HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, October 5, 1961.

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

BULK HANDLING OF GRAIN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the Bill.

QUESTIONS.

GERIATRIC AND CUSTODIAL HOSPITALS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: A circular I have received concerning the Geriatric and Custodial Hospital Association of South Australia states:

The above association was established early this year and now has 20 member hospitals. It is intended to seek new legislation to provide better benefits for chronic sick patients cared for in the geriatric hospitals of this association.

The circular states that the board comprises a doctor from the Central Board of Health, a matron from rehabilitation, geriatric and custodial categories and a physiotherapist. When I visited one of these hospitals I found a high standard of accommodation. The Commonwealth Government's provision for hospitalization is not adequate to meet the situation at present. Has the Premier obtained any report from the association on this matter, and can he say whether the Government will consider requesting further assistance from the Commonwealth or whether the State can offer any other assistance for the care of aged people?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: It has not been the policy or practice of the Government to investigate every association that may be formed. Indeed, that would be an endless job and, anyway, would be an infringement of the normal right of free association in this country. The mere fact that an association is established does not of itself justify an immediate investigation of it. If it is alleged that the association is being conducted improperly or illegally, that is a different matter. I do not know anything about it other than that I did see that an association had been formed. As far as I know, it is highly reputable and there is no need, in my opinion, for any investigation of it.

As regards the second part of the question, subsidies to hospital patients are dealt with by the Commonwealth Government: the State Government has no control over them. We do, however, subsidize non-profit hospitals in their expansion programmes and have given generous assistance to such hospitals for buildings on a proportionate basis. If subsidies are given, they are sometimes on a basis of £2 for £1. The association mentioned by the Leader did, I believe, qualify to receive a 50 per cent subsidy. In fact, I think special circumstances made it necessary, for the time being at any rate, to provide for something a little better than a 50 per cent subsidy. I will refer the question to the Minister of Health.

ABATTOIRS COMMITTEE.

Mr. LAUCKE: The Minister of Agriculture has announced the appointment of a special committee to inquire into proposed changes at the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs, Gepps Cross, in respect of the pen selling of cattle and the alteration of the marketing days for pigs and calves from Wednesdays to Mondays, and to report to him on the effects of such proposals on various sections of the community. This is a democratic and practical approach to seeking a satisfactory solution to a problem that has caused primary producers great concern. I commend the Minister for his action. Are the terms of reference to the committee to cover the pen selling and alteration of market days exclusively, or may such matters as the following be considered by the committee: (1) the desirability of investigating the rationalization of killing for butchers' pregiven weekly orders; (2) services now rendered by the Abattoirs Board, such as the delivery of meat; and (3) certain inspectorial services (I have in mind the inspection of shops and vehicles now done by the abattoirs staff, but which may well be within the province of the Board of Health and not of the Abattoirs Board)?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The committee that has been appointed is being given the specific task of examining the proposals for the alteration of market days and of the system of cattle selling, and it is asked to inform me on the desirability of those proposals and of the effects on the various sections of the community. I do not intend to ask the committee to do anything more than that. The points raised by the honourable member are wide and in time will need to be considered further, but this committee has not that job. The Abattoirs Board wants to get on with its proposals, but some people have protested that they may be adversely affected by them. Consequently, I thought it would be fair to get a committee to satisfy itself whether or not the changes

would work to the detriment of some people, as it had been alleged that the changes might help the board but not other people. That is what I want a report upon. If I asked the committee to go further into the killing changes, methods of delivery and inspectors, it would take a long time and there would be little chance of getting a reasonably quick answer. Undoubtedly these other matters will all crop up ultimately. The board has plans to improve in every possible way its administration of the abattoirs and it will certainly turn its attention to these problems. As I have pointed out previously, the board has been appointed to run the abattoirs and I do not propose that this committee should review everything the board does. I want to be satisfied on the effect of these changes on the community.

PENSIONERS' CONCESSION FARES.

Mr. RICHES: I have asked questions about an approach being made to the Commonwealth Railways Department for concession fares to pensioners using the Commonwealth railway services to match the concessions granted on our railways. Yesterday pensioners came from my electorate and had to pay the full fare on the Commonwealth railway service but at Port Pirie they obtained tickets at the concession rate granted on our railway service from Port Pirie south. Earlier this session the Premier promised to make overtures to the Commonwealth authorities to see whether similar concessions could be granted to the people who live beyond Port Pirie. Has the Premier received a reply from the Commonwealth Minister?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: No.

SUPERPHOSPHATE PRICES.

Mr. NANKIVELL: So far the new season's prices for superphosphate have not been announced and as the delivery period is fast approaching can the Premier say whether there has been a change in the prices compared with last season's prices and, if so, what this season's prices will be?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Prices Commissioner has investigated superphosphate prices for this year and will be issuing, today or tomorrow, a report on the proposed prices for South Australia. This year the announcement is later than normal but the position is rather different because the bounty on locally produced acid was withdrawn by the Commonwealth Government, which resulted in an increase in the cost of acid amounting to about 10s. a ton for superphosphate. This was an important decision. Also, as members know, there have been increases in the price of bags and in wages, and a slight increase in the price of phosphate rock. All other States have had to increase their superphosphate prices—the lowest increase being 4s. a ton and the highest 11s. 6d. The Prices Commissioner has adjusted the price of pyrites and has investigated the sulphuric acid aspect. The prices he will announce will be the same as applied last year, which is a remarkable performance under the circumstances. I cannot pay too great a tribute to the work done by the Prices Department. In one way or another over the last five years, on superphosphate prices alone the Prices Commissioner has saved the community about £1,000,000.

RAILWAY EXCURSION FARES.

Mr. TAPPING: Each year, for five weeks during December and January, a carnival is conducted at Semaphore for the benefit of charities. In the last few years the Railways Department has spent millions of pounds on good new rollingstock, but from my observations suburban trains are frequently poorly patronized and it might be well for the Railways Commissioner to consider providing excursion fares at certain periods of the year to specified organizations to assist the Semaphore carnival, popularize Semaphore and other beaches, and benefit the department. Will the Minister of Works confer with the Minister of Railways and ascertain whether the Commissioner will consider providing excursion fares on special occasions?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I do not know whether the Minister of Railways will agree entirely with the member's suggestion that by giving away money he can earn revenue, but I will put the proposal to him for consideration by the Commissioner.

VICTOR HARBOUR RAILWAY SHED.

Mr. JENKINS: In speaking to the Estimates last evening I mentioned an unsightly railway shed at Victor Harbour. Will the Minister of Works ask the Minister of Railways to get a report from the Railways Commissioner about the future usefulness of this shed and whether it can be demolished, sold, or otherwise disposed of?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I noted the honourable member's remarks on this matter yesterday and I think they will have already been drawn to the attention of the Commissioner. In view of the question I will see that it is brought to his notice.

SOUTH-EAST SLEEPER ACCOMMODATION.

Mr. HARDING: During the Estimates debate reference was made to the sleeper accommodation provided on the South-East railway service. I have tried to obtain a sleeper for next Monday night, but have been informed that the accommodation is now booked out and that it would be difficult for the South Australian Railways Department to obtain a Victorian coach. Will the Minister of Works draw the attention of the Minister of Railways to the position and ask whether something can be done about it?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes.

COMPANIES' ACTIVITIES.

Mr. STOTT: Recently many companies have been formed with insufficient capital and have canvassed people in the country to take out shares and invest in all sorts of projects. It has been proved subsequently that these companies have not been *bona fide*. Recently I had to represent several creditors and at a meeting it was decided to appoint a committee of investigation. I was appointed chairman of that committee, and it was revealed that in the first place the debtor had had no substantial financial backing to be able to undertake the project he visualized. Consequently, some creditors lost over £20,000, and many of them were in my electorate. Today, I attended another meeting of creditors, many of whom were country people, who had invested money in this company in good faith, but investigations had proved that it had had insufficient financial backing to be able to go ahead with the project involved. There are far too many of these companies, some dealing in hire-purchase, which falsely pretend to people that they provide good investments, yet subsequently some are proved fraudulent and many to have had insufficient capital. Will the Premier place this matter before Cabinet with a view to legislating to amend the Companies Act to provide that before persons or companies become registered under that Act they shall be investigated by a capable committee on whether they have sufficient capital backing, whether they are *bona fide* and whether they are able to undertake the projects outlined in their prospectuses? If this were done it would overcome these fraudulent practices of mushroom companies which are taking money from people under false pretences.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: This matter is extremely difficult to administer. The Government cannot undertake the duty of examining every proposal that may be floated and giving a certificate of its soundness or otherwise; indeed, if it did that, it would immediately assume a great responsibility because, if any project should fail for any reason whatever, the fact that it had been investigated and approved would make the Government responsible (at least morally responsible) for losses incurred. Regarding the second part of the question, certain information is required under the Companies Act and at present the whole of this legislation is being reviewed by the Attorneys-General of all the States with the object of bringing forward a Bill that will considerably tighten the provisions regarding balance-sheets, declarations and other aspects that are in some respects somewhat loose at present. That Bill is nearing completion and I think will be available by next session. I cannot take the matter further than saying that I will refer it to the Attorney-General for consideration in relation to the uniform Bill.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

Mr. RALSTON: On August 22, when asking the Premier a question about unemployment relief, I quoted a press report about the concern felt by the Penola District Council about unemployment in that area. In his reply the Premier mentioned the amount of State relief provided where hardship arose in unemployment and volunteered to obtain a report about the number of unemployed in the Penola area. I have endeavoured without success to obtain figures relating to the number of unemployed in the Mount Gambier area from the Commonwealth authorities. I have been able to obtain the number of unemployed in the whole of the South-East, but not in Mount Gambier alone. If the Premier has obtained a report about the unemployment figures for the Penola area, I should be pleased if he would make it available. If he has not obtained it, will he add to the report about the unemployed in the Penola area a statement about the unemployed in the City of Mount Gambier and the immediate surrounding districts?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I attempted to get the information the honourable member required, but found that no separate records were kept in respect of individual towns. The best information I could get was that 159 men and 99 women were registered as unemployed in the district. I can only conjecture, but I would think that these figures relate to South-Eastern districts and not to one particular town.

HOAXES.

Mr. FRED WALSH: Has the Premier obtained a reply to my recent question about the perpetration of hoaxes on policemen and other persons?

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

Attached for your information is a list of the false reports and telephone calls of a bogus nature received and recorded at this headquarters, together with the result of charges against persons making these reports. The only reports to country and suburban police stations included are those in which a charge resulted. Reports of this nature cause members of the public considerable anxiety and result in a waste of manpower and unnecessary expense as far as the department is concerned. No doubt press publicity had a stimulating effect on the person or persons responsible for the reports relating to bombs, as there were 13 calls of this nature for the period August 15, 1960, to April 19, 1961. This department has three courses in laying charges against a person making a hoax call to the police. They are as follows:

Section 63 of the Telephone Regulations under the Post and Telegraph Act, which reads:

(1) Any person who—

(*a*) whilst using any telephone associated with or connected to the telephone system, makes use of any unbecoming expression or of any language of an objectionable, obscene or offensive nature, or of a character calculated to provoke a breach of the peace; or

(*b*) mischievously uses any such telephone for the purpose of irritating any person, or of conveying any fictitious order or instruction or message—

shall be guilty of an offence. Penalty: Fifty pounds.

(2) Where a subscriber's telephone is used by any person in any manner specified in the preceding sub-regulation, the telephone may, without prejudice to the right of the department to recover the rental and other charges payable to the end of the term agreed upon, be disconnected and any instrument or fittings belonging to the department removed.

When the false report is actually made to a member of the Police Force, the offender, if detected, is charged under section 62 (1) of the Police Offences Act, which reads:—

(1) Any person who falsely and with knowledge of the falsity of his statements represents to any member of the police force that any act has been done or that any circumstances have occurred, which act or cirumstances as so represented are such as reasonably call for investigation by the police, shall be guilty of an offence. Provided that where the statements alleged to have been made by the defendant were statements concerning the conduct of a member of the police force the defendant shall not be convicted on the uncorroborated evidence of members of the police force.

Penalty: Fifty pounds.

(2) Upon convicting a person for an offence against this section, the court may order him to pay to the complainant a reasonable sum for the expenses of or incidental to any investigation made by any member of the police force as a result of the false statement.

(3) Any amount received by the complainant under this section shall be paid by him to the Treasurer in aid of the general revenue of the State.

If the report, as sometimes happens, is made to a person other than a member of the Police Force, a charge can be laid under section 62a of the Police Offences Act, which reads:—

(1) If—

(*a*) Any person does any act with the intention of creating a belief that a felony or misdemeanour has been committed or that life has or may have been lost or is endangered; and

(*b*) At the time of doing the act firstmentioned, he knows that the act or circumstances with respect to which he intends to create such belief has not or have not occurred,

he shall be guilty of an offence.

Penalty: One hundred pounds or imprisonment for one year.

In this subsection "belief" includes suspicion.

(2) Upon convicting a person for an offence against this section, a court may order him to pay to the complainant a reasonable sum for the expenses of or incidental to any investigation made by a member of the police force as a result of the offence.

(3) Any amount received by the complainant under this section shall be paid by him to the Treasurer in aid of the general revenue of the State.

The penalties available under existing legislation appear quite adequate from the police point of view, but I do not know of any instance where the maximum available penalty has been imposed. The compensation machinery is sufficiently comprehensive to provide relief for departmental expense if the culprit is apprehended. However, offenders are extremely difficult to apprehend, and even when a phone call is suspect, it is almost impossible in the case of a false telephone call, to hold a hoaxer in conversation long enough to trace the call through the automatic exchanges. It is not always possible to completely ignore many of these calls, as the fact that it is a

hoax does not emerge until after the investigation has commenced. There is also a remote possibility that something which appears to be a hoax may be a genuine call, and restraint from action by the police would bring a storm of criticism from those people who are always ready to find fault with either the actions of the police or their lack of action.

TROTTING DISPUTE.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: I understand from press reports that the trotting season will open at Wayville on Saturday night. It would appear that an arbitrator has been sought to settle some misunderstanding between the South Australian Bookmaker's League and the trotting club. Has the Premier any information regarding the possibility of solving this problem?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I am not well aware of the grounds of the dispute that has arisen, but I understand it is one between the trotting authorities and the bookmakers regarding the fees that should be paid by bookmakers for attendance at the trotting meetings at Wayville. I make it clear that this matter is one that primarily concerns the two bodies I have mentioned. When those parties failed to reach an agreement they approached the Betting Control Board to see whether the problem could be solved. After a further discussion, suggestions were put forward, and finally, I am pleased to say, both the trotting authorities and the bookmakers have accepted my offer for the Prices Commissioner to investigate and arbitrate in the matter. I think Mr. Murphy will investigate the claims made by the parties and give a decision which I hope will be mutually acceptable.

BUILDING MATERIALS.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Has the Premier a reply to my question concerning the use by the Housing Trust in Whyalla of gyprock board in place of the locally produced plaster board?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Chairman of the Housing Trust reports:

A contractor for the Housing Trust building timber-frame houses at Whyalla was, at the end of June last, held up because of the lack of supply of fibrous plaster walling and ceiling linings. The contractor was approached by Associated Fibrous Plaster Company of Whyalla, which was the supplier of fibrous plaster for the houses, to take from the company gyprock linings as an alternative to the fibrous plaster which was intended to be used. It was agreed to take the gyprock linings for 15 houses. I would emphasize that what was done was done at the instance of the fibrous plaster industry at Whyalla. At no time has the trust or its contractor stated that the trust intends to use gyrock ceilings or linings as a general practice.

RADIUM HILL COMMITTEE.

Mr. CASEY: In view of the report of the Radium Hill Project Committee, laid on the table this afternoon by the Premier, I am anxious about the appointment of the re-employment committee set up to deal with the employment, housing and compensation of families concerned. Has the Government considered this report and arrived at a decision?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The report was handed to me only last night by Mr. Justice Chamberlain and, because of the public interest in this matter and the need for information about the nature of the report, it was laid upon the tables of the Houses today. It has not, however, been read by me or by any other Minister; nor am I aware, probably, of as much of its contents as is the honourable member himself at this moment, but I have no doubt that any measure recommended by the committee for the suitable transfer in employment of persons who may be engaged in the industry at Radium Hill, if no longer required, will be sympathetically considered by the Government; and, if a committee is recommended to be appointed for this purpose, I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that the honourable member may expect a Cabinet decision giving effect to that recommendation. I can assure him that that would be in keeping with Government policy on that. I will inform him as soon as a decision on this matter is reached by the Government and also on any committee that may be appointed.

LAMEROO ELECTRICITY DEPOT.

Mr. NANKIVELL: My question concerns the Electricity Trust depot at Lameroo. I am informed that the trust has purchased land at Lameroo for the purpose of establishing a regional depot there. Can the Minister of Works say whether this information is correct? If it is, when will the building of the depot and the necessary housing associated with it commence?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will ask the Chairman of the Electricity Trust for a report.

BAROSSA VALLEY OLIVE PLANTATIONS LTD.

Mr. TAPPING: On July 25 I asked the Minister of Education to refer to his colleague the Attorney-General the activities of Barossa Valley Olive Plantations Ltd., having had complaints from some people, one of whom had invested £550 in this company with no

success. From what I heard in July, I understood that the police were investigating this company. I asked the Minister then if he would expedite a police report so that those suffering from this maladministration could consult a lawyer to get some redress or legal advice. Has the Minister received a reply from his colleague? If not, will he try to get one as quickly as possible?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: On the day following the honourable member's question, I referred the matter to my colleague the Attorney-General. I have made several inquiries and caused other inquiries to be made from time to time but my colleague cannot yet furnish me with a report for the honourable member, for the very good reason, as stated by the honourable member, that the police are still investigating. However, I will endeavour to get some interim report, at any rate, by next Tuesday.

POLICE RADIO COMMUNICATION.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Will the Minister representing the Chief Secretary ask his colleague whether the police vehicles involved in the recent search for a missing trapper were fitted with radio? It appears from the reports that various people engaged in the search had no radio communication with one another, and it seems desirable that in such cases radio communication be established between the various parties engaged in the search. Were any of the vehicles so equipped? If not, will consideration be given to fitting with radio equipment police vehicles used in outback areas?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I speak subject to correction, but I believe that all police vehicles operating in outback areas are normally fitted with radio communication. The problem that arises in these cases is that frequently other vehicles are called in for emergency use which are not normally police vehicles at all; they are used because they are adjacent to the scene of the emergency. I will get a report from the Police Commissioner. I agree that the consequences of a search going wrong can be serious in outback country if the vehicles used are not in radio communication, particularly if people who do not normally know the country are using the vehicles, and if those vehicles are two-wheel drive vehicles, in which case they could cause an emergency for the searchers even greater than the emergency for those originally involved. However, I will get a report to see if anything useful can be done in this connection.

RAL RAL DIVISION DRAINAGE.

The SPEAKER laid on the table the final report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence, on Drainage of Ral Ral Division of Chaffey Irrigation Area.

Ordered that report be printed.

LAND SETTLEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Acting Minister of Lands) moved:

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Land Settlement Act, 1944-1959.

Motion carried.

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

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It extends the operation of the Land Settlement Act, which would normally expire in December of the present year, for a further two years. The Bill is in similar terms to that which was passed in 1959. The Government is still of the opinion that the provisions of the principal Act should not be allowed to lapse and the effect of clause 3 is to extend the term of office of members of the Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement until December 31, 1963. Clause 4 amends section 27a of the principal Act enabling the acquisition of lands in that portion of the western division of the South-East which is south of drains K and L up to December 22, 1963.

Since the completion of the War Service Land Settlement Scheme, the Land Settlement Committee has had less work than it had some years ago. The committee's future has been considered by the Government, and it is felt that, as members of the committee have a knowledge of and interest in agricultural and rural subjects, the committee should be maintained in its present form and projects that are normally referred to the over-worked Public Works Standing Committee, and which relate specifically to rural matters, should be referred to the Land Settlement Committee for inquiry. This proposal will be effected as soon as possible after the extension of the committee's life.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

STOCK DISEASES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Agriculture) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Stock Diseases Act, 1934-1959. Read a first time.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to confer on the Governor power to make regulations requiring persons carrying stock health certificates from the authorities of other States from which stock are introduced into this State to produce their certificates to the owners or managers of runs entered by them with the stock or to any inspector or member of the Police Force.

Section 8 of the Stock Diseases Act provides that the Governor may make regulations, *inter alia*, XI. For requiring certificates of health from the authorities of any other State from which stock are intended to be introduced, the issue of a permit for stock to enter this State, and the production of the permit to the proprietor or manager of any run which the owner of the stock may enter or propose to enter with the stock, or to any inspector or member of the Police Force.

Under this provision the regulations may require production of a permit for stock to enter the State, but the power, unfortunately, does not extend to requiring production of the certificates of health. The defect in the legislation is remedied by clause 3.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

BOTANIC GARDEN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Acting Minister of Lands): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is twofold. The more important of the two amendments effected by the Bill is made by clause 3; the amendments made by clauses 5, 6 and 7 being consequential thereon. The principal Act, by section 3, defines the expression "the Garden" as "The Botanic Garden of Adelaide"—an area more fully defined in section 4. By various sections of the Act the Board of Governors of the Garden are given powers relating to "the Garden". Certain lands comprising what is known as the Mount Lofty annexe have been dedicated as Botanic Garden reserves, but do not comprise part of the garden as defined in the principal Act, nor are they lands placed under the control or management of the board. Even though the lands might technically come within the terms of section 9 of the principal Act as lands "occupied" by the board, this would not assist the board in relation to the exercise of any of its powers which are expressed to relate to "the Garden"; that is to say, the Botanic Garden of Adelaide. This means that, among other things, the board has no power to make by-laws under the principal Act relating to the Mount Lofty annexe, and the same position would obtain in respect of any other lands which might become vested in the board or placed under its control.

It is to remedy this defect that clause 3 widens the definition of "garden" by extending it to cover not only the botanic garden in Adelaide but also any other lands belonging to, lawfully in the occupation of, or under the care, control or management of, the board. This amendment would enable the board, among other things, to make by-laws. Additionally, clause 7 expressly amends section 13 of the principal Act by empowering the board to make by-laws in relation to the garden or any part of it.

It will be the intention of the Government, if this Bill is passed, to arrange for the Mount Lofty annexe to be declared to be under the care, control and management of the board under the provisions of the Crown Lands Act. The annexe would then come within the extended definition of "garden". The other amendment is effected by clause 4, which will empower the board to have a common seal of which judicial notice will be taken. Such provisions are common in many of our statutes but do not appear in the Botanic Garden Act. The board of governors has asked that provision should be made, and the amendment will give effect to this request.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

WHYALLA TOWN COMMISSION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It amends the present Whyalla Town Commission Act in three respects: first, by altering the status of Whyalla from "town" to "city"; secondly, by providing the Chairman of the commission with the right of appeal against removal from office on resolution by other members of the commission; and, thirdly, by empowering the giving of proxies for commissioners appointed by the company.

The first amendment is effected by clauses 1 and 3. Subclause (2) of clause 1 will alter the title of the Act as amended to "The City of Whyalla Commission Act," and clause 3 will substitute the words "City of Whyalla" for "Town of Whyalla" wherever that expression appears in the principal Act. It will also alter the designation of the commission from "Whyalla Town Commission" wherever that expression occurs in the principal Act to "City of Whyalla Commission". Two necessary consequential amendments to sections 20 and 26, where the word "town" appears by itself, are also made. I should explain that an amendment of the principal Act is required to effect the change in the status of Whyalla and the name of the commission, because procedure by way of petition under the Local Government Act is not available.

Clause 4 deals with the subject of appeals by the Chairman. Section 13 of the principal Act provides that the Chairman of the commission may be removed either if the Governor is satisfied that he is not a fit and proper person to hold office or where other members of the commission unanimously resolve that he be removed from office on the grounds that he is not a fit and proper person. The Chairman is appointed by the Governor, and is the principal executive officer of the commission. It is felt that the power conferred under the second portion of section 13 of the principal Act upon the other six members of the commission to resolve that the Chairman be removed from office should contain some provisions which would entitle the Chairman in such a case to appeal to the President of the Industrial Court in the same way as a suspended or dismissed council clerk may appeal under the Local Government Act; and, of course, as principal executive officer of the commission, the Chairman is the Mayor and Town Clerk of Whyalla. Clause 4 accordingly adds a proviso to paragraph (*b*) of section 13 giving such a right of appeal.

The third amendment is effected by clause 5. Under the principal Act any elected commissioner can, by notice in writing, authorize any other elected commissioner to vote for him at specific meetings. No similar provision is contained in regard to Commissioners appointed by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company, although the company can appoint deputies. It is felt that, to ensure continuity at meetings of the commission, it would be desirable to give to commissioners appointed by the company the same right of nominating a proxy as that which other commissioners have. Clause 5 accordingly inserts a new subsection (1a) in section 16 to this effect.

Mr. LOVEDAY secured the adjournment of the debate.

SURVEYORS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

ARTIFICIAL BREEDING BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 24. Page 571.)

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray): I support the Bill. I had been wondering just when it would come before us again. It has been on the Notice Paper now for what seems to have been 12 months; I know it has not been as long as that, but, like many other Bills, it was put on the Notice Paper before the Budget debate and has only just been reached, with the result that sometimes members forget what they intended to say. However, that is not so on this occasion, as I must say some things supporting the measure. It is remarkable that here again we find that South Australia is lagging behind the rest of Australia in introducing this Bill to give effect to a request from dairymen's associations and others connected with the dairying industry. Although pilot schemes have been operating in South Australia, no full-scale scheme has been put forward by the Government for dairymen in this State.

In the Lower Murray swamp area a local committee, a member of which was a local veterinary surgeon, did much research and was almost ready to commence operations, which it would have done if the committee had not known that the Government intended to set up another committee. The committee appointed by the Government did much research into the need for artificial breeding from a central authority. The pilot schemes that had been arranged, the local committee at Murray Bridge that was almost ready to start operations, and other smaller private schemes that were contemplated: all these could have created much confusion, as happened in other States. Now it is agreed generally by all dairymen that they will have a central authority, although in no sense will it be a Government board. The committee brought down a recommendation that a board be formed, and it is interesting to read its report. It has put much time into this subject. It has taken evidence from other States and overseas, and the committee to which I referred gave evidence. Out of those investigations it compiled

a good report for the Minister, and because of that he has seen fit to introduce this Bill. It has been requested by dairymen; it follows a policy that has been adopted and proved in other States and overseas for some time; and it will have untold benefits for the entire industry.

We have been told that there will be two representatives of stock raisers. In this case, naturally, because it is the dairymen who are most concerned—although it could apply to other stockowners as well—the two representatives will be appointed from the industry. I am sure that this provision will be well received by dairymen, and I trust they will be satisfied with the representation they will have from their own producers. The appointment of the chairman of the board is something that should be specially considered. It is claimed that this board will be self-supporting once it passes its initial stages and becomes operative, and therefore it should be controlled by the very best brains of the State. It is a wise move to provide that a veterinary surgeon shall be a member of the board. I would think that possibly one of the keenest business brains is necessary for the chairman of the board, for I believe that an appointment of such a person will be necessary if the board is to stand on its own feet and not be subsidized by the Government. That is desirable, because on this occasion the dairymen will be getting a distinct advantage.

Obviously, a better progeny will result from this artificial breeding, the facilities that will be provided at Northfield, and the access to semen from other States. Some of the best studs in Australia will be made available to the dairying industry generally. In the past some dairymen have not been able to afford a good type of bull, but now that they will be able to breed by artificial means they will be able to get the very best semen available in the country. This naturally must lift the whole industry in relation to production and to the better class of stock that will be obtained. The small producers—men who run perhaps only half a dozen cows—were put to much inconvenience when the time came for a cow to be serviced, but they will now be able to have this service provided for them without being inconvenienced, and will be able to get a better type of stock because of it.

The safety angle is another important aspect. We have heard of dairy farmers and other farmers being gored by bulls, but now that dairy farmers will be able to dispense with bulls the anxieties of many people will be relieved. I know a number of dairymen's wives who have been ill at ease about the way bulls have behaved, and they have been most anxious for the safety of their husbands and other members of the family. The extra production from the various areas appeals to me. I think that will be achieved, because extra cows will be carried. It has been said that one cow can replace one bull, but the benefit can be even greater because many people believe that three cows can be kept in place of two bulls. Production will therefore be stepped up considerably because of this facility.

It has been said that about 32,000 cows will come under the scheme in the next two years from the areas of Murray Bridge, Mount Gambier, Meadows, Myponga, and Woodside; that this will increase as time goes on; and that within five to 10 years the number will be 48,000. If we take a mean figure of 50,000 we can say that 1,000 bulls can be dispensed with and therefore between 1,000 and 1,500 extra cows can be kept in their place. A production of 400 lb. of butterfat is not unusual for a good cow today, therefore we could have another 400,000 lb. of butterfat per year—quite a big lift in our primary production. Only this week we are having a dairy promotion week. I think the Metropolitan Milk Board will need to look for the promotion of milk in future to dispose of the extra production, because milk, butter and other dairy foods are great body builders and can assist considerably in building up healthy families. Greater publicity is necessary to point out to the public the need for their partaking of the richness that they can get from dairy products.

I see one danger associated with the Bill. The committee, which has gone into this matter very thoroughly, expects 48,000 cattle to come within the scheme within five to 10 years, but I consider that this figure can be greatly increased because of the advantages that I have outlined. I know of dairy-farmers who in the first place did not intend to come under the scheme but who are now seeking to come under it. My electorate is a large dairying district, and I am convinced that its total will exceed the expected numbers. Those dairy-farmers will see the benefits to be derived, and therefore I predict that the increased numbers will be much greater than expected. I trust that the board will make sure that there is never a shortage of semen, for once the dairymen dispose of their bulls they could be at a considerable disadvantage if a shortage of semen occurred. I hope that the board—and I feel sure it will—will consider these things. I support the second reading, trusting that the board will be a good one and that time will

prove that great advantages will accrue because of its establishment.

The rich alluvial swamps adjacent to the River Murray are our big milk-producing areas. They are comparatively close to the city and they supply, at times, at least one-third of metropolitan requirements. I maintain that we have here a wealth that is not being fully exploited. I have advocated previously that the rich dairy lands along the river could be increased even more because of the increased knowledge we have today. Frequently we find that these areas change hands and the new dairy farmers coming in have to learn by trial and error how to get the best out of their dairy farms. I mention this again for the consideration of the Minister and the department, that from time to time as sales take place it would be a good opportunity for the Government to buy one of these dairy farms as a research centre, to be there for the advantage of the dairyman and the whole industry, to get increasing production on this valuable land which at times is not being fully used.

We have an excellent service from the dairy adviser at Murray Bridge, Mr. Ives, than whom there is no better dairy adviser in the State. We have often discussed this very matter of the potential of increased production from the swamps, and there has been an increase since the flood because of the improved conditions arising from the fertility then built up. Now is an admirable time for the Government to get in and buy one of these farms because it is, by its very nature, so different from other parts of the State; the Government can come in and build up production on this valuable dairy farming land. I support the Bill, realizing that it is a good one. The dairy farmers have asked for it. It will have widespread advantages both for the dairying industry and for the State as a whole.

Mr. JENKINS (Stirling): I, too, support the Bill, which is designed to set up a board for the management of an artificial insemination centre in South Australia. I commend the committee appointed last year to make its recommendations to the Minister on the setting up of this board. They are all men of great integrity, possessed of a wide knowledge of the dairying industry. Having had the advantage of being able to see the reactions from the pilot plant set up in 1958, I say that was a wise thing to do. The member for Murray (Mr. Bywaters) said the Government was lagging behind in setting it up, but it took the precaution of looking at it well before reporting that it was satisfied.

In 1958, a single-unit pilot trial was set up in South Australia to establish techniques to prove the practicability of artificial insemination, to test the reaction of farmers and to analyse the costs involved. From the experience gained, the department recommended that the trial be extended to the main dairying areas. In the 1959-60 programme, 5,000 cows were inseminated. This year it is expected the number will be about 15,000 cows. The knowledge gained from that pilot plant was important and influenced the recommendation, to a great degree, of the committee set up to inquire into the matter. The authority to be set up as a board would consist of representatives of producers and business and veterinary interests. I know one or two of them. They would be admirable people to conduct this business. Success will depend largely upon the efficiency of management and co-operation of the dairymen and stud breeders. There is no doubt on that score whatever that it will be welcomed by the dairymen of South Australia.

I have been all over my own district in the last few weeks on different business and contacted many dairymen interested in this scheme. I have heard no word of dissent from any of them yet. A fortnight ago on Monday I was out all day with the chairman of the Metropolitan Milk Board (Mr. Seth Gale) looking at the dairying interests and the dairy establishments in my own electorate. I spoke to many people during my visit and found them all in favour of this scheme. They favour it mainly because many of them have taken advantage of the pilot plant that has been in operation for the last few months, and they have had a good idea of the value to be obtained from that service. It will be a great advantage to a man with a few cows, who regards them as a sideline to sheep or cereal-growing. In many instances, when running only a few cows, it is uneconomic for them to keep a bull themselves. This service will be of inestimable value to those people in particular. They will also have the advantage of being able to breed a first-class breed conducted by the artificial insemination centre. They will be able to choose the breed most suited to their few cows whereas, if they had to keep a bull, they would have only the services of that one bull.

The Minister has said that the advantages are not merely in the cheapness of the service, but it will undoubtedly be of considerable importance. Over these last few years several savings or parings of costs have taken place in the dairying industry. As I pointed out several times during my speech on the Address

in Reply, there has been a great improvement in pasture management, animal husbandry and herd testing, and an increase in butterfat production of herd-tested cows of 33 lb. in the years between 1953-54 and 1959-60; and in herd-tested cows the lactation period has increased from 244 days in 1955-56 to 253 days in 1959-60. Milking machine efficiency has improved following tests by the Agriculture Department. It can go out and make tests of the pulsation of various milking machines, which improve efficiency and economy for the farmers. The city milk licences down the years have improved the dairies to a considerable extent. The farm bulk milk pickup in the Jervois area is also something that will be extended in the future.

There is a great appreciation, too, of the scientific methods passed on to the dairy farmers from the Agriculture and Government Produce departments. All these improvements have enabled the industry to meet the rising costs over the last few years. Mr. Seth Gale told me a fortnight ago that the board had kept a record of 100 dairy farms over the last 12 months, and there seems to have been an increase of 11.3 per cent in production from those 100 farms. That is a creditable effort and goes to prove that results are flowing from the scientific research by the men in these departments.

Regarding the cost of keeping a bull, I should like to read an article from the *Journal of Agriculture (South Australia)*, dated June, 1961. It has been compiled carefully and, I think, on a reasonably conservative basis. The article is headed, "The Figure is higher than many of us realize". It is by Mr. E. Georgeson, dairy field officer at Millicent. It is pertinent to this debate and gives us some idea of what this centre can mean to many dairy farmers. It reads:

The costs incurred in keeping a bull are many and varied. Some can be readily seen; others—the "hidden" costs—are sometimes greater than we realize. Let us look first of all at the most obvious item in the bull's upkeep—cost of feed. The average working bull weighs about 1½ times as much as a cow, so we can say fairly positively that the feed he consumes for body maintenance is also 1½ times that of a cow of the same breed. Thus we can say that the feed needed by a Friesian bull is that of 1½ Friesian cows, and that of a Jersey bull is the same as the feed for 1½ Jersey cows. Some owners may argue that this figure is not accurate and claim that in some cases a hand fed bull, restricted to a small area, needs less feed than a cow. It follows that if the rate of hand feeding is low, the animal must exist on something. He could be drawing on body fats built up previously when on a heavier diet; and while he need not look thin and underfed, the proof of this point would be in comparing weights taken at the start and finish of the restricted diet, not in the appearance of the animal. If he has access to a fairly large yard, instead of a restricted area, he may be able to get enough pickings to keep him going. In both these cases, consideration must be given to costs of fencing, shelter, water points and the basic cost of the land.

Statistics for 1959-60 show that 7,099 dairy bulls were registered as being in use in South Australia. Theoretically this represents (at 1½ cows per bull) 10,648 cow equivalents. Allowing 212 lb. butterfat per cow (the State average for all cows) this means a loss of production of 2,257,376 lb. butterfat every year. While it may be said that this is a loss to the State, it certainly means a very real loss to the dairy farmer. Perhaps you are one of the dairymen who keep two bulls. If so, your personal pocket is hit for 636 lb. butterfat each year on this item alone. But the cost of keeping a bull does not stop here. Let us look further.

We may economize by buying our replacement bulls as calves and rearing them to working age. This, no doubt, means a saving in the money laid out at the moment and has other advantages, particularly as regards training, but there are also disadvantages. One of these is the possibility that the animal may die before maturity. This can place the dairy farmer in the very awkward position of being without a working bull when he needs it, and so having to use any bull, with consequent loss of good replacement calves for one year. Again, there could be damage to the vital organs of an immature bull, either by overuse, misuse or accident.

Moreover, the bull calf would be bought on the production figures of his dam or of his antecedents—not a very good practice when compared with the proven bull or one which has sisters in production. These production figures can be compared and the value of the bull gauged against the lift to be expected over the present cows in the herd. These comparisons minimize the risks taken in buying a new bull with whose daughters we expect to improve our overall production.

There is considerably more to the article, but the relevant part is a comparison of costs. In that respect it states:

Many of these costs are hidden, and we cannot hope to arrive at a figure in actual money. Let us concentrate on the items where we can arrive at a cost figure and list them on a "per bull per year" basis:

	£	s	d.
Loss of production (318 lb. butterfat at 5s. per lb.)	79	10	0
Interest on price of bull (£100 at maturity at 5 per cent)	5	0	0
Loss at sale in 3 years (£21)	7	0	0
Feed (100 bales of hay at 3s. 6d. bale)	17	10	0
Bull paddock or yard (£80, interest at 5 per cent)	4	0	0
Depreciation and repairs to yard	10	0	0
Total	**£123**	**0**	**0**

These are conservative figures; and those who do not agree with them should take pencil and paper and try to arrive at their own costs. The results will probably stagger them. Then there are all those "hidden" costs to be added on to that final figure. For the dairyman who has only one bull and 35 cows, at the above figure of £123 this means a service cost of £3 10s. per cow. Is it any wonder that officers of the Department of Agriculture always insist that dairymen should only buy the best bulls available from a reliable source? It costs money to keep a bull.

It is an extremely good article, scientifically worked out. There are many other considerations that would lead dairy-farmers to patronize the proposed service. One producer told me that he would never have a bull on his farm while this service was available. When a bull is not in the bull paddock, but in a normal paddock, there is always danger to children and to a family. There is also the chance of a bull getting into a neighbouring farm and serving cows that he should not serve and a bull coming from that neighbouring farm and doing likewise. That is disturbing to people who wish to keep their breeds clean. Great care is devoted to the bulls used for artificial insemination purposes, which is another factor in favour of the service. The Government can be congratulated on proposing this service which will greatly benefit the dairying industry generally and which will, over the years, increase in popularity.

Mr. HARDING (Victoria): I support the Bill. It is not generally known, but even queen bees can be artificially inseminated. When one thinks that that can be done satisfactorily and with amazing results, one would imagine that it would be a simple matter to introduce artificial insemination into dairying. However, there is a vast difference between a queen bee and a cow. A queen bee mates only once in her lifetime, which makes it simple for those who do the artificial inseminating.

I am obliged to the Agriculture Department for providing me with information on the subject of artificial insemination. Much of it has already been used by the members for Burra and Stirling, but it is interesting to relate the background to artificial insemination. It is by no means a new practice, and was known centuries ago by the Danes. They were the first to realize the possibility of commercially using artificial insemination to improve the productive capacity of the mass of dairy cattle. The first co-operative began to function in 1936 and was followed by a similar scheme in the United States in 1938. Advancement in Europe was hindered by the Second World War, but since then the increase has been rapid. All types of artificial insemination have been improved and the standard of dairy cattle has been improved by a wider use of the best blood available. It has resulted in a prevention of the spread of breeding diseases—diseases that are spread by physical contact.

In the United Kingdom an additional reason for the use of artificial breeding has arisen in recent years and it has boosted the dairy farm income and the nation's meat supply—the crossing of low-grade dairy cows with beef bulls. In my own electorate that type of breeding has been introduced to obtain calves and vealers and the advantage to be gained from breeding from the right type of dairy cattle crossed with a beef bull for fat calves and vealers is amazing. That is one reason why I rose to speak. I sincerely congratulate the Agriculture Department on this step forward. I do not think it is a belated step; although we may not have been the first State to do this, we have experimented for many years.

This measure will benefit this industry, which has a great future. Unfortunately, about 50 per cent of our butter must be imported from Victoria and other places; this is wrong, as we have the country to carry out more dairy-farming here. I can see a future for the dairying industry in my own electorate. I notice that the project envisages having five centres, and I feel that there will be a great increase in dairy cattle in the future. I look forward to the time when Naracoorte and other smaller districts will become predominantly dairying districts. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa): I, too, support this Bill and commend the Minister for his progressive policy in all matters pertaining to rural industries. I believe there is no more noteworthy instance of this progressive policy than the provisions of this Bill. The crux of this matter is that it costs no less to feed a poorly bred beast lacking in any history of proven and recorded productive capacity than to maintain a thoroughbred of carefully tabled and proven performance. In these days it is incumbent on farmers generally to cut costs wherever possible, and conversion of feed is of vital importance to the farmer, who must ensure that he can have it converted to its best use in the most economical way possible.

Heredity plays a vital part in ability efficiently to transform feed into flesh in the case of beef cattle, or feed into milk in the case of dairy cattle. The benefits that come

from proper breeding of cattle apply equally to other large stock. I think nothing but good can come from this measure, as it will undoubtedly raise the quality and productivity of livestock through giving producers access at economical rates to the best blood lines available. I think three parties must be considered; first, the small dairy farmer, who is the one who will gain most from the proposal. A dairyman who has a limited number of stock could well find it much to his advantage to have the services of the centre in preference to keeping a stud bull on his property. On economics alone the small man will benefit appreciably and will be enabled to have access to good blood lines, whereas his economy might otherwise preclude him from having the type of breeding stock which he requires but which he just cannot afford to have access to. The larger dairy farmer possibly will not make such a great use of this service, as he can afford to run a bull on his property or to buy a bull of proven quality, possibly through subsidy schemes now operating that enable dairy farmers to purchase well-bred stock at reasonable prices. The third group is the stud breeders of dairy cattle. In this State there are breeders who in interstate Royal Show competitions have excelled and have shown they are equal to the best in Australia. I hope their interests will not be adversely affected in any way by this measure. I hope it will provide a further outlet for their top-grade stock to the centre for dissemination to those who desire the services that will come from the centre. In every respect, I can see nothing but good coming from this measure, which I warmly support.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Agriculture): I thank members for their attention and the support they have given this Bill. Perhaps I should make one or two comments in reply. An allegation was made by the member for Murray that this State was lagging behind the rest of the Commonwealth. I do not wish to appear too hard to please, but that statement is not correct. Although I do not know how many animals have been artificially inseminated in proportion to the numbers of dairy cattle, I know that there have been greater advances in some States and less in others. The committee that took evidence on this matter investigated the systems of other States and called witnesses, who advised us on what we should do here. In some notable instances the witnesses said, "We have made certain mistakes that we recommend you to avoid", and gave evidence to show why. In that respect, they were most helpful and by reason of their frank evidence the committee was able to give a unanimous decision on the best way to organize the service in this State.

The practice of artificial insemination is talked of almost entirely in terms of dairy cattle, but, of course, it can have a much wider application; I think it probably will have an even wider application in future. It was also said during the debate that there might be an effect on stud breeders of dairy stock. That is not easy to forecast, and I do not feel qualified to make statements about it, but I know that the stud breeding of dairy cattle in countries in the northern hemisphere, which have highly developed artificial insemination services, is still a most important development. It should be stressed that not only is it necessary to provide the material for artificial breeding but it must be genetically such that it will give the highest quality. That may sound obvious, but it is sometimes overlooked in talking about this matter. Not only must it be made cheaper and safer for dairy farmers by eliminating bulls on their properties but it must also be the aim to keep on improving the standard if possible. In that regard I do not think the stud breeders would be in any sense adversely affected by this practice. Whether I am right or wrong, the service is desired and this is the machinery to provide it.

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

SALE OF FURNITURE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 31. Page 689.)

Mr. FRED WALSH (West Torrens): I support the Bill. While the amendments are long overdue, in my opinion they do not go as far as they should. The origin of this Act goes back to 1904, and since then there has been only one small amendment, to section 10. That was in 1935, and at the same time sections 11 and 12 were repealed. Apart from that, the Act remains today as it was in 1904. I believe that the principal reason for its enactment was that in Adelaide there were many Chinese furniture manufacturers, and much backyard work was indulged in by other people, some of them working in the trade during the ordinary working hours and in their backyards in their spare time building furniture that they sold to retailers. I can well

recall the bottom end of Hindley Street, from Morphett Street to the West End brewery. The houses on both sides of the road and in all the side lanes were inhabited mainly by Chinese, most of whom were manufacturing furniture and selling it more cheaply than it could be sold by the legitimate manufacturer.

Despite the enactment of this legislation, the Chinese and the others I have mentioned were not affected, except that the people who purchased furniture knew by whom it was made and if they did not feel disposed to buy furniture from the legitimate manufacturers they had nobody to blame but themselves after this Act was passed. The Act at present provides for the branding of furniture made in South Australia, but not furniture made in other States or overseas. Some other States have legislation providing that all furniture must be branded, irrespective of where it comes from, and I believe the object of this Bill is to make our Act conform with the legislation of those States.

I consider that the Bill does not go far enough in prohibiting the use of certain timber. Timber that is borer-infected should be specified in the Act to protect people from buying timber which they think is perfectly sound in the furniture, but which they find out later is borer-infected. I understand that this borer-infected timber can remain without suspicion of the existence of borers in the furniture for a period of up to 12 months. Therefore, I think the Government should seriously consider amending the Act, perhaps later, in that respect. The Minister said that the provision was not dissimilar to that in force in New South Wales. That is true, but only so far as that requirement is concerned. New South Wales has two or three Acts covering the sale of furniture—and not only the sale of furniture but the sale of quilts, bedding, mattresses, etc.; that is covered by similar provisions. There is a much wider application of the powers in that State, where regulations can be made from time to time under the relevant Act to meet changing conditions.

When recently in Sydney, I inquired about the legislation there and found that only furniture made by registered manufacturers could be sold to retailers or the public. In other words, people who manufacture furniture there have to be registered. Regulations made under the New South Wales Factories and Shops Act prohibit retailers buying from "backyarders" in the furniture trade. "Backyarders" is a term known to most, if not all, members. It applies not only to the manufacturer of furniture. Unfortunately, many other products are manufactured in back yards, but this Act concerns itself only with furniture. It also makes it possible to trace manufacturers who have used unseasoned or borer-infected timber. As in the case of the Trade Description Regulations and other furniture trade laws, the retailer is bound by the furniture-marking section of the Factories and Shops Act of New South Wales independently of the manufacturer to whom they also apply. This is desirable for all associated with the trade, and is considered necessary. It will become abundantly clear when the nature of the problem confronting the industry is examined.

The three-fold purpose of these provisions is: (1) to prevent the marketing of furniture on unregistered premises; (2) to enable powder-post borer-infected timber in furniture to be traced to the retailer and the maker subsequent to sale; and (3) no person who has made an article of furniture can sell it, either to a retailer or to a member of the public, unless it is the product of a registered factory and bears that maker's registered number. They issue these registered furniture manufacturers, and also the retailer, with a number. This law was passed without opposition in either House of Parliament in 1927 as the result of joint representation by all sections of the furniture trade to have trading in furniture confined to registered manufacturers (including registered self-employed persons) and their employees. That means that a person may engage in the manufacture of furniture and he need not employ anybody but still he is registered and issued with a number and comes within the provisions of the Act.

It is essential on the manufacturer's part that the furniture he produces is stamped with the number allocated to him by the Department of Labour and Industry immediately on completion and prior to its leaving the factory. This number need not be conspicuously appended as in the case of the trade description labels: it may be stamped wherever it can conveniently be seen by a factory inspector, preferably on the back of the job. As the foregoing provisions are applicable only to furniture made in New South Wales, the retailer who buys furniture from another State must obtain from the department a retailer's registration number and imprint this on such goods within 48 hours of unpacking. The retailer's responsibility to have no furniture on his premises which does not bear the manufacturer's number (if made in New South

Wales) or his own number (if made outside the State) has effected the prohibition of his buying from backyarders in that State. The backyarder's main desire, and only avenue of encroachment, is to work during the times when work in furniture factories is legally prohibited—at night and at week-ends. There are, dealing with the hours they can work in New South Wales, provisions that we do not have here. The law in this respect was passed 40 years ago. No Government of either Party has amended it (except to make it more effective) and no organization of employers or traders has objected to it.

Another provision of the Act makes one person engaged in any branch of the furniture trade a "factory" and registration compulsory, notwithstanding that no machinery is used or labour employed. A person who refrains from registering, however, is not exempt from the limitations as to hours of work, and can be proceeded against by the department for breaching any provision of the Act. The backyarder cannot, therefore, dispose of anything he makes unless he and the retailer break the regulations. To comply with these, however, the former must conform to requirements that defeat his purpose. Manufacturers or retailers failing to comply with the regulations under review are liable to penalties ranging from a minimum of £5 to a maximum of £50 for a subsequent offence. (Convictions have been recorded and fines imposed on traders in both sections.)

The prohibition against backyarding is further strengthened by the furniture trade award provision (which operates as a common rule) which makes it illegal for anyone in employment to work on his own account or for any other employer. That means that, if a person is employed in a legitimate factory in the manufacture of furniture, he cannot make furniture on his own account in his home at week-ends; otherwise, he is guilty of a breach of the Act. Nor can he work for another employer during the week-ends.

Retailers as well as manufacturers have been convicted and fined under the Timber Marketing Act. As regards borer-infected furniture in New South Wales—and this is where I think the South Australian Government could consider including in our legislation provisions similar to those in New South Wales—it is an offence under the Timber Marketing Act of that State for anyone, including a retailer, to sell furniture that contains timber infected by the powder-post (lyctus) borer. If the susceptible timber has not been de-sapped by the manufacturer it cannot go into furniture unless it has been immunized against attack by the borer by means of a preservative treatment approved by the Forestry Commission. The retailer is also bound by this Act if he sells borer-infected furniture, and the Furniture-marking Regulations under the Factories and Shops Act, by requiring all furniture made and retailed to bear the maker's number, enable those in authority to trace both the maker and the retailer. But, as a similar law does not require furniture manufacturers of other States (except in Queensland, which has the Timber Users' Protection Act, 1949) to exclude or immunize borer-infected (lyctus) timber, retailers who buy outside this State should take care so to advise prospective purchasers. On such furniture the following printed notice should be conspicuously displayed:

As this article has been made outside New South Wales, where the Timber Marketing Act does not apply, we are unable to sell it or offer it for sale to you without giving you this notice. We cannot state that it is free from lyctus sapwood, and because of this fact we hereby give you notice that untreated lyctus susceptible sapwood may have been used in its manufacture, and it therefore may be liable to attack by lyctus.

That does not prevent sales, but the purchaser buys the article on his own responsibility and in the knowledge that the article may be infected. Upon evidence of infection subsequent to the sale, that warning to the purchaser, which is permitted by section 5 of the New South Wales Act, will exempt the retailer from proceedings at law. As the lyctus beetle may be dormant while the article is in the retailer's store, it must not be thought that the timber is sound: the period of liability is 18 months from the date of manufacture.

The conditions of furniture manufacturing and retailing, once most unenviable and sometimes suspect with the public, could not have been raised to their present high standards without the aid of legislation obtained over years and the co-operation and policing which are essential factors in the success of such controls. There is ample scope for freedom of enterprise under properly-regulated conditions. Those who are not prepared to abide by the established codes of conduct will have a very short period in which to engage in illegal practices. The regulations which require retailers to do business only with those who are legitimately connected with the trade have been fully justified, particularly because of the mixed constitution of the industry and the

great need for safeguards to develop and maintain dependable relations with the public.

Furniture in my own home is branded in non-erasible ink. The name and address of the maker and the fact that it is made by European labour only is branded thereon, and the printed label of the Furniture Manufacturers' Convention is affixed. That convention is interested in protecting the public and I presume that it was as a result of representations from that body that this Bill was introduced. Clause 5 of the Bill amends section 6 of the principle Act to read as follows:

6. (1) The stamp or label shall be stamped or affixed in a prominent place on each article but not necessarily on the face of the article or in such a way as to disfigure the same.

(2) The particulars prescribed by section 5 of this Act shall be in the English language in clearly legible characters.

The furniture will not be damaged by such stamping and the branding will not be noticeable to persons other than those looking for it. My furniture is stamped on the doors or in the drawers, and so long as the brands can be seen by inspectors the position is covered. I wholeheartedly support proposed new section 8a, which states:

Any person who—

(*a*) obstructs or hinders any inspector in the exercise of any of the powers conferred or the discharge of any of the duties imposed by this Act upon an inspector; or

(*b*) without lawful excuse refuses to answer or fails to answer truly any question put to him by an inspector in the exercise of his powers under this Act;

shall be guilty of an offence.

That provides a necessary protection for the inspector, because frequently inspectors are intimidated in various ways and, consequently, they are loath to go near certain establishments without that protection. It is no good our passing legislation unless it adequately provides for proper policing by inspectors. The penalty is to be increased from £5 to £25, but if we have regard to the change in monetary values since 1904 the penalty should be nearer £35. However, that is of no great moment. In New South Wales the penalty has been increased over the years to a maximum of £50. The Government should examine the New South Wales legislation with a view to embodying its more important aspects in our law.

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens): I support the Bill. Its amendments are useful and worthwhile, and can only result in good. The Bill provides greater protection to the purchaser of furniture who is not sufficiently skilled to appreciate its quality, to assess how the timber will stand up to the vagaries of our climate, or to discern shoddy workmanship. The fact that brands will appear prominently should encourage the manufacturer to protect his name and reputation by producing furniture above the minimum standard. I listened with much interest to the valuable contribution to this debate made by the member for West Torrens, and further consideration might be given to some of his suggestions later.

There has been a trend in recent years for a better class of brand to be introduced. This is particularly apparent in the appliance manufacturing field. In the production of refrigerators, ranges and the like, in the United States of America, Great Britain and Australia we find what is known as the "gold star" label. This is a system of labelling whereby manufacturers who produce a superior article in finish and technical standard are permitted by an association to brand their products with a special gold star label which indicates to the purchaser that the product is approved by the association and is of a superior finish and performance. Only those producers who manufacture high class products are permitted to affix this label to their products. Incidentally, this is rigidly policed by the associations concerned, and it has the effect that the manufacturer tries to produce a better article. It also means that the purchaser knows automatically that if an article has this badge it must be of the highest finish and performance. Perhaps a similar system could be introduced for furniture.

Mr. Fred Walsh: The Furniture Trades Convention has a label that all members put on their furniture.

Mr. COUMBE: I see. I did not know of that being done, but, if it is not done, I think it is a worthwhile suggestion. The relevant association should take up this matter, as it would help to ensure that its products were of a superior finish and would indicate to the purchaser that by buying furniture with this badge attached he would be buying an article of good quality timber with a high quality finish. This should be encouraged because, if it were done, it would more effectively achieve the objects of the Bill.

Mr. HALL (Gouger): I, too, support this Bill and hope that it will achieve some of its objects. I listened with interest to this debate and to the interesting proposal put forward by the member for Torrens. If such labelling were done on the initiative of private manufacturers, it would assist in this matter. However, we are not trying to protect people from

any faults in that type of product. People who make articles that warrant special commendation do not need anything to make them do so, so I do not think this Bill is aimed at them. I think it is aimed at people who produce furniture on a large scale and who often put shoddy workmanship behind a good coat of paint. I know that there is a lamentable apathy on the part of the public in purchasing furniture. Apparently some people look through shop windows at the front of the article and buy it because of the paint. If that were not so, much furniture on show in shops would not be sold. I hope that eventually, by such moves as this, the public will look for brand names; I do not think many now look even at the quality of the timber.

The worst offender is the manufacturer who uses immature second or third-grade *pinus radiata* in furniture. If members look at the corners, joints and drawers of some furniture on display they will find that knotty second-grade *pinus radiata* has been used. This furniture will perhaps last only six months with normal use, as the front of a drawer will often pull away from the sides. I hope that we can educate the public to look for these faults and, if they find them, to avail themselves of the protection afforded by this Bill by looking at the brand name and seeing that they do not buy that brand again. I am sure the widespread use of faulty timber is the result of a lack of conscience among many furniture retailers because, after all, the retailer sets the standard. If a traveller offers a retailer an article, the retailer can say whether or not he will sell it, so he is the one who is guilty of foisting on the public many of these faulty articles.

I also know that there are many frustrated manufacturers. Recently, I read an article about a company that insisted that everything it made was of top-grade quality but that it was going insolvent quickly because nobody would buy its products. Admittedly, the quality of such furniture makes it dear, but we are up against the insoluble problem that a manufacturer cannot make an article of the high quality we like for the mass market; the market either cannot afford it or does not want the quality article in quantity. I hope that by this move furniture will eventually be bought by brand names, as is done with motor cars, tools and many other articles. I also hope that eventually we shall come to know manufacturers by their brand names and to know that they will not put second-class unseasoned timber into their products. Although many articles of furniture may have good quality workmanship, it is negatived by poor materials. I hope that brand names will eliminate this trouble and that there will be a compromise whereby, although we may not reach the quality we desire, we will eliminate many faults along the line.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga): I regret that the member for Gouger has perhaps struck a note that I think is undesirable in criticizing the timber, most of which is of Australian origin, used in the manufacture of furniture in this State. To my knowledge, the timber is of a high quality. Queensland maple ranks with imported timbers from Burma and Malaya, as people who know something about furniture manufacture agree.

Mr. Hall: I hope manufacturers use more of it.

Mr. SHANNON: Mahogany, which is an imported timber, is used in better furniture. For sentimental reasons mainly, people buy this wood because they think it sounds high-class, so it commands a market as high-class furniture. However, from the point of view of durability and suitability, it is not as good as Queensland maple, as I am told by the best-informed people. Some furniture manufacturers are also timber distributors (although the smaller men are not) and the competition in supplying timber is sufficiently keen to ensure that no furniture maker need buy a second-quality timber.

Mr. Hall: Then why do they do it?

Mr. SHANNON: I shall tell the honourable member where the real problem arises. If he had inquired, he would have discovered the same problem. Our manufacturers are concerned about the importation of cheap furniture from other parts of the world, and I agree with the honourable member that it is slapstick stuff. It is tacked together and after a few months' use it starts to show wear and tear caused by drawers being pulled out and thrust back. In this type of furniture those drawers do not operate very well after a time.

Mr. Hall: They are not all imported.

Mr. SHANNON: Most complaints have been about imported furniture. One advantage of the Bill is that from now on, if the legislation is enforced properly, people buying shoddy furniture will know whether the article is imported or made locally. I commend the Government for taking that step. In my opinion our own furniture manufacturers are reputable people who wish to keep their clients satisfied. In my considerable experience of

this subject, if a person has a legitimate complaint the average furniture manufacturer quickly rectifies it. I emphasize that the furniture people themselves are in a highly competitive business.

Mr. Hall: Don't you think the retailer is partly to blame?

Mr. SHANNON: No. He is taking the opportunity of buying cheaply manufactured goods from countries with low wage structures; he can buy imported goods and sell them more cheaply than our local product. I am a little worried about that aspect, and I think that is one of the main problems this Bill is designed to solve.

Mr. Hall: What quantities of imported furniture are coming in?

Mr. SHANNON: I do not know, but I know there is unrest in the furniture trade about the importation of some overseas furniture which on the surface looks good.

Mr. Hall: Don't you think most imports are from other States?

Mr. SHANNON: No, I think it is the imported furniture that the trade is worried about. The Bill is designed to protect the origin of manufacture. A person who buys an article that is made outside of Australia knows that he cannot go to the manufacturer to complain about it because the manufacturer is not available, but if that person buys an article made in his own country and he considers that it is not as it should be he can complain to the manufacturer.

Concern is felt about other articles, too. I heard the other day that a certain company, which was perhaps being a little optimistic, purchased a large consignment of commercial trucks from overseas. After a few months the engines of these trucks failed to stand up to our conditions. As a result of this, I understand, a writ has been issued through the courts for about £500,000 compensation. I believe the furniture trade is worried about the fact that the goods coming in are not up to the standard which we are accustomed to and for which we look.

In my opinion we are inclined sometimes to unnecessarily criticize our own people, and I do not like criticism of our own people unless there is reason for it. In my experience of the furniture trade, it is doing all it can to keep our standards high. I do not think members of the trade will object to having their furniture stamped; on the contrary, they welcome the opportunity of being able to brand their name on their own article, for they know that the buyer will be able to say, "Well, that comes from so and so, and we know that is good; we have had it before," or, "Our friends have had it before."

Mr. Hall: There has been nothing to prevent manufacturers from doing that?

Mr. SHANNON: There has been something. The real problem is that the uninformed buyer looks not at the brand on the furniture but at the price ticket. The manufacturer of this imported furniture enjoys a great privilege in every way in the matter of costs, and he can under-sell. If an intending purchaser sees an article that is £10 less than another one yet looks exactly the same in quality, he will buy it; he looks at the price tag and not at the stamp of the manufacturer, so even if the manufacturer had stamped his name on the article (as the member for Gouger said he had the opportunity to do) it had to compete with an imported article of inferior quality which cost much less.

It will take some little time for the effects of this amending legislation to be felt. The public has to be made aware of the possibility that they may be buying an article which appears to be cheap but which really is not cheap. I consider that in time they will look for the manufacturer's name, and that if he is a reputable manufacturer they will know that they can buy with assurance. That is the intention of this small Bill, on which I have spoken because I thought there was a tendency to criticize our own local industry unnecessarily.

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

HOSPITALS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 31. Page 689.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): When the late Leader (Mr. O'Halloran) in 1959 moved to amend section 47 of the principal Act, there was merit in what he did because his amendment related to Parliamentary control of public hospital charges. Those charges were previously fixed by the Director-General of Medical Services, but members should be given the opportunity of disallowing increases in hospital charges if they consider them excessive. Why has this Bill been introduced? Is it because of our experience with road accidents? Recently, £7 a day was charged to one hospital patient.

I assume that, because the hospital was subsidized, the insurance company queried the claim. If the Government is to subsidize hospitals, should Parliament not be able to control hospital fees? That was the whole basis of the 1959 Bill, which is more desirable than this one. The Act should be left as it is. Because I see no necessity for the Bill, I oppose it.

Mr. NICHOLSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

CHILDREN'S PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 31. Page 690.)

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood): I have read this Bill and the explanation of it. As I think it is unexceptionable, I support it.

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

COLLECTIONS FOR CHARITABLE PURPOSES ACT (ROYAL NAVAL FRIENDLY UNION OF SAILORS' WIVES AND MOTHERS INC.).

Consideration in Committee of Legislative Council's resolution.

(For wording of resolution, see page 875.)

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

That the resolution be agreed to.

The motion is that members should, pursuant to subsection (3) of section 16 of the Collections for Charitable Purposes Act, 1939-1947, adopt a resolution approving of the making of a proclamation by His Excellency the Governor in the form set out in the notice of motion. Subsection (1) of section 16 provides that if the Governor is satisfied that any moneys or securities for moneys, held for any charitable purpose by or on behalf of any person, society, body or association to whom or to which a licence is or has been issued under this Act, are not or will not be required for that purpose, the Governor may by proclamation declare that the whole or any part of such moneys and securities shall be applied by such person, society, body or association to any other purpose. Subsection (2) of section 16 provides that any such proclamation shall have the force of law and payments and transfers shall be made to carry out the directions of the Governor thereby made. Subsection (3) of section 16 provides that a proclamation shall not be made under that section until a resolution has been passed by both Houses of Parliament approving of the making of the proclamation.

The Royal Naval Friendly Union of Sailors' Wives and Mothers, Incorporated, a society which raised moneys during the war for its general purposes pursuant to a licence issued under the Collections for Charitable Purposes Act, 1939-1947, has informed the Government that it is at present holding moneys or securities for moneys to the amount of £500 which are not and will not be required for those purposes, and that it desires that these moneys shall be applied by it to payment to the H.M.A.S. Watson Memorial Chapel Fund of Watson's Bay in the State of New South Wales. In order that the society may apply the moneys in this manner it is necessary that His Excellency the Governor should make a proclamation under section 16, declaring that the moneys shall be so applied, and members are asked to pass the motion moved for that purpose.

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.55 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, October 10, at 2 p.m.