

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, August 13, 1959.

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

QUESTIONS.

MEAT PRICES.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Recently I asked the Premier a question about price control of meat, particularly whether grading was possible. The Premier said that grading had been investigated but that no agreement had been reached. Has the Premier noticed the violent fluctuations that have taken place in the abattoirs market in mutton, lamb and beef during the last fortnight or so, both as regards price and quality? In view of that, will he have the matter further examined to see whether it would be possible to introduce a system of grading that would facilitate a more just system of price fixation than is possible under the averaging system?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The question of grading was taken up three or four years ago, and the Government offered to pay the cost of grading meat if we could get some satisfactory method. The suggestion was that we grade meat according to export standards. The Government offered to pay £7,000 to strip brand meat at the abattoirs, but at that time it did not have much support from the consumer and certainly had hostility from the industry. The General Manager of the Government Produce Department at that time (Mr. Rice) was instructed to introduce the system, but after a full investigation he said it would be impossible to do so unless it had the support of the industry and the persons concerned with it, because, without co-operation, its introduction would be impossible. The Government reluctantly dropped the proposal. The system had operated in Queensland, and the general report was that it had operated fairly satisfactorily. I will have the matter further examined, but quite frankly, unless the industry is prepared to co-operate it will be difficult to introduce it with any degree of success.

MANSFIELD PARK FIRE.

Mr. HEASLIP—A report in this morning's *Advertiser*, headed "Faulty Wiring in Temporary Home," states:—

An examination of the Mansfield Park temporary home where five children were burned to death on Monday had disclosed

faulty electrical wiring, the Premier (Sir Thomas Playford) said in the Assembly yesterday.

As I heard the Premier's reply to the question yesterday it did not seem that he said the fire had been caused by faulty wiring in that home. Can he say whether faulty wiring brought about the fire?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—No. I thought I made it quite clear yesterday that an officer of the trust who examined all the connections in the whole of the wiring system had made it plain that in his opinion the fire was not due to an electrical wiring fault. He said there were some extensions that were not approved but that they were generally carried out in a manner which, in his opinion, would not cause any fire. As far as he could see, he did not believe that the wiring was the cause of the fire. Any newspaper report that suggested my reply was that the fire was caused through faulty wiring is not correct.

Mr. LAWN—Yesterday I asked the Premier a question about the recent fire at Mansfield Park. The Premier did not reply to my question, but simply read a report he had obtained from the Electricity Trust. I would like the Premier to reply to my question. I refer to a statement that appeared on the front page of yesterday's "Late Home" edition of the *News*, but not in the "Last" edition. Although this statement does not give any name of the first individual concerned, the *News* claimed that he was a qualified electrician, and I read a paragraph on page 29 concerning a neighbour's complaints about the electrical wiring. Will the Premier assure the House that these two persons will be called before the coronial inquiry to give evidence on oath, and that, between now and the inquiry, some competent qualified electrician will be appointed to examine all the wiring in these houses so that he also may be called to give evidence at the inquiry?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will certainly submit the honourable member's question to the Coroner so that he will be able to get in touch with these people and obtain the information. I am sure the Coroner would be anxious to get any information that would indicate any structural fault if such structural fault existed. I have over a period ordered coronial inquiries into every fire in Housing Trust homes, but I have never had a report of any structural defect in any of them. The coronial inquiries have not elicited any structural faults. No doubt the Coroner will

inquire into this fire. I do not want to pre-judge the matter, but it is so easy for persons who may not have any knowledge to assume immediately that this temporary house was not satisfactory.

A certain amount of politics has entered into this matter. The secretary of one union has always advocated, no doubt for the sake of his union and possibly also for general matters, that temporary houses should be completely reconstructed. He always made a point of giving wide publicity to temporary structures or any frame structures built in this State, but I point out that 80 per cent of houses here are of solid construction. I am pleased that this is so because they are a better class of house, are more permanent and there is less upkeep cost. That is not the position in every State, however. In Queensland only 20 per cent of houses are of solid construction and 80 per cent are timber-frame or of similar type, but it has never been suggested in that State that wooden houses are basically unsafe. In New South Wales and Victoria 40 per cent of the houses are of wooden construction. South Australia is quite out of line with the other States regarding solid construction homes.

Mr. Lawn—I am concerned about the wiring. Will the Government appoint another independent qualified electrician?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The policing of electrical wiring has been left to the Electricity Trust, which is thoroughly competent and completely independent, and before any house can be connected to the supply it must be inspected by it.

Mr. Lawn—Could the trust send an officer through all these houses?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—They have already been inspected; they could not be connected to the supply before being inspected. In many instances, if not all, subsequent inspections have been made. I will refer the question to the Coroner and I am sure that if he can get any competent witness to come forward he will be glad to call him.

PHARMACY TRADING HOURS.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I have been approached by a person claiming to be a representative of a retailers' association who expressed concern about the pharmacies that are trading all night and at weekends, alleging that they are selling non-exempt articles—such as films and patent medicines—after prescribed trading hours. It is claimed that there is a difference

of opinion among the retailers as to whether or not this is permitted. Can the Premier say whether it is a fact that they are not permitted to sell non-exempt lines after the prescribed trading hours?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will have the honourable member's question analysed and give him a complete report as to what constitutes illegal trading under the Early Closing Act.

COOBER PEDY WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. LOVEDAY—In view of the need for an improved water supply at Coober Pedy and the adverse reports of Dr. Deland of the Public Health Department concerning the present system of collecting water from an unfenced area into an underground tank, will the Minister representing the Minister of Mines have a geological survey made in the area to ascertain whether an underground dam could be satisfactorily constructed?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I shall be pleased to have that request forwarded to the Minister. In fact, I believe some surveys have been made of that particular area. I will get the honourable member a report next week.

PRINCES HIGHWAY CROSSING.

Mr. HARDING—Recently I asked the Minister of Works whether he would obtain a report from the Minister of Roads with reference to a dangerous corner at the junction of the Glencoe-Kalangadoo Road and Princes Highway. Has he a reply?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—No, but I will make further inquiries.

PORT PIRIE HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. McKEE—Some weeks ago the Minister of Education informed me that the Education Department was negotiating for the purchase of land adjoining the Port Pirie high school from the corporation. I believe the council is waiting on information from the department as to what area it will require. In view of the influx of students to the school next year and the present overcrowding of classrooms, can the Minister say when the purchase of this land is likely to be finalized and when building will commence?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The Education Department has been in communication with the Port Pirie Corporation concerning the possibility of the department purchasing from the corporation an area of approximately three

acres on which the old power house is located. The site adjoins the Port Pirie high school and is required as an extension of the school grounds. Following a suggestion from the town clerk of Port Pirie, and representations made to me by the honourable member, arrangements have been made for the Assistant Superintendent of High Schools and the Property Officer of the Education Department to visit Port Pirie on Wednesday next, August 19, to discuss matters concerned with the purchase of this property.

RAILWAY CROSSING WARNING DEVICES.

Mr. HALL—Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question concerning the installation of automatic railway crossing warning devices?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—My colleague, the Minister of Railways, has furnished me with the following report from the Railways Commissioner:—

In respect of the level crossings at Port Wakefield and Mallala both level crossings are equipped with the latest pattern warning boards and with "stop" signs, and provided motorists exercise reasonable care and observe the provisions of the Road Traffic Act, not any unusual hazard exists. Accordingly, priority has been given to the installation of automatic warning equipment at level crossings where there is a greater hazard.

TRANSPORT OF FORESTRY APPRENTICES.

Mr. RALSTON—At present Cellulose Australia Limited near Millicent in the South-East makes available transport to its apprentices to bring them to the Adult Education Centre at Mount Gambier where first class facilities are available for their practicable training. I have no doubt that Australian Paper Manufacturers Limited will also play its part in seeing that its apprentices obtain similar advantages in an effort to produce first class fully qualified tradesmen. I understand the Woods and Forests Department has apprentices employed at Mount Burr and Nangwarry, but that no transport is available for them to come to Mount Gambier. If this is so, will the Minister of Forests investigate the position and report to the House on the policy of the department regarding apprenticeship training and making transport available to bring apprentices to the Mount Gambier training centre?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN—I will take up this matter and get a considered reply. I

have not heard of it before, nor do I know whether the apprentices of the Woods and Forests Department have made any approach.

BOOKABIE TANK.

Mr. BOCKELBERG—Can the Minister of Works give any information regarding alterations to the Bookabie tank?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—In April last I approved the employment of a contractor to build a new tank at Bookabie, which, I understand, has been satisfactorily completed from the point of view of time and quality of the work. The district engineer has a gang of men waiting to erect a new windmill and change from the old tank to the new, but he has deferred doing this as it would throw the old mill out of commission at a time when many landholders are carrying water from that point. He has not authorized the work to be done, hoping that in the meantime some good rains might fall that would result in at least a temporary cessation of water carrying from this point. He is ready to do the work when it can be done without interfering with the existing supplies which at present are essential.

PORT AUGUSTA COURT SEATING.

Mr. RICHES—The member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday) has complained to me that his constituents, when called for jury service at the Port Augusta circuit court session, find the seats in the courthouse most uncomfortable. They are required to sit for long hours and some find it quite an endurance test. I have had similar complaints from people of my own district who have been called for jury service. Will the Premier call for a report on the possibility of providing some kind of upholstery for the seats used by jurors, some of whom are elderly? In any case, as it is an honorary service, they should not have to endure discomfort.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will refer the matter to the Attorney-General.

MENTAL CARE: DR. CAWTE'S REPORT.

Mrs. STEELE—Has the report submitted by the Deputy Superintendent of the Enfield Receiving Home been studied by the Government, and is it intended to implement the recommendations contained therein?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The report was released for perusal of honourable members, but not for publication. It was one report that the Government received in connection with this matter from one

officer. Honourable members asked whether they would be permitted to peruse it, and I stated that I did not propose to have it made a public document but was prepared to allow honourable members to peruse it in accordance with the Government's usual practice to let them know what are the issues in various departments. Incidentally, some officers of the department quite as qualified as that particular officer do not agree with some features of the report. Some of the matters reported have already been acted upon. All the matters have been considered and some are still to be acted upon, if considered necessary.

It was a pity that an officer's report to the Government should become a matter of public controversy. Honourable members will appreciate that officers should be able to report to the Government without having their reports made the subject of a public controversy, for an officer should state fully his views in these matters. If I stated a report was available to honourable members for perusal, I should regard it as not being issued for publication. If it is for publication, it is laid on the table and then everybody can see it. Honourable members will realize there is some advantage in all Government officers being prepared to report fully on various matters without there being a controversy, with various features of their reports being debated in the press.

WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT.

Mr. QUIRKE—Can the Minister of Lands tell me how many single-unit properties have been purchased under the War Service Land Settlement Agreement since the inception of the agreement in the two categories of (a) dry lands and (b) irrigation; and, secondly, how many single-unit properties have been purchased in both categories in the two years ended June 30, 1959?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Replying to the first part of the question, the figures are dry lands 78 and irrigation 30, making a total of 108. Properties purchased during the two years ended June 30, 1959, were dry lands 17 and irrigation 3, making 20 in all.

PARINGA CAUSEWAY.

Mr. KING—Has the Minister of Works further information on the progress of plans in connection with the Paringa causeway between Renmark and Paringa?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have a reply from the Minister of Roads that the sizes of the openings for the various alternative sites

have been agreed upon by the Commissioner of Highways, the Engineer-in-Chief, and the Chief Engineer of the Railways Department. After deciding these matters a survey has now been completed and the designs of the various alternatives have been investigated to ascertain the most economical. The investigations are well forward and it is expected that it will be possible to complete the designs in the near future and that contracts will be let some time during this year.

FARE REFUNDS TO PENSIONERS.

Mr. FRED WALSH—I have been questioned by some pensioners who are resident in my district and who are required from time to time to attend the Royal Adelaide Hospital as outpatients. They say that some receive refunds of taxi fares and that others do not. Generally speaking, they are dissatisfied with the attitude of officers responsible for dealing with claims made to the hospital. Can the Premier say whether refunds of taxi fares are made in special circumstances to pensioners attending public hospitals as outpatients, what are the conditions and practices followed in the refund of fares to pensioners travelling on public transport to hospitals, and will hospital officers, whose duty it is to attend to these claims, extend the utmost courtesy to pensioner claimants?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Replying to the first part of the question, the Government does not believe it is necessary for taxis to be provided to take patients to hospitals, but in some instances the Hospitals Department has paid the fee on the ground that an ambulance has not been available. The Government subsidizes ambulance services and at present is not in a position to provide taxi fares for pensioners to be taken to our institutions. That practice will be limited to the utmost extent. There is no reason why an ambulance should not take a patient to a hospital if it is necessary for him to go by a special conveyance. Regarding the second part of the question, after much discussion with the Auditor-General it was decided that the simplest way to give assistance to pensioners going for hospital treatment was for the Hospital Department to pay cash when refunding the fare paid, and instructions were given to that effect. I would be surprised if any hospital officer has not been courteous, but I will inquire into the allegation. Bearing on this matter is the alteration in the concession, which I announced to the House last week, to be given to pensioners travelling

on trams and trains in the metropolitan area. Cabinet has now approved the proposals, and I will be able to announce to the House next week the methods that will be used. The matter has been finalized with both the Railways Department and the Municipal Tramways Trust. The report could have been available today, but I omitted to put it in my Parliamentary case. If the Leader of the Opposition or any other member asks a question on this subject next week the reply I shall give will be set out in *Hansard* and all members can then see the procedure to be followed.

Mr. Fred Walsh—Does "public transport" include public transport run by private ownership?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—It means transport which is provided by the Government—the Railways and the Municipal Tramways Trust—but not otherwise.

Later:

Mr. O'HALLORAN—The Premier said that he hoped to have information on Tuesday on the details that have been agreed to regarding concession fares to pensioners on public transport when travelling in the metropolitan area. I understand he now has the information.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Director-General of Medical Services has provided the following information:—

The following information concerning the free transport scheme in operation for pensioners attending Royal Adelaide Hospital or other Government hospitals is submitted in order that the Premier can reply to the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition on July 30, 1959.

All pensioners and their dependants under 16 years of age and persons in needy circumstances required to attend a Government hospital for treatment as outpatients can, on application at the hospital, be reimbursed the actual cost of the return fare incurred in travelling to and from the hospital for treatment on vehicles owned by the Municipal Tramways Trust or on transport owned by the Government of the State. This concession is available to pensioners and needy persons, either metropolitan or country areas, provided they:

- (a) attend the hospital for either general or specialist outpatient treatment;
- (b) travel on transport supplied by the Municipal Tramways Trust or the Government; and
- (c) produce a pension authority or an advice from the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department.

AREA SCHOOL FOR ROBERTSTOWN.

Mr. HAMBOUR—Last Monday the member for Burra and I visited Robertstown, which has

a school adjoining our respective boundaries, with a view to trying to alleviate the difficulty of transporting children for secondary education. It is the desire of the school committee and parents at Robertstown to have a higher primary school there. I know this matter is surrounded with difficulties, but I ask the Minister whether he would send a competent officer to Robertstown to investigate all the possibilities and the circumstances surrounding the request?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes, I shall be very pleased to send Mr. Whitburn, the Assistant Superintendent of Primary Schools, who is a very competent and experienced officer.

KANGAROO INN AREA SCHOOL.

Mr. CORCORAN—I have received a letter from the secretary of the Kangaroo Inn area school committee asking whether any finality has been reached concerning the establishment of this school. The Minister of Education advised me previously that he approved the establishment of this school in principle. The relevant parts of the letter I have received are as follows:—

I write on behalf of the Kangaroo Inn area school committee. A year ago this committee was formed and canvassed the district to find that parents wished to send 156 children of school-going age to an area school at Kangaroo Inn. These children have 103 younger brothers and sisters. You will remember that on April 14, the Hon. the Minister of Education advised you that he approved in principle the establishment of this school. The above committee has selected sites, with the landowners' approval, and forwarded that information to Mr. Whitburn (Assistant Superintendent of Primary Schools). It was moved that we ask you to support us firmly in getting the school as soon as possible.

Can the Minister tell me anything about the possibility of this school being ultimately established, and when?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—No finality has been reached as to when the proposed school can be established, but following on representations made to me by the honourable member and by various interested local persons the request for the area school at Kangaroo Inn has been investigated by the Assistant Superintendent of Primary Schools (Mr. Whitburn) and by the District Inspector of Schools (Mr. Whitelaw). The reports that I have received state that the establishment of a primary school with secondary classes is necessary to serve the needs of children in the hundreds of Bray, Smith, Fox, Symon and Kennion. This area is almost entirely devoted to soldier settlement.

The children concerned attend primary schools on the circumference of the area at Robe, Beedy Creek, Mount Bruce, Furner and Beachport.

I have been informed that the children concerned could be transported to a school on a site near the Gillap Station over very good roads and the maximum travelling distance would be 24 miles. Such a school, when established, would probably have a primary enrolment of 210 and a secondary enrolment of 50. In view of the numbers of children concerned and the fact that most of them at present have to board away from home to obtain secondary education, I have approved in principle that an area school at Kangaroo Inn should be established at some time in the future, but I am not in a position to supply any more detailed information as to when it is likely to be established.

TEATREE GULLY PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Mr. LAUCKE—Can the Minister of Education say whether negotiations which have been proceeding for the purchase of land at Teatree Gully for a proposed new primary school have as yet been successful?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—No. A site which was selected after a cursory examination for a new primary school at Teatree Gully was not proceeded with as two other sites were considered to be better. An inspection of these sites has been made by officers of the Education Department and of the Architect-in-Chief's Department, and an approach has been made to the owner to ascertain whether he is prepared to sell an area of approximately eight acres, if approval is given for purchase. Arrangements were made by the Education Department to meet the owner to discuss requirements but, unfortunately, he became ill and has had to have an emergency operation. It is hoped that he will be well enough to discuss matters within the next few weeks.

NORWOOD HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked recently regarding painting and tar paving at the Norwood high school?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—My colleague, the Minister of Works, has supplied me with the following information:—

The painting of the school buildings will be carried out in approximately two months' time.

Concerning tar paving, the report states:—
Authority has been given to carry this work out, but it is uneconomic and undesirable to

do the work until after the end of the winter. However, the matter will be investigated to see whether some amelioration of the conditions can be effected.

TRANSPORT CONTROL BOARD LEVY.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Yesterday I asked the Premier whether the levy on tourists travelling by bus to the Flinders Ranges was on the total amount paid by them for transport and accommodation or only on the cost of transport. Has the Premier a reply?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have been informed that the levy applies to the transport and not to the accommodation.

BOOK SALESMEN.

Mr. SHANNON—My question relates to a most improper practice being pursued by the Australian Educational Foundation (Southern) Pty. Ltd. whose headquarters are in Melbourne. I have two letters related to this subject and a copy of some of the conditions this company imposes on the unfortunate purchasers of their encyclopaedia, and I desire to read them to the House.

The SPEAKER—Is the material relevant to the explanation?

Mr. SHANNON—It is essential if the Minister is to understand the complaint about this company's activities. Salesmen of this company approach householders, usually the woman of the house because the husband is at work—and it would seem that, as the complaints I have received are all from women, the approach to the woman of the house is intentional—and sell them encyclopaedias. Mrs. Sillett, of Heathfield, wrote to the company stating that the representations made to her by the salesman were inaccurate and asking to be relieved of her contract. She received the following reply:—

We acknowledge your letter requesting cancellation of your contract to purchase the *Australian Junior Encyclopaedia* and the enrolment of your family in the Advisory Service. We draw your attention to the clauses, duly signed by yourself, which state:—

"I agree that this is a definite order and is not subject to cancellation by me.

" "The books are not supplied on approval and cannot be returned." "This order form contains all the terms and conditions of enrolment and no representation or condition is made or given unless herein stated." "I understand there is no connection with any school or Education authority and that this work is not a compulsory text book for schools."

In view of this, we are unable to consider your request and must insist on the terms of the contract being observed and payments made regularly when due.

We trust that you will co-operate in this respect, as failure to do so will mean immediate legal action for recovery of the whole of the balance outstanding and this can only result in putting you to additional expense.

Upon receipt of that letter, dated July 22, Mr. Sillett telephoned me at my home one evening and I suggested, in effect, that he return the books and write explaining why he did so. The letter he wrote to the company was as follows:—

I am herein returning to you the books, the *Australian Junior Encyclopaedia*, and all other papers received from your firm. As stated in my wife's former letter, these books and the enrolment of my family in the advisory service were sold to us by the direct misrepresentation of your salesman. Under the circumstances we consider that therefore no contract between the Australian Educational Foundation and ourselves, the undersigned, can or does exist. As we deem this to be the case, we demand therefore the return of our deposit.

The letter was signed "R. C. Sillett" and "I. Sillett," husband and wife.

Mr. Hutchens—They are not orphans. There are plenty of others.

Mr. SHANNON—I thought it wise to publicize this matter and I think I am justified in naming some people—indeed, they merit some public obloquy. The two salesmen operating in the Heathfield area were R. Williams and D. Frost. I have shown the Minister the form containing the conditions of purchase of this company, but the letter sent to Mrs. Sillett by the company's Melbourne office manager is virtually a reiteration of it. Unfortunately, I could not decipher the office manager's signature, otherwise I would have given him too the benefit of some publicity. Obviously the unfortunate person ordering the books does not understand or does not see the conditions of purchase. One of the clauses Mrs. Sillett signed was:—

I understand there is no connection with any school or education authority and that this work is not a compulsory text book for schools.

This was immediately after she had been told by the salesman that these books were recommended by certain headmasters and teachers of schools. The salesman used names in canvassing for these orders in order to create a sense of respectability and encourage people to buy. Will the Minister of Education state what steps his department can take to cut short this undesirable activity? I do not know whether legal action will be taken by the company against the people whom I have recommended to return the books, but if it does will the Minister consider making some form of

assistance available to the people who, in each instance, are working people employed in the city but living in the hills? I think we should give them some legal assistance if they are hauled before the court in an attempt to force them to carry out the terms of this iniquitous contract.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—As the honourable member and other members are aware, I made a fairly lengthy and strong statement on this matter a couple of weeks ago in this House. I also quoted at length from a circular letter which the Director of Education, after consultation with me, had forwarded to the headmaster of every school in the State. Considerable publicity was given to that statement but, I think, perhaps not sufficient in the circumstances because I have heard of numerous instances, similar to those referred to by the honourable member, having taken place since then. The Director of Education, the Deputy Director, several of the principal officers of the Education Department, and I, have received numerous complaints, both verbal and in writing, from a large number of householders—mainly women—from various parts of the metropolitan area and nearby country centres concerning the sales methods adopted by these salesmen. In my opinion there is no doubt that the salesmen employed by this company have engaged in a practice of reckless and reprehensible misrepresentation. The general tenor of the numerous complaints received from householders is that salesmen say or imply that they represent the Education Department. I could quote letters similar to those quoted by the honourable member from many householders, particularly women, who claim that these salesmen say specifically, "We are from the Education Department."

Mr. Lawn—Could not the Government prosecute these salesmen?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Perhaps the honourable member will permit me to make my point. What is more, in several cases, they have specifically named principal officers of the Education Department and also some other prominent public servants as having sponsored them and their visit. These statements, of course, have been indignantly and truthfully repudiated by these officers, who say they have had no connection with the salesmen or the company and that this is the first they have heard of the matter. I have no doubt that these statements have been made and are being repeated with reckless abandon by these salesmen.

Following on my previous statement—and at my request—Mr. Griggs, Deputy Director of Education, whom all members know as a very able, experienced, responsible and respected public servant, interviewed the general manager of the company, one Mr. Boas, who was accompanied by a Mr. Vider. He reports as follows:—

Mr. Boas informed me that he himself was very concerned with certain misrepresentations that had been made by certain salesmen employed by his firm. He had come to Adelaide to investigate some complaints. He informed me that at least four salesmen had been dismissed following investigations of complaints made. He stated that he had a staff of 30 men employed in South Australia, and that 1,800 families were visited each week. The salesmen carried a copy of an extract published in the *South Australian Teachers' Journal*.

This was an extremely flattering review published in the March, 1959, issue of the *Teachers' Journal*.

Mr. O'Halloran—Do you know who wrote it?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I take it it was the editor of the journal. I read it and it is a general review in very flattering terms and great use is made of it by the salesmen. They have had it reprinted in very large and imposing type and it is headed "South Australian Teachers' Journal—the Official Organ of the South Australian Institute of Teachers," and there follows, of course, this review. Mr. Griggs' report goes on as follows:—

Mr. Boas undertakes to instruct all his salesmen that they were not in any way to suggest or imply that they were connected with the Education Department. He requested that his Adelaide representative be informed immediately should any further complaint be received.

Since then Mr. Griggs has received a letter from Mr. Boas, in which, amongst other things, he states:—

In conformity with our undertaking we have issued the following instruction to all representatives:—

1. That at no time must any representative convey or infer that this company has any connection with the Education Department.
2. That any representative found committing such a breach will be summarily dismissed.

I repeat that the Director of Education, the Deputy Director, all other responsible officers of the Education Department, and I, strongly repudiate the statement or the suggestion that this company or its salesmen are in any way representative of the Education Department or in any way associated with it. I did not know

them until these recent statements were made and I indignantly repudiate these suggestions. I do not know what further I can do as Minister of Education.

Mr. Shannon—Would Mr. Boas be prepared to cancel the contracts improperly secured?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I am not answerable for him or for his large number of salesmen, but I am prepared to take the matter up and seek advice from the Crown Solicitor whether anything further can be done because I am very much concerned about the large numbers of women who are being exploited in this matter by completely irresponsible misrepresentation made to them at their homes, in the absence of their menfolk, as a result of which they unwittingly sign these written contracts.

LEAVING HONORS COURSES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked last week regarding students now attending the Marion high school and wishing to take Leaving Honors courses in 1960?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—With regard to students now attending the Marion high school and wishing to take Leaving Honors courses in 1960 there will be no departure from the policy adopted for 1959. This has been worked quite satisfactorily. Those students whose homes or whose boarding addresses are in the Marion zone, west of the South Road, are directed to the Brighton high school for Leaving Honors, whereas those whose addresses are east of the South Road are directed to the Unley high school. Where special transport difficulties arise, for example with students from Port Noarlunga and Christies Beach, the directing officer uses his discretion and directs such students to the Adelaide boys' high school or to the Adelaide girls' high school, as the case may be. To enable early consideration to be given to such special cases as those referred to by the honourable member and several others, and to make the best use of available specialist teaching staff, students desiring Leaving Honors courses for 1960 are requested to submit provisional application forms for enrolment by October 31 of the year prior to enrolment.

TRANSPORT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN.

Mr. HAMBOUR—Has the Minister of Works a reply from the Minister of Roads to my question about transport of school children?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—My colleague, the Minister of Roads, has now furnished me with the following report from the Commissioner of Highways:—

Pending the findings of the public inquiry into the recent sinking of the Kingston ferry, and the operation of River Murray ferries, district councils were requested to instruct ferrymen to load a passenger bus with cars only. If the district council of Morgan considers it necessary, they could arrange for the ferryman to give priority to the Morgan-Waikerie school bus.

KINGOONYA SCHOOL.

Mr. LOVEDAY—At Kingoonya primary school a number of drums of Colas have been lying around since 1957 and some of them have leaked considerably. I understand they were placed there to seal part of the school yard. Another matter which needs attention is the installation of septic tanks, there being an ample water supply. At present sanitary arrangements are covered by the pan and pit system which is quite unsatisfactory. Would the Minister have these two matters inquired into and submit a report as to when they are likely to be attended to?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I shall be very pleased to do so.

DEMOLITION OF HOMES.

Mr. LAWN—In yesterday's *News* a paragraph appeared relating to the Governor's Speech at the opening of the New South Wales Parliament the day before. It read as follows:—

The New South Wales Government is planning to control the demolition of habitable dwellings. The Governor, Sir Eric Woodward, said this in opening State Parliament today. He said the Government would make appropriate provision for dealing with these demolitions.

Will the Premier submit the matter of controlling the demolition of habitable dwellings to Cabinet for consideration with a view to the possible introduction in this House of similar legislation?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Legislation dealing with this matter was in operation in this State for a considerable period, but was discontinued when it was found that it did not contribute anything to the general welfare of the community. No house is demolished unless a full price is paid for it, and at present there is no difficulty in getting another house built because ample materials and labour are available. Legislation of this type would only inflict a hardship on a person

who might have a site used for housing that is more valuable as a factory site or for some other purpose. I am sure that amendments to the housing control Act this year will not contain such a provision.

COUNTRY ELECTRICITY CHARGES.

Mr. LAUCKE—Has the Premier a reply to my recent question in which I asked that the Electricity Trust investigate the possibility of introducing an all-purpose tariff for power and light used on farms?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The assistant manager of the Electricity Trust has made the following report:—

The Electricity Trust is continuously reviewing its tariff structure with the object of simplifying and improving tariffs for the various classes of consumers. In the case of farms the matter is complex because of the diverse usage of electricity, both in type and amount of consumption. However, the question of whether simpler tariffs can be devised for this class of consumer is one of the matters being investigated and if this investigation reveals that any action can be taken this will be done, either as a particular case or on the occasion of the next general review of tariffs.

STANDARDIZATION OF SCHOOL BOOKS.

Mr. RALSTON—At a recent conference held at Penola of delegates from primary school welfare committees in the South-East the subject of text books used in primary schools was fully discussed, and it was decided that they should be standardized as soon as possible. Parents are faced with costs for books that vary not only in the same grade from year to year but in the same grade from school to school in the same year. As this is a contentious matter, will the Minister of Education obtain a full report on the department's policy regarding standardization of text books, especially bearing in mind the aspects raised by my question?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—The whole question of standardization of text books is a vexed one that has given me a lot of thought and worry during the last few years. I have had numerous discussions with the Director of Education, the Deputy Director, and the Superintendent, and there is a divergence of opinion among them. I am very largely on the side of the parents because I think it is far too expensive for them to pay for so many changes of text books, I think unnecessarily, but on the other hand the Education Department, quite rightly from its point of view, wants to give as much freedom and flexibility as possible to members of the teaching staff so that they are not tied down to

extreme standardization. During the last six months or so, after consultation between the Director and myself, the matter was referred to the curriculum boards of the various primary and secondary schools and they are at present investigating the matter. Prompted by the honourable member's question, I shall have a further discussion with the Director of Education because I am anxious to get some finality this year so that if there are any changes they should be ready by the beginning of the next school year.

SEATON RAILWAY CROSSING.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Has the Minister of Works obtained a reply from the Minister of Railways to a question I asked last week relating to the Seaton railway crossing?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The Minister of Railways has furnished me with the following report from the Railways Commissioner:—

Factors which contribute to the safe passage by road vehicles over level crossings may be enumerated, in order, as under:—

- (a) the skill and care of the driver;
- (b) the observance of rules prescribed in the Road Traffic Act;
- (c) the aids furnished by the Railways Department in the form of signs, with or without the addition of automatic warning equipment.

The aids installed at the Tapleys Road level crossing over the Grange line comprise standard warning boards supplemented by flashing light signals automatically actuated. Experience has shown that, at crossings over single lines, such signals provide a useful aid to road users in detecting the approach of trains. The signals are regularly tested and are maintained in good working order. They were operating normally at the time of the fatal accident referred to. It must be emphasized, however, that devices of this sort presuppose that drivers of road vehicles will exercise due care and comply with the rules prescribed in the Road Traffic Act relating to level crossings.

HOUSING TRUST RENTAL HOMES.

Mr. RYAN—Has the Premier ascertained from the Housing Trust, in response to a question I asked recently, the number of homes to be built for rental purposes in the metropolitan electoral districts during this financial year?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—During the year ending June 30, 1960, the Housing Trust expects to build approximately 300 rental houses in metropolitan electoral districts, and they will be situated in the electoral districts of Enfield and Edwardstown. This proposal does not include flats erected under the trust's various flats schemes or rental houses to be erected at Elizabeth.

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ABOLITION OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Mr. LAWN—Yesterday's *News* contained a paragraph as follows:—

The Governor also said that a referendum of the N.S.W. people would be taken to determine whether the Legislative Council should remain part of the legislature or be abolished. Will the Premier of this State submit to Cabinet for consideration the question of whether there should be a referendum in South Australia on the abolition of the Legislative Council in this State?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Again I assure the honourable member that the Government will not take action similar to that taken in New South Wales.

Mr. Lawn—We are always last.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—In point of fact, we are always first.

Mr. Lawn—Never yet!

PERSONAL EXPLANATION:

DR. CAWTE'S REPORT.

Mr. JENNINGS—In reply to a question from the member for Burnside, the Premier deprecated that the recent report by Dr. Cawte, Deputy Superintendent, Enfield Receiving House, had been made the subject of public discussion. I was one member who used material from Dr. Cawte's report in this House; I was not the only one, but I speak only for myself now. After I had used the material, not in the form of quotations, certain newspaper men saw me and I showed them a full copy of what I had said and notes of what I intended to say on this subject when I had the opportunity. I assure the Premier and the House that whilst that report was in my possession it was never out of my possession.

UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE COUNCIL.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD moved—

That three members of the House be appointed, by ballot, to the Council of the University of Adelaide, as provided by the University of Adelaide Act, 1935-1950.

Motion carried.

A ballot having been held, Messrs. Dunstan, Heaslip and Laucke were declared elected.

CONSTITUTION 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 object of this Bill is to make express provision that women are not disqualified by

reason of sex or marriage from being elected to, or sitting or voting as a member of, either House of the State Parliament.

Clause 3 accordingly provides for the insertion into the State Constitution Act of a new section so providing. As honourable members are aware, some doubts were expressed during the recent election period as to the eligibility of women to sit as members of either House and, in fact, the question was raised as a matter of law following the nomination of women candidates. The legal proceedings were indecisive. Two of the candidates concerned were elected and, in order to remove any legal doubts that might be considered to exist regarding the validity of their election, the proposal in the Bill is that it shall be deemed to have come into operation on January 1 of this year, a date prior in time to the time of issue of the writ for the election.

Honourable members must be proud of the fact that South Australia was one of the first parts of the British Commonwealth to give electoral suffrage to women, but I do not think it was ever contemplated that there would be legal quibbling regarding it. However, this matter has been raised and in order to decide it express provision is made in the Bill.

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

HONEY MARKETING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Agriculture)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill proposes to extend the operations of the Honey Marketing Act to June 30, 1964. Honourable members will recall that when this legislation was first introduced it was contingent on a favourable vote by producers, that is, beekeepers who had 10 or more colonies. Following on this, in 1953 a further extension was made of the Act. During the passage of the Bill I, as a private member, successfully moved an amendment providing that not less than 100 producers could petition the Minister for a poll on the future continuance of the board. A petition was not to be presented less than two years after the holding of a poll. On one occasion since, in 1956, a petition was presented, and a poll was duly held. The producers voted in favour of the continuance of the Act. It is considered that the safeguards mentioned above provide a fair

opportunity for any group of producers who are not satisfied to assert their rights to be free of the Act.

Since I have been in my present office I do not recall anyone in the industry asking for repeal of the Act, and I am satisfied that the majority of producers want to retain it. If that is a wrong view, the remedy rests with the producers.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I understand that the producers wish the Act to be continued, as provided in the Bill; therefore, I see no objection to its passing. We on this side of the House believe in orderly marketing, which the primary producers want. In this case the producers have favoured it in a ballot and I trust that the Bill will pass.

Mr. QUIRKE (Burra)—There is a condition attached to the marketing of honey with which I do not agree. In its future activities the board should review the possibility of people being able to get the quality of honey they want to buy. In the interests of orderly marketing it has been the practice to blend honey. Top grade honey is blended with honey that is not quite top grade, and the result is an f.a.q. sample, which is sold commercially in shops in the metropolitan area. I do not agree with that practice. If people want to purchase top grade honey and to pay the price they should not be compelled to accept an f.a.q. sample. Orderly marketing is one thing, but to reduce top grade honey to an f.a.q. sample in the interests of such marketing is not my idea of the way to achieve it. I endorse the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition, and those made by the Minister of Agriculture in his explanation, that the honey producers desire a continuance of the board, but as a representative of a number of honey producers and one who has some knowledge of the industry and of the requirements of people who purchase honey, I urge the board to alter its policy and provide for at least two grades—the f.a.q. sample, and the top grade. I have never agreed that we do any good to an industry by bringing the quality of any product down, even in the interests of orderly marketing.

The Honey Board gives licences to producers, particularly, and some others, to sell first grade honey. We can obtain that first grade honey from people along the roads who pay a toll to the Honey Board for the right to sell that honey. However, that only obtains in country areas, usually where the honey is produced.

whereas in the metropolitan area such honey is not usually available or is completely unavailable. I trust that in its future operations the board will urgently consider the necessity of supplying people with what they want and for what they are prepared to pay. With those reservations I support the second reading.

Mr. HARDING (Victoria)—I support the continuance of this legislation. I have been the chairman of the board since its inception, and I wholeheartedly support it from the producers' angle. The member for Burra objects to the blending of honey, but I do not object to such blending.

Mr. Quirke—I do not object to the blending of honey.

Mr. HARDING—Butter is a commodity that is blended, and I do not object to that. Honey is not necessarily blended down. What people call low grade honey is the most valuable honey medicinally. The member for Burra said that it was impossible to obtain straight lines of honey, but I point out that in the diningroom in this building we can get straight line honey, and it is possible to obtain it in this city. I defend the policy of the board in blending honey. Australia has some 300-odd types of eucalypts, and each provides a different type of honey. It is impossible in this State to market straight lines of honey, that is, to give any continuity of marketing, because of the large variety of types. In my opinion—and in the opinion of the huge majority of beekeepers—there is only one way to maintain a continuity of a blend of honey on the local market, and that is by blending honey, in the same way as we blend butter. If we were to market butter throughout the State as lucerne butter or clover butter we would get nowhere.

The housewives and overseas importers of honey desire a continuity of supply and a continuity of blend. I have no hesitation in stating that the beekeepers in this State desire a continuation of the board. The only way to carry on satisfactorily is to market all honey, and in marketing all honey we must market a blend of honey. The board has always kept unpalatable honey from the table, and will always do that. If honey is really unpalatable it is graded and set aside, and can only be sold as manufacturing grade honey. The honey which is sold in Adelaide and throughout the State has never been of a higher quality, and the consumption per head in this State has never been higher, than it is today.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Duration of Act."

Mr. QUIRKE—In the second reading debate I made some statements which were contradicted by the member for Victoria. My vote in support of this Bill was contingent upon the recognition of certain factors that I put forward, one of which was the blending of honey. I do not disagree with the blending of honey. Blending is necessary, but I want all the people in the metropolitan area to be able to say what type of honey they wish to purchase, and if they wish to pay a higher price for the very top grade honey they should be able to do so. That was the essence of my support for this Bill, and I trust that when it is passed the board will consider my remarks in that regard. I repudiate any suggestion that I am against the blending of honey. The quality of blended honey is good, but there is better honey than what is generally put on the market as blended honey, and I think the people of the State should have the right to purchase that honey.

Clause passed.

Clause 4 and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment; Committee's report adopted.

EXCHANGE OF LAND (HUNDRED OF NOARLUNGA) BILL.

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to enable the Catholic Church Endowment Society and the South Australian Housing Trust to effect an exchange of land in the hundred of Noarlunga. The Roman Catholic Church holds section 616A in the hundred of Noarlunga. The land is 20 acres in area and was granted to the church as glebe land in 1851. The grant to the land has been lost and, although exhaustive search has been made, it appears that the grant was never registered in the General Registry Office. The only records relating to the grant are found in some Government dockets. The land is now administered by the Catholic Church Endowment Society, which is a body created by the church to administer its land holdings. Section 616A is in close proximity to the site of the oil refinery to be constructed nearby and abuts land acquired by the trust in the vicinity.

As part of the negotiations for the establishment of the refinery, it was agreed that the trust would provide houses for refinery employees, and from 300 to 400 houses will be needed for this purpose. In order to meet the housing needs which will arise from the industrial development which can be expected after the refinery is in operation, the trust has purchased over 2,000 acres of land near Christies Beach. For the time being, housing development will be limited to the western part of the trust holding where the 300 to 400 houses needed for the refinery will be built. At some future time, however, and as industrial development proceeds, it can be expected that a large town will be created by the trust.

When the trust develops large housing areas, it is the practice to make available to religious denominations areas for churches and schools, and the Roman Catholic Church frequently obtains land from the trust for these purposes. When the trust proceeds with large scale housing development at Christies Beach, the Roman Catholic Church will, as usual, need its church and school sites. Whilst section 616A, the present holding of the church, is of little value for its present purposes, it can be valuable if used for industrial development after the establishment of the oil refinery. Accordingly, the church and the trust consider that it would be mutually beneficial if section 616A were exchanged for an equivalent area in the future new town to be erected by the trust. A Bill to enable this to be done is necessary, firstly, because the land grant to section 616A is lost and secondly, because the grant is of glebe land, that is, land held as part of the property of an ecclesiastical benefice. The present practice is not to grant land as glebe land.

The Bill has been suggested by the trust with the approval of His Grace the Archbishop. It provides that the Governor may issue a grant to the trust of the fee simple in section 616A, upon the Minister of Lands being satisfied that the trust and the Catholic Church Endowment Society have agreed that, in exchange for section 616A, the trust will, at some future time to be mutually agreed upon, transfer to the society 20 acres of land in the area held by the trust near Christies Beach. The land to be transferred by the trust will be decided upon by the parties in the future and may be in one or more parcels of land to a total of 20 acres. The actual land to be transferred to the society and the time of transfer will, therefore, be determined according to the requirements of the church at the relevant time. The Bill is a hybrid Bill

within the meaning of Joint Standing Orders on Private Bills and accordingly, if read a second time, will be referred to a Select Committee.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Electoral Act, 1929-1955. Read a first time.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to amend section 73 of the Electoral Act, which entitles certain specified electors to apply for postal vote certificates and postal ballot papers, by adding to the list of such persons members of enclosed religious orders. The effect of the amendment would be to enable members of such orders to vote by post in the same way as electors who are away, ill, or infirm. The reason for the amendment will be apparent to honourable members who will be aware of the fact that there are certain religious orders, the members of which, upon entry, take vows to abide by the constitution or rules of the order, which preclude them from leaving the precincts.

As the Electoral Act now stands there is involved a conflict between the duty of these people to the State, which obliges them to go out to a polling place to record their votes, and their religious duty which precludes them from leaving the precincts of the order. This is an unfortunate situation, since it is not the desire of these orders or their members to avoid their obligations to the State, and it is the view of the Government that the way to get them out of an embarrassing position is to enable them to take advantage of the provisions of the electoral law covering postal voting. I might add, for the information of honourable members, that, so far as the Government is aware, there is only one religious order in the State whose strict enclosure precludes them from leaving their institution, namely, the Order of the Carmelite Nuns at Glen Osmond, of whom there are 19.

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

STATUTES AMENDMENT (PUBLIC SALARIES) BILL.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Agent-General Act,

1901-1955, the Audit Act, 1921-1957, the Police Regulation Act, 1952-1955, the Public Service Act, 1936-1958, and the Industrial Code, 1920-1958, and for other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It provides for increases in salaries of certain public officers whose remuneration is fixed by Act of Parliament. Honourable members are aware that on June 1 of this year the Public Service Board reclassified the salaries of officers within the Public Service, prescribing a scale of general increases ranging from £9 to £284. The reclassification was gazetted and the Government has been paying the rates prescribed as from and including April 1 of this year, being the date fixed by the board as the date from which the reclassified salaries should operate.

There are, however, some officers whose salaries are fixed by statute and who cannot share in the general increase until the relevant statutes are amended. These officers include the Agent-General, the Auditor-General, the Commissioner of Police and the Public Service Commissioner, whose salaries were last fixed in 1957. Since then there have been cost of living increases, amounting to £80 a year and the general increases of this year which, in the case of the salaries of these officers, would amount to £284, making a total of £364.

It is accordingly proposed in this Bill to increase the salaries of the officers whom I

have named by £364 each as from April 1, 1959. Additionally, there are the President and Deputy President of the Industrial Court who received an increase last year, but in order to bring them into line with the Public Service generally it is necessary to provide for a further increase now. In the case of the President the amount is £325 and in the case of the Deputy President, £275. All of the officers concerned will thus receive substantially similar treatment to that accorded to members of the Public Service who are governed by the board's reclassification.

The Bill also contains a provision concerning the salaries of the South Australian Railways Commissioner and the Commissioner of Highways whose salaries are by law required to be fixed by the Governor and not the Public Service Board. The Government considers it just that they should now receive increases based on the last scale laid down by the board, with retrospective effect to April 1, 1959. In order to carry this proposal into effect it is necessary for the Bill to contain a special provision empowering the Governor to make retrospective alterations of the salaries. This provision is in Clause 8. The appropriation of money for the payment of arrears of salary under the Bill is contained in Clause 9.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.55 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, August 18, at 2 p.m.