HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, August 31, 1961.

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

QUESTIONS.

RAIL STANDARDIZATION.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Today's *Advertiser* reports that Mr. Bolte (Premier of Victoria) said that his Cabinet would consider the implications of any move to by-pass Victoria by standard gauge rail developments in other States. Can the Minister of Works, in the temporary absence of the Premier, say whether Cabinet has considered similar implications concerning South Australia and, if so, what action is proposed?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I assume the Leader is asking whether the South Australian Government has considered the question of being by-passed. That is part of the overall question of standardization of railways under the Commonwealth-State Agreement, and at various times Cabinet has discussed every angle and every implication of standardization including priorities. However, as the Leader knows, we have up to the present not been able to arrive at any firm programme for standardization of South Australia's lines other than the work already done in the South-East and, until further progress is made, I do not think there is any point in attempting to forecast the implications of any arrangements that might arise.

MOUNT COMPASS SCHOOL.

Mr. JENKINS: Some weeks ago the Mount Compass primary school committee wrote to the Minister of Education requesting that that school be made an area school next year. Has the Minister any information on that matter?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: I am awaiting an official report and recommendation from the Director of Education. He is on recreation leave, but when he returns next Monday I will take this matter up with him and try to obtain a reply by next Tuesday.

MOONTA POLICE RESIDENCE.

Mr. HUGHES: In August, 1959, the Minister of Works reported to the House that the Commissioner of Police had stated by way of report to him that a new police station and residence were planned for Moonta, that the old station would be demolished within a few months, and that work on the new residence and station would begin early in 1960, but that work has not yet begun. As a further sum is allocated in this year's Loan Estimates for that type of work, can the Minister say when he thinks the work will begin?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will refresh my memory on the matter, get the docket to see whether or not that work is included in this year's programme and let the honourable member know.

TAPLEY HILL ROAD.

Mr. DUNNAGE: The Tapley Hill Road from Darlington over the hill has been in the course of construction for about eight or nine months now and it appears that the work may continue for another eight or nine months. Does the Government intend to complete this work as a matter of urgency or to proceed gradually with the rest of the road over the hill?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will ask the Minister of Roads for the information the honourable member desires.

FIRE BRIGADE LEVY.

Mr. TAPPING: I have often brought before the notice of the Treasurer the question of the fire brigade levy on the respective councils and have mentioned how burdensome it has been on the Port Adelaide Council. This year the levy will amount to £14,000, about £1,000 more than in the previous year. The other day I read in the press that another council was protesting against the increase of £1,500 by the Fire Brigades Board. From time to time the Treasurer has told me that he has discussed this matter with members of councils to try to compromise on a new scheme more equitable to all councils. Has he anything to report on negotiations in this matter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: No. The Government is prepared to accept any plan for a re-allocation of the costs of the fire brigade, provided it is agreed to by members of the councils concerned. That, however, does not alter the proportion that councils in aggregate provide towards the cost of the brigade, but the allocation between councils is a matter in respect of which the Government would be happy to agree to any variation, provided such variation was accepted by the councils concerned. That is the only qualification we make on that. The Government has for some years provided an amount greatly exceeding that provided for by the Act of Parliament passed in 1936, which governs contributions to the Fire Brigades Board. The total was set down at that time as £10,000

but in the Estimates each year a much greater amount than that (last year it was about £80,000 or £90,000) is provided. This year the Estimates will provide an allocation similar to that of last year. The allocation is a matter for councils to work out between themselves.

ABATTOIRS MARKETING DAYS.

Mr. HALL: In this morning's *Advertiser* is a report concerning the Abattoirs Board and I ask leave to make a statement to explain my question. The press report states that the board is to institute the selling of calves and pigs on Mondays instead of on Wednesdays as at present. This will have a big effect—

Mr. LAWN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I want to get this clear. I have previously asked leave to make statements and you have put it to the vote of the House before leave has been granted. I wondered why the question was not put on this occasion.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member asked for leave to explain his question.

Mr. LAWN: He asked leave to make a statement.

Mr. HALL: I may have neglected to preface my question correctly.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member must ask leave to make an explanation.

Mr. HALL: I apologize if I neglected to do so. In order to explain my question I ask your permission, Mr. Speaker, and that of the House to do so.

Leave granted.

Mr. HALL: The Abattoirs Board has announced its intention of altering the selling day for calves and pigs to Monday. This could have an effect on the rail transport of stock because the time tables for trains bringing stock to the city have been worked out to cater for sale days. If the time tables can be altered to enable the deliveries to take place on Mondays it will mean that the stock will have to be loaded on Sundays which, of course, is impossible in many instances. Will the Premier use every influence to ensure that the road transport of stock for the Monday sale is unrestricted so that the farming community will not have to work on Sundays loading stock on to trains?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I know nothing of the matters the honourable member has mentioned. As far as I know, the Abattoirs Board has not consulted the Government, although I believe a report is to be sent to the Minister of Agriculture. I will have the matter examined and notify the honourable member.

PORT AUGUSTA WATERWORKS OFFICE.

Mr. RICHES: Can the Minister of Works report on the progress being made with the planning and erection of new Government offices at Port Augusta, particularly in relation to the waterworks office?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I have received the following report from the Director of Public Buildings:

Sketch plans for the proposed new Government office block at Port Augusta, which will incorporate the Engineering and Water Supply, Education, Children's Welfare and Agriculture Departments, have been completed and an estimate of cost is now being prepared. When this is available the matter will be submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

MEAT PRICES.

Mr. LAUCKE: Has the Premier a further reply to my recent question regarding the big disparity between wholesale and retail prices of meat?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have a full report from the Prices Commissioner which shows that the present margins are much greater than the margins that were in force at the time of decontrol. The report relates to the position at August 2. The margin for beef when price control operated was 5d. a pound whereas now it is 9.01d., an increase of 4.01d.; for mutton, 4d., now 8.02d., an increase of 4.02d.; for pork, 7d., now 15.84d., an increase of 8.84d.; and for lamb 8d., now 16.63d., an increase of 8.63d. The full report is available if members want to study it. The Prices Commissioner believes that some useful purpose may be served if from time to time the Prices Department issues, for the guidance of purchasers, lists of what it considers to be fair prices for consumers to be charged for meat based on current stock prices. Problems can arise with meat, because qualities vary considerably, but the Government will consider that matter.

Mr. BYWATERS: Has the Premier a reply to my recent question about pig meats?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The report refers to pig meats and states:

During the last five months there has been a considerable decline in market prices of baconer pigs. Following repeated requests by the department both verbally and in writing, the manufacturers have reduced prices on three occasions during the period, the last being on August 21. The total reductions made by

manufacturers on the main items with the corresponding reductions in retail prices are:

	Manufacturers' reduction per lb.	Retail reduction per lb.
Middle rashers ..	7d.	8d.
Rolled rashers . ..	5d.	5½d.
Pressed leg ham ..	7d.	8d.
Pressed shoulder ham	5d.	6d.

Although the total reductions made are substantial, further inquiries are being made to determine whether additional price reductions are warranted. The position regarding retail prices of bacon and ham following the wholesale price reductions has been assisted by the Retail Storekeepers' Association which publishes in its journal each month retail prices for these products which are largely observed by retailers generally. Whilst the Association largely maintained retail percentage margins of profit when prices were rising, with a resultant increase in money margins, it has fairly applied the same policy since wholesale prices have come down, with a consequent reduction in money margins.

The honourable member will see that the position concerning pig meats is probably much more satisfactory than with other meats that have been discussed. However, I shall consider whether a price list should be issued for pig meats at the same time as I consider the matter raised by the member for Barossa.

PENOLA ROAD.

Mr. HARDING: A part of the Penola Road leading from Naracoorte (between Butler Terrace and the junction of Jenkins Terrace and Gordon Street) has been trenched and mains have been laid. This work has been completed for some time and in the last 12 months I have received many complaints about the terrific dust nuisance in the area. Nothing could be done until now, but, as the trenches have been completed, will the Minister obtain a report on the matter from the Minister of Roads, who has been in the district recently? I have been told that the road within the town boundaries will be sealed during 1961.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will get a report for the honourable member.

RIVER MURRAY DAM.

Mr. KING: In this morning's *Advertiser* it was suggested that money could be saved and there would be benefits if, instead of our building a dam at Renmark, the River Murray were dredged. As this proposal is not new and as this belief is held in a wide circle, will the Minister of Works obtain a report from the Engineer-in-Chief about the economics of such a scheme and the quantity of water that could be saved if it were practicable?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: When Mr. Dridan saw me this morning I mentioned this article to him, but we did not discuss it at length. I think the honourable member can take it as being a fairly firm principle in water conservation that excavating in order to conserve an equivalent quantity of water is not an economical engineering proposition. It costs a substantial sum to impound water by placing a dam across a gorge or river merely to impound water without having to carry out appreciable excavation even in favourable geological and topographical conditions. Although the proposal mentioned in this morning's paper has merit from the point of view of evaporation losses, which are substantial on any sheet of water, I feel it would be out of economic consideration to remove soil in order to replace it with water on a conservation proposal. The cost of dredging, even in harbors and rivers where only silt and sand have to be removed, is extremely high, so the cost of removing soil and conveying it some distance in order to conserve water would be completely uneconomic.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.

Mr. FRED WALSH: According to this morning's *Advertiser* the Rev. H. G. Weir, director of after-care to the Prisoners Aid Association of South Australia, addressing the Rotary Club yesterday, said:

If we must persist with corporal punishment in South Australia, for goodness sake let us not repeat a fairly recent case where a caning was ordered together with commitment to Magill, but it was months afterwards before the caning was carried out. For almost six months the boy was left wondering about the execution of his sentence, then he was bundled from Magill to Adelaide Gaol, refused permission to have visits there from his probation officer, given his caning under adult maximum security conditions and after three weeks sent back to Magill.

Will the Premier ascertain whether these statements are correct and, if they are, will he see that such a set of circumstances does not occur again?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes.

JABUK WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. NANKIVELL: Has the Minister of Works obtained a further report following on investigations into the proposed Jabuk township water scheme?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The Engineer for Water Supply reports:

It is possible that the maximum output of Mr. Seaman's bore could be 200 or even 300 gallons an hour more than the 1,500 gallons

achieved in the Mines Department's test. However, during this test the water level in the bore was only 15 feet above the bottom of the pump and as the pump was only 17 feet above the bottom of the bore it is considered that it would not be practicable to assume that even 1,500 gallons an hour could be consistently withdrawn from this bore for a township supply.

I have asked the Minister of Mines to request the Director of Mines to investigate still further the possibilities of this bore or an alternative bore.

TEROWIE POWER SUPPLY.

Mr. CASEY: Has the Premier obtained a reply to a question I asked on August 23 regarding an electric power line between Terowie and Jamestown?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Assistant Manager of the Electricity Trust advises that work has started on the survey of the route from Jamestown and it is expected that construction of the line will be completed by April, 1962.

SCHOOL COMMENCEMENT AGE.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Has the Minister of Education studied the recommendations of Professor Schonell and the Institute of Teachers in Queensland regarding the advantages of children starting school at the age of five and a half years instead of five, as at present?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: I have briefly perused the articles referred to and have had discussions on them, but prefer not to make any statement until I have considered them with the Director of Education and other senior officers of the department.

SUPERANNUATION.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: As the Governor's Speech forecast legislation to amend the Superannuation Act, will the Premier say whether the Government intends to introduce a Bill to amend this important Act during this session? If it does, will he assure the House that the Bill will be introduced soon in order that members will have an opportunity to consider the amendments?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Government intends to introduce legislation on this matter this year, and it will be introduced as soon as conveniently possible. I remind members that we have only just disposed of the Loan Estimates and that from next week it will be necessary to consider the Budget. I hope that members will have ample time to consider all the implications of the Bill.

DRIVING SCHOOLS.

Mrs. STEELE: Has the Premier an answer to my recent question concerning driving schools and the proposed standards of instruction?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Commissioner of Police reports that the standard for instructors of driving schools should be that required of members of his department employed in an instructional capacity in the police advanced driving wing. In selecting personnel for the wing a careful assessment is made of not only their proficiency in all phases of driving and road courtesy but also their accident record and personal qualities.

BY-LAWS.

Mr. CLARK: At present there is before the House a motion for the disallowance of a certain by-law which amends by-law No. 40 of the Salisbury District Council. This by-law, in respect of zoning, was made by the council on December 15, 1959 and forwarded by the council's solicitor to the Highways and Local Government Department for transmission to the Crown Solicitor on January 13, 1960. On January 25, 1961, I received a letter from the Salisbury Town Clerk asking me to find out the reasons for the delay with this by-law, as the council was anxious to expedite the matter. On inquiry I found that the by-law was still in the Crown Solicitor's office. It was not laid on the table of this House until June 20 this year, which means that a by-law transmitted to the Crown Solicitor on about January 13, 1960 took until June 20, 1961 to reach this House. I do not reflect on the Subordinate Legislation Committee (which certainly did not delay the matter) or the Highways and Local Government Department, but it seems to me that there was an undue delay in the Crown Solicitor's office. Can the Minister of Education ascertain from the Attorney-General why it took so long for the by-law to reach this House?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: I shall be pleased to do that.

URANIUM.

Mr. HARDING: I direct the Premier's attention to an article in today's *Advertiser* concerning a meeting on uranium. The report, from Canberra, states:

"There was unlikely to be any significant demand for uranium in Australia during the present decade", the Minister for National Development (Senator Spooner) said today in a written reply to questions asked in the House of Representatives by Mr. Johnson (Labor).

Can the Premier comment on this report?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Government has sent two very highly qualified officers abroad to inquire into this matter, and on their return they will report to the Government. In addition, a special committee is inquiring into all aspects of the uranium industry. Until those reports are available I would not venture to make any statement on the matter.

RIVER MURRAY DAM.

Mr. BYWATERS: I noticed in the press recently that Mr. Dridan had stated that a report would soon be going to the River Murray Commission in relation to the dam above Renmark. I have also been told that surveys and various investigations are still taking place at Teal Flat. Can the Minister of Works say whether the Government has anything in mind concerning Teal Flat, and particularly whether that scheme may still be considered?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: It is correct that the Engineer-in-Chief, as South Australia's representative on the River Murray Commission, will attend a meeting of the commission on September 5 and the Chowilla dam will be considered there. Concerning the project lower down the river, this Government, as I think the House and the public are aware, has at all times taken the earliest possible steps to investigate the possibilities of any developmental scheme that may appear to offer any advantage whatever to the development of the State. The work that we have done on the lower part of the river is with that object in view, for it offers possibilities. Whether or not it will be necessary to exploit that area at this stage depends upon the outcome of discussions regarding the Chowilla dam in the first place, and also upon the factors relevant to the inquiry at the lower point so far as they reveal the practicability and economics of this proposal.

BORDERTOWN COURTHOUSE.

Mr. NANKIVELL: Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked during the debate on the Loan Estimates regarding a courthouse and police premises at Bordertown?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The Director of the Public Buildings Department reports:

Provision has been made in this year's Estimates for the commencement of work on a new courthouse building to be erected on a site in the close locality of the proposed new police premises. It is intended to let one contract for the erection of both the courthouse and police premises.

NORTH-SOUTH RAILWAY LINE.

Mr. RICHES: Can the Premier say, firstly, whether the agreement to build a railway line from Alice Springs to Darwin forms a part of South Australia's High Court action against the Commonwealth Government on the standardization of gauges? Secondly, on August 16, when speaking on a motion in this House, the Premier said:

Because I objected to the issue being raised in the Commonwealth Parliament yesterday I must take the view that it should not be debated here today.

Will the Premier say whether he lodged an objection with the Commonwealth Parliament because of the debate that had taken place there on the subject of standardization of gauges (which matter he considered *sub judice*) and, if so, has he received a reply?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: With regard to the honourable member's first inquiry, when the Northern Territory was handed over to the Commonwealth Parliament to control, one term of the handing over was that the Commonwealth Government should build a railway through to Darwin. That was in 1910, but no action was taken in that connection except that the line was extended from Oodnadatta to Alice Springs by the time the Commonwealth-State Standardization Agreement was drafted. That first requirement of the Commonwealth was restated in the second Bill. It does, therefore, come within the ambit of the present writ.

Regarding the honourable member's second point, the answer is "No". I have not yet communicated with the Prime Minister because in the interim period an offer has come from the Prime Minister on diesel-electric locomotives. That offer is at present being considered and, when I reply on that offer, I intend to raise this matter. That reply has not yet been prepared by the Crown Law officers.

WHYTE YARCOWIE STATION MASTER.

Mr. CASEY: It has been brought to my notice that the Railways Commissioner intends to relieve the station master at Whyte Yarcowie, which would mean that the station would not be manned, and this is causing concern to the local residents of the town and district. Will the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Railways in this House, furnish me with a report on the decision of the Railways Commissioner?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes.

GLOSSOP HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. KING: Will the Minister of Education obtain details about the Glossop high school? Two items are mentioned in the Loan Estimates, one being additions to the school and the other in connection with the craft work and domestic arts centre. What is contemplated concerning the sum of £80,000 under the heading "To be designed" in Appendix I of the Treasurer's statement?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: I shall be pleased to supply the information the honourable member asks for.

UMEEWARRA MISSION.

Mr. RICHES: As regards the education of children in the Umeewarra Mission, I understand the Ministers of Education and Works have been conferring on the subject. I do not know which Minister will reply. I should like the Minister of Education to if he would, but previously he told me that he was not ready to answer it because he wanted to have a discussion with the Minister in charge of the Aborigines Department. He promised to obtain a report for me from the Director of Education who, in turn, had the benefit of a report submitted to him by Mr. Piddington and Mr. Price on this whole question of the education of children at that mission. Can the Minister reply on that?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The honourable member is in some difficulty as to whom to address his question to as both my colleague and I are involved in it. The last time we said we would confer, which we have done. My colleague showed me two days ago a report he had received from the officer of his department dealing with the educational aspect of this matter, and we agreed that we would have a conference between the Director of Education, the Protector of Aborigines, the Minister of Education and myself to resolve this matter. That will probably take place in the early part of next week, or at least when Mr. Mander Jones, the Director, returns from leave.

RAILWAY ACCIDENT.

Mr. RALSTON: Recently an accident in which a man lost his life occurred at a railway crossing near Mount Gambier where the Adelaide line crosses the Princes Highway. This serious accident afterwards involved much work on the part of the Railways Department as, in addition to the damage to the train, considerable damage was caused to the permanent way. Will the Minister of Works take this up with his colleague the Minister of Railways and ascertain the cost involved to the Railways Department in rehabilitating the railway line and the damage done to the rolling stock?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will refer the matter to the Minister of Railways.

NEW ROAD AT VICTOR HARBOUR.

Mr. JENKINS: The people of my district are pleased with the new road from Mount Compass to Victor Harbour, to the top of Klienig Hill. It is intended to extend that road into the town. A survey appears to be taking in several feet of some of the residences of my constituents. Opposite those residences is a railway embankment. Will the Minister of Works take this matter up with his colleague the Minister of Roads to see whether he is prepared to re-site the road to proceed along some of the railway property rather than along the front gardens of these residences, if that is possible?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes.

EGG PRICES.

Mr. BYWATERS: Egg producers in my district and other districts are concerned with the high charges of the Egg Board for handling eggs. In fact, one constituent producer showed me some returns last week where, in respect of a 30-dozen case of eggs, £1 6s. was deducted for charges, which amounts to 10½d. a dozen, and producers feel that is high compared with the overall price of eggs. Will the Premier examine this matter to see whether the charges are excessive, because they mean a big disparity between the price to the producer and that to the consumer?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I should be pleased if the honourable member would give me the producer's name and the consignment of eggs so that I could get the precise cost checked for him. That would be more satisfactory because he could then go back to his constituent and show him how the items were made up and whether they were properly made up.

HONOURS LIST.

Mr. RICHES: I understand that Birthday Honours and New Year Honours are conferred on South Australian citizens on the recommendation of someone associated with the Government. Can the Premier say who makes the recommendations or how names are brought to the notice of Her Majesty for recognition? Also, does he know that a petition is being circulated currently in some areas of South

Australia asking that a member of this House have a knighthood conferred upon him, and does he think that that is a desirable method of approach?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I certainly did not know that a petition had been circulated, and I do not think that it would be the best means of securing the desired end. Representations are made by many authorities in respect of the valued services of members of the community. Those services are all evaluated and considered by the authority which handles this matter, not only in this State but in other States, because the honourable member will realize that only a limited number of honours are provided for the Australian States and the Commonwealth each year. If any honourable member wants to make a recommendation, I suggest that it be submitted to the Under Secretary first.

ADELAIDE PARK LANDS ALTERATION BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 29. Page 604.)

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide): I support the Bill. I listened to the Minister's second reading speech and subsequently read it. I do not think anything needs to be added to what has been said.

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

ROAD TRAFFIC BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 17. Page 462.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): The present Road Traffic Act dates back to 1934 and there have been numerous amendments made over the years which have further complicated the understanding of the Act. In addition, during the last 26 years, as members are aware, there have been marked changes in road traffic, and, consequently, some of the existing legislation has become out of date. Whilst this Bill was drafted with the intention of bringing our traffic laws up-to-date, the opportunity was also taken to make improvements in the law as well as attempting to make our legislation more uniform with that provided in the other States. Sir Edgar Bean, a former Parliamentary Draftsman, is to be commended for the amount of effort he has put into drafting the present Bill, because it consolidates amending legislation and is many years overdue.

I am open to correction, but I was under the impression when the Premier introduced this Bill that it was to be a consolidation of the full Road Traffic Act, but my impression from the perusal of the Bill is that it is only a consolidation of the road traffic control section of the existing legislation, whereas clause 3 provides that the Governor, by proclamation, may repeal all the existing legislation in regard to the Road Traffic Act. For example, section 358 of the Local Government Act was amended by section 25 of the Road Traffic Board Act, 1960, regarding traffic islands and safety zones as follows:

(1a) Before commencing to construct or erect a safety island, safety zone, traffic island, roundabout or median strip in a public street, road or place the council shall give the Road Traffic Board of South Australia notice of its intention to do so and supply to that board a plan of the locality and full particulars of the situation shape dimensions and manner of construction of the proposed safety island, safety zone, traffic island, roundabout or median strip.

The said Board may approve of the proposal unconditionally, or subject to any modifications or conditions which the Board deems necessary in the interests of public safety and convenience, or may refuse to approve of it.

A Council shall not construct or erect a safety island, safety zone, traffic island, roundabout or median strip in a public street, road or place except with the approval of the Board under this section and shall comply with any modifications or conditions to which the approval is subject.

If this Bill is left in its present form, clause 3 and its related schedule will provide that the above Act is to be repealed. If this is the case, would it not have the effect of the Local Government Act reverting to the law that applied prior to the Road Traffic Board Act of 1960? I am sure that this is not the intention of the Government. If the Government's intention is to repeal those particular sections of the existing legislation when they are replaced by the enactments of the provisions of the Bill, I should prefer to see this fact stated clearly instead of our being asked to pass the blanket provision provided by clause 3. I have only cited the above as an example, but there may be other provisions in earlier legislation of the Road Traffic Act which are amendments to other Acts and which are not needed to be repealed, and, therefore, I would appreciate further explanation from the Government on this matter.

After the introduction of the Bill last year various approaches were made to me from many

private individuals as well as interested traffic bodies, and from their remarks it appeared that the Government still needed to give a great deal of consideration to the provisions of its legislation before it could satisfactorily cope with the traffic problems of today. When a Road Traffic Bill was introduced towards the end of the last session of Parliament, the Premier informed us that this expedient was used so that all members would be afforded sufficient opportunity to peruse the provisions of the proposed important legislation. Several months ago we were informed that, because of its importance, the consolidating and amending Road Traffic Bill introduced last session would be reintroduced with minor amendments. Apparently the Government has been subjected to some criticism on its original proposal, because there have been some sweeping changes in the new Bill in accord with the improvements I intended to recommend. However, some improvements still need to be made. When a Bill on this subject was introduced last year I gave it much attention, but the present Bill contains so many more amendments that in many respects it appears to be almost a new Bill. The efforts of members in trying to keep up with these matters are lost sight of. We can claim, at least, that this Bill is an improvement over last year's measure.

Clause 32 relates to speed zones and provides that the Road Traffic Board may by resolution fix speed limits for any zone. These zones should be altered only by regulation, because as much publicity as possible should be given before any alteration is made in traffic control devices. Clause 44 is another provision I have in mind: it deals with the illegal use of motor vehicles. This offence is most prevalent at present and is causing the Police Department much concern. This offence is normally committed by an irresponsible section of our community and many times it is committed by persons whose sole intention is to elude the police and escape to another State, which may result in their arrest being delayed for a long period. It is very pleasing to see that the time factor of two years for a prosecution, which was inserted by the amending Act of 1959 but omitted from the Bill of last session, has now been introduced in the existing Bill. As this offence is so prevalent and the offenders so difficult to apprehend, I can see no reason for omitting this provision from the previous Bill, but I still have an objection that relates to the same clause.

The existing legislation provides that any person who drives, uses, or interferes with a motor vehicle without first obtaining the consent of the owner is guilty of an offence. To my mind, this is quite clear, for, if a person interferes with a vehicle anywhere without the consent of the owner, he commits an offence, whereas, under the present Bill, the words "on a road or elsewhere" have been inserted. If these inserted words are allowed to pass, the Government will only create difficulties for the courts that have to carry the law into effect, because many legal arguments will occur on whether interference has occurred on a road, or something similar to a road, to establish that an offence has been committed. I consider that the section as provided under the present Act should stand, because then there could be no doubt that the offence could be committed anywhere. The point I am making is that, if it is the intention of the Bill that it is an offence to interfere with a person's vehicle anywhere, then that is what should be stated.

Clauses 48 to 53 deal with speed limits. The 10 m.p.h. limit around corners in the metropolitan area has been omitted from the Bill. At corners there is the greatest potential for traffic accidents and having a speed limit of 10 m.p.h. tends to reduce dangerous traffic situations. The Premier said that these problems were catered for in other clauses, but I think it is better to prevent accidents than that drivers should become liable to penalties after they occur. Motorists travelling east along North Terrace in front of Parliament House intending to turn left at King William Road tend to speed up when the green light is on, and a traffic hazard is created for pedestrians trying to cross from west to east. Pedestrians in Adelaide need to be rather mobile because motorists are able to make left-hand and diamond turns, so that the pedestrian must watch for two lots of traffic. If the speed limit around corners is removed there will be a greater risk to pedestrians.

Clause 53 deals with increased speeds for heavy vehicles. Because of the greater speeds of modern vehicles and the gearing of trucks carrying heavy loads, I agree that these vehicles should be able to travel at greater speeds. However, greater speeds will mean that the maintenance costs of our highways will be proportionately greater. I should have liked the Government to indicate when it would introduce legislation to provide a fair return for the increased maintenance cost

that will be caused by the greater speeds at which these vehicles will be permitted to travel.

A number of clauses which refer to driving on the left of other vehicles and passing have been confused by the use of the words "left" and "right". In order to avoid any possible confusion, I think the words "nearside" and "offside" should be used. The nearside of any vehicle or person is the side near the kerb, and the offside is the side off or away from the kerb. As a matter of fact the passing of other vehicles on the left or nearside is a very dangerous practice, and I am not in favour of any of these amendments except where the vehicle in front is turning to the right and has either slowed down or has stopped in the middle of the carriageway to allow right of way to vehicles travelling in the opposite direction. A free flow of traffic is maintained by allowing vehicles to pass on the left or nearside of the vehicle which has stopped in the middle of the carriageway preparatory to turning right. This is legal under the existing legislation, and it is the only exception which should be continued. This particular portion of the Bill dealing with driving or passing on the left is confused by the use of the words "left" and "right", and it must cause confusion to the road users who are obliged to conform with these particular rules. As a matter of fact there were some errors in last year's Bill on this subject which have now been corrected, but this strengthens my contention because if the persons drafting the Bill could become confused, then surely the motorist is just as liable to make mistakes of interpretation which could lead to accidents. However, the provision which is of much greater danger is that which permits passing of vehicles on the left where two or more lanes are marked on the roadway, and it is one to which I am completely opposed. This subject is covered by clauses 54, 56 and 58. For example, clause 58 (3) states:

> The driver of a vehicle may pass a vehicle proceeding in the same direction on the left when the carriageway has two or more marked lanes for vehicles proceeding in the same direction and the passing vehicle is in a lane on the left of the lane in which the other vehicle is proceeding, and it is safe to pass that other vehicle on the left.

I am opposed to this amendment because it lends itself to very dangerous situations in traffic. I believe that the less involved we keep our traffic laws the fewer infringements and the fewer accidents we will have. Therefore, even though lane lines may be painted on roadways, I still maintain that all traffic should be moving as near as practicable to the left of the roadway, so that any passing that may be necessary could be carried out to the right or offside of all other vehicles. The only exception I would accept is where the vehicle in front has indicated the intention of turning to the right and has moved to the middle or right of the carriageway, which is the law as it exists at present. I examined the British law on this matter and found the exception to passing on the right in lane traffic was as follows:

> Overtake on the right.—This rule does not necessarily apply in the following circumstances . . .
>
> (ii) In slow-moving, congested traffic, when vehicles in a lane on your right are moving more slowly than you are.

I believe this was the intention of our traffic authorities when they made provision in the existing Bill for passing on the left. However, they have not stipulated that it must be slow-moving or congested traffic before the following vehicle is allowed to pass on the left. As I said before, passing on the left creates dangerous traffic situations, and I consider that it should not be allowed unless there is congested traffic on the road which is moving slowly because of the congestion, and which would be speeded up if left-hand passing were permitted. Therefore, clause 54 (2) (*b*), clause 58 (3), and clause 60 (2) (*a*) should be struck out of the present Bill, unless there is the added proviso that left-hand passing is only permitted in slow-moving, congested traffic. I consider that the main purpose of any road traffic legislation is to provide for giving way to traffic on the right. We all understand that we should drive as near as practicable to the left-hand or near side of the road, and we know that we should pass on the offside of the road, because we have been educated to that. Even the children who ride bicycles are educated along those lines, and the commonsense thing would be to retain the laws our children grow up with. I believe accidents could occur through the confusion that will take place, and I think that if we maintained the present legislation we would be better off.

The next matter I will discuss is that of right-of-way at intersections and junctions. I was very unhappy with the wording in the Bill last session because it seemed to open the way to much confusion. These provisions have also reverted to similar wording to that in the existing legislation, which has been well tested

in the courts and is now quite clear, but the Government has now introduced a further complication at junctions and intersections, namely, "give way" signs. This is another provision to which I am opposed. My approach to road traffic is to keep the laws as simple as possible, and the introduction of a new sign is contrary to this object. If a person is a frequent user of a particular section of a highway, he soon realizes the danger spots and takes additional care, but the introduction of "give way" signs gives a false sense of security to the frequent user of the particular road who would be aware of the "give way" sign. I have seen many instances of persons driving straight past a "stop" sign and thereby causing a very dangerous situation to the vehicle on the left which was proceeding in anticipation of the other vehicle stopping at the "stop" sign. I know the immediate reaction is that the person who drove through the "stop" sign committed an offence and would have to suffer the penalty, but my point is that if we retain our normal right of way rule there is less risk of errors and dangerous situations because of the simplicity of the rule. I am aware that councils have removed "stop" signs in many instances because they found that instead of reducing accidents they have had the opposite effect. I place these "give way" signs in the same category as the "stop" signs, and consider they are a retrograde step and will add to rather than diminish the possibility of accidents at junctions and intersections.

Last session clause 75, which deals with duties at traffic lights, caused me a great deal of confusion, because it adopted the negative approach. I notice in the present Bill that the provisions have been dropped (or, should I say, postponed) because it is intended to deal with this matter by regulations. However, I still feel that it can be adequately dealt with in the Act and, therefore, I propose to put forward my suggestion because, if the same approach is made in the regulations as was made in the Bill last session, the provisions will still cause confusion to road users. As I said, the approach was negative because it set out various combinations of colours of red and amber lights or arrows when it would not be permissible for a vehicle to cross a "stop" line and proceed. My suggestion is to adopt a positive approach and state that, where traffic lights are in operation, it is only permissible for a vehicle to cross a "stop" line and proceed at traffic lights if a green circle or a green arrow is showing, with the proviso that, where vehicles proceed when lights other than a green circle or a green arrow are showing, then an offence is committed and the appropriate penalty could be provided. My reason for adopting this approach is that there are various types of traffic lights and our traffic laws must be made as simple as possible in order to keep accidents on our roads to a minimum. It is very much easier for a driver to remember that at traffic lights he can proceed only if there is a green light or a green arrow, rather than to think of a Road Traffic Act and regulations which provide for seven different combinations when he may not proceed.

The same criticism applies to the duties of pedestrians at traffic lights, in that various combinations were also given when pedestrians were not to proceed, whereas now it is proposed to cover this by regulations. I still feel that it could be covered in clause 75 of the present Bill by also adopting the positive approach and stipulating that pedestrians may proceed at traffic lights when either a green light, green arrow, or "walk" sign is showing. With this approach, the principle of simplicity in road traffic laws would also be maintained.

Turning to clause 135, there is a strong case, from a safety point of view and prevention of accidents, to have illuminated direction indicators on all vehicles such as trucks, trailers and articulated vehicles above a certain size. At present, there are various mechanical hand indicators on these large vehicles but, because of the size of these vehicles, the first visible indication that they intend turning is when they commence urning in front of the following vehicle. When the large vehicle gets on an angle to the following traffic, the mechanical indicator is clearly visible but is only visible to the immediately following vehicle after the large vehicle has commenced its turn.

These large units are normally commercial vehicles that are being used to earn income, and the expense of running the vehicles would be a legitimate business expense. I understand that on all new large commercial vehicles flashing turn indicators are standard equipment, and I do not see that any financial hardship would be imposed on the owners of these vehicles, where mechanical indicators were not readily visible to the following traffic, that it would be obligatory to fit flashing indicators to the rear of these vehicles. This is not provided for in the Bill.

The last proviso of clause 176 refers to experimental traffic schemes. A new clause has been inserted empowering the Governor to make regulations for facilitating the carrying out of traffic experiments. The effect of this is that the provisions of the proposed Act would be suspended for a period of six months in order to carry out this experiment. I agree with this, but there is a provision that this period of six months could be further extended, and I do not agree with this. I consider that the traffic authorities should be able to make up their minds in the first six months allowed.

If we look at some of the roads and intersections in and around Adelaide, we find that they have had sandbags of one type or another put on them, which have been lying there for a long time so that the bags have rotted and are just heaps of dirt. If the traffic authorities cannot make up their minds in six months, it is time we got some other people to help them.

The final topic I wish to discuss is that of the drivers on our roads who are over 70 years of age. Many of these people are excellent drivers with long experience and without any physical disabilities but, in the year in which they reach 70 years of age, and thereafter, they have to undergo a practical driving test which causes inconvenience to these people; but just at the moment I am more concerned with those people who have reached 75 years of age because, in addition to the inconvenience of a practical driving test, they have an added financial burden of producing a certificate of eye test from a qualified person and, if there is any known medical disability, they also have to produce a medical certificate. Another factor that could be taken into consideration is that the older persons who are compelled to provide the eyesight test certificates would not be using our roads to the same extent as either drivers for commercial businesses or the drivers in the younger age groups. Most probably outside of attending a church service and collecting the normal shopping requirements their cars would receive little use.

These older people have been taxpayers and worthy citizens for many years and have helped to make our State what it is today, and now a further financial burden is being placed upon them by the present Government, which compels them to bear the cost of eyesight test certificates when the majority of them are on either relatively low fixed incomes or meagre age pensions. Instead of adding to their financial problems by causing them additional expense, the Government should be seeking ways and means of reducing their burden in order that they may retain the convenience of a motor vehicle. From the point of view of safety the eyesight and medical tests are desirable, but the point I wish to emphasize is that if the Government insists on the various certificates being provided by these older drivers, then the tests should either be carried out by the Government at no cost or the driver's licence fee should be reduced in order to compensate these people for the cost of the tests involved. The Bill contains 177 clauses and a member would be punishing himself if he attempted to consider them all. I suggest, for the Government's consideration, that in Committee some latitude should be allowed members so that they can propose amendments without giving the necessary formal notice. I support the second reading.

Mr. HALL (Gouger): I agree with the Leader that 177 clauses constitutes a big Bill and it is virtually impossible for a member to consider them all. It is evident that we are dealing, in many respects, with the safety of our citizens and I am sure members will devote their utmost attention to the Bill to ensure that the provisions make traffic on our roads as safe as possible. I shall not delay the House unduly, because this is primarily a Committee Bill. There is nothing much in it with which I disagree, and there is not much that I am qualified to disagree with. I am pleased that the recommendations of the South Australian Road Transport Association have been accepted and that higher speeds are proposed for certain commercial vehicles. This will facilitate transport and enable a better use mechanically of the vehicles. One is struck with the powers of the Road Traffic Board and I was interested to hear the Leader's comments on the fact that its decisions will be implemented by resolution of the board. We will undoubtedly hear more of the board's powers as the debate progresses.

Several clauses need clarification and amendment. Clause 47 deals with driving under the influence of liquor or drugs. I have no quarrel with most of the provision, which affords protection to the community, but I do not think it is proper that every five years the convictions standing against a person should be disregarded. Subclause (3) states:

In determining whether an offence is a first, second, third or subsequent offence within the meaning of subsection (1) of this section, a previous offence for which the defendant was

convicted more than five years before the commission of the offence under consideration shall not be taken into account, but a previous offence for which the defendant was convicted within the said period shall be so taken into account.

I doubt whether any person could be convicted three times within five years for this offence. In fact, on the second conviction, there would be a substantial licence suspension and the person would probably not be able to drive more than four or five years. If this provision is to be effective the period during which prior convictions are to be considered should be lengthened and I suggest that 10 years would not be inappropriate. Clause 105 seems pointless. It states:

A person riding an animal or driving or being conveyed in a vehicle shall not lead more than two animals within a municipality, town or township.

I doubt whether anyone would try to lead two or more animals in Adelaide.

Mr. Nankivell: What about racehorses and trotting horses?

Mr. HALL: That is an aspect I had not considered.

Mr. Jennings: You will see it being done near Morphettville.

Mr. HALL: I thank the honourable members for their information. Clause 113, dealing with rear lights on vehicles, states:

Every vehicle must be fitted with a lamp on the rear thereof showing a red light to the rear.

I believe that bicycles are not sufficiently illuminated at night under the present provisions. The standard of lighting is determined by regulation, but under this Bill I am not sure whether it will be determined by regulation or by resolution of the board. The present standard is completely inadequate. A bicycle has to have a red light and a reflector at the rear. The regulations now in force provide that a reflector shall be round or rectangular and, if round, that it shall have a diameter of not less than 1¼in. Of what use is a reflector with a diameter of 1¼in. under adverse conditions? Under perfect conditions the red light at the rear of a cycle is sufficient to show its position to motorists approaching from the rear but if there are adverse conditions (if two vehicles are approaching each other with lights dimmed, if windscreens are not completely clean, or if there is fog or rain) a push cycle cannot easily be seen. The regulations are completely inadequate to ensure that a push cycle's position is clearly shown.

A push cycle is particularly vulnerable. Not only is the rider unprotected but usually he is travelling at a speed much lower than that of the general flow of traffic. All motor vehicles generally have to pass push cycles, whereas motor vehicles are not passed frequently, so I think the push cycle should have as much illumination as a motor vehicle so that its presence is obvious. I know that is not practicable because we cannot expect a push cycle to carry lights as good as those on a modern motor car (although I think they should have lights that are equally as effective). I shall move an amendment to section 123 to have inserted in the Act (and not to rely on regulations, which are at present inadequate) a provision for a definite reflective area at the rear of a push cycle to give warning of its presence. I shall listen with interest to other members who follow; with these few remarks, I support the Bill.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla): In supporting this Bill, let me say first that Sir Edgar Bean has done a remarkably fine job in consolidating the Act and is to be commended for making such a thorough examination of all the matters involved. In his second reading explanation, the Premier said that since last year's measure was introduced these matters had been examined by the Road Traffic Board, assisted by experts from the Royal Automobile Association, Police Department and Highways Department, and by other people. I think it would be a great advantage when considering this Bill in Committee—and I think it is mainly a Committee Bill—if we had available to us the evidence supplied by these people, as it is extremely hard for the layman to express definite opinions on some of these points unless detailed evidence is available. The observations of the layman are often relevant only to his own particular circumstances and, if this evidence were available, members could form opinions of their effect over a wide area. I do not wish to debate all the points in this Bill, but in reading through the Premier's second reading speech one or two things occurred to me. He pointed out that speed zones can be created only by regulation, that the Road Traffic Board wants power to fix zones without regulation, and that the Government has agreed to that suggestion. Is this to be done in consultation with councils where zones are in council areas? A strong case could be made to keep the present system so as to ensure that a close examination is made before a speed zone is created. This would avoid confusion amongst

motorists when speed zones are altered from time to time without sufficient warning being given to the public.

It seems to me desirable to alter present arrangements regarding accident reports. Now all accidents, except those described as trivial, must be reported. "Trivial" is a word capable of wide interpretation, and the existing provision is not satisfactory. The Bill provides that an accident need not be reported unless a fair estimate of the damage is £25 or over, and no doubt this will save a tremendous amount of paper work which has little real value.

The Bill alters the speed limit of 20 m.p.h. approaching level crossings and within 50yds. thereof; it is suggested that this should be controlled by having a short speed zone. The Premier said that this speed limit had been unpopular and had been regarded as unnecessary at numerous crossings where there was a clear view and few trains. There seems to me to be a great deal of inconsistency in this matter in that many level crossings in the country are well guarded by warning signs yet have a "stop" sign, and there is a heavy penalty if the motorist does not stop. Many of these crossings have an excellent view from both directions and it appears to me that the "stop" sign is there to enable the railways authorities to get out of any trouble should there be an accident.

Mr. Shannon: The protection is for the Railways Commissioner rather than the motorist, you think?

Mr. LOVEDAY: Yes, and there is an element of danger in this type of crossing. When semi-trailers have to stop at these crossings, it is possible that while they are moving off and going through a number of gears a fast-moving diesel train, travelling at between 60 and 70 m.p.h., which was not in sight when the driver moved off, will be on the semi-trailer before it is clear of the crossing. Also, sometimes after stopping, the engine of a vehicle may stall before the vehicle moves off again. I believe many accidents have been caused by this. I think that approaching a crossing at a medium speed is preferable to stopping if the crossing is visible from both directions. If more steps were taken to improve the visibility of level crossings I think that would be a more sensible approach to the problem.

I feel the suggested increase in the speed over intersections is of doubtful advantage. Here again, if the speed is to be increased we shall need far better visibility at many intersections.

Mr. Millhouse: How are you going to get that?

Mr. LOVEDAY: I think that in many instances it will be impossible. It would be possible to obtain it in some residential areas where fences could be lowered or hedges cut, but where buildings are built right up to the line, as they are in closely built-up city areas, it would be impossible. I believe that the increase of that speed limit is likely to lead to many more accidents, and that we should be more concerned with the danger to life and limb than with the question of getting a little extra speed out of the traffic. I am willing to hear any expert argument that might be adduced, but I know that in the instance of a large municipality in my electorate any increase of speed over intersections would of necessity result in more accidents. It is a fact that at intersections where there are spoon drains known by motorists, and where motorists naturally slow up, there is an almost entire absence of accidents, but where there is no barrier to the motorists' crossing the intersection at a greatly increased speed we find the greatest number of accidents. It is also suggested that the 10 miles an hour speed limit on the turn in the metropolitan area should be altered, but I wonder whether that is desirable.

Mr. Millhouse: You are very conservative about these things, aren't you?

Mr. LOVEDAY: No, I am merely taking a humane point of view. I am more concerned with the protection of the individual than with the increase in speed. I think that is the correct view, because, after all, traffic should be subservient to human needs rather than to the needs of speed. The traffic in Adelaide is by no means as considerate to pedestrians as it is in Sydney. Although traffic generally moves faster in Sydney, one finds far more respect paid to pedestrians there than in Adelaide. In fact, it is noticeable in this State that the motorist just pushes his way through pedestrians and shows that he does not really care much at all. In Sydney the pedestrian is given absolute preference, and I have been told that that has come about because, where accidents occur as a result of motorists pushing through, those motorists are always wrong. As a consequence, they pay far more attention to giving the pedestrian right of way.

Mr. Quirke: The pedestrians are better trained in Sydney, too.

Mr. LOVEDAY: That may be so. What I have said is the opinion held by many people. I have discussed this matter with many people who know the traffic problems in both cities, and not one has dissented from that opinion.

Mr. Clark: The traffic is not as great in Perth, but the same applies there.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Yes. Sydney has a far greater density of traffic and it is moving faster, yet far more consideration is given pedestrians. Regarding the increase of speed limits on heavy commercial vehicles, those vehicles are already exceeding the prescribed speed limits.

Mr. Heaslip: They can hardly keep down to the present limit.

Mr. LOVEDAY: That is so, and there is not the slightest doubt in my mind that in introducing this measure the Government is acknowledging what is a fact at present. With those few remarks, I support the Bill and hope that when we have the matter before us in Committee we will have all the evidence we need to enable us to make sound decisions on these important matters.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa): I shall make a few broad observations at this stage and leave the more detailed discussion until the Committee stage. I pay a tribute to Sir Edgar Bean for his masterly work in consolidating this legislation. This gentleman did wonderful work for the State during his term of office as Parliamentary Draftsman, and he has displayed an excellent spirit of citizenship when in retirement in spending much time in making this important legislation more effective. With his great understanding he has made it much more common-sense legislation than it has been in the past.

At present there is a motor vehicle for every three persons in the community. The road traffic laws therefore assume a greater importance from day to day, as we have the increase in vehicles on the road and a greater use of them. This is an Act which must in its machinery and provisions have a degree of resilience and adaptability to meet the constantly changing traffic problems. What would adequately meet the requirements of today could well be outmoded by tomorrow, and in this respect I hail the establishment of the Road Traffic Board which has a very important role to play in making recommendations from time to time for additions or alterations to the Act in order to keep this important legislation up-to-date. I am happy to see that there is a general trend towards greater uniformity of traffic laws of the various States. In my opinion, that is a good thing. Whilst aiming at uniformity in general principle, I think we can still retain, for certain locations and districts, conditions that are rendered necessary by the peculiar circumstances of those areas.

Clause 32 (2) causes me some concern. This matter has been referred to by the Leader, by the member for Gouger (Mr. Hall), and by the member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday). I also refer to it as being one of considerable importance. The clause dealing with safety zones states:

The board may by resolution fix a speed limit for any town and may by resolution vary or revoke any such resolution.

The provision relating to a "resolution" disturbs me.

Mr. Millhouse: What do you suggest should be done about it?

Mr. LAUCKE: I do not like that provision, because a "resolution" is firm and final and there is no ability to appeal against it.

Mr. Millhouse: Bureaucratic control!

Mr. LAUCKE: Exactly, and I do not like bureaucratic control.

Mr. Millhouse: What do you think should be substituted?

Mr. LAUCKE: I think that recommendations could be made by the Road Traffic Board and submitted to this House as regulations. I appreciate that there must be rapidity of decision in this matter, but there should be some opportunity to review the board's recommendations. Speed limits should be fixed by regulation and therefore be subject to review by Parliament. Any parties who might be adversely affected could then seek redress through private members or through the Joint Committee on Subordinate Legislation, but the new scheme apparently will not allow such a procedure. There is certainly power in the Bill for specified authorities to obtain reviews of some decisions of the board, but those remedies will not be available to sectional interests who have a genuine and real interest in the board's decisions. I have the utmost confidence in the board, all members of which have my greatest respect, but I believe that, notwithstanding their best endeavours, they could arrive at a decision to which legitimate exception could be taken by a section of the community that would have no available means of redress other than requesting the board to amend or revoke its decision. I should like to see it made possible

that any resolution of the board under clause 32 should be tabled in this House and be subject to the same procedure as is the case with regulations.

Mr. Millhouse: What about a proclamation?

Mr. LAUCKE: A proclamation has basically the same attributes and defects as a resolution.

Mr. Quirke: You would not have much scope with a proclamation.

Mr. LAUCKE: No; I prefer a regulation for the consideration of this House.

Mr. Quirke: Proclamations are very definite.

Mr. Millhouse: A proclamation is not as bad as a resolution.

Mr. LAUCKE: I do not like "proclamation" or "resolution"; I desire "regulation". Clause 32 (3) provides:

> Every speed zone and the speed limit for that zone shall be indicated by signs on the road at or near the beginning and end of the zone.

In addition to these signs, I suggest it should be incumbent upon the board to erect signs at a reasonable distance ahead of a zone, warning drivers that they are approaching such a zone. Unless this is done, a dangerous hazard may well be created by the sudden braking of vehicles. A driver may be compromised by the difficulty of reducing his speed in sufficient time. A warning well in advance that a driver is approaching a certain zone area will enable him carefully to reduce his speed to that appropriate for that zone, without endangering either himself or those travelling immediately behind him.

Mr. Quirke: Should these signs be lower and bigger than they are at present?

Mr. LAUCKE: They could be improved.

Mr. Quirke: They are too high now.

Mr. LAUCKE: Yes, too high to catch the eye of the driver.

Mr. Quirke: And they could be bigger.

Mr. LAUCKE: Yes, easily. Clause 42 (1) (*b*) states:

> A member of the police force, or an inspector may—
>
> (*b*) ask the driver or the person apparently in charge of a vehicle (whether on a road or elsewhere)—

I emphasize the word "elsewhere"—

> questions for the purpose of ascertaining the name and place of residence or place of business of that driver or person or of the owner of the vehicle, or the nature or constituents of the load on the vehicle, or for the purpose of estimating the weight of the vehicle.

I am concerned at the possible extent to which the new words inserted in this paragraph could be construed or used. From my reading of the Premier's remarks, it seems clear that the powers are sought in connection with clauses 91 and 92, coupled with clause 35 (2), wherein procedure is laid down for duties in connection with driving on or approaching ferries, and persons in charge of ferries are empowered to give directions. I fully approve of those clauses of the Bill but suggest that all that is needed effectively to implement them is to delete the word "elsewhere" in this subparagraph and insert the word "ferry".

In regard to speed limits (clause 53), I am pleased to note that there is to be allowed an increase of five miles an hour on commercial vehicles of seven tons and over in non-built-up areas. Within built-up areas the limits are to remain as they are but I should like to see slight increases there, too, because the modern commercial vehicle operates efficiently at given minimum engine revolutions. The five miles an hour increase in non-built-up areas is certainly, in my opinion, a move in the right direction. I am fully cognizant of the need for safety at all times but, with modern machinery and modern braking power, to ensure efficient transport I think that reasonable speeds should be allowed to heavy vehicles—according, of course, to the location, situation and type of road, hill or open run.

I note, too, that, whilst an extra speed of five miles an hour is granted, the maximum penalty is to be increased from £50 to £75, which seems hardly reasonable when at the same time the penalty under clause 47 for dangerous driving is being reduced from £50 to £30. More particularly does this action appear to be somewhat unjustified when it is realized that the same maximum penalty will prevail for offences where no lift in speed is being granted—in the built-up areas, where there is to be no increase in speed limits but there is to be a sharp increase in fine for those exceeding the existing unchanged limits. I think the £50 previously provided is sufficient.

Clause 97 relates to driving abreast. In conjunction with this, there should be a provision making it an offence for a motorist who is being overtaken to accelerate to prevent the overtaking vehicle from passing him. A most dangerous situation is created when the vehicle being overtaken accelerates to try to prevent the overtaking vehicle getting past. It was an offence in the old Act but there is nothing in the new Bill about this. Sections

129 and 130 of the current Road Traffic Act, if re-enacted, would cover this situation; they should be written into this new Bill, because nothing is more conducive to accidents than that silly practice of a driver accelerating when being overtaken by somebody else.

Clause 141 (4) relates to rear vision mirrors in connection with the limitation on the width of vehicles. The previous Bill specified that, in determining the width of a vehicle, the rear vision mirrors should not be taken into account. I refer to clause 138 (4) of the first Bill. Freedom to have good rear vision mirrors on either side of the cabin of a commercial vehicle is an important safety assistant to the driver. Regarding the weighing of commercial vehicles by inspectors to determine whether or not they are overloaded, I believe that when a driver has been stopped and his vehicle weighed, if the load complies with the law he should be issued with a weighbridge certificate which should be sufficient evidence, if he is stopped later, that his load is in order. That would save his being stopped perhaps two or three times on the one trip.

Mr. McKee: He might put some extra load on after the first weighing.

Mr. LAUCKE: There could be a discretionary power. If there is reason to suspect additional loading the vehicle could be re-weighed, but where there is no suspicion it seems an impost to weigh a vehicle a number of times, thus wasting the driver's time. I shall move amendments in Committee. I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 9 passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 29. Page 604.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): I support the second reading. I believe all members agree that aged and invalid persons should not be exploited. All rest homes should be registered and standards set and maintained. However, I am somewhat concerned about nursing homes that cater for geriatric cases. At one time aged people could be maintained in these homes from their pension allowances, but the Commonwealth Government enacted legislation that precluded these persons from entering nursing homes and receiving care for about £13 or £14 a week. Instead, they have to enter hospitals for a limited time and can be charged up to £25 a week.

I do not wish to refer to any particular home that is caring for the aged. I have made it my business from time to time to find out what is going on in some of these nursing homes, which are in some cases called private hospitals. I visited the Winchester private hospital at Malvern and found that it was doing rehabilitation work in addition to caring for aged people. This hospital has gone so far in this work that I was surprised that the Bill did not go a step further and provide for this type of accommodation. This work is linked up with the work of *Meals on Wheels*, an organization conducted by Miss Doris Taylor, to whom I pay a tribute.

The Bill refers to rest homes but it should have had a higher objective. The hospital to which I referred gives rehabilitation exercises and, people who respond to treatment prove that this work is of great benefit to the community. I understand that Miss Taylor has made comprehensive reports to the Minister of Health and if a little encouragement could be given to her organization we would be getting somewhere in assisting elderly people. I know of an elderly woman who was discharged from the Royal Adelaide Hospital and could not obtain admittance to Northfield. She subsequently went to the Winchester Street hospital, and the organizer is to be commended for the way in which this woman responded in health as a result of the rehabilitation training and speech therapy at that hospital. If the Minister of Health has been made aware of these matters, then the Government should take a bigger step so that hospital treatment might be provided for aged and invalid people in receipt of social service benefits. People trying to get aged relatives into hospitals would know that they would be treated well, and a greater contribution could be made by the Commonwealth Government. The benefits payable by the Commonwealth Government do not do it credit, so it is up to the South Australian Government to investigate this matter in the interests of the people who may have to enter this type of nursing home. If the Government is satisfied that new section 146a (3a) covers all it wishes to do at this stage, it may be able later this session to introduce further amendments to do what I have suggested.

Mrs. STEELE (Burnside): I, too, support this desirable Bill, which has been sought by

the Central Board of Health and the Municipal Association to ensure that there is control of homes that provide accommodation for aged, infirm, helpless or partially helpless people. Many families provide accommodation and care most excellently for their own aged parents and relatives, and they would not think of putting these people into homes. I feel that, although we hear much about young people and old people not mixing, the association between grandparents and their grandchildren is lovely and is something that is needed. However, many people have no relatives to look after them and it is then necessary to find homes in which to put them. Such homes should provide everything that old people need in their declining years.

In recent years the attitude of the public towards aged people has changed considerably; in practically every State of the Commonwealth fine homes have been set up by various organizations for the care of old people. An excellent arrangement exists whereby the Commonwealth Government provides a subsidy on a £2 for £1 basis, and in the area close to Adelaide many fine homes have been set up. On the other hand (as will always happen) some places do not conform to the standards desirable in providing accommodation for old people, and this measure will rectify that position. In my district some homes cater specifically for discharged mental patients. In some of these homes people are crowded in, sufficient space is not provided, and insufficient care is given to the patients' welfare.

This is one condition this Bill seeks to improve. The local boards of health are most anxious that this position should be rectified and they have therefore asked that this amendment be enacted so that inspection will be possible and people living in these homes will be given proper care and attention. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill, which is a good one.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood): Very shortly I support the second reading of this Bill, the aim of which is to provide that there shall not be loopholes for those people, who are running unsatisfactory houses for the assistance of aged and helpless people, to avoid licensing and registration. I fear, however, that the section to be enacted will not achieve the purpose for which it is designed. As the new provision stands, the onus will be on the person desiring to evade registration and licensing to prove that no part of the return to that person from any board or lodging fee or any fee paid by the person in the home is for the additional care to aged, infirm, helpless or partially helpless people beyond board and lodging.

Frankly, it is not going to be terribly difficult for those who desire to evade this provision to evade it. What would happen if persons intent on evading this provision chose to require any person entering their home to enter into a written agreement providing for the return to that home of a substantial payment for board and lodging and expressly stating that no part of the fee or reward is for any additional service? It would not be difficult, therefore, to produce that agreement as to the nature of the contract between that person and the inmate of the institution.

It may be rather easy in those circumstances for persons endeavouring to evade the section to evade it in the future as they are doing under the Act at present. I have racked my brains to find some means of tightening up this provision but I must confess that I have not been able to discover any means of doing so. I only hope that the Bill does what it is intended to do, but I can only express the fear that loopholes will in fact still exist.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

SALE OF FURNITURE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON (Minister of Education): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The principal amendment effected by it will be to require all furniture other than second-hand furniture and furniture not sold by way of trade to be stamped or labelled with the name of the manufacturer and the name of the country or State of Australia of origin before it can be sold. The opportunity is being taken at the same time of making some other amendments to bring the Act into line with modern conditions. The principal amendment to which I have referred is effected by clause (4) (*b*) which will amend section 5 of the principal Act. That section requires all furniture made in the State to be stamped but does not require the stamping or labelling of furniture not manufactured in the State.

The effect of the amendment will therefore be not only that local manufacturers be required (as at present) to stamp their names upon furniture made for sale but also all traders will be required to see that any

furniture whether manufactured in this State or elsewhere is stamped or labelled with the name of the manufacturer and the place of origin. The object of the amendment is to afford some measure of protection to the public who will, when buying furniture, be able to discover by whom and where furniture was made. It appears from representations made to the Government that there is some tendency for shoddy furniture becoming dumped in this State to the detriment of the local industry and the buying public which at present has no means of discovering where the furniture was made or by whom. I may add that a not dissimilar requirement is in force in New South Wales.

Clauses 3 and 4 (*a*) will enable furniture to be either stamped or otherwise labelled. It is considered that the present provision which requires an indelible permanent ink or stain or impression is not reasonable either in respect of highly polished furniture or in respect of furniture which, consisting of a wooden frame, is subsequently covered by upholstery. For many years branding by means of stickers or sewn labels has been permitted as substantially complying with the spirit but not the letter of the Act and it is considered desirable to make proper provision to permit of this being done. Clause 3 makes a consequential amendment to section 3 of the principal Act while clause 5 will amend section 6 concerning the nature and position of the stamp to accord with modern conditions. Clause 6 will amend section 7 of the principal Act which provides that an inspector may seize furniture and detain it for the purpose of proceedings but that it must be returned if proceedings are not taken within three days. It is proposed to increase this period to seven days. Clauses 7 and 9 will provide for the offence of obstructing inspectors or refusing to answer questions and also provide protection to inspectors in respect of actions taken by them in pursuance of the Act. Clause 8 will increase the general penalty under the Act from £5 to £25, the present penalty having remained unaltered for some fifty-odd years.

Mr. FRED WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

HOSPITALS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON (Minister of Works): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to remove an unintended consequential effect of an amendment to the Hospitals Act Amendment Bill, 1959. The object of that Bill in its original form was to empower the Director-General of Medical Services to prescribe differential rates for different types of accommodation provided in public hospitals and to make it clear that the Director-General had power to remit fees owing to patients. During the course of the debate an amendment was moved by the Leader of the Opposition to provide that rates for public hospitals should be prescribed, not by the Director-General but by regulation, so that fees to be imposed on patients should be subject to review by Parliament and this amendment was accepted by the Government. The Bill was considered at a late stage during the session and as there was no opposition to its basic provisions the amendment was accepted without perhaps that full consideration which it might have received under different circumstances.

It was not appreciated that the amendment to the Bill would have an unintended effect upon subsidized hospitals. But section 48 of the principal Act provides that the provisions of section 47 covering fees may be applied to subsidized hospitals upon proclamation. When such a proclamation is made, all of the provisions of section 47 are applied to such subsidized hospitals, substituting the words "the board or the committee of management of the hospital" for "the Director-General" and the "Crown" wherever these latter expressions appear in section 47. This provision worked satisfactorily as long as the Director-General of Medical Services fixed fees for public hospitals, but section 47 in its amended form now provides that all fees shall be prescribed by regulation and thus the unintended result has been brought about that not only must fees for public hospitals be fixed by the Governor, but also fees in respect of subsidized hospitals. These fees have always been fixed by their respective boards of management.

The object of this Bill is to add to section 48 appropriate provisions which will ensure that that position is maintained, and clause 3 accordingly provides that section 47 in its application to subsidized hospitals shall be read in a manner which would give effect to the intention. Clause 4 provides that the amendment made by clause 3 shall operate retrospectively to the passing of the 1959 amendment so that full effect can be given to what was then the real intention of the Parliament.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

CHILDREN'S PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON (Minister of Education): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to enable a court or jury, when the age of a child is in question, to determine, on its own view and judgement, that the child is of or over a certain age. Section 19 of the principal Act provides that if in any proceedings under that Act or whenever the age of any child is in question the court or jury, on its own view and judgment, is satisfied that the child is under a certain age, the child shall be deemed to be under that age, unless the contrary be proved.

This provision enables a court or jury to assess the age of a child as under a certain age, but it does not assist in a case where a court or jury has to be satisfied that a child is of or over a certain age. For instance, in proceedings under section 52 of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act, which deals with carnal knowledge of a female of or above the age of 12 years and under the age of 13 years, difficulty has been experienced in establishing the age of a child born in a country outside Australia whose mother was not available to prove the child's age. Clause 3 is designed to meet that difficulty by extending the provisions of section 19 of the principal Act to enable a court or jury in such cases to determine, on its own view and judgment, that a child is of or over a certain age.

Mr. DUNSTAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.46 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, September 5, at 2 p.m.