or are prepared to clean the windows and keep a record of the books borrowed to be fully trained in library service. One difficulty is that our council areas are large, but their population is small; that difficulty is not encountered overseas. There is not a big public demand for free libraries at present. The average person does not know what such a service entails, but this measure, inadequate though it is in many respects, will provoke people into thinking about our library services. I believe many people will become more aware of the problems of these services. The Bill breaks new ground, and, although it is not all we desire, I wholeheartedly support the second reading and hope it will not be further opposed by over-enthusiastic members opposite.

Mr. RICHES secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### HARBORS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH (Minister of Marine), having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Harbors Act, 1936-1953. Read a first time.

The Hon. M. McINTOSH—I move—

*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

I thank the House for enabling me to introduce this Bill. Its object is to enable the Harbors Board to make and carry out arrangements with the Commonwealth under which the board will obtain the Dean Rifle Range at Port Adelaide in exchange for other land. The acquisition of this rifle range is essential in order that the board may be able to carry out developmental work at Port Adelaide which is of great value and importance to the State. Some negotiations have already taken place between the Harbors Board and the Commonwealth, in which the Commonwealth authorities have displayed a very reasonable and co-operative attitude. They are quite willing to give up the Dean Rifle Range on condition that some other suitable land can be found for a range to take its place. The negotiations have proceeded satisfactorily, but in the absence of further statutory powers they cannot be finalized. This Bill will give the board the necessary authority to do this. It empowers the board, with the approval of the Governor, to make arrangements with the Commonwealth under which the Dean Rifle Range will be transferred to the board, and in exchange the board will transfer to the Commonwealth other suitable land for use as a rifle range. The Bill also gives the board the necessary power to acquire land for carrying out the arrangement. The cost of acquisition and other expenses incurred in connection with the arrangement will be paid out of money provided by Parliament. This Bill does not appropriate the money. It will thus be seen that before the arrangement can be carried out it must be approved in Executive Council and the necessary funds must be available.

The Government has introduced this Bill because it considers the acquisition by the State of the Dean Rifle Range to be essential to the development of the Harbors Board's undertaking on the east side of the Port River. In this area there is a tract of land of about 2,000 acres extending north and east from the present northern end of the Harbors Board's wharves towards the North Arm.

Most of it is lowlying land, periodically inundated by the tides, and requiring reclamation before it can be developed. Some of it was privately owned, but in 1950 Parliament authorized the Harbors Board to acquire the privately-owned portions and most of them have now been acquired accordingly. The remainder of the area consists of Harbors Board's reserves, railway reserves, Crown lands and the land belonging to the Commonwealth, consisting of the Dean Rifle Range and a protective area and other lands on the boundary of the range.

The extension of harbor facilities, including wharves, docks, transit sheds, storage sheds, stacking yards and the necessary roads, railways and sidings, and the provision of sites required for the development of industry, render it essential that this area of land should be reclaimed and developed. The Harbors Board is the only authority in South Australia which can satisfactorily undertake this work because it alone has the dredging plant with which the work can be done. Some of the land north of the wharves has already been reclaimed with soil dredged during the deepening and widening of the Port Adelaide River, and it is proposed to continue this work gradually northwards to the North Arm. The Dean Rifle Range is in the centre of the area proposed to be reclaimed. For this reason its acquisition is vital to the developments which the Harbors Board is carrying out, and which are essential in the interests of the commercial and industrial expansion of the State. The Government therefore seeks Parliamentary authority to continue the negotiations with the Commonwealth, and to carry out the arrangements which may be agreed upon. The Bill is purely an enabling Bill, with adequate safeguards to ensure Government and Parliamentary control.

There is urgent need to provide Port Adelaide with high land on which to expand and develop. Even now there is insufficient occupiable land to provide sites for all those interests that have need of locations within handy distance of the shipping zone, e.g., (1) interests that are being displaced as port development progresses; and (2) new industries.

The rifle range property is very low lying land and its incorporation in the port plan involves its reclamation—a work which can only be done by the employment of the Board's resources. Part of the land is required for a new railway marshalling yard. (The Gillman marshalling yard is practically up to its

capacity). The rifle range must be acquired to ensure for the following:—

- (a) the future extension of marginal wharves and the construction of docks at Port Adelaide downstream from Berth No. 20 (Ocean Steamers Wharf).
- (b) the future construction of cargo transit sheds and stacking areas to support these wharves.
- (c) storage shed accommodation to the rear of the future wharf area proper.
- (d) the future construction of main approaches to the port by new arterial roads running from Grand Junction Road to the future new wharves.
- (e) the future construction of subsidiary roads to give access to the wharves and to meet the requirements of the commercial and industrial interests that will follow in the wake of the future extension of the wharves.
- (f) a new railway marshalling yard to deal with the railway traffic to new wharves, and
- (g) new rail access.

New road access and railway access to the future wharves must pass through the Dean Rifle Range land; these must be constructed on high land. This is only an enabling Bill, and I intend with your permission, Mr. Speaker, to place a plan on the board.

Mr. STEPHENS obtained the adjournment of the debate.

#### ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (GENERAL).

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer), having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Road Traffic Act, 1934-54. Read a first time.

#### BUSH FIRES ACT AMENDMENT BILL. Read a third time and passed.

METROPOLITAN AND EXPORT  
ABATTOIRS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.  
Returned from the Legislative Council with an amendment.

INDUSTRIAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL  
(PENSIONS).  
Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

#### TOWN PLANNING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council with amendments.

BRANDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.  
Returned from the Legislative Council with an amendment.



**NOXIOUS TRADES ACT AMENDMENT  
BILL.**

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

**LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONTROL OF  
RENTS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL.**

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

**SUCCESSION DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT  
BILL.**

Returned from the Legislative Council with suggested amendments.

**APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2).**

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

**POLICE REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT  
BILL.**

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

**ADJOURNMENT.**

At 5 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, November 23, at 2 p.m.