

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, October 9, 1957.

The SPEAKER (Hon. B. H. Teusner) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

### QUESTIONS.

#### HOUSING TRUST RENTS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—It has been brought to my notice that the Housing Trust has increased its rents to tenants replacing former tenants, in some cases by 5s. or more a week. Can the Treasurer explain the trust's policy in these circumstances?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—This matter was considered by Parliament—I think twice—and Parliament realized that as all the accommodation provided by the trust was fairly similar there should not be a wide discrepancy in rentals. When the trust commenced operations building costs and rentals were low, but as it proceeded the costs of building increased and the economic rent obviously had to increase. Parliament gave the trust authority to level up the rents so that all tenants would pay a fair amount and some would not enjoy a concession merely because they got their houses first, whereas others would be charged a higher sum in accordance with present-day costs. The trust tries to maintain rents at a fair level and is certainly not making a profit out of its activity. It provides houses at the lowest possible cost and it equalizes its rents in the way approved by Parliament under its Act.

#### RAILWAYS LUGGAGE COLLECTION.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—Will the Minister of Works ask his colleague, the Minister of Railways, to examine the matter of collecting luggage which arrives from Melbourne by express in the luggage van and which is made available to passengers at the luggage office, which is on the street level near this House? At present it takes a long time to get the luggage from the brakevan. Will the Minister also examine the suggestion made to me that the Railways Department establish a parcels depot in the centre of the city where small parcels for carriage by rail may be left and collected by the Railways Department once or twice a day?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I will take up the question with my colleague and bring down his reply as early as possible.

#### HUNGRY HILL WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. BYWATERS—My question, which is directed to the Minister of Works, concerns a water supply for the Hungry Hill area. Before asking my question, I ask leave to make a statement explaining it.

Leave granted.

Mr. BYWATERS—The Hungry Hill area is perhaps better known as the Paradise Hill area, but at the moment it is the "Thirsty Hill" area because of lack of water.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Mr. Speaker, I object. I do not mind a statement, but this is only propaganda.

The SPEAKER—Order! The honourable member asked leave to make a statement, but whatever statement he makes must be in explanation of his question and strictly relevant to it. Objection having been taken, the question must now be asked.

Mr. BYWATERS—Will the Minister of Works endeavour to speed up the work on the pipeline that has been requested by the people in the Hungry Hill area, in view of the fact that they are so desperately in need of water because of present circumstances and are unable in the middle of the day to get water from their taps?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I think the honourable member knows as well as I do what is holding up the work: the non-delivery of pipes ordered from New South Wales. He also knows—and I have kept him in constant touch with the position—that as soon as those pipes are here the pipeline will be completed. Until those pipes arrive I can do nothing, other than to urge their delivery, to expedite the work. The honourable member knows that in ordinary circumstances that area was reasonably well served, but owing to the very great increase in consumption arising out of the needs of the gherkin growers—

Mr. Bywaters—No gherkins are being grown there at this time.

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—Until that time arrived the area was reasonably well served. Funds are being made available this year for the work to be done and as soon as the pipes arrive the work will proceed.

#### QUORN BARYTES TREATMENT PLANT.

Mr. HAMBOUR—Can the Treasurer say what part the Government played in the establishment of the barytes treatment plant at Quorn and whether the Government is financially involved?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Government was concerned in this

matter. Firstly, the Mines Department undertook the investigations that led to the determination of the process by which barytes are refined; secondly, the Mines Department drew up the specifications upon which the plant was based; thirdly, the Government provided the guarantee that enabled much of the money to be advanced for the establishment of the industry; fourthly, the Electricity Trust undertook to spend £20,000 to enable electricity to be supplied specially to enable the industry to be established. We are therefore somewhat concerned in the success of this project. As a matter of interest, the Government is represented on the board of directors.

#### PORT ADELAIDE TUG PENS.

Mr. TAPPING—For a number of years people in the Semaphore and Port Adelaide district have complained about the frequent opening of the Birkenhead Bridge, and to overcome this problem the Public Works Committee some time ago recommended that tug pens be constructed on the Birkenhead side of the river, near the Birkenhead Bridge. Because of the frequent opening of the bridge to enable all types of craft to pass and because the proposed tug pens will be down stream from the bridge, can the Minister of Marine say whether that work will be done soon in order to obviate the necessity of opening the bridge so frequently?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—If the honourable member had closely followed the loan appropriations this year he would have found that there was no allocation for this work being done in this financial year. The whole amount available for public works has been allocated and there was some suggestion, even on his side of the House, that Port Adelaide was receiving favourable treatment. The Government is anxious to proceed with these works, but there are not enough funds available for them all.

#### MIDDLEBACK RANGE ORE DEPOSITS.

Mr. LOVEDAY—Has the Premier any further information, from periodical reports, on the operations of the Mines Department in the Middleback Ranges?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will get the honourable member a special report giving full information. Speaking from memory, the Mines Department has made a new estimate of the ore that has been located at the racecourse area, and I think

it takes the amount of high grade ore to about 30,000,000 tons, though the figures had not been completed when I last discussed the matter with the Director of Mines. This week Cabinet approved an appropriation of between £60,000 and £70,000 from the Mines Department's vote for the continuation of the exploration in that area. There is another area, I think on the north-western side of the range, which is considered to offer possibilities of substantial tonnages.

#### MINING RESEARCH CENTRES.

Mr. LAUCKE—The recent Parliamentary inspection of the Research and Development Branch of the Department of Mines—the analytical mineralogical and chemical research sections at Parkside, and the metallurgical, chemical and engineering sections at Thebarton—was a most illuminating and gratifying experience. The work being done at Parkside and Thebarton is of inestimable value to the scientific development of the mineral industry, both here and throughout the Commonwealth, and is worthy of the greatest possible support from this Government and the Commonwealth Government. I understand the Premier has opened discussions with the Commonwealth Government on the matter of expanding the activities of the research centres to more effectively serve the mining industry generally. Current events underline the vital importance of science and technology to the wellbeing of our nation, and I ask the Premier whether any progress has been made in the negotiations with the Commonwealth Government?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—A conference was to have taken place last week in Adelaide between representatives of the Commonwealth Department of Development, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, and the State Government. Two proposals were to be considered. One was that a research company be formed consisting of representatives of the Commonwealth Government, the State Government and mining companies, the two Governments to be represented because they were providing money. That proposal was advanced particularly by the representative of the C.S.I.R.O. The other proposal, advanced by my Government, was that the laboratory should be under the control of a committee consisting of representatives of the Commonwealth and State Governments, and that the two Governments would jointly contribute to its maintenance and upkeep, and that we would accept work from outside companies

of the type that members were pleased to remark upon when they visited the laboratories a few days ago. I would be more in favour of the second proposal than the first because I do not know how the management of the first proposal would be arrived at. Last week's conference was not very successful because the Commonwealth representative, Dr. Raggatt, was unable to attend.

There seems to be some doubt in the minds of some persons associated with these laboratories on the future of the laboratories, and that may have some unsettling effect on the laboratory staffs. I want to make this public statement that, whether the Commonwealth joins in this project or not, the State Government will continue work on at least the present scale. There is no suggestion that there will be any cheeseparing of the funds for this activity, and it may be expanded because the development of the State is closely wrapped up in the scientific development that can be achieved in these laboratories. The negotiations with the Commonwealth have not been on the basis of eliminating the State's responsibility, but we have found that these services, which are not paralleled in any other part of Australia, are now being required by so many companies outside South Australia that they have become more national than State in character. For that reason we were offering the Commonwealth a participation, but whether the Commonwealth comes into it or not, I assure members that the scope and scale of these laboratories will be maintained at least on the present basis, and probably expanded.

#### MILLICENT POLICE STATION.

Mr. CORCORAN—My question is in relation to one I asked yesterday about the courthouse and police station at Millicent. Although the present courthouse may be in reasonable condition and meet the needs of local court business, the office accommodation to house the police staff in carrying out their public duties is inadequate. In view of this, will the Premier cause further consideration to be given to building a police station at Millicent? Will he cause investigations to be made with a view to improving the position?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I shall be pleased to do so. I am not quite sure whether the honourable member wants the Commissioner's report to deal with the police station only, or, as he mentioned housing at Millicent, whether he wants the question of housing also considered. I will ask the Com-

missioner to report on both matters and will advise the honourable member in due course.

#### GROYNES ALONG METROPOLITAN BEACHES.

Mr. FRED WALSH—In the Estimates recently passed, under the heading of "Harbors Board Department—Miscellaneous," provision was made for an expenditure of £7,300 for the construction of groyne. Does the department envisage constructing any groyne along metropolitan beaches?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—If the honourable member had asked this question during the debate on the Estimates, I could have given him the information then. Hundreds of thousands of pounds have been spent from Government funds on restoration of metropolitan beach improvements following the comparatively recent damage caused by storms, but to my knowledge no proposal has been put forward for the construction of groyne at metropolitan beaches. The Estimates provide for construction of groyne, but none will be constructed at metropolitan beaches. I will supply the honourable member with details of the location of the proposed groyne if he so desires.

#### AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS.

Mr. KING—My question relates to the collection of agricultural statistics by the Department of Agriculture. The present statistics merely relate to varieties such as peaches and oranges, and we know that marketing and harvesting times for these varieties cause separate problems. It would be to the advantage of this State and the industry if the information were more detailed, particularly for the next five years, as there has been a great increase in plantings of these particular varieties. Will the Premier take up with the Government Statist the matter of asking for more detailed information, commencing next year, to show the number of trees of each variety of stone fruit in production and not in production, and similar information regarding citrus trees?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The information requested dealing with the number of stone fruit trees of different kinds in production and not in production is already provided in the return, but it does not show the varieties of each. The problem we are up against is that many people rather resent requests for a lot of detailed information, and I am not sure whether the law would compel an answer along the lines suggested. However, I

will forward the honourable member's observations to the Government Statist and see if he can assist to obtain the desired information. It may be that the Department of Agriculture would be able to get that information by ascertaining from nurserymen the number of trees called for by growers.

#### SCHOOL LAVATORY ACCOMMODATION.

Mr. DAVIS—Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked recently regarding lavatory accommodation at the Port Pirie High School?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—A contract has been let for the construction of new toilet blocks to serve the high and technical schools at Port Pirie.

#### PRICE CONTROL ON MEAT.

Mr. HEASLIP—My question relates to price control of meat. Irrespective of what has happened in the past or may happen in the future, the supply of meat now is such that the selling price is up to 9d. a pound below the fixed price. In view of this, and the fact that so many carcasses are being killed outside the abattoirs but cannot be sold and the fact that we must get rid of our meat in some way—

The SPEAKER—The honourable member cannot debate the question.

Mr. HEASLIP—Will the Premier state whether further avenues can be made available to people outside the abattoirs to dispose of their meat, and whether there is now any need for price control over meat?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—As explained previously, the price fixed for meat is a maximum price, and there is nothing to stop anyone from selling at a price below that. The maximum price is fixed by taking into account the actual sales of the previous month, so it is not an unfair maximum price—in fact, at present it is probably very much above the actual market price. As there was a wide divergence in the price this month as compared with last month the Prices Commissioner actually asked the industry whether it would not be advisable to equalize, and for it to retain some benefit from the lower price and not increase the price to last month's price. The industry turned that down and requested a full observance of the agreement that had been reached. At present it is possible to sell meat profitably below the fixed maximum price. This month's markets will be taken into account when fixing the maximum price next month.

#### FILM ROBBERY UNDER ARMS.

Mr. RICHES—Recently I asked the Premier if he would take up with the J. Arthur Rank Organization the possibility of simultaneous premieres of the film *Robbery Under Arms* at Port Augusta, Adelaide and in London. Reports that have come to hand indicating that the landscape has stolen the honours in this film afford people in the north great satisfaction, particularly in view of the disappointing treatment the area received in a previous film. Can the Premier yet say whether simultaneous premieres are possible?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—As promised, I have made representations in connection with the release of the film, but have not yet received a reply.

#### BRUISING OF LAMBS.

Mr. FLETCHER—Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to the question I asked on October 1 whether wastage from bruising on a shorn lamb transported to the abattoirs was greater than on a lamb in the wool?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have attempted to obtain the information, but the reports indicate that it would not be possible, without an enormous amount of research. However, information gained from the meat trade tends to show that the bruising of shorn lambs is less than the bruising of woolly lambs, which is rather contrary to what I would have expected.

#### MEAT DELIVERIES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to the question I asked on October 1 concerning late deliveries of meat from the abattoirs?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have received the following reply from the General Manager of the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs Board:—

In reply thereto I desire to advise that there has been some delay in effecting deliveries for the following reasons:—

1. For some period prior to 25th September last delivery employees were not prepared to work overtime prior to their normal commencing times with the result that deliveries could not be completed as far as possible within normal trading hours. Since that date following certain arrangements with the Meat Employees Union overtime has been worked as and when required.
2. Delays in delivery now occurring are consequent upon the adverse seasonal conditions which have resulted in large numbers of sheep and lambs being sub-

mitted for slaughter which in turn has the following effects:—

- (1) An inevitable increase in the quantity of meat being treated for local consumption.
- (2) A great increase in the volume of meat being rejected as unsuitable for export and becoming available for the local market due to the poor quality of stock being submitted for export.
- (3) An increase in local canning requirements due to the availability of stock.

It is submitted that the present delays are only of a temporary nature due to the seasonal conditions. A further improvement in the board's meat delivery service is anticipated within three weeks or four weeks when a contract for the reconstruction of a chiller block will be completed thereby releasing further facilities for the loading out of meat. The establishment has been working continuously, seven days per week, since the 16th September last to cope with export slaughtering in addition to local requirements. There has been no lag in slaughtering for the local trade as it receives priority of slaughter over all other slaughtering.

#### DISPOSAL OF MEAT FROM OUTSIDE ABATTOIRS AREA.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Recent press reports indicate that Noarlunga Meat Limited desired to make gifts of beef available to certain charitable organizations, but that it had to prove to the satisfaction of the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs Board that they would be gifts. At present, because of building alterations at its Adelaide depot, carcasses of meat from outside intended for sale in the area covered by the board must be taken to Gepps Cross for branding. I know of some cases where carcasses have been brought from the Adelaide Hills to Gepps Cross for branding and then taken back to the hills. Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether it is necessary for the company to prove that it intends making *bona fide* gifts to charitable organizations and whether, during the building alterations to the Adelaide depot, some more reasonable method of inspection of carcasses can be devised for meat killed outside the Metropolitan Abattoirs area and intended for consumption in the metropolitan area?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—As the honourable member implies, the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs Act requires that meat slaughtered outside the metropolitan area must be inspected by the Abattoirs Board before it can be brought into the metropolitan area for sale. The honourable member is correct when he says that the company has offered certain meat as a gift to charitable organiza-

tions, and the board does not object to that provided it is satisfied that the requirements of the Act are met. In other words, although it is illegal for meat to be brought in for sale, the Act does not prohibit its being brought in as a gift, and if the inspector is satisfied about that, there is no difficulty. The Act prescribes that meat must be inspected at the premises of the Abattoirs Board, but to meet the convenience of the company it has been the practice to inspect it in Adelaide. At present, however, alterations that are being made prevent inspection in Adelaide; therefore the company was asked to take its meat to Gepps Cross for inspection. I presume that when circumstances permit, inspection will be carried out at the old premises.

Mr. HEASLIP—I understand that the Metropolitan Abattoirs cannot possibly deal with all the stock forwarded to it and that some must wait a fortnight before being dealt with there. Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether the Government will consider relaxing the legislation so that other non-Government abattoirs may deal with some of that stock and sell the meat to the local public at a lower price than that being charged today?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—There is nothing to prevent any other company from buying stock at the Metropolitan Abattoirs today and treating them at their own works other than for export. I understand that is being done.

Mr. HEASLIP—Will the Government relax or alter the legislation so as to make available to the public meat that has been passed as fit for human consumption but may not be exported?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I do not quite grasp the purport of the question, but so far as meat rejected for export is concerned, if the honourable member is referring to Noarlunga Meat Ltd., the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs Board has always attempted to meet the requirements of the company in the disposal of its reject meat, and it is still prepared to do so. A problem arises when, owing to abnormal circumstances and the fact that the company itself is entering on the export beef trade now, certain quantities and qualities of meat are in surplus supply, and the company is seeking to market them locally. There are a number of other aspects, but I deliberately refrained from mentioning them because I did not want to bring in any extraneous matters, but the company may, for export purposes, operate on the abattoirs market and draw on the large numbers of stock

coming forward. I informed the Acting Leader of the Opposition that there was no problem about local killings. The Abattoirs Board, because of the priority given to local killings, is able to kill immediately all meat required for local consumption. The problem which arises at Gepps Cross almost every year at this time, and this year in particular, is a result of the large numbers of stock coming forward which are not of sufficient quality for local or export trade, and they are the sheep that are being held. The number of sheep held over from last week was surprisingly small in relation to the numbers coming forward. I understand that today's market was of lesser proportions than last week's, and I expect that, with the abattoirs working seven days a week, the carry over at the end of this week will be very small indeed.

#### LONG SERVICE LEAVE.

Mr. LAWN—Many firms have already signed agreements with unions granting long service leave of 13 weeks at the end of 20 years. As these firms, including three of the largest employers in South Australia, are implementing the terms of the agreement this week and as many other employers are doing likewise, will the Treasurer reconsider the Bill passed in this House, but not yet passed in another place, and see whether it can be altered to meet the wishes of employers and employees generally?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Does the honourable member want me to consider 13 weeks' leave at the end of 20 years or at the end of 10 years? If he would explain what he wants I would be able to answer his question, but when he says he wants the Government to consider a Bill that will meet the interests of both employers and employees he is obviously talking with his tongue in his cheek to a certain extent because the interests of those two bodies are completely opposite.

Mr. LAWN—The Premier invited me to state what I wanted. I was not asking the Government to introduce a Bill on the lines I would prefer, but during the last few weeks I have been addressing factory lunch-hour meetings. Those factories are working under State Court awards and come within the ambit of this Parliament's legislation. I have been asked, "Do you think there is any chance of our employers being covered by other arrangements?" In view of the fact that employers and employees are making agreements to take them outside Parliament's legislation, will the Government further consider introducing another Bill?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—There is no necessity to introduce another Bill because the one that the Government so wisely brought before the House provided that any award entered into between employers and employees registered under any industrial tribunal would be given effect to and would be outside the scope of our legislation. When an agreement is registered in the court the parties concerned are automatically excluded from the provisions of the legislation passed by Parliament. Employers naturally like to enter into agreements with the A.C.T.U. for 13 weeks' long service leave at the end of 20 years' service because that is much less costly to them than the leave provided under the Bill. That leave does not give nearly so much benefit to employees, so employers are disposed to go to the court and register an agreement. The Bill enables employees to trade away the advantages contained in the legislation that was passed by this Chamber and I hope will be passed by the other House, but what is more important is that there are a large number of persons who are not under any industrial award, and the legislation passed by this House, not with the assistance of the honourable member, will protect them.

#### QUALIFICATIONS OF MEAT INSPECTORS.

Mr. BROOKMAN—Can the Minister of Agriculture say what is the difference, if any, between the qualifications required of meat inspectors accredited by the Commonwealth Government and those accredited by the State Government?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—As far as I am aware there is no difference between the qualifications of the inspectors who inspect meat for export. In fact, in works where inspectors operate and where both export and local meat is processed I understand the same inspectors do the job.

#### TRANSCIEVERS FOR POLICE.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Premier a reply to my recent question regarding the provision of transceivers for police officers in the outback?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have received the following report from the Commissioner of Police:—

Police vehicles can be fitted with portable transceivers, at a cost of approximately £200 per unit, which will enable them to contact the Flying Doctor Service stations and the police country radio stations. At present Oodnadatta has a portable transceiver which

enables the officer in charge to contact stations in the Alice Springs and Port Augusta Flying Doctor Service while on patrol. Consideration is being given to the complete overhaul or replacement of the base station at Oodnadatta. Port Augusta has had a mobile transceiver fitted to a vehicle for the last five years enabling contact with stations in the police country radio network. This unit is in Adelaide at the moment for overhaul and appears to have had very little use during the past twelve months. A new portable transceiver for installation in the police vehicle at Marree has been ordered and will be delivered within the next few weeks. This will enable the officer in charge to contact stations in the Broken Hill Flying Doctor Service and stations in the police country radio network while on patrol. The matter of further mobile transceivers for other country centres will be considered when finance is available.

#### COUNCIL HOSPITAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

Mr. FRED WALSH—In February, when replying to my question concerning the contributions of councils to the Royal Adelaide Hospital, the Treasurer said that notices had already been issued for this year, but the Government was willing to consider recommendations for next year, providing that the recommendations did not involve a reduction in the total sum to be provided. Has the Treasurer received any recommendations, and if so, what is the result of their consideration?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—A recommendation has been made to the Government on this matter that involves all the contributing bodies in the Adelaide Hospital district. Although I have not the precise figures before me I believe that all the councils except perhaps three agreed to the waterworks assessment as a fair basis for contributions. It appeared to me that the recommendation was sufficiently well endorsed to ensure its acceptance by the Government and it has been passed on for that purpose.

#### PRICES DEPARTMENT OFFICER.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I understand that an officer in the Prices Department on a full-time salary also carries on a private practice similar in nature to his departmental duties. Will the Premier ascertain whether this is correct, and does the Government permit a full-time officer to engage in another occupation?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—If the honourable member will let me have the officer's name I will investigate the matter.

#### PORT AUGUSTA HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. RICHES—When the Loan Estimates were being debated I asked the Treasurer what

work would be done at the Port Augusta High School under the line showing £85,000 for alterations and additions to high schools at Brighton and Port Augusta. Has he a reply?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Architect-in-Chief reports that a contract has been let and work is proceeding for the erection of domestic arts and woodwork centres. Tenders will be called for additional classrooms shortly.

#### NAPPERBY AND NELSHABY PRODUCE.

Mr. RICHES—Last week I asked the Minister representing the Minister of Railways whether he would take up with his colleague a request from fruitgrowers at Napperby and Nelshaby for a Thursday evening train service to Adelaide or for a permit for a road service, to enable them to get their produce to the Friday market in Adelaide. Has he a reply?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I have not yet received a reply from my colleague. I point out that two separate questions were asked—one related to a train service, and the other to the alternative of a road service, which would have to come under the control of the Transport Control Board. Obviously, it would take some time to get the two separate items ironed out, but as soon as the information becomes available I shall inform the honourable member.

#### OIL REFINERY FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Mr. TAPPING—On June 27 I asked a question relating to the proposed oil refinery in this State, and in his reply the Premier said:—

The Government is still optimistic. The matter has been examined by the Harbors Board and representations have been made to the company concerned.

Has the Premier any further information on this matter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I cannot take the matter further than I did when the honourable member asked his question before. Negotiations are proceeding, but as this is a very big project and involves many angles, it is obvious that before it can be approved a considerable time must elapse, as the people concerned must satisfy themselves on the desirability and the economics of the project. I can only inform the honourable member that, so far as I know, negotiations are proceeding satisfactorily.

#### NAPPERBY AND NELSHABY ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

Mr. RICHES—My question relates to the electricity supply to Napperby and Nelshaby.

I have been informed that when an application was made for a supply to these two places the trust asked for a guarantee by way of surcharge or permanent standing charge, and the residents formed themselves into a committee and sought to apportion the surcharge amongst themselves on an equitable basis. This was done with the goodwill of the trust. I have been told that the surcharge ranges from £6 or £7 to £80 or £90 a year. The committee sought to bring about a more equitable sharing by agreement, but it failed by several hundred pounds, and as a result the trust apportioned the surcharge. The people concerned have reason to believe that, if given another opportunity, they could reach agreement, and have asked me to request the Premier to ascertain from the trust whether it will give them another opportunity to apportion the amount themselves.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have a report on this matter that I am prepared to make available to the honourable member. It states that an attempt was made by local people to make an apportionment, but that did not succeed, as not all the proposed consumers would agree to the apportionment. I am certain that if the local committee can reach substantial agreement on a reasonable apportionment, any representations it makes will meet with favourable consideration from the trust, provided the overall target is reached. If the honourable member will take up with the local committee a further attempt to get agreement, gets a satisfactory answer that it has been reached, and brings the answer to me, I shall be happy to negotiate on behalf of the committee.

#### HOMES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

#### AMUSEMENTS DUTY (FURTHER SUSPENSION) BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

#### MARRIAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

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

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

The Government has introduced this Bill again because it makes a highly desirable reform and there is still a strong public demand for it. Both Houses have at one time or another accepted the principle of the Bill and the

Government suggests that it should now be passed. Most members are familiar with the general principle of the alteration of the law proposed in this Bill, and I need not deal with it at length. At common law the age of marriage was twelve for girls and fourteen for boys. Children of these ages could contract valid marriages and even children under these ages could marry and affirm the marriage upon attaining the age of marriage.

A considerable number of marriages of children take place in this State. The statistics show that in the last seven years 155 girls under sixteen and 133 boys under eighteen have married. It has been pointed out by social workers who have taken an interest in such matters that these marriages are usually unsatisfactory. In many cases they only take place because the girl is pregnant and because the parents force the children into marriage. It was pointed out that the same problem had arisen in Great Britain and that country in 1929 had raised the age of marriage to sixteen for children of both sexes. In Tasmania in 1942 the marriage age had been raised to sixteen for girls and eighteen for boys. Last year the same ages were adopted in Western Australia.

The Bill provides that, in future, a marriage will be invalid if the girl is under sixteen or the boy is under eighteen, unless the consent of the Chief Secretary to the marriage is obtained. The Government agreed to this exception when it was proposed earlier this year by Mr. Millhouse, M.P., and after further consideration believes that it should work satisfactorily. The Chief Secretary will have a discretion to allow under-age marriages. As a result of amendments made in another place the principles governing the exercise of his discretion have been amplified. The basic rule is that the Minister is not to consent to a marriage where either of the parties is under age unless he is satisfied that the marriage is desirable. This was in the Bill as introduced in the Council. In addition, it has been provided by amendments that no consent is to be given where either party is below the age of marriage recognized by the common law, that is, fourteen years old for a boy and twelve for a girl.

Another rule incorporated in the Bill by amendment is that if all parents whose consent to a marriage of minors is required under the Marriage Act have consented to a proposed marriage, the Minister must consent unless there are special circumstances which would justify him in refusing to do so.



For the exercise of the power conferred on the Minister by these provisions it will be necessary for him to obtain reliable information about all the relevant circumstances, but with the aid of the administrative and legal officers of the Government there is no reason why this should not be done. The Minister will have to consider all the relevant circumstances such as the means of the parties, their maturity, their character and the prospects of the marriage being successful, and he will have to give special weight to the attitude of the parents towards the marriage.

The Bill also contains the clause (which was in the previous Bills) dealing with the legitimation of children of under-age parents. If the Bill did not provide to the contrary, one effect of it would be that an illegitimate child born of parents under the marriage age would be incapable of being legitimated by the subsequent marriage of the parents. This is so because of the rule that a child cannot be legitimated by the subsequent marriage of its parents if there was a legal impediment to the marriage at the time of the child's birth. There seems to be no virtue in applying this rule when the only barrier to marriage was youth. The Bill accordingly provides that the

child of parents who were at the time of the child's birth prevented from marrying solely because of their youth will be capable of being legitimated by a subsequent valid marriage of the parents.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 3. Page 942.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Edwardstown)—This Bill makes a number of amendments that will render the work of the Motor Vehicles Department less complicated and enable it to carry out its functions more expeditiously and efficiently. Such amendments are those contained in clause 5, which makes it unnecessary for the owner of a motor vehicle to submit a statement regarding insurance; clause 8, which provides for the issue by the department of traders' plates; clause 9, which provides for a more even flow in the issue of drivers' licences; and other clauses. The Motor Vehicles Department has expanded considerably during the last 10 years, as the following figures, taken to the nearest thousand, indicate:—

	1946-47.	1956-57.	Increase.	Percentage.
Number of vehicles registered . . .	107,000	247,000	140,000	131
Number of drivers' licences . . .	138,000	299,000	161,000	117
	£	£	£	
Revenue . . . . .	716,000	3,590,000	2,774,000	387
Expenditure . . . . .	34,000	184,000	150,000	441
Surplus . . . . .	682,000	3,406,000	2,724,000	400

While most of the proposed amendments are quite reasonable and warrant no particular comment, there are one or two which, I think, should be carefully considered. One of these is the proposal contained in clause 15 to empower the Treasurer to withdraw an approval for non-observance of duties and obligations relating to insurance. The particular problem to be solved by the amendment is that arising from the refusal of an approved insurer to issue a policy to any person.

As suggested in the Minister's second reading speech, the provisions in the Act relating to approval of insurers are somewhat vague, and I have been unable to discover any provision prescribing the procedure to be followed by an insurer in becoming "approved." I hope that in Committee these provisions will be clarified. Who is to judge whether an insurer is wrongly refusing to issue a policy?

Section 70k provides that an approved insurer may apply to a court to have a person's

driving licence cancelled. In such case the complaint would be considered with due observance of legal procedure. In the case of an insurer refusing to issue a policy, the proposed power of the Treasurer to withdraw approval could be in the nature of duress. This provision should also be clarified.

Clause 16 increases fines and the increase in respect of a first offence for dangerous or reckless driving is severe—the minimum fine from £10 to £50 and the maximum from £50 to £100. It is interesting to consider what constitutes reckless or dangerous driving. A person could be driving at 35 miles an hour but because of the amount of traffic and circumstances he could well be driving recklessly or dangerously. By the same token he could be driving at 70 miles an hour on a main highway, but with no traffic about his driving could be quite safe. The Act provides for a 15-mile speed limit past schools when children

are entering or leaving the school. I commend those responsible for the installation of *News and Mail* traffic lights. In most cases children, under instructions from their teachers, cross at specified places. However, it frequently happens that these flashing lights continue operating throughout the day. Someone should supervise the control of these lights and they should only be working when children are liable to be crossing the roads. It is surprising the congestion of traffic that can occur on main roads near schools. South Road is an excellent example.

Clause 19 refers to right hand turns. In considering this matter it may be desirable to refer to the Emerson crossing. At present the Act provides that a bus must stop at a railway crossing before proceeding. It has been necessary to amend the Act because of the traffic lights at the Emerson crossing. These lights are the most effective in the metropolitan area and if drivers are reasonable the lights are foolproof. Buses should be enabled to flow with the traffic stream across that intersection without stopping. The Act provides that no vehicle shall cross a double line. In the hills double lines on an uphill stretch indicate that a motorist should not cross them, but on downhill runs the lines are frequently broken to indicate that a motorist has a reasonable view and can cross them if necessary. I do not think a double line is necessary at the Emerson crossing. This line is drawn on the road at the commencement of the right-hand turn. Businesses established in the vicinity should be afforded a reasonable opportunity of retaining their custom and if a broken line or a wide line were marked on the road the customers could drive in to those business premises without breaking the law.

The short right-hand turn is effective in relieving traffic congestion. However, unless an intersection is controlled by traffic lights or police officers, motorists should at all times give way to traffic on their right. One of the most difficult corners to negotiate in the city is the junction of West Terrace and North Terrace. I believe that all motorists should have an equal opportunity of using that intersection and that those turning from West Terrace into North Terrace should be given the same amount of time as those turning from Port Road into West Terrace. Unless a police officer happens to be controlling the traffic there, motorists making a right-hand turn from West Terrace into North Terrace are at a disadvantage and it is not unusual for the main stream from the Port Road pro-

ceeding into West Terrace to take more than its fair share of the use of the road. If traffic lights are suitable at the Emerson Crossing, could not a system be installed at the New Market Hotel corner? Further, many motorists ignore the stop sign at that corner.

The increase of £1 a year in the fee payable for traders' plates will be of some advantage to the department, although it may be imposed merely to cover the increased cost of the plates. This Bill is a Committee Bill and members will have ample opportunity in Committee to discuss the problems associated with it.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE (Burnside)—I support the Bill. I pay a tribute to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, who is working assiduously to remove some unnecessary red tape that has cluttered up the procedure in registering motor vehicles for many years. The issue of driving licences to run from the date of application will be useful and, although it will have no great immediate effect, in due course it will smooth out the high peaks of intense work and allow a much smoother flow in the issue of drivers' licences.

The clause relating to the change in the requirements for the clearance lights on vehicles was found necessary after some experience. It is the result of the practical effect of recommendations made some time ago, following the adoption of the terms of the code on vehicle lighting. It lends colour to our view that uniformity is not necessarily desirable unless it gives us the best in practice. After some experience we gained in the requirements of the standard code, some modifications were made and this Bill gives effect to them.

The penalties for driving under the influence of liquor have been increased and these increases are necessary. Alcoholism is accounting for an increasing number of road fatalities. In about a year drunkenness has risen from the fifth most serious cause of road deaths to the fourth. The principal causes are speed, inattentive driving, failure to give way, and drunkenness. As drunkenness becomes more prevalent as a cause and partial intoxication more noticeably contributes to fatalities, increased penalties are desirable.

The clause making it now not obligatory for certain classes of vehicles to stop at railway crossings was found desirable after a period of experimentation when certain classes of vehicles were required to stop. Those classes were vehicles carrying inflammable materials, explosives or more than a certain number of

paying passengers. That regulation had the effect of requiring a few classes of vehicles to stop, whereas the general run of traffic was not required to stop. This had the effect of creating an intermittent flow of traffic and I am advised by traffic experts that a smooth flow of traffic is desirable; therefore the Bill provides that these classes of vehicles need not stop unless a stop sign requires all vehicles to stop or the crossing is guarded by gates or some other device to restrain the traffic when a train is approaching.

The code of road signs in use throughout Australia is being revised by the Australian Standards Association and a new code will be available shortly. I believe it would be desirable if the colour red were used to indicate danger spots rather than the yellow and black we now use. The new code will be published shortly and it will probably then be desirable to modify some of our signs to bring them into line with the recommended practice for Australia and to follow more closely the recommended international signs.

Some difficulties have arisen where other than orthodox turns to the right are warranted by the nature of an intersection, and the clause authorizing the Highways Commissioner to say where such lines shall be placed on the road is necessary. I hasten to assure members that this in no way takes away from councils the right to authorize "Parking" or "Non-parking," or any other signs considered necessary for local purposes. The clause solely relates to directive signs placed on the road where a turn other than a conventional turn may be warranted by the nature of the intersection or the traffic. This procedure follows the standard practice we have adopted under the Road Traffic Act in relation to the approval of marked-foot crossings, known as "Zebra" crossings, and traffic islands, the location and style of which must be approved by the Highways Commissioner after application by the council concerned.

The clause permitting a vehicle to be towed with a newly approved towing device is highly desirable. The State Traffic Committee has thoroughly examined photographs and specifications of this device and a number of members have seen it operate. It is a marked advance over the former practice of pulling a car up by its front axle and almost hanging it in mid-air. The new device is regarded as completely safe, will eliminate the risk of damage to the towing vehicle, and will not require a man to be seated in the towed vehicle.

I pay a tribute to the members of the State Traffic Committee for their tireless enthusiasm and the expert advice they tender the Government. As chairman, I claim no skill in these matters, but the other members of the committee give devoted and expert service to the Government and the State and many useful suggestions are advanced from time to time.

Mr. HAMBOUR (Light)—Last year, in reply to my question in this House on the speed of trains over crossings in built up areas I did not receive much satisfaction, and I took up the matter with the Railways Department, but again received little satisfaction. Parliament passes laws telling pedestrians, motorists, and all other users of the roads what they must do for the safety of the public, yet we allow our trains to speed over crossings in built up areas regardless of any restriction on speed. On a railway crossing in my home town it takes 13 seconds from the time the warning device begins to operate until the train passes over the crossing. In recent years one man has been killed and numerous accidents have occurred at that crossing, mainly because people stop at the stop sign and by the time they start their vehicle to cross the line the train is upon them. The danger arises only from trains coming from Adelaide because those leaving the local station have not time to develop speed before reaching the crossing. The new Bluebird rail car passes over the crossing at about 40 to 50 miles an hour, and immediately after it does so it must start pulling up. I do not think it unreasonable to instruct the drivers of these rail cars to show a little more care when approaching crossings.

I have not ascertained whether this Bill can be amended to restrict the speed of such vehicles. I believe their drivers could be controlled by an order issued by the Railways Commissioner or the Minister of Railways. I consider it is highly improper that one section of the community should show an utter disregard for the rest of the community simply to make up time or for some other reason.

I have referred to my own district and to a crossing with which I am familiar, but I have read many newspaper reports of accidents in the metropolitan area. Mr. Geoffrey Clarke, chairman of the State Traffic Committee, said that speed was the most frequent cause of road accidents and I believe the same statement could be made concerning railway traffic. I am sorry that the Minister representing the Minister of Railways is not in the Chamber at present, but I ask the Government to ensure

that the Railways Commissioner instructs railway drivers to show some discretion in approaching crossings in built-up areas. In Committee I will again refer to this matter and seek an assurance from the Government so that road users passing over railway crossings will be more adequately protected.

Mr. TAPPING (Semaphore)—I support the Bill. Mr. Hambour referred to railway crossings in country areas, a subject with which he is more familiar than I, but I consider that a problem exists particularly at railway crossings where warning devices operate and there is a double track. Terrible tragedies have occurred at some of these crossings. I recall particularly the one at Osborne three or four years ago, when a tramways bus ignored the warning device and, assuming that the line was clear, proceeded on to the crossing, only to be hit by a train coming from the opposite direction. The driver of the bus should have waited until the warning device stopped ringing. Steps should be taken to prevent such difficulties and save lives, because this sort of thing has occurred more than once at crossings having a double track.

This Bill is not very contentious. I was astounded to learn that in the past owners of vehicles provided traders' plates. I thought that was the responsibility of the Registrar and his staff. If abuses have occurred it is time the legislation was tightened up. I agree with the proposal for the department to issue the number plates and for the colour of the plates to be changed each year. It seems that in the past traders' plates have been issued for periods of up to 15 or 20 years, and there may have been abuses, but the position should be much better in the future. The annual fee for a limited trader's plate will be increased from £2 to £3, and the fee for general traders' plates will rise from £16 to £17, but I do not know whether the increase for the general traders' plates is sufficient to offset the department's costs and service given to traders.

I have noticed for some years, particularly recently, that some motorists use only one headlight. The other may have been defective, but this is a dangerous practice, particularly if the defective light is on the offside, because an approaching motorist might think he was coming towards a motor cycle. The State Traffic Committee should consider whether the legislation adequately covers this point. I agree with the member for Burnside (Mr. Geoffrey Clarke) that driving under the influence of liquor is becoming more prevalent,

and I support the clause increasing the maximum fine for a first offence to £100. I hope that this will result in fewer such cases coming before the court. I support the Bill.

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I support most of the provisions in the Bill. I also am concerned about the practice of some people driving with faulty headlights or failing to dip their lights. A motorist may think he has dipped his headlights, but the State Traffic Committee should consider the advisability of making it compulsory to fit anti-dazzle headlights to cars. Some Continental cars have amber headlights, which do not dazzle so much as white lights. I have often referred in this House to the offence of driving under the influence of liquor, which is one of the greatest causes of road accidents. However, a fine of £100 would mean practically nothing to some people, and strong action should be taken against them.

Clause 13 enables disqualified persons to drive vehicles on private property, but I cannot see the justification for this. I have a great appreciation of the importance of primary producers, but why should we enable them to drive vehicles to carry out their work, but deny that privilege to others, such as butchers, bakers and commercial travellers? Any penalty should apply to all sections. If a primary producer were allowed to drive his vehicle on his farm he might run into a farm labourer or some other person. If the clause is not altered in Committee I shall oppose it. I am concerned at clause 19, which deals with the right-hand turn, for we shall be reverting to a practice that was found to be entirely unsatisfactory. I do not know whether I am under any misapprehension about this clause, but I may have to oppose that clause, too, in Committee. With this reservation, I support the second reading.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla)—I endorse the remarks of the member for Hindmarsh about the increased penalty for people convicted of driving while under the influence of liquor or drugs. I agree with him that the increased penalty may not be heavy enough. The modern car is a lethal weapon in the hands of a drunken driver, and one can hardly exaggerate the enormity of such an offence. I hope the State Traffic Committee will consider the remarks I shall now make about vehicles having to stop at certain railway crossings. The Commonwealth Railways have erected stop signs at crossings between Port Augusta and Port Pirie, and a driver is liable for a fine

of £50 if he fails to stop. However, it is dangerous to stop a long vehicle, such as a semi-trailer or passenger bus, because it is very slow in getting off the mark. A diesel railcar may be out of sight, but because the bus or semi-trailer is so slow off the mark it could be struck by the railcar if it were travelling at, say, 70 miles an hour. The Lee Transport Company and West Coast Motor Services have told me of the danger at these crossings. Five of six drivers employed by Lee Transport Company said that it was dangerous to stop a semi-trailer at these crossings, and the manager told me that he fears these vehicles may be involved in a collision with a railcar.

Drivers employed by West Coast Motor Services have expressed the same opinions. This matter has been brought before the Commonwealth Railways, but they said that the existing conditions could not be improved. It would be much safer if vehicles were required to approach these crossings at not more than 10 miles an hour in second gear. Drivers could then see whether a railcar was approaching and proceed if the line was clear. If a vehicle has to stop there is the added danger that the motor may stall when bottom gear is engaged. That may not occur if the motor is in perfect condition, but if it is not there is a possibility of stalling when accelerating the motor to get over the crossing. All these points should be considered by the Traffic Committee to see whether my suggestion would not provide a safer approach to this type of crossing. I am, of course, referring to crossings not fitted with such warning devices as flashing lights or wig-wag signals, but merely having a stop sign with a notice stating that a penalty of £50 is provided for not stopping.

I endorse the remarks of previous speakers about the provision that will enable a person to drive a motor vehicle on private property after he has been disqualified from holding or obtaining a driving licence. I see no reason why they should receive this privilege, because a person in any other walk of life is at a serious disadvantage if he is disqualified from driving. They should be subject to the same penalty as anyone else in the community. I support the second reading, and probably in Committee stages I shall add something on one or two other aspects of this matter.

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray)—In supporting the second reading, I endorse what has already been said about increased penalties for driving under the influence of liquor or of a drug.

Although the penalty has been increased to £100, in some cases it will still be insufficient. I realize that the court has power to cancel driving licences, but cancellation should be compulsory rather than at the discretion of the court. However, the increasing penalties will probably have some effect in reducing the number of accidents caused by drunken driving. When I was a young man one of my friends was killed by a drunken driver and his brother lost a leg. The driver was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, but as it was nearly Christmas he was released after serving only two months of his sentence, and what was worse, he was given back his licence again in two months. Cases close to home, such as this, draw these matters to one's attention. The penalty should be heavy to remove the hazards created by the menaces who drive under the influence of liquor. However, as much has been said on the subject in this debate, I shall not labour it.

When I was driving back to Murray Bridge last Sunday evening, I was approaching the rear of a semi-trailer travelling on the edge of the road when I saw a green light indicating that the road ahead was clear. On the other side of the vehicle was a red light to show that the road was not clear and indicating that the driver behind should remain there. I thought this was a good idea and could be emulated by other drivers of these large vehicles.

Last week I received a letter from one of my constituents stating that his registration for a motor vehicle expired on May 31, and on receipt of a notice from the Registrar of Motor Vehicles he forwarded his application for registration and a cheque for the fee. On May 22 he received a letter from his insurance company stating that at his request it had forwarded his insurance papers to the department. However, his registration papers did not arrive until June 5, and this meant that he could not use his vehicle in the interim. He showed the letter to the police, but they did not have the power to give him permission to drive his own vehicle, and of course they were acting within their rights. Another person in my district sent a cheque to the department, but unfortunately did not add sixpence for exchange. He received a letter from the department stating that he should have added exchange, and because of the delay he was not able to drive his vehicle for several days. As he depended on driving the vehicle to make a living, he went to the police and offered them the sixpence, but they could not accept it. In

such cases, where people make genuine mistakes of this nature some provision should be made for payment at a police station for forwarding to the department so that the registration disc could be sent.

The Bill contains a clause providing that a bus driver will not have to stop at a railway line where there is a warning device, and this is a good provision. The driver of a bus at Murray Bridge told me that he has found it awkward to stop at crossings. Although other vehicles are not obliged to stop, buses must stop at crossings not protected by warning devices because of an amendment to the Act passed two years ago. This man told me that by stopping he makes it dangerous for the drivers of vehicles who have to pass him, as sometimes other traffic is travelling in the other direction. As the member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday) said, sometimes buses cannot clear the line very quickly. As he pointed out, it sometimes takes only 13 seconds for trains to reach a crossing, and this would not allow a heavy vehicle sufficient time to cross.

Mr. FRED WALSH (West Torrens)—In supporting the second reading, I am of the opinion that the Act, like many others, needs a complete overhaul. When it is considered that it contains 182 sections, and with the passage of time we can expect considerably more to be added, it can be realized that it is about time it was consolidated to cut out redundant sections and bring it up to date. These remarks also apply to other Acts. I entirely agree with the proposed amendment relating to right-hand turns, but something should also be done about the use of right-hand turns in King William Street, and possibly also Pulteney Street. They should be completely banned in King William Street between North Terrace and Flinders Street at all times of the day, not only at certain peak periods. As anyone who travels along this street in normal times of the day knows, there is much congestion. Although most taxi drivers are sensible and efficient drivers, some are not, and particularly in King William Street make turns wherever they like. I have seen taxi drivers making U turns that take them over the lines across tram safety zones. Of course, when trams are eliminated, there will be no need for safety zones, except that in wide streets such as King William Street refuges will be necessary in the middle of the road because people cannot always complete their crossing before the lights change. These refuges have been placed in parts of Sydney.

The police are very lax in controlling traffic, particularly in King William Street, where taxi drivers seem to be a law unto themselves. They should not be permitted to make U turns in that street, because that creates dangerous situations for pedestrians. The Adelaide City Council has banned right-hand turns at certain times of the day. I suppose that was done on the advice of the Police Department, and it is a recognition of the possible dangers to which I have been referring. I hope it will not be long before this ban is applied to King William Street down to Victoria Square at all times of the day.

Under the Act, councils have certain rights in regard to the erection of stop signs and other signs indicating the route of traffic. These signs can be placed on the roadway with the approval of the Commissioner of Highways. I feel that stop signs should be totally eliminated from all streets unless they are given effect to in the way that they indicate—that is, stopping against all traffic.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—Many have been removed.

Mr. FRED WALSH—I appreciate that. I do not agree with the existing provision that once a person has stopped, he has complied with the law, and has the right of way. If he exerts right of way a highly dangerous situation is created because, on a main arterial road where the traffic is moving freely and at a fair speed, the traffic approaching the stationary vehicle from the left is not always prepared to yield right of way. I am sure we have all had that experience. Once a stop sign has been erected at an intersection it should be obeyed and no traffic should proceed until the roadway is clear on both sides. If a motorist does, it should be at his own risk. People are frequently undecided when they stop at an intersection, particularly if another vehicle is stopped on their right. Often they beckon the other motorist across. These matters should all be considered by the State Traffic Committee, on whose recommendation the Government apparently acts when drafting amendments to this legislation. Mr. Geoffrey Clarke eulogised that committee, but I am not prepared to concede that it should be the last word on traffic matters. Its members are no doubt experienced, but motorists who continuously drive vehicles are equally competent to express opinions. At all times the views expressed by members should receive equal consideration.

The member for Edwardstown (Mr. Frank Walsh) referred to the North Terrace-West

Terrace junction as a death-trap. People who use that junction know that there is uncertainty as to which motorist has the right of way. Traffic coming from Port Road turns into West Terrace and traffic from North Terrace proceeds across the junction to the Port Road, while the traffic coming along West Terrace to turn into North Terrace must wait until the road is clear. Some motorists make their turn into North Terrace at the risk of life and limb, but most motorists are not prepared to do that unless they are in a semi-trailer or other heavy vehicle. Traffic lights are badly needed at that junction and the city council should seriously consider providing them.

Last year I opposed zebra crossings. I was not opposed to them in principle, but suggested that their presence should be clearly indicated, preferably by flashing lights. Although legislation was enacted to enable councils to lay down zebra crossings, I do not know where any have been provided, although I understand one is contemplated at Unley. I understand it is now proposed to install pedestrian lights instead of zebra crossings. Such lights have been operating in Sydney for almost 20 years. A pedestrian desiring to cross a road presses a button and he is shown the green light while the traffic is shown the red light, and he is able to cross in safety. I understand such a light exists at the corner of Frome Road; but what has happened to the proposal to mark zebra crossings?

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—Some have been approved by the Commissioner of Highways. Parliament decided he should have the authority.

Mr. FRED WALSH—My point is that it is ridiculous to suggest zebra crossings without affording additional protection to pedestrians and motorists.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—Proper advance warnings will be installed with the zebra crossings.

Mr. FRED WALSH—When I suggested that the year before last I was ridiculed by some members opposite, including the Premier. The member for Burra (Mr. Hawker) agreed with me that flashing lights should indicate the presence of a zebra crossing.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—Standard warnings will be installed. The State Traffic Committee followed a standard recommendation. We followed the recommendations of the Standard Code which prescribes advance warnings.

Mr. FRED WALSH—What Standard Code?

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—The Australian Standard Code.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Outside two or three States such a code is unnecessary. There are zebra crossings in Brisbane, which necessitate all traffic stopping while pedestrians cross, but there is no advance indication of their presence.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—That is because Brisbane has not adopted the Standard Code, which is based on the world's best experience.

Mr. FRED WALSH—It is because Brisbane does not need zebra crossings and they are a waste of time there. By law people are compelled to cross at such crossings rather than at points between them. It is necessary to protect pedestrians, but we must avoid traffic congestion. I suggest that when zebra crossings are provided flashing lights be installed on both approaches thereto. Motorists would stop when the lights were flashing.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—The standard warning sign is a picture of walking feet on a sign of prescribed size in advance of every crossing.

Mr. FRED WALSH—If that is standard it has only been so in recent years. It is not long since I was overseas and I consider myself as observant as any person, but I have not seen such signs. We cannot compare Adelaide with cities of the size of New York, London, Paris, Brussels and Hamburg. We have given councils considerable authority, but, in many instances, they have been carried away by that power. In every suburb prohibited areas are marked, limited parking is prescribed and in some instances vehicles are not permitted to park on one side of a street—and frequently the latter provision is completely unnecessary.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—Local authorities should know the local needs.

Mr. FRED WALSH—A person living in a locality knows the needs as well as the local authority. I do not give all the kudos to the State Traffic Committee.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—It is not the function of the Traffic Committee to prescribe such areas, but the responsibility of the local council.

Mr. FRED WALSH—It is a pity councils do not effectively exercise their responsibilities. It will be appreciated that I am not referring to the council with which I am associated. According to this morning's press the Commissioner of Police proposes recommending that persons who do not understand the English language should not be licensed to drive motor vehicles. That is a recommendation I would wholeheartedly endorse. Despite what has been said about drunken drivers, mistakes can be made, and it is not always the drunken driver

who is responsible for an accident. One needs only to study the daily papers to realize that frequently aliens are involved in motor accidents. I do not suggest they are less careful than native-born Australians, but because of their lack of knowledge of the language they cannot understand or interpret our laws. I hope the Traffic Committee will consider the Commissioner's proposed recommendation.

Clause 9 repeals section 36 of the Principal Act and inserts in lieu thereof a new section concerning the duration of a licence. I bought a car on July 31 and its registration expires on June 30 next year, so I lose a month's registration. This is bad in principle and it should be possible to adopt the same practice with regard to registrations as is provided for driving licences. I ask the Government to consider this matter.

Mr. CUMBE (Torrens)—I support the Bill. I agree with the member for West Torrens (Mr. Fred Walsh) in his remarks about the driving test for the driver's licence given to New Australians who cannot use our language. It is evident that people who cannot read our warning and direction signs can be a menace on the road and anything we can do to minimize the possibility of accidents should be done. I have had bitter experience of road accidents and I feel strongly that we should do everything in our power to minimize their possibility and that this is one way in which we can help achieve that end.

I have referred to a certain matter before in this House and I again draw the attention of the State Traffic Committee to it. In many suburbs difficulty is experienced because motor cars and other vehicles park right up to the corner of an intersection, which means that vehicles coming out of a narrow street have their vision restricted to the right as they cross the road or join the traffic stream. This results in the practice of a car nudging out part of the way into the stream of traffic before its driver can get a clear view to the right. The obvious way to overcome this difficulty is for councils to declare a prohibited area a certain distance back along the kerb. Indeed, provision exists to do this, but in any one municipality there would be thousands of such intersections and it would be financially impossible for the councils to do anything. To be practicable it would be essential for every council to carry out this scheme. It would be no good, for instance, Norwood council having this provision and Port Adelaide council not having it: it

would have to be uniform. It would be financially impossible for any suburban council to gazette each area, mark it and police it. I realize that the Adelaide City Council carries this out, but it should be introduced as a general rule for the whole of the metropolitan area. Indeed, it could be done by amending this Bill and I suggest that the Road Traffic Committee consider the matter.

At intersections, corners and junctions where vehicles at present park right up to the corner they restrict the vision of motorists leaving the street, and a prohibited area of say 15ft. or 20ft. should be declared. The driver of a large car may have to get three or four feet further into the stream of traffic so that, from his position behind the wheel, he gets a clear view, and this causes a traffic hazard. I have seen many accidents result from this hazard and hope that next year the Committee will bring down a recommendation along these lines.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa)—I support the Bill, which contains desirable amendments embodying plain commonsense. As members will be able to discuss the amendments in detail in Committee, I shall content myself by referring only to one or two major matters affecting country roads. The first is the practice of heavy vehicles parking near the brow of a hill. The drivers of heavy transports often rest during the night at a spot from which they will have an easy run off in the morning, namely, the brow of a hill. In keeping to the left along that road a motorist may suddenly find a huge obstacle in front.

Mr. Lawn—Don't you think this Bill is suitable?

Mr. LAUCKE—I think it is excellent, but I consider the matter to which I refer should be dealt with by legislation. I have in mind the prescription of the minimum distance a vehicle may park from the brow of any hill. I also refer to the danger of vehicles parking at night on a highway and ask the Government to consider the provision of run-off strips on main highways wherever practicable.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 5 passed.

Clause 6—"Registration Fees."

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Acting Leader of the Opposition)—Can the Minister say what proportion of the increase in revenue that will result from the recent increase by the



Commonwealth Government in the diesel fuel tax will be used to improve our roads, and whether the reduction in the registration fees payable on those vehicles will affect that amount?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH (Minister of Works)—In reply to the honourable member, I can do no better than quote the following extract from the Treasurer's second reading explanation:—

Clause 6 deals with the registration fee for diesel-engined vehicles. In 1951 the registration fee for these vehicles was doubled. The reason was that diesel fuel was not subject to a Federal tax, as petrol was, and in order to secure an equitable contribution to the roads from the owners of diesel-engined vehicles, Parliament decided that they should pay a higher registration fee. But in view of the recent Federal tax of one shilling a gallon on diesel oil the justification for the higher registration fee no longer exists, and the Government desires to repeal the provision imposing it.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—In effect the comparable registration fees of diesel-powered and petrol-driven vehicles are identical and the State would recoup such revenue as it lost from the reduction of these registration fees from the proportionate increase in the yield to the Commonwealth from any increase in petrol and diesel taxes. That would be reflected in the Federal Aid Roads Grant. The Federal revenue would rise slightly and be channelled to the States in the proportion in which they now share the revenue derived from taxation on petrol and diesel fuel.

Clause passed.

Clause 7 passed.

Clause 8—"Traders' plates."

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Can the Minister tell me the purpose of the proposed increase in the cost of these plates?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—The Treasurer's statement is self-explanatory. In his second reading speech he said:—

In order to cover the cost of the new scheme, and the cost of the traders' plates, it is proposed to increase the fees. The fee for limited traders' plates will be raised from £2 to £3 and that for general traders' plates from £16 to £17.

These increases are necessary in order to keep pace with increased costs.

Clause passed.

Clause 9—"Duration of licence."

Mr. FRANK WALSH—This clause will be advantageous to the Motor Vehicles Department. Even if licences were issued from month to month, it would be a decided improvement on what we now have.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—The peak of the work is now at the end of June because at one stage it was customary for all driving licences to be taken out from July 1. This has put very great pressure on the department and it has been almost impossible to cope with the work at that time of the year. The effect of the amendment will not be felt for some time, but as many more new licences are taken out, licences will be evenly spread over the year.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—This Bill contains a number of administrative provisions in line, I believe, with the policy of the new Registrar of Motor Vehicles (Mr. Kay). I compliment the Registrar on the job he is doing, and I believe the alterations which are being made are very commendable. The member for Burnside (Mr. Clarke), who has a specialized knowledge on this subject, has explained this amendment, which is one of several recommended by Mr. Kay. I am certain that the amendments will result in an even better administration of this department.

Clause passed.

Clause 10—"Lights on motor vehicles."

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I agree with the revision of the method of lighting vehicles. However, even when vehicles are properly equipped with lights accidents still occur through these vehicles being parked on highways. The member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke) raised an important point this afternoon. We take steps to see that vehicles are properly lighted, but it is still sometimes difficult to see them at night-time under even normal conditions when they are parked on highways. Something more is necessary in order to prevent accidents in these circumstances.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—The State Traffic Committee has given a great deal of attention to the points raised by the member for Barossa and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Sometimes vehicles have either broken down or been parked, and either their lighting system is inadequate or it has itself broken down. However, before the Committee can act on these matters it should have them properly referred to it by the Government. There is much substance existing in the points raised by both members, and the committee has given a good deal of consideration to them. It is not easy to define in words what precautions should be taken to avoid the accidents that sometimes occur.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Can the Chairman of the Traffic Committee say whether any consideration has been given to the possible change

of headlights to an amber colour, such as used on Continental cars?

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—I do not think there is any prohibition in the Act against amber lights, but I think it is desirable to keep to white lights because amber is becomingly increasingly used as a warning device. The whole practice of motor car lighting is at present under review by the Australian Road Traffic Committee and the Standards Committee. The State Traffic Committee was recently asked to comment on the new idea of four headlamps which are appearing on the new cars imported from America. Our Act does not prescribe anything about lamps except that they must not be glaring, and whether they be amber or white it is an offence under the Act if they are glaring. The proposal for four headlamps does not infringe the provisions of the South Australian Act, and indeed there is a good deal to be said for them because of their greater arc of illumination. My own view is that it is not desirable to have an amber headlight.

Clause passed.

Clause 11—"Driving whilst drunk or under the influence of drugs."

Mr. FRANK WALSH—This clause increases the maximum penalty for a first offence to £100. I have no sympathy for a drunken driver because he is a menace to himself and other road users, but are we to have blood tests to determine whether a driver is under the influence of liquor or are we to continue the present system of calling a police doctor to determine whether he is drunk?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—To get a conviction the prosecution must establish that the person charged was under the influence of liquor. I understand that blood tests are provided for in other States, but sometimes they give confusing results, so they are not altogether satisfactory.

Mr. MILLHOUSE—I do not think the increased penalty will be much of a deterrent. My view is that imprisonment should be ordered in all cases, even for a first offence.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Probably the biggest deterrent of all is the fear of a suspension of the licence to drive. Most appeals are against the suspension of a licence, not against a fine or imprisonment. If a person's licence has been suspended in another State we do not allow him to drive in this State during the period of suspension.

Mr. Quirke—Does that apply in all States?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I think it does. I agree that a fine of, say,

£50 would not worry a person who was well off, but that it would be a real hardship on a person in straitened circumstances.

Mr. HAMBOUR—I disagree with Mr. Millhouse. Last week I gave evidence of character on behalf of a boy of 20 who was found guilty of driving under the influence of liquor. He was not a drinker in the real sense of the word, but had been to a birthday party and had a few drinks. He felt ill and endeavoured to get home, but hit an electric light post. To send that boy to gaol would be criminal. The court should be allowed discretion in imposing the penalty, and I would oppose any move to send a person to gaol for a first offence of driving under the influence of liquor.

Clause passed.

Clause 12 passed.

Clause 13—"Driving while disqualified."

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I know of an instance where a prominent business man was disqualified from holding a licence and he immediately decided to go to another State and boasted that there would be no hindrance on his driving a vehicle in Victoria or New South Wales, notwithstanding that I informed him that I entirely disagreed with his contention. His licence was suspended because his record was not very creditable, and I think that in cases of this description we should be able to notify the registrars of the other States so as to prevent action of this kind. A person who earns his living by driving a motor vehicle can, if his licence is suspended, employ someone else to drive it for that period and he is thus penalized in two ways. On the other hand, a farmer or an orchardist who has motor equipment on his property can continue to drive that equipment on his property although suffering disqualification from driving on the roads. In this case the penalty is not nearly so severe.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—This could apply equally to an employee moving vehicles from one part of a factory to another.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Quite so. It could apply anywhere.

Mr. Hambour—What you want is to apply the same penalty on the farm.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I do, and I oppose the clause.

Mr. HUTCHENS—At first sight I was fully in accord with the Deputy Leader, but from the interjections it appears that a person has no need to obtain a licence to drive a vehicle on his own property.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—If he has an accident while driving without a licence he cannot claim on his insurance.

Clause passed.

Clause 14—"Insurance against third party risks."

Mr. LAWN—Earlier we repealed section 8b of the principal Act which dealt with statements as to insurance on the registration. This clause deals with section 70b which deals with similar statements in regard to re-registrations. How is the registrar to be satisfied that there is a policy in existence?

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—The registrar demands that a renewal certificate has to be handed in at the time of application for registration or renewal and unless there is that certificate from the insurance company he will not permit the registration. Therefore there is no need for it to be on the form. It is automatic.

Clause passed.

Clause 15—"Provisions as to approved insurers."

Mr. FRANK WALSH—If an insurance company refused to issue a policy to a motor vehicle owner has he the right of appeal against its decision, or can the Premier intervene. Is he then in a position to say after an examination whether he can approve the company? Can the Treasurer explain the position?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—It is necessary that a person should be able lawfully to insure, because if he cannot he is disqualified from the use of the roads. One of the conditions upon which a company is approved by the Treasurer to issue insurance is that it will fairly take all the compulsory insurance tendered to it. If it is allowed to pick and choose its risks, refusing the bad risks, a number of persons will be disqualified from driving vehicles on the roads. We have not had an opportunity to cancel approvals if a company does not carry out its obligations. All we can do is to threaten not to renew in future. Obviously, it is grossly unfair to the companies which loyally take their full share of their good and bad clients to allow another company to pick and choose. It is necessary to see that a person who is lawfully entitled to an insurance is able to effect it. The whole purpose of the amendment is to give the Treasurer additional powers. We have had complaints, one of which was thoroughly justified because the company was refusing to renew and accept certain insurances.

Mr. Frank Walsh—Would they mostly be third party?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—It was third party insurance which this company was refusing to accept. We had no power to cancel, and it was not until the time of renewal that we could handle the matter, but we then handled it definitely, and I do not think we will have any more trouble from that company. I believe it is now abiding by the law. However, that emphasizes the fact that we must have sufficient power to see that there is a reasonable compliance with the principle that a person entitled to insurance can get it from an approved company. That is all that the clause proposes.

Clause passed.

Clause 16 passed.

Clause 17—"Crossing railways."

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I believe that the amendment will meet with the desires of the Police Traffic Superintendent. I should like the Treasurer to have an investigation into the installation of traffic lights at the corner of North and West Terraces so that all road users will have a chance to their right of the road in their turn.

Mr. HAMBOUR—I have in mind a railway crossing near Eudunda where on one side the approach is downhill with a mill obscuring the vision, and on the other the approach is uphill, although the visibility is good. When a train is approaching from Adelaide, from the time the warning bell starts to ring it takes a train 13 seconds to cross. The Railways Commissioner was asked to have trains slowed down when approaching the crossing, but this was refused. In certain instances I believe it is essential for the safety of the public that trains should slow down at crossings. Some travel at 50 miles an hour over a crossing and then begin to slow down 20 yards past it before reaching a station. I suggest that they should slow down before reaching the crossing and so help to avoid accidents. At the crossing in question one man has been killed in the last six years, vehicles have been smashed and some people have been injured. The noise at the nearby mill drowns the warning bell. I would like the Government to call for a report and decide each case on its merits. In this instance I know that it would favour trains slowing up before crossing.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will get a report as requested.

Mr. QUIRKE—I should like to know whether paragraph (b) applies to petrol waggons.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—It does.

Mr. QUIRKE—Many of them do not comply with it.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—The purpose of the clause is to enable a smoother flow of traffic. Accidents have been caused because of the strict observance of the law as it now stands. It only means that the law is repealed to the extent that vehicles are required to stop even where there is no sign.

Clause passed.

Clause 18—"Power to mark signs on roads."

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Will the Treasurer take up with the Minister of Roads the question of the double lines on the roadway at Emerson railway crossing? There is a double line and also another line which relates to traffic turning right. The question arises whether the double line could be reduced in length, or drawn as a broken line, or whether it could be one broad line so as to permit the shops which were established prior to the introduction of the light system to regain some of the business they had prior to the double line being marked on the roadway.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will have that matter investigated.

Mr. STEPHENS—One part of the clause gives the Commissioner of Highways the right to mark roads, and the other gives it to councils. Could either mark roads for purposes other than those set out in the clause? On hills roads the double lines are a great advantage, and the white paint on kerbs is also of benefit to traffic. On the Port Road near the Squatters Arms Hotel it is difficult to see the kerb, and although lines are painted on the centre of the road, they are difficult to see. If the kerb were painted white, a number of accidents would be prevented. When I spoke to the member for Burnside (Mr. Geoffrey Clarke) about this, he said he did not know whose responsibility it was. I subsequently spoke to a councillor, who told me the matter was the responsibility of the Highways Department. Is this clause inserted because it is not always clear whose responsibility it is to mark roads?

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—This clause has very limited application; it applies only to lines or signs placed on roads to indicate the route to be followed by traffic turning or about to turn to the right or left at an intersection or junction. It was inserted because traffic direction is an expert job if a smooth flow of traffic is to be obtained. If councils desire kerbs to be painted white, they have only to apply to the Commissioner of Highways, who

will tell them whether it is in their power to do this work. The clause is to enable traffic to be directed at unorthodox turns, either to the right or left. When a right hand turn has to be made around a traffic island, it is usually necessary to keep left, but in some cases it is desirable that traffic should pass to the right of the centre of the road. If there were no signs in such cases, a great deal of confusion would result. This clause is designed to make the practice uniform.

The Commissioner of Highways has a qualified traffic engineer attached to his staff, and this man, incidentally, has just gone to America on a scholarship to increase his knowledge. Traffic islands are primarily the responsibility of councils, but they must obtain the approval of the Commissioner of Highways for their construction. The same method has been adopted for zebra crossings. Councils have the responsibility of painting the lines and they have the right to suggest where crossings should be, although they must ultimately be approved by the Commissioner.

Mr. STEPHENS—Will you consider the place I have mentioned?

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE—I am afraid this is a matter for the council. The State Traffic Committee only considers problems submitted by the Government.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The member for Port Adelaide (Mr. Stephens) has raised an important matter that will receive more consideration in the future than in the past. Too many unauthorized lines have been painted on roads for improper purposes. For instance, double lines have been placed on some roads merely to slow down traffic, and their presence could easily cause accidents if they prevent people from passing when a clear view can be obtained for an appreciable distance ahead. Lines placed merely to secure observance of the speed limit are improperly placed. Lines on roads in the Norwood district were not placed judiciously, and I do not know if the Highways Commissioner approved of them, or of many others that have been placed on roads. Double lines are to prevent passing in awkward positions, not to prevent speeding. The way to make people observe speed limits is to ask the Commissioner of Police to give special attention to the area in question and obtain convictions. The Government will take more interest in road marking because it believes that not only are they not fulfilling the purposes of the Act but are creating dangerous situations.

Clause passed.

Clause 19—"Mode of making right-hand turns."

Mr. FRANK WALSH—This clause appreciably alters the present law. Some of the provisions are vital, but I am not quite sure of what their effect will be.

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

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Most of the proposals in this clause are self-explanatory, but I do not know whether under (1b) a motorist turning his vehicle must give way to traffic both on his left and right or whether only to that on his right.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—It means that he cannot turn into approaching traffic.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Must he give way to traffic on his left as well as on his right?

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—Yes.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I assume that it will not cause any confusion and will not in any way contradict section 131 of the principal Act.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Playford—The person turning to the right must give way to all oncoming traffic. There are one or two intersections where apparently this rule has not operated.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—I can visualize that it might not apply at the turn-off from West Terrace down Anzac Highway. Glenelg-bound traffic at present does not give way to traffic turning from Anzac Highway into South Terrace. If it is perfectly understood by all motorists that at all times they must give way to traffic on their right there will be fewer accidents and driving will be much safer. I assume that the clause also means that vehicles crossing the plantation on the Port Road at other than intersections must give way to all oncoming traffic.

Clause passed.

Clause 20 and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment and Committee's report adopted.

#### STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

#### ACTS INTERPRETATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

#### METROPOLITAN MILK SUPPLY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 8. Page 967.)

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray)—I support the Bill because I believe it is essential that the Metropolitan Milk Board should be enabled to extend its activities further afield than at present. At the moment its field of activities does not extend beyond Enfield but it is proposed to extend it to Elizabeth and Salisbury, which is desirable. I understand that the Dairymen's Association took this matter up with the Premier some time ago, even before the town was known as Elizabeth. They regarded it as essential to have some measure of control over the dairies and the delivery of milk in that area. I understand that this provision will not operate immediately but that it is to be the subject of regulation when the Government thinks it is necessary. I hope it will not be too long before this is done because already Salisbury and Elizabeth are, in effect, part of the metropolitan area.

There is a need to control dairies, and such control is provided for in the principal Act. This control is necessary in the case of Salisbury, Elizabeth and adjacent areas that are becoming more thickly populated. I realize that some dairies are not up to satisfactory hygienic standard and the consumer should be protected because milk can carry germs if it is not treated correctly and proper supervision of dairies is not carried out. Some time ago certain dairies along the River Murray were not up to the high standard prevailing today when, under the control of the Metropolitan Milk Board and the County Board, the dairies in those areas are something to be proud of. The fact that those dairymen have been forced to put their dairies into proper order has resulted not only in city people receiving milk of a better standard, but in keen competition among river dairymen to ensure that their dairies are satisfactory.

Mr. JOHN CLARK (Gawler)—I support the remarks of the member for Murray (Mr. Bywaters) and believe that the legislation is to the advantage of Salisbury and Elizabeth. One gentleman interested in the sale of milk told me that the time is not yet opportune for the introduction of this measure, so I ask the Minister of Agriculture whether the extension of the metropolitan area mentioned in the Bill is to be proclaimed, and if so, whether it will take effect immediately. I support the Bill.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—This matter is not easy to resolve and the Minister of Agriculture has my sympathy in assessing what is required in the area to be proclaimed for the supply of milk as whole milk to the metropolitan area. This problem has caused much heart burning among producers. If a good service is to be given to the community the producer must spend hundreds—in some cases thousands—of pounds to establish a satisfactory dairy to the standard required by the Milk Board before he is licensed to sell milk as whole milk in the metropolitan area. This is a heavy impost and the Minister has to decide whether he will extend the metropolitan area. In past years areas not so contiguous to the metropolitan area that one would have thought them desirable for this purpose have been included within the meaning of this legislation, whereas other areas much nearer Adelaide have been excluded from the privilege of supplying whole milk to the metropolitan area. This has caused much heart burning.

Generally speaking, my own district falls within the definition of the contributing area so I cannot be charged with being parochial in my approach to this problem; but other members whose districts are not so favourably situated know that their constituents have had to put up with the basic price for their butter-fat as it applied to manufacturing purposes and could not enjoy the premium paid for milk supplied as whole milk for human consumption. The Bill provides that the Government may extend the contributing area as defined in the Act.

In other capital cities, particularly Sydney, 200 miles afield is not considered outside the realms of practical purposes for delivering milk to the city for human consumption. We have not had to go as far afield as that and possibly Jervois—only 70 miles from Adelaide—is one of the most distant areas that provide milk to the metropolitan area for sale as whole milk. That is not far, because today modern transport facilities can deliver the milk to Adelaide in perfect condition as whole milk. That factor is desirable and one that I would be the last to break down.

I have previously suggested that licensing by areas is perhaps not the right approach to this problem and I have always felt that any dairy farmer able to deliver his milk to the metropolitan area in a condition that complies with the standards laid down by the Metropolitan Milk Board should be licensed. At the moment dairymen in certain areas north of

Adelaide are sending milk as far as Broken Hill for sale as whole milk. That area is much farther from the producers than is the Adelaide metropolitan area. Obviously, those producers could supply milk to the metropolitan area. Members on both sides of the House have producers in their districts who do not enjoy the privilege of getting a premium of about 3½d. a gallon, but those who supply high-quality milk for re-sale as whole milk are entitled to that premium.

We should aim at raising the standard of milk supplied for manufacture into cheese, butter or powdered milk, but producers who supply milk to factories get a lower return than those who supply it for re-sale as whole milk. South Australia is one of the least favoured States in the dairying industry. Transport problems face farmers who run a few cows and supply cream to butter or milk to cheese factories. It would pay the State if we could give a small margin to the man who produces a first class article, even for manufacturing purposes. A certain well-known industry pays a premium on milk that it uses in manufacturing if the milk reaches a standard of at least equivalent to the standard we demand of whole milk retailed in the metropolitan area. I think the Minister is aware of these facts, and we might do South Australia a good turn if we encouraged producers by paying a margin over the basic price if they produced better milk.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

#### VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 8. Page 967.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Acting Leader of the Opposition)—The Leader of the Opposition has asked a number of questions relating to this matter as a result of requests from councils in his electorate, in reply to which he was told that an amending Act would be introduced this session. When this matter was before the House in 1945 it was realized that it was desirable that rabbit burrows should be destroyed. The Bill provides that property owners will be served with a notice during the simultaneous periods prescribed. It may be argued that some people will be denied the opportunity to make a livelihood in some areas by shooting or trapping rabbits, but the question arises which is the more important from the point of view of the country as a whole—

that erosion should be encouraged by the continued existence of rabbits or whether land should be utilized to the best advantage for sheep grazing or other production in areas which would be most affected. The Leader of the Opposition has had a long experience on the land and realizes the importance of a uniform approach to the extermination of rabbits. Consequently, I support the second reading.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra)—I am pleased to see this legislation introduced, the provisions of which have been carefully worked out. For quite a time it has been sought by councils responsible for the destruction of vermin. That it is necessary has been exemplified hundreds of times. In one instance a man spent large sums on rabbit poisoning, and destroyed all the burrows, but because he had open dams rabbits came from the property of an adjoining landholder, who made no effort to destroy them, but the man who had made every effort was charged because the rabbits were found on his place. However, the prosecution failed, peculiarly enough because the free water was an attraction to the rabbits, over which he had no control.

Under this Bill everyone will have to destroy rabbit burrows, or be subject to prosecution. If everyone applies himself to the law, there will be no rabbits. We had myxomatosis, which did an excellent job, but the experts said it was not a complete answer in itself and that it would be necessary after the rabbit population had been reduced by this disease to take action against those few remaining, which could build up an immunity to the disease. Unfortunately, that advice was not always acted upon and the rabbits showed a tendency to increase.

Action under the Bill following the very heavy destruction by myxomatosis should have a marked effect in keeping down the rabbit population. It has been worked out that a certain number of rabbits will eat as much as a sheep, and considering the countless millions of rabbits we have had in this country it can be realized that they have had a direct impact upon our economy. Some people regret such drastic action being taken against rabbits, because they have provided a source of employment for a number of people for many years. Certainly, their fortune fluctuated with the rise and fall in the value of pelts. I know of people who all their life have maintained themselves and their families by catching rabbits. I have a very great affection for

the draught horse and regret its passing, although I knew it was inevitable, but I have no such regret about the passing of the rabbit. I have much pleasure in supporting the measure, which cannot, if firmly implemented, do anything but good in the agricultural and economic life of the State.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment; Committee's report adopted.

#### CROWN LANDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 8. Page 966.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Acting Leader of the Opposition)—In my area there are not very many Crown lands, but certain lands have been acquired for recreation purposes. This Bill provides the machinery necessary for the Government to cancel proclamations establishing towns that did not develop according to expectations, to acquire the land, and provides necessary safeguards to ensure that no person having a title or interest in the lands acquired shall be prejudiced. It also provides for payment of compensation to those interested in the allotments.

The Minister, in his second reading speech, said that in one town 90 out of 360 blocks were sold, in another 26 out of 130, in another 14 out of 350 and in others only one or two out of about 100. However, he did not mention where these towns are situated although as we are being asked to subscribe to the Bill, we could expect to have this information. Usually when Crown lands are to be resumed or used as roads a map appears on the Notice Board of this Chamber to indicate their location, but that practice has not been followed on his occasion. We have not been told the size of the blocks, although I assume they would be larger than those in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Quirke—Not very much.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—They could be on the Murray—I have no indication. If they were on the Murray they would at least have a reasonable supply of water, and if they have a water supply, were they in a fruitgrowing area or a prospective mining town? Surely we could expect an indication from the Government on why the survey was conducted in the first place, because this must have involved some cost. According to the Minister's speech we can assume the surveys were carried out many years ago but nothing has eventuated.

We have already discussed an important resolution relating to the appointment of a committee to inquire into decentralization. As 14 blocks out of 350 were sold in one town, they must have had some value. The Minister should have indicated why the original expenditure was incurred, because there must have been some history behind it, and these places must have had some potential, or is the land to be resumed because it was not suitable for closer settlement.

As the member for Murray (Mr. Bywaters) contended, we should at least have had some information on where these lands are located. I do not know whether it might not have been possible to establish secondary industries in these proposed townships. Expense must have been involved in surveying the areas, but there is little hope of regaining that expenditure. Those who purchased allotments or who have inherited them will be compensated.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra)—These allotments were part of the original survey of the State. There is nothing sinister in this Bill. It is difficult to appreciate what was originally intended with these allotments but obviously there were wise people in those times who visualized the State's development and made provision for townships throughout the country. Some of the allotments were sold, but in some cases the ownership of them cannot be traced. That happens in country towns today. These areas were surveyed and planned as townships to cater for the future development of the country. Our early legislators provided some of the areas with parklands and with cemetery areas in which no-one was ever buried. Because of the effluxion of time and the development of the State they are no longer necessary and the Bill is designed to reclaim those allotments sold and to compensate the owners. There are some small country towns with parklands attached and I hope that in the administration of this legislation those parklands will not be carelessly sold. Many of them are being leased at present.

Our early legislators also made provision for roads, principally on the boundaries of hundreds. There are many such roads in the Clare district—roads that even a mountain goat could not climb. I would not know how many such roads are provided but they must represent a considerable area of land, which should be put to some use.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—At present they are rubbish dumps.

Mr. QUIRKE—Yes, and rabbit warrens and harbours for noxious weeds.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Many of the township allotments were virtually given to the original owners.

Mr. QUIRKE—And many were not sold. Some people, however, did purchase allotments in respect of which titles were issued. Many of the titles have been lost, but if claimants of these blocks appear they can be recompensed for any acquisition.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson—And at present-day values.

Mr. QUIRKE—I would not mind if my ancestors had acquired a few square miles of these allotments. There is nothing sinister in the Bill and the Vermin Act Amendment Bill we have just considered could well apply to the areas concerned. I support the second reading.

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray)—I support the Bill. It is possibly necessary to reclaim some of this land which is virtually unused. Probably many of those who purchased blocks in the proposed townships are dead and their land has been neglected and is a harbour for noxious weeds. The early legislators revealed foresight in providing for townships in country areas where no doubt they visualized development. At the conclusion of his second reading speech the Minister said that it had nothing to do with the question of decentralization, but I suggest that our early legislators envisaged decentralization. Our forefathers revealed wisdom in allocating certain lands for country townships and it is unfortunate that the country has not developed as they visualized. I agree with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that it would be interesting to know the location of these townships. I have no doubt the Lands Department is capable of administering the provisions of the Bill and will have the State's interests at heart when they acquire the land. Compensation will be paid to those who have inherited it.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga)—This legislation is one method by which the Government is trying to clean up what is obviously wasteful to the State. This land lies unused by anybody, and it is desirable that we try to make some productive use of it, not only by way of roads, but also by way of building blocks. Sometimes these blocks are sold to recover the rates; indeed, sometimes the council cannot even find the owner. The district council of Stirling, which is near the city, has



had to sell building blocks for the non-payment of rates.

I commend the Government for taking steps to clear up what is really the result of the well-laid plans of our forefathers who decided to lay out townships with reserves and streets on the assumption that this country would develop along the lines of the Old Country, from which they came. Our conditions are so totally different, however, that that did not eventuate, nor is it likely to eventuate now. This land, if not resumed by the Crown, will become a harbour for all the troubles that surrounding landholders are heir to. I do not doubt that, if the time ever came when this land was required for the purpose for which it was originally intended, it would still be available and usable to make a township or reserve. By passing this legislation we are not denying posterity anything to which it is entitled.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Will it be sold?

Mr. SHANNON—I hope it will be put to productive use. It will become Crown land and may be leased out on miscellaneous or perpetual lease. It will therefore be put to some good purpose because under the agreement for lease a lessee must conform to the specified conditions of the lease, so we need not fear that the Government of the day will not see to it that the land so resumed will not be put to the maximum possible use.

This Bill is a move to clear up some of our sore spots about which we are prone to criticize local councils. We may say, "The council has an area infested by rabbits and noxious weeds and it is doing nothing about it," but it is not the council's fault, for it does not own the land. Indeed, the owner of the land may not even pay his council rates, therefore this Bill may do something to solve that problem. The Minister and the Government are to be commended for trying to tidy up some unhappy conditions that prevail throughout the State and the Department of Lands is wise to set about the matter in this way.

Mr. HEASLIP (Rocky River)—I, too, support the Bill. There are some derelict townships in my district and to the north of my district. Such areas become a menace to adjacent landholders because these allotments, frequently owned by non-existent people, provide a harbour for rabbits and a breeding ground for noxious weeds that nobody tries to eradicate. Often the council rates are unpaid and the district council resumes the land, but there are derelict buildings falling down. In

many cases the holders of adjoining land would be willing to buy or lease the lands that will become Crown lands on the closing of these towns. They may then become productive lands whereas at present they are a non-productive menace breeding vermin and noxious weeds. I commend the Bill to members.

Mr. KING (Chaffey)—I support the Bill, which I regard as a necessary part of the re-adjustment of the growth of this State and a recognition of a condition that has arisen because of the non-fulfilment of some of the hopes of the people who drew up the original plans. It is also partly the result of the great change that has taken part in the development of South Australia. Many of these towns were first established in the days of the horse and buggy, of the waggon and team, and in those days a day's march by team was perhaps only 10 or 15 miles. Consequently, many country towns have languished because of progress. Today a day's travel by motor car is at least 150 miles, consequently on the West Coast and in the northern part of the State there are a number of these small towns, some of which were never used and some of which had their brief day until changes in the method of land usage and of handling the produce from that land resulted in their decline.

In the meantime, the titles to this land have become valueless and the records are cluttering up the archives and the vaults of the Lands Titles Office. The position should be cleared up as many of these titles have little or no value. This legislation is a step in the right direction and marks a milestone in the development of the State. It will enable us to continue the development that has taken place in the last 100 years.

Mr. GOLDNEY (Gouger)—I support the Bill. Many years ago conditions in the country were quite different from what they are today. Many of our country districts were then in a virgin state and the provisions now being considered were wisely made so that townships might grow. The original provisions were widely used and many country centres benefited as a result. Some of our best country townships grew up as a result of this legislation. In many country towns all the building blocks that were laid out were used, and even privately-owned land adjoining townships was sold as building blocks. I agree that there are many building blocks in the country that have not been used, but which could be put to better use.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart)—This Bill gives a tremendous power to the Government, a power that Parliament, as at present constituted, would not consider giving the Government if it was in respect of anything other than township allotments. However, this power would be very handy for the Government in the acquisition of large estates that could be cut up for closer settlement, but the Government is not prepared to ask Parliament for that power so as to satisfy those who wish to go on the land. If the principle is all right in the case of township building blocks why cannot it be applied for the acquisition of large estates?

The Government will merely have to issue a proclamation, and from the date of that proclamation the land will become Crown lands. The Government does not even have to give notice to anyone that the land will be acquired. I do not think there is any right of appeal under the Bill, though a notice has to be served on owners so that they can claim compensation. I admit that there are places in the north where townships have been surveyed, and where the land may no longer be required for township allotments, but surely some notice should be given to the owners so that they could have a right of appeal. For instance, Yatala Harbour was surveyed, but some people are interested in establishing youth camps and other facilities there. If the Bill is not amended in Committee I shall oppose it.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Power of Minister to resume land set apart as site for a town."

Mr. RICHES—Will the Government consider the suggestion I made during the second reading debate that notice shall be given of any

intention to take over land set apart as township sites so that people interested may have a right of appeal?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—In many cases it would be impossible to give notice to the occupier. In point of fact, many would not be known. If the owners were known, it would be relatively easy to give notice, but the problem in these vacant townships is that the land is of so little value that when the owners have died their executors have not taken out probate. One case came under my notice where the land was in the name of two trustees, both of whom had been deceased 50 years. I do not know how the Minister could give notice in such instances. No proclamation is made unless there is complete agreement that the matter has to be cleared up. The position is one which the Bill is seeking to meet. From an administrative point of view Mr. Riches' suggestion could probably be met. I will suggest to the Minister of Lands that an advertisement be inserted in the local press of the area concerned a month before it is proposed to issue a proclamation so that anyone concerned could have a chance to take action.

Mr. RICHES—The Premier's assurance removes most of my objections. I know that everything he said is true concerning many places in the north, but I also know that the Bill can give the Minister power to take over a whole township.

Clause passed.

Clause 4 and title passed. Bill reported without amendment and Committee's report adopted.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 8.59 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, October 10, at 2 p.m.