

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, August 15, 1962.

The SPEAKER (Hon. T. C. Stott) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

LOCOMOTIVES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Although normally my question would be directed to the Minister of Works, who represents the Minister of Railways in this House, I think it should be directed to the Premier because Government policy is involved. I understand that the normal policy of the Government is to provide for the assembly of diesel-electric locomotives away from the Islington workshops and that, as far as is known now, these locomotives will be used in places on the narrow gauge system. Will the Premier indicate whether the Government intends to insist that all maintenance and replacement repairs be effected in the railway workshops?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I understand that that is the position, but I will get a report from the Railways Commissioner and let the Leader have it, probably tomorrow.

LANGHORNE CREEK TO WELLINGTON ROAD.

Mr. JENKINS: Has the Minister of Works obtained a reply from the Minister of Roads to the question I asked on August 2 regarding the sealing of a further section of the Langhorne Creek to Wellington road?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I have a report from the Minister of Roads informing me that traffic counts indicate that sealing is justified of a further two miles of the Mount Barker to Wellington main road 15, south of the present end of the bitumen at Langhorne Creek. It is expected that funds will be made available to the District Council of Strathalbyn to commence this work when the reconstruction of the Callington-Woodchester main road 237 is complete. There are no plans to improve the alignment of the Willunga Hill section of the Noarlunga to Victor Harbour main road 31 during the current financial year, although a small isolated length of reconstruction will be carried out at the top of Willunga Hill in order to improve the intersection with the Meadows-Willunga main road 231.

MAIN NORTH ROAD LIGHTING.

Mr. CLARK: In the last few months I have received many complaints from motorists, including members of Parliament on both sides

of the House, which, from my own experience, I know to be completely justified, about the lighting of the Main North Road through Elizabeth. It is claimed that many sections of the driving surface are very dark, which greatly increases the possibility of accidents, and I agree. Will the Minister of Works ask the Minister of Roads to have this section of the road thoroughly investigated by his department with a view to obviating the difficulties I have mentioned?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will direct the question to my colleague and ask for a report.

SAFETY BELTS.

Mr. NANKIVELL: I understand that the Premier has a report from the Commissioner of Police relating to a question I asked about the installation of safety belts in police vehicles.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Commissioner reports:

As the necessary finance is available Police Department vehicles are being fitted with safety belts. Forty-four vehicles are already fitted with this safety device, and all but two of these vehicles have belts fitted to the front seats only. The use of the belts has been confined to front seats because in the majority of cases it is only this seat which is occupied by members. The equipping of police vehicles with safety belts is not only considered desirable but also a very important safety measure.

ETHELTON WHARF.

Mr. TAPPING: The *Southern Endeavour* was acquired by the Commonwealth Government to enable private enterprise to conduct trawling operations between Port Adelaide and the Great Australian Bight, but after about 20 months the venture failed and the vessel was sold to a New South Wales enterprise. From my observations I would say that the Harbors Board spent a large sum in improving a berth for this vessel at the Cable Company's wharf at Ethelton to the standard necessary for a trawler's requirements. I am concerned that the board should have spent money on this enterprise and the boat discontinued operations here. Can the Minister of Marine say whether the Harbors Board initially spent money in bringing the berth up to the required standard, and, if it did, whether it will be possible to secure any recompense now that the boat has left Port Adelaide and gone to New South Wales?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: From memory, I think that the sum spent was comparatively small. In any event it is a function of the

Harbors Board to provide berthing facilities for all legitimate purposes, so that the fact that money was spent or may have been spent in bringing this wharf to a certain standard for use by the *Southern Endeavour* does not mean that the money is wasted or that the improvement is valueless to other shipping: indeed, it must be of value to any shipping. I should not think that a case for recompense could be made out to any authority—and I do not know to which authority one would look for recompense if such were justified in this case. I imagine that many changes in the use of port facilities take place from time to time and the fact that one enterprise ceases to use them, or that existing accommodation has been outgrown and it has been necessary to transfer to some other berth or to improve the existing facilities, does not alter the fact that that is a normal function of the Harbors Board. I should not think that there is any justification in this case for seeking compensation through lack of use of the facility. However, there may be some substance in the suggestion and I will ask the General Manager of the Harbors Board to report to me on the honourable member's question.

EGGS.

Mr. LAUCKE: I understand that the Minister of Agriculture has a reply to the question I asked on July 31 regarding the reduction in the price received by producers for their eggs, the current level of egg sales in South Australia, and whether a more imaginative sales promotion scheme could be instituted by the Egg Board.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The reply to this question has been delayed through the absence of the Chairman of the board in Sydney. He is still away. However, upon request, I have received this statement from a member of the board, in the following terms:

(1) It is usual for eggs to fall in price when production shows an increase, and this year is no exception.

(2) South Australia has a larger percentage of surplus, after catering for sales in our own State, than any other State in the Commonwealth, so that the prices that the South Australian Egg Board can obtain for its surplus greatly influences the prices that producers can be paid for their eggs.

(3) The immediate outlook for export of egg products in any form is, to say the least, very bleak, and further falls in egg prices throughout Australia can be expected.

(4) The activities of the South Australian Egg Board for the year ended June 30, 1962, showed that expenditure which included administration and meeting losses on eggs exported

exceeded their income. In other words South Australian producers were over-paid to this extent for the eggs handled by the board.

(5) This sort of thing cannot continue, and the board must, as far as it is possible, avoid making progressive losses.

(6) From my close contact with the board, through its Chairman, Mr. Anderson, I am convinced that producers are receiving a far better return than they would if no board existed.

Regarding the number of eggs sold in South Australia, the position is that the board's sales of South Australian produced eggs increased by 5 per cent during the year ended June 30, 1962. Although during this period it should be noted that the production increased by approximately 8 per cent. Owing to the fact that both Victoria and New South Wales are sending eggs to South Australia and selling them at pence per dozen under the price of South Australian eggs, the overall picture of the total sales, including those of New South Wales and Victoria and the South Australian Egg Board, is not known.

The member of the board drew attention to a press statement about the egg yield, which was published a few days ago. Interstate trade, which has been discussed many times, is a major reason for Mr. Anderson's absence in Sydney, where he is working as well as he can towards further rationalization of the egg marketing systems within the Commonwealth.

Mr. TAPPING: From reading daily press reports I believe the number of offences against the Egg Marketing Act in this State have increased and, although I do not condone that type of offence, I wonder whether the Minister of Agriculture can say why these offences occur. They have increased to such an extent that I am inclined to think there must be a weakness in the administration. Will the Minister obtain a report from his officers on the main causes of these transgressions?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: As I said earlier this afternoon, the position of the egg industry is not happy. Under those circumstances there will always be a greater pressure for breaches of the marketing laws to occur. This Act was passed by both Houses of Parliament and it has not been altered in this respect for some years. To my knowledge, the board is exercising its powers and honouring its obligations under the Act. I will ask the Chairman of the Egg Board if he has noticed any recent trend in the direction the honourable member has indicated. I know that the Chairman is concerned not only about breaches occurring within South Australia but also about the amount of interstate trading in eggs that is carried on by private people.

That is outside the ambit of the honourable member's question, but I will obtain a statement for him on it. Summarizing, I repeat what I said earlier: that in times of difficulty there will always be a greater pressure against measures for organized marketing.

TOWN PLANNING REPORT.

Mr. HUTCHENS: In reply to the member for West Torrens (Mr. Fred Walsh), the Premier said recently that the town planning report would shortly be tabled. Has the Government considered the advisability of setting up a co-ordinating committee in order that steps may be taken to put the plan into operation as early as practicable?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The original legislation introduced by the Government to set up a committee provided that the master plan would be tabled in the House and, unless someone moved successfully to have it disallowed, it would become the official authority for the matters contained therein. But Parliament did not approve of that and that provision to enable the plan to operate was struck out by the House; so that, when the plan is presented, it has no legal force whatever until action is taken in Parliament. Parliament is the only authority that can take action to have the plan made an official project. I am not sure where this takes us. I believe the other proceeding would have been better—that the plan would operate unless the House decided that it contained something of which it could not approve. However, until I see the plan and what is covered by it, I hesitate to suggest what might be the best measures to give effect to it. The original proposal was good. However, Parliament made a decision, and that is all there is to it. Until the plan is presented, I hesitate to take the matter further.

Many matters contained in the plan represent projects that the departments have approved as policy. For instance, I have no doubt that in providing for the roads section of the master plan the Commissioner of Highways has been consulted on the freeways and highways he intends to construct, so there is no need for a co-ordinating committee to put that into effect, because it is already policy. The same thing would no doubt apply to water, electricity, sewers, and such matters. The master plan will probably take into account the Housing Trust's housing plans, but several other things are not taken into account officially: for instance, recreation

areas. However, the matter will be carefully examined and the Government will announce its policy on it.

CENTRAL MARKET.

Mr. LAWN: The Adelaide City Council for some time past, apparently, has been considering a development plan for the Adelaide Central Market. This concerns many people living in the metropolitan area, the stallholders in the Central Market, and many shopkeepers nearby. Can the Premier say what the Adelaide City Council has in mind for the development of the Central Market? If he cannot make a statement now, will he be kind enough to obtain a report from the Adelaide City Council?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have no direct knowledge of the latest proposals that, I understand, the Adelaide City Council is now considering. I have seen reports in the press that proposals are to be submitted to the Adelaide City Council, and that the council will consider them next Monday. Some time ago, other proposals were being considered and the matter came before the Government, not officially but unofficially. It has been discussed with the Government because I understand that the developing company is not prepared to go ahead with its proposals unless it has a 99-year lease, whereas the council has no authority to give a 99-year lease: its authority extends to the granting of only a 75-year lease. If a proposal for a 99-year lease became acceptable to the council it would have to be submitted to this Parliament for approval. Cabinet expressed only one view at the time: that this land had been reserved primarily for a retail market. The Central Market provides a tremendous service, particularly to people who are not so well off, for it enables them to obtain good quality commodities at reasonable prices, and the Government would be most anxious that nothing should happen that would in any way be detrimental to the continuance of what, I believe, is a unique market in Australia. It takes the view that no action should be taken that would in any way impair the present efficiency of the market to provide for the needs of the community. Two things are involved in this. First, if the building structures were costly and the rent high, obviously the stallholders would not be able to work on fine margins. Secondly, if the market was not convenient and accessible to the public by being on the ground floor, then obviously it would immediately lose patronage and again would fail to achieve its purpose.

I only make these comments in answer to the honourable member's question. I am not interfering with the Adelaide City Council's business; I should hate to do that.

Mr. Lawn: Will you ask the council for a report?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will try to get the information the honourable member desires as soon as possible.

SULPHUR FUMES.

Mr. McKEE: A letter I have received from the Secretary of the Australian Workers Union (Mr. E. R. O'Connor) states:

At a meeting of representatives of the Broken Hill Associated Smelters employed at Port Pirie, the following matter was raised, with reference to Part 10 of the Workmen's Compensation Act covering this industry. Owing to the very high density of sulphur and lead being allowed to enter the atmosphere, the employees are very concerned over their health or the effects it may have on them. Under the medical scheme set up by the B.H.A.S., any employee submitting himself for examination may at his request have a report submitted to his own medical officer, but in such an industry protection is better than cure, and many of the employees are very perturbed as to the effects of their employment. If they were to have a certain amount of lead count when examined by the company's doctor, it may not be a large enough percentage to be placed on workmen's compensation, but it could affect their employment or rates of pay. The raising of the matter may draw the attention of the Department of Mines or whichever jurisdiction it comes under to have a check made to see that the health of the employees is protected. Will the Premier obtain a medical report regarding the number of employees of the B.H.A.S. who have been examined by the medical board during the last 12 months and found to be suffering from the effects of lead? Will he ascertain whether any examination has been made of employees or checks made at various times by this board, or whether an employee has to wait until he has a certain percentage of lead or his health is impaired before receiving treatment under the Workmen's Compensation Act? Will he also ascertain whether any check has been made of the fall-out of lead or arsenic content in the atmosphere from the stacks which may be injurious to the health of the employees and the general public?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: If the honourable member will let me have the correspondence I shall have the matter examined.

BOOK SALESMEN.

Mr. LOVEDAY: I understand the Minister of Education has received a complaint regarding the activities of salesmen selling encyclopaedias on behalf of the Ruskin group, and that these books were sold on the grounds that they had the approval of the Education Department. Has the Minister examined this allegation, and can he say whether proceedings can be taken against the company, in view of the charge that has been made?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: I have received a number of complaints, one from the member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke) and some from other members, and the Education Department has received complaints from individual householders. I think it has been mostly women that have been approached by these salesmen at their houses during the absence of male members of the family. It is a repetition of the type of misrepresentation by people who claim to represent the Education Department or who claim to have recommendations from members of the Education Department. Some of them even claim to be former teachers or members of the department. All these stories have been proved to be absolutely untrue. Parliament passed legislation last year to deal with this type of offence; the matter received wide publicity in the press before, during and after the passing of the legislation, and I had hoped that the evil which was sought to be cured had in fact been cured, but apparently it has not been. We referred several of these complaints to the Attorney-General's Department, and I understand that certain officers of the Police Department have been investigating them. However, I have not yet received any final report concerning them. I am sure that the matters referred to me by the member for Barossa and now publicly by the member for Whyalla will serve a useful purpose. I shall ask my colleague, the Attorney-General, to let me have a written report on the outcome of the investigations by the Crown Law Office and the Police Department, and I hope that action can be taken to cure this evil and also to stop these people being pests to womenfolk in their houses during the daytime when they are alone.

SCHOOL SPORTING GROUNDS.

Mr. LANGLEY: Will the Minister of Education say whether his department controls school sporting grounds and, if it does, will he consider wholly providing and maintaining sporting projects controlled by his department?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: I shall be only too pleased to comply with the request to consider the matter, but it raises a big problem. The funds of the Education Department, however generously the Treasurer has treated us in the past (and I am confident he will do so in the future), are limited, and, if we spend huge sums on wholly controlling sporting facilities, we must deplete the funds required for the erection and maintenance of classrooms and other essential education requirements. However, I will consider the matter and, as I know the honourable member's sporting background and experience, I will consider it sympathetically.

WILPENNA CHALET.

Mr. CASEY: It seems that this year will be an exceptionally good year for holidaying in the Flinders Ranges and, as spring is just around the corner, there will be a big influx of tourist traffic to the area. School holidays will also swell the numbers in the area; on many occasions during last year's school holidays up to 5,000 campers were in the area. In view of this, will the Premier ascertain what progress has been made on the ablation blocks at the Wilpena Chalet and on re-siting the road into the chalet from the main Hawker-Blinman road?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The necessary approval for the alterations and arrangements for improvements were made a considerable time ago. On a previous occasion the Government financed development by allowing the sum spent to be credited as rent, but the more recent proposal is slightly different. However, I will obtain a report about how far the building has proceeded and about the road. Speaking from memory, I believe that the work was to be completed in time for the expected influx of tourists.

FRUIT CANNING.

Mr. BYWATERS: On April 19 I asked the Premier a question about payment of money owing to fruitgrowers by Brookers (Aust.) Ltd.—which has now been taken over by Foster Clark (S.A.) Ltd.—and the Premier promised to get a report. This morning I received a letter asking me to ask the Premier whether progress had been made in making payments to fruitgrowers of some portion of the £70,000 which, I understand, was owing to them by Brookers (Aust.) Ltd. when that company was taken over by Foster Clark. Will the Premier say whether the new company is accepting any responsibility

for this amount, from which season or seasons the indebtedness arose, and whether any legislative protection for growers from future debacles of this kind is contemplated? Also, has the Premier a report in reply to my previous question?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I know that Foster Clark has made some progress payments for fruit purchased this year. As far as I know, this firm is not in any way responsible for any of the liabilities of Brookers (Aust.) Ltd., as it did not take over the liabilities, but I will get a report.

Mr. BYWATERS: I am pleased that the Premier has made available the abridged report from the Fruit Canning Inquiry Committee. I have read it, and, although I do not agree with all of it, much of it is very good. The report states that there has existed for some years an association to which most South Australian canners belong and which has met every year to agree on the standards of acceptance to be adopted, but that it is freely admitted that many members have departed from the specifications as and when it has suited them. The report states:

It cannot be too often emphasized that the growers and canners are partners in the industry which can only survive by their mutual co-operation.

Has the Premier considered the Government's calling together the canners and fruitgrowers' representatives to discuss the report to see whether something good could come from it relative to the future of the canning industry?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Government has not called the canners and fruitgrowers together on those specific matters. First (and I speak as a person associated with this industry for a long time) the standards of fruit have to be assessed and the assessment is extremely difficult in some cases. We have had an instance this year in the industry where fruit, which everyone would have assumed would have been of the highest quality, did not come up to standard. That is difficult to assess and, so far, it has been always for the canner to assess the quality. If it is not up to standard, he has the unfettered right of rejection. I do not know of any way of overcoming the problem. The general standard the association has set out, but the individual application of that standard is for each firm to determine. On occasion, it becomes a matter of great dispute. One cannery in South Australia that is run in the interests of the growers once caused much

consternation when it rejected fruit. I will examine the question to see whether any useful purpose can be served by having a meeting of the sort suggested.

ALSATIAN DOGS.

Mr. HUTCHENS: I want it clearly understood that I do not oppose the keeping of animals as pets and that I have no prejudice against any types of animal, but last night I attended a meeting that was representative of people in my district (including councillors from three municipalities) and I was requested to ask the Government to consider increasing registration fees for Alsatian dogs. It was pointed out that a study of cases in which people were injured by dogs would prove conclusively that Alsatisans were the greatest menace.

Mr. Lawn: Part Alsatisans, not thorough-breds.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Hindmarsh.

Mr. HUTCHENS: I am putting the case that was put to me. Accordingly, I ask the Premier whether the Government will consider this request.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: By special Act of Parliament, a much higher registration fee is charged already for Alsatisans than for other breeds of dog. If I remember correctly, the fees are £2 2s. for Alsatisans and 7s. 6d. or 10s. for other dogs. I doubt whether the Government would be prepared to introduce legislation to increase the fee charged for Alsatisans. I will not express any views on the relative merits of dogs, but I know that, of all the animals trained for blind people, the Alsatian, I believe, is most readily adapted for that purpose. I should not like to penalize that type of person by imposing heavier registration fees.

CANINE DISTEMPER.

Mr. CASEY: I understand that the Minister of Agriculture has a reply to the question I asked on August 7 about canine distemper vaccine.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I have received the following report from Mr. M. R. Irving, the Acting Chairman of the Veterinary Surgeons Board:

Prior to 1958 the Veterinary Surgeons Board investigated several complaints concerning the alleged mis-use of live canine distemper virus as supplied by the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories. This live virus was used in the immunization of dogs; but was also capable of giving rise to widespread outbreaks of distemper in contact dogs which had not been immunized.

Several outbreaks in country areas were suspected on strong circumstantial evidence to have been due to the careless or even malicious use of live virus by persons not qualified to use it. At that time a much safer attenuated vaccine had become more generally adopted by veterinary surgeons as equally effective and much less risky than the live virus. The position had arisen that qualified veterinary surgeons had adopted the safer vaccine while certain untrained people were using the virulent virus often giving rise to outbreaks of distemper.

The board decided that it was desirable in the interests of protecting working dogs in country areas from the mis-use of live virus to prohibit its use except by qualified veterinary surgeons. At the same time the board authorized the use of the attenuated vaccine by all veterinary surgeons and practitioners and approved of the distribution of this vaccine by qualified veterinary surgeons to stockowners in the more remote areas where veterinary services are not readily available. The aim of the board was to encourage the wider use of immunization of dogs particularly in pastoral areas. However, the use of live distemper vaccine, even of the safer attenuated type, should be only under the direct supervision of a qualified person either by verbal or written instructions. The careless handling of this fragile vaccine may destroy its immunizing ability and so mislead the owner and discredit the vaccine. There is no obstacle to the immunization of dogs in any part of the State and the board's action was designed to encourage the wider use of distemper immunization and to ensure its reliability and effectiveness.

MALLALA AREA SCHOOL.

Mr. HALL: Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked several weeks ago regarding the possible establishment of an area school at Mallala?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: I was disappointed, as was the honourable member, that I could not see my way clear to recommend to the Treasurer the inclusion of the Mallala Area School in the Loan Estimates he introduced yesterday. I have received a lengthy report from the Director of Education, and in view of the importance of this matter I shall read some extracts from it. The Director reports:

I have at last been able to complete the extensive investigations which I felt were necessary in relation to the inquiries which Mr. Steele Hall, M.P., has made and the requests of the deputation which waited upon you on May 3, 1962. Some of the information which I consider to be essential was difficult to get, especially that dealing with the secondary schools which children now in Grade VII might be attending next year. It was even difficult to find out in some cases the schools at present being attended by some secondary children from the district. The facts appear to be as follows: the district

concerned is Mallala and the surrounding area, and includes the smaller schools at Pinkerton Plains, Reeves Plains, Korunye, Lower Light, Grace Plains, Dublin, Windsor, Long Plains and Barabba.

He states that at present 241 primary children are attending these schools and that about 121 secondary children are in the area. Of these 118 of them are attending the high schools at Gawler or Balaklava. His report continues:

The closing of the nine small schools mentioned, and the establishment of a consolidated area school at Mallala, would involve the establishment of four distinct transport routes at a total annual cost of at least £5,500. In addition, such an act would, of course, take away the school from each of these nine centres and the school is in some cases the centre of the township life. The construction of a suitable area school at Mallala would involve a substantial expenditure of Loan money.

The Director concludes:

After careful consideration I do not consider that I would be justified in recommending the establishment of an area school at Mallala, at least for the present. I feel that at the present time the cost of consolidation, from the point of view of transport, would be out of proportion and that there would be little saving in the total number of teachers required. The cost of providing a suitable area school at Mallala would be considerable and there are a number of other country centres throughout the State which have a prior claim. There still remains, of course, the possibility of providing some additional means through feeder services or subsidized services to make it easier for children in the district to attend a State secondary school. This matter, however, is now being examined by the Transport Committee.

I repeat that I feel disappointed about this matter because it was one of four proposed area schools, and the other three have been commenced, but we could not include the Mallala Area School in the Loan Estimates. However, I shall be pleased to take up the matter with the transport committee to ascertain what better transport facilities can be provided in the meantime.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.

Mr. RICHES: My question concerns cruelty to young animals. I have received correspondence complaining of pictures published following buck-jumping competitions at the last agricultural show, indicating that considerable cruelty was inflicted on some of the animals concerned. I understand that representations were made to the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society asking whether these exhibitions could be discontinued, but the society has replied stating that buck-jumping exhibitions will again be held this year. Can the

Minister of Agriculture say whether steps will be taken to ensure that these exhibitions give rise to no cruelty?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I will take up this matter. My attention had not been drawn to it but I have no doubt that the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is interested in these things and, knowing the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society, I have no doubt that it will adopt a reasonable attitude. I will ascertain the position and let the honourable member have a report.

EFFLUENT.

Mr. HALL: Can the Minister of Works say whether further progress has been made towards the setting up of a specialist committee to study the possible uses of treated effluent that will be available from the Bolivar treatment works?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: That docket has been before me and is being considered. However, as several years will elapse before any effluent is available from the treatment works at Bolivar, it is not a matter that assumes great urgency—at least, from a departmental point of view. Therefore, owing to pressure of other work, I have not yet come to any conclusion on the matter. However, it has not been forgotten and I will consult the Engineer-in-Chief and other interested officers regarding it and regarding the composition of the committee. Many aspects of this matter need careful thought and must be considered before recommendations are made. On the other hand, it would be inadvisable to arouse anticipation in the minds of people who might feel that this offered a great prospect for development, if indeed such, on investigation, proved not to be the case. So caution and consideration are necessary.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT.

Mr. LOVEDAY: My question is addressed to you, Mr. Speaker. In today's *News* appears a report of a statement alleged to have been made by you, which is as follows:

The Government can rest assured that I will carry out my obligations, will not vote them out of office, and will support them in a crisis.

Do you feel that this viewpoint, if it is expressed correctly, is consistent with the views I gave the other day of an eminent authority on House of Commons procedure in relation to the impartiality of the Speakership?

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has asked a question about the impartiality

of the Speaker. I think he is impartial and that, if anybody can be impartial in this place, it is an Independent.

Mr. RICHES: As you, Mr. Speaker, have now stated that the principle of impartiality from the Chair will not be departed from and that an Independent is still the best able to exercise that impartiality, is your press statement, whereby you pledge support to the Government in advance, accurate?

The SPEAKER: I think that, in fairness, honourable members should read the whole of the statement. The honourable member for Whyalla quoted only part of the context of the statement, and I suggest that the honourable member for Whyalla and the honourable member for Stuart should read the whole of my statement.

PORT PIRIE DAMS.

Mr. McKEE: Has the Premier obtained a report from the Mines Department on the liquid waste dams at the rear of the uranium treatment plant at Port Pirie and has the department considered filling in the dams or securely fencing the area?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Director of Mines reports that Mines Department officers living on the site of the uranium treatment plant, Port Pirie, advise that only a very few children have been seen near the dam embankments in the past six months. A personal house-to-house canvass of the neighbourhood is at present being carried out by the Mines Department officer-in-charge to acquaint householders with the position. Apart from security fencing the whole area, no other action can be suggested at present. The matter will be kept under constant review.

STUDENT TEACHERS' FARES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Has the Minister of Education a reply to a question I asked yesterday about student teachers' fares?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: Student teachers at the several teachers' colleges are reimbursed for fares in excess of 2s. a day paid by them in travelling between their homes and the college. Individual claims are submitted to their colleges by the students at the end of each term. These are checked and certified by the college and submitted to the Education Department. Payment is made on the basis of the number of days travelled times the excess over 2s. a day, irrespective of how many days in the week.

HOUSING LOANS REDEMPTION FUND BILL.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) 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 provide for the establishment of a housing loans redemption fund and for other purposes.

Motion carried.

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

LOANS TO PRODUCERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) 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 Loans to Producers Act, 1927-51.

Motion carried.

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

JOINT COMMITTEE ON CONSOLIDATION BILLS.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) moved:

That the House of Assembly request the concurrence of the Legislative Council in the appointment for the present session of a joint committee to which all Consolidation Bills shall stand referred, in accordance with Joint Standing Order No. 18, and to which any further questions, relative thereto, may at any time be sent by either House for report.

That, in the event of the Joint Committee being appointed, the House of Assembly be represented thereon by three members, two of whom shall form the quorum of the Assembly members necessary to be present at all sittings of the committee.

That a message be sent to the Legislative Council transmitting the foregoing resolutions.

That Mrs. Steele and Messrs. Millhouse and Frank Walsh be representatives of the Assembly on the said committee.

Motion carried.

Later:

The Legislative Council intimated its concurrence in the appointment of the committee.

UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE COUNCIL.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) moved:

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

Motion carried.

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

PARLIAMENTARY DRAFTSMAN.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) moved:

That Standing Order No. 85 be so far suspended for the remainder of the session as to enable the Parliamentary Draftsman and his assistant to be accommodated with seats in the Chamber on the right-hand side of the Speaker.

Motion carried.

IMPOUNDING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It is designed to make certain amendments to the Impounding Act, 1920-1947, which, upon representations made to the Government by various local government associations, have been recommended by the Local Government Advisory Committee. The major amendment proposed by the Bill will increase the penalties, fees, charges and rates for damage by trespassing cattle, prescribed by the Act, so as to bring them more into line with current money values. The Bill also seeks to make certain amendments which will facilitate the carrying out of the objects of the principal Act. Under section 15 (3) of the principal Act, a person who impounds trespassing cattle on his own land shall not keep the cattle so impounded longer than three days. Considerable difficulty has, however, been experienced by such persons in tracing the owners of trespassing cattle within that short period, and the Local Government Advisory Committee has recommended that this period be increased to seven days. Clause 3 accordingly gives effect to this recommendation.

Sections 14 and 15 of the principal Act provide that trespassing cattle may be impounded in the nearest public pound or elsewhere in certain cases. Clause 4 inserts a new section 15a, which will enable such cattle to be driven or led to the pound or place where the cattle are to be impounded or to be conveyed there by suitable means of transport. A number of existing public pounds are long distances apart and it is therefore often not practicable to drive or lead cattle from the place of trespass to the nearest public pound. Provision for enabling them to be conveyed by suitable means of transport would enable persons

impounding cattle to despatch them to the nearest public pound without loss of time or undue inconvenience.

Section 25 of the principal Act provides, *inter alia*, that if cattle impounded in any public pound are not claimed by the owner within 24 hours of being impounded, the poundkeeper shall give notice of impounding to the owner of the cattle. If the owner is known to the poundkeeper the notice must within 48 hours of the impounding be given to the owner by personal delivery or left at his usual or last known place of residence in the State. But if the owner resides more than 10 miles away from the pound the notice may be sent by the earliest post after the expiration of 24 hours after the impounding. The Local Government Advisory Committee has recommended that the giving of notice by post will suffice in all circumstances. Clause 5 accordingly substitutes for subsections (2) and (3) of the section two subsections which will enable the notice to be delivered personally or sent by post in all circumstances.

Clause 6 will increase the penalties for allowing a bull or entire horse to stray from £5 to £10 and for any ram from £2 to £5. Similarly, clause 7 will increase the penalty for allowing any cattle to stray in any street or public place from £5 to £50. The fourth, fifth and sixth schedules of the principal Act prescribe the scales of fees chargeable by a ranger for the impounding of cattle and for poundage and the rates for damage by trespassing cattle. These scales and rates have been unaltered since the principal Act was enacted in 1920, and are very much out of line with current values. They have accordingly been revised on the recommendation of the Local Government Advisory Committee, and clause 8 gives effect to that recommendation by re-enacting those schedules as so revised.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

BULK HANDLING OF GRAIN ACT
AMENDMENT BILL.

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

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This is a short Bill the object of which is to enable the Treasurer to execute a further guarantee to the Commonwealth Trading Bank repayment of an amount up to £200,000 being part of any loan made by the bank to South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited, the guarantee to be on conditions agreed between the bank and the Treasurer.

Honourable members will remember that last year an Act along similar lines was passed, the amount then under consideration being £500,000. On the occasion of the introduction of the Bill, I pointed to the importance of the grant of assistance to the company whose activities affect one of our principal industries. The present Bill is the outcome of discussions between the company and the Australian Barley Board. In the light of the experience of the economies and facilities of bulk handling, the board desired to secure port bulk handling facilities as soon as possible and, in view of its own position and the undesirability of two authorities providing separate facilities, one for wheat and one for barley, decided to secure the co-operation of South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited. Agreement in principle was accordingly reached some months ago between the two authorities that the South Australian company should provide the initial funds, construct the facilities and continue to own and operate them, the Barley Board meeting reasonable operation and maintenance costs and payments to amortise the full cost of the structures over 20 years and of the machinery over 10 years. The cost of construction of the additional facilities is about £730,000, of which £400,000 would be expended at Port Adelaide and £165,000 each at Wallaroo and Port Lincoln. Of the total sum, about £330,000 can be met out of current tolls and other revenues, leaving an additional requirement of £400,000. The Commonwealth Banking Corporation earlier this year agreed to advance this sum on condition that the State Government should, as it has done in the past, guarantee half of it.

In March of this year, following an approach from the company for the necessary guarantee, I discussed the matter with the honourable the Leader of the Opposition, when it was agreed that legislation to enable the guarantee to be given would be supported. I am happy to say that the bank has already acted upon my assurance and the work is proceeding. The present Bill will give the Treasurer the

necessary authority to carry out the undertaking given to the bank. I appreciate the compliance of the Leader of the Opposition, which has enabled this project to go forward and will enable the grain to be handled, substantially anyway, in the forthcoming season.

Mr. HUGHES secured the adjournment of the debate.

ELECTRICITY (COUNTRY AREAS) SUBSIDY BILL.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended to the House of Assembly the appropriation of £500,000 out of the surplus moneys in the Consolidated Revenue Account of the Treasurer for the financial year ended June 30, 1962, and such further amounts not exceeding in the aggregate £100,000 from the general revenue of the State as were required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It provides for the payment of subsidies to undertakings generating and/or distributing public supplies of electricity in country districts. The Electricity Trust has been reducing country tariffs over the last few years and had anticipated a policy of tariff reduction in country areas which would, over the next five years, reduce charges for electricity used in country areas to a level much closer to zone I tariffs than now applies.

The Government has examined the trust's proposal and decided that it is desirable to give the country consumers immediate relief by a reduction of charges, so that the tariffs operating for areas outside the trust's zone I area will be no higher than about 10 per cent above the metropolitan rates. The Government is satisfied that the trust should not be required to do this immediately from its own resources. In fact, the trust has fairly heavy commitments, principally in the salary increases it has to meet this year. The trust's policy for financing country extensions has been successful and of great benefit to country people. The Government supports this policy and, to enable reduced charges to apply in country districts forthwith, the Government proposes that Parliament should authorize a scheme by which consumers of electricity in country districts will be subsidized from the general revenue of the State.

This subsidy scheme will result in 45,000 consumers in country areas receiving immediate financial benefit from lower charges for electricity supplied by the trust, including bulk supplies. In addition to those people who use electricity supplied by the trust, about 3,600 consumers in country districts rely upon local authorities and private persons or corporate bodies for their supplies of electricity. The trust's scheme for gradual tariff adjustments would not have benefited these people but, under the Government's proposals, they will receive subsidies also in respect of the electricity used by them. Accordingly, under the Government's proposals as outlined in this Bill, a total of almost 50,000 country consumers will benefit directly from a reduction in power rates.

Clause 2 (1) provides that £500,000 from the State's revenue surplus for 1961-62 shall be paid to the Electricity Trust to provide the trust with the portion of the funds required to carry out the purposes of the Bill. Present estimates indicate that £500,000 will be insufficient for all the purposes of the Bill. An additional £100,000 is, therefore, appropriated by subclause (2) of clause 2 for payment to the trust if it is required.

Clause 3 provides that the trust shall, during each of the five years commencing with the present financial year, credit to its own revenue and pay to other country electricity suppliers such amounts as are approved by the Treasurer. The total to be paid to the trust's revenues over the five-year period will be £300,000. The cost in the first year for reducing the trust's country tariffs as proposed is estimated at £160,000, of which the trust will meet £60,000, and the Government subsidy will be £100,000. In the remaining four years it is proposed that payments by the Government will be reduced each year and the cost to the trust will increase until in the sixth year the full cost will be met by the trust. The proposed subsidy payments each year to trust revenue, and the annual cost to the trust, will be:

	£	Cost to Trust. £
First year	100,000	60,000
Second year	80,000	80,000
Third year	60,000	100,000
Fourth year	40,000	120,000
Fifth year	20,000	140,000
Sixth year and thereafter	Nil	160,000
	<u>300,000</u>	

Other country electricity suppliers referred to in clause 3 include undertakings operated by private enterprise and by local authorities.

The subsidy payments to these suppliers will be the total amount of reduction allowed in consumers' accounts pursuant to arrangements between the Government and each of the 25 eligible undertakings providing country supplies. The arrangements with country suppliers other than the Electricity Trust will, of course, be restricted to those suppliers whose charges are more than 10 per cent above the level of the trust's zone I tariffs. I have a schedule of these undertakings and I ask permission to have it incorporated in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

SCHEDULE OF UNDERTAKINGS PROVIDING ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES IN COUNTRY DISTRICTS WHERE CHARGES ARE MORE THAN 10 PER CENT ABOVE THE TRUST'S ZONE I TARIFFS.

Locality.	Supplier.
Beachport . . .	L. F. Smith
Bordertown . .	D.C. Tatiara
Ceduna	D.C. Murat Bay
Cleve	Louis Stubing Ltd.
Cockburn . . .	S.A. Railways
Cowell	Cowell Electric Supply Co.
Elliston	D.C. Elliston
Hawker	D.C. Hawker
Kimba	Ellis & Co.
Kingston	Lacepede Electric Supply Co.
Kingscote . . .	Kingscote Electric Supply Co.
Lucindale . . .	D.C. Lucindale
Mannahill . . .	S.A. Railways
Marree	Commonwealth Railways
Mingarie	S.A. Railways
Oodnadatta . .	Department Civil Aviation
Penola	Penola Electric Supply Co.
Peterborough .	Corporation of Peterborough
Naracoorte . . .	Corporation of Naracoorte
Robe	P. A. Sheridan
Streaky Bay . .	D.C. Streaky Bay
Tintinara	Tintinara Electric Supply
Wudinna	D.C. LeHunte
Yongala	Yongala Power and Service Station
Yunta	G. F. Ding

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Reductions in the trust's country tariffs will be effective for electricity used in rural areas from July 1, 1962, but it will be impossible to subsidize all of the consumers in the local government and private undertakings immediately as the charges and financial results of each must be examined before subsidy arrangements can be agreed with them. I can, however, assure honourable members that the Electricity Trust will expedite its investigations and recommendations so that the consumers in these areas will receive the subsidy benefits as early as possible.

Clause 3 also provides that the trust may be paid subsidies in respect of any of these 25 undertakings which it may take over during the five-year period. Clause 4 defines a "country electricity supplier" as the Electricity Trust of South Australia and any person or corporation approved by the Treasurer which provides public supplies of electricity in country areas outside the areas in which the trust's zone I tariff applies. So that Parliament will be properly informed as to the operations of this Act, clause 5 provides that the Auditor-General shall within three months after the close of each financial year furnish the Treasurer with a report upon the operation of the Bill, every such report to be laid before both Houses of Parliament as soon as possible.

The schedule of undertakings that I referred to contains, I believe, the names of all eligible undertakings, but if by any mischance any eligible undertaking has been overlooked, if honourable members will bring the name of such undertaking under my notice I will see that it is included in the list.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

HOMES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It amends the Homes Act, 1941-1958, by increasing the maximum period over which the Treasurer may guarantee repayment of loans or payment of purchase money on dwelling houses from 30 to 40 years. Section 7 (1) of the principal Act now limits the power of the Treasurer to guarantee the repayment of loans or payment of purchase money in respect of dwelling houses to cases where the full amount due is payable within 30 years from the date of mortgage or contract for sale and purchase. When the Act was first passed in 1941 it provided for guarantees by the Treasurer to an amount of £1,000 with a maximum interest rate of 5 per cent. At that time a five-roomed house could be purchased with land for about £1,000 and finance was available at 4½ per cent or less. The Act now authorizes guarantee of a maximum loan of £3,000 where the loan does not exceed 95 per cent of the value of the house, and £3,500 where the loan does not

exceed 85 per cent of that value. The maximum interest rate is now 6 per cent.

At the present time the price of a five-roomed house with land will range to £4,000 and upwards while interest rates charged by Government banks range up to 5½ per cent. Purchasers of houses from the Housing Trust usually find it necessary to borrow £3,000 on first mortgage and sometimes this amount has to be supplemented by second mortgage. Weekly payments on account of principal and interest on a loan of £3,000 range from £3 18s. 11d. to £4 0s. 1d. on a 30-year term and £3 11s. 6d. to £3 12s. 8d. on a 40-year term, to which must be added about 12s. to 14s. a week for water, sewerage and local government rates plus insurance and maintenance; in many cases there are additional payments under a second mortgage. Such weekly commitments can bear very heavily on a house purchaser of moderate means, and if the maximum term for loans which can be guaranteed under the Act is extended from 30 to 40 years, the weekly commitments of purchasers will be reduced by about 7s. or 8s. a week. Such a reduction would obviously facilitate house ownership very appreciably, and the Government has therefore decided to amend the principal Act by providing that mortgage loans or payments under agreements for sale repayable or payable over a period of up to 40 years may be guaranteed by the Treasurer. Clause 3(a) accordingly strikes out the present limitation of 30 years and inserts 40 years. As a corollary to the foregoing provision, clause 3(b) provides for the automatic extension of existing guarantees where the guaranteed institution, with the consent of the Treasurer, agrees to extend the period for repayment up to a maximum of 40 years from the date of the original mortgage or agreement for sale. Honourable members will see that the whole purpose of this Bill is to lighten, if possible, the weekly commitment that arises under the present Act, because the cost of housing and the cost of money are so high. I may be asked whether institutions that have provided loans on a 30-year basis are prepared to extend those loans to 40 years, but I cannot in every instance give a clear-cut answer in that connection; I believe some of the institutions depend on the repayments from the 30-year loans for their future financing of houses. However, I assure honourable members that I will facilitate the extension when it is feasible. I think the terms of the Bill will commend themselves to honourable members.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

COMPANIES BILL.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) 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 consolidate and amend the law relating to companies.

Motion carried.

Resolution agreed to in Committee and adopted by the House.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.54 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, August 16, at 2 p.m.