

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, November 14, 1963.

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

### ASSENT TO BILLS.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the following Bills:

- Aged Citizens Clubs (Subsidies),
- Lottery and Gaming Act Amendment (Trotting),
- Motor Vehicles Act Amendment,
- River Murray Waters Act Amendment,
- River Murray Waters Agreement Supplemental Agreement.

### QUESTIONS.

#### HOUSING COSTS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Yesterday, during the debate on the prices legislation, I said there had been an increase in the labour-only cost of brickwork in house building. I said that I had reason to believe that the general price was about £17 10s. a thousand, whereas the trust's contractors paid only £15 and, I understand, as little as £13 a thousand some time ago. Can the Premier say whether the Housing Trust contractors are obtaining a sufficient number of bricklayers at £15 a thousand, or has the price been increased?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will get the information for the honourable member.

#### SOUTH-EAST DEVELOPMENT.

Mr. HARDING: On October 30 I asked the Minister of Works a question about the development of the South-East and the hinterland of the western districts of Victoria. Has he obtained a report from the Minister of Local Government?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The honourable member will appreciate that this question contains many complexities that require much consideration. At his request I forwarded his question to the Minister of Local Government. So far as I am aware, no policy discussions have ensued about it, but I know that my colleague has the matter in hand and as soon as I receive information from him I will inform the honourable member.

#### GOODWOOD BOYS TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. LANGLEY: I have received the following letter from the President of the Goodwood Boys Technical High School Council:

For many years the council at the Goodwood Boys Technical High School has been planning to convert the old Commonwealth building to an assembly hall. At the request of the Public Buildings Department the council engaged an architect who prepared plans, specifications and called for tenders. All this was completed by May, 1963, and on May 31 a subsidy was applied for. Six months later the subsidy had not been granted.

For several reasons this is frustrating, since all conditions set out by the Public Buildings Department have been complied with and plans prepared by a leading qualified architect; the school is indebted to the architect for several hundred pounds; the successful tenderer, whose price was accepted subject to subsidy approval, would no doubt have made other commitments; and the price of the tender must be increased due to wage and holiday adjustments.

Will the Minister of Education ascertain the reason for the delay, and at the same time expedite the granting of the subsidy? If there are any problems will he have the Public Buildings Department discuss them with a school council representative at the school?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: This is a double-headed question. I shall be pleased to comply with the first part and inquire as to the reasons for the delay, but I am not prepared to promise offhand that I will agree to the subsidy, because it has not been the policy of the Education Department or of the Government to subsidize the building of assembly halls. In this case there may be a special reason of which I am not aware. From what the honourable member has read out, the school council seems to have put the cart before the horse: it has gone to the Public Buildings Department and made arrangements concerning the actual building before applying to the Education Department for a subsidy. I am indebted to the honourable member for raising the matter, and I will give it my personal attention and endeavour to notify him next week of my decision.

#### THEVENARD BOAT HAVEN.

Mr. BOCKELBERG: On October 3 I asked the Minister of Marine a question about the visit of a Harbors Board officer to Thevenard where he inspected a prospective boat haven. The Minister then stated that he had not received a report, but that when he had he would send it on to the Minister of Agriculture.

Has either the Minister of Marine or the Minister of Agriculture a report on the outcome of the officer's visit?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I must apologize to the honourable member for not being certain whether I have forwarded the report. I expect to consult with a senior officer of the Harbors Board this afternoon, and I may be able to tell the honourable member for certain later today just what has occurred.

#### HOUSING LOANS REDEMPTION.

Mr. RICHES: At Port Augusta the Housing Trust has been re-erecting some houses brought down from Radium Hill and they are being offered for sale to local residents under the scheme whereby they are available for a minimum deposit of £50. I was interested to hear the reply the Premier gave yesterday to the member for Burnside (Mrs. Steele) regarding the housing loans redemption legislation. Can the Premier say whether the houses being sold at Port Augusta at present come within the operation of that legislation? If they do not, will he see whether purchasers in the appropriate age group buying these houses at Port Augusta could avail themselves of the financial assistance available under that legislation?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes, the purchasers of those houses would be eligible. As the honourable member probably knows, one or two conditions must be fulfilled. For instance, the loan must not extend beyond the purchaser's 65th birthday. Provided that condition was fulfilled, the purchaser would be eligible to apply and take out this insurance, which I believe is the cheapest insurance available anywhere for a house purchaser: for a few pence a week a person gets complete cover. If the breadwinner dies, the whole of the outstanding debt is cancelled immediately and the widow and the other dependants have no further problems regarding the repayment of the loan.

#### PULPWOOD.

Mr. CORCORAN: Last month I directed a number of questions to the Minister of Forests regarding additional supplies of pulpwood for Apcel Limited, near Millicent. In one of his replies, the Minister said that, under an Indenture Act passed and amended by this House, Harmac had until the end of this year to inform the Government whether it intended to proceed with the pulp mill at Mount Gambier. Further, he said that, until formal notification was given to the Government, the contract with Harmac would not proceed. He also said that

the Government was not able to enter into further negotiations, and I take it that meant regarding the additional supplies of pulpwood. Has the Premier had any further indication from Harmac whether it will proceed at Mount Gambier?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Probably the strictly correct term was not used in reply to the honourable member's question, if it was stated that we would not be able to consider other negotiations. The answer that should have been given was that we were unable to conclude other negotiations, because while Harmac has still the right, as it has, to take up the option, obviously we could not conclude any other negotiations on the assumption that Harmac would not take it up. I can take the position a little further than the Minister was able to take it in reply to the honourable member's last question. Since he asked the question in the House the principal of an American firm that is interested in Apcel has come to South Australia, and on behalf of his firm he has told a conference comprising members of the Forestry Board, the Minister of Forests and me what the firm's desire would be regarding expansion here. Also, a representative of the other associated firm—Australian Paper Mills—has been to South Australia and has discussed with us the expansion that firm could contemplate here. I have promised Australian Paper Mills that I would take the discussions a step further with Mr. Alstergren, the Chairman of Directors of Harmac. While the House is sitting it is not always possible to chase up such detailed matters, but I assure the honourable member that during the next two or three days I shall discuss with Mr. Alstergren the proposals which are at present only taking preliminary shape but which appear to the Government to be extremely interesting. I cannot take the matter further. When a big industry is involved, fairly careful detailed consideration must be given to the subject. Personally, I was impressed with some proposals that have been explained to us; others did not seem so advanced, but nevertheless I believe they have reached a stage where I should discuss these matters fully with Mr. Alstergren to see whether a policy could be evolved that would be acceptable to him because, after all, he controls a large area of the private forests that would be involved in any transaction, even if the option over the State forests were exercised. I shall inform honourable members as soon as anything of any value has transpired. I can only say that discussions are proceeding.

## BUS TOUR PERMIT.

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: I have received a letter from the managing director of a company situated in the city which conducts road bus tours to various parts of South Australia. According to the letter, an application was made earlier this year to the Transport Control Board for a permit or licence to conduct a day tour to the Barossa Valley on Thursday each week, but the application was refused. The proposed tour was from Adelaide *via* Elizabeth to the Barossa Valley and returning *via* Chain of Ponds. If I hand this letter to the Premier, will he inquire to ensure that no tourist is denied the undoubted pleasure of seeing the scenic beauty of the Barossa Valley (the Canaan of Australia) and of tasting its luscious fruits and sparkling wines in a natural setting?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The honourable member almost makes me feel dizzy! This matter has already come to my notice. For some time the Government, through the Tourist Bureau, has been considering what steps can be taken to enable tourists to sample the heady wine referred to by the honourable member, but the problem is that a co-ordinated service has been arranged, and I am informed that in accordance with the arrangements certain local people have entered into fairly heavy commitments to purchase a transport bus. I considered that it would be unfair for me to advocate a speedy change of a system that had been entered into in good faith by local interests that had set about to try to do something to develop the district. I have discussed this matter with the Director of the Tourist Bureau, who shares my view that, by and large, tourists prefer a comprehensive round trip by bus rather than the co-ordinated service. My own view was that at an appropriate time, after the local people had had a chance of at least reducing their liability on their present vehicle, the Government would request the Transport Control Board to change the system. However, I have not yet had the opportunity to ascertain the indebtedness of the local people in respect of the bus. There is the additional question whether, the local people having provided the bus, it would not be fair to give them the opportunity to run the unco-ordinated system to the city rather than bring in an outside firm. One or two things concerning this matter have not been finalized, but I promise the honourable member that it has been considered, that the Government's policy will be to change over to a less restricted system in the future,

but that it would not want to do that to the prejudice of people who had set out earnestly to provide a service in the past.

## WALLAROO HARBOUR.

Mr. HUGHES: Yesterday I asked the Minister of Marine a question about the progress of the work of deepening the berths of the Wallaroo harbour and whether specifications had progressed to a stage that would enable tenders to be called for the deepening of the channel. Has the Minister a reply?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I have received a report from the General Manager of the Harbors Board on the two matters raised. On the first matter he states that the board's grab dredger *Andrew Wilson* has been operating on the deepening of the Wallaroo berths since October 23, 1963, and it is expected that this phase of the dredging project should be completed towards the end of next month. This work, which is proceeding satisfactorily, is about one-third completed, and consists of deepening No. 1 berth (north), No. 2 berth (north), and No. 1 berth (south) from 28ft. low water to 31ft. low water in each case. This aspect of the project was regarded as the most urgent one and the one that could confer the most immediate benefit, as it would allow ships to load at all phases of the tide whereas previously they have had to load on a rising tide and get out into deep water before the ebb tide caught them. This work is well in hand and is expected to be completed by the end of next month. As regards the dredging of the channel, which is proposed to be carried out by contract, the specification has been completed with the exception of the finalization of the quantities to be dredged. This will require further sweepings over the channel area to determine the exact nature of the bottom and enable a more accurate assessment of the quantities to be made. This further investigatory work will be completed during December, and tenders will be called for the work early in the new year. The problem to which this report refers was not apparent to me as a layman in the early stages of the investigation, but it is necessary to find out fairly precisely just how much sand or rock must be removed. It is overgrown with weeds and the initial soundings, although accurate enough to determine the passage to be chosen, were not sufficiently accurate to measure the quantity of sand or rock to be removed. The work is being pushed ahead and, as the report indicates, it is hoped to call tenders early in the new year.

## OCCUPATION CENTRE.

Mr. BURDON: Some time ago, both privately and by question in this House, I took up with the Minister of Education the desirability of establishing an occupation centre at Mount Gambier. As the establishment of this centre has been approved, can the Minister say what stage the project has reached and when it is expected to be opened?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: Some time ago I referred to the establishment of the occupation centre at Mount Gambier and asked that it be given a very high priority. I hoped that it would be ready by the beginning of next year, but the manager of the Building Division of the Public Buildings Department has informed me that, because of the great volume of work in hand, he may not be able to have it ready for use until the middle of next year.

## WINCKEL BRIDGE.

Mr. CLARK: Has the Minister of Works a reply from the Minister of Roads to a question I asked on November 7 about the Winckel bridge?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes. My colleague, the Minister of Roads, states that "Gawler River" signs are placed at each end of the bridge. Signs indicating "Winckel Bridge" will be attached to the same posts underneath the "Gawler River" signs.

## RUBBISH BURNING.

Mr. RYAN: Recently I have received correspondence from many residents in the Ottoway and Wingfield area in my district complaining of the nuisance caused by burning off rubbish in the Adelaide City Council dump nearby. The residents, who have been complaining for several years, recently wrote to the Enfield council so that it might take action. They received a reply from the council stating that it did not have power to deal with this matter (which I do not believe) and that an Act of Parliament was being considered under which action could be taken in such cases. Recently this House amended the Health Act to provide that a committee, known as the Clean Air Committee, could be set up by the Governor to deal with such matters. Will the Premier say whether the Government is now able to set up this committee and, if it is, when such a committee is likely to be set up to deal with the matters covered by the Health Act Amendment Bill?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I cannot answer this question offhand as another Minister controls this department, but I know that the composition of a committee has been

discussed. If the honourable member will ask the question next Tuesday I shall give him precise information.

## PUFFED CREAM.

Mr. DUNSTAN: Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to the question I asked yesterday concerning Victorian cream?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The honourable member showed me an article in a publication yesterday on the subject of additives to cream. In perusing it I noticed that it criticized the Dunstan Government in Victoria for having introduced the thickeners initially. Incidentally, it criticized the State Labor Government for supporting him at that time. For many years Victorian cream has had a minimum fat content of 35 per cent as a standard and, as well as that, thickeners were allowed in it to make it look thicker than it would naturally have been with that minimum fat content. South Australian cream has had, until early this year, a minimum fat content of 40 per cent, but in most cases this cream actually had a higher fat content than the minimum so that it would be thicker. No thickeners were allowed and its viscosity was important to make it acceptable to the buyers. The minimum content would, in practice, be considerably higher and in some cases would be over 50 per cent. In order to allow the South Australian industry to compete on more favourable terms with Victorian trade (which incidentally has gained a large share of the South Australian market) our regulations were altered early this year to reduce the minimum fat content in South Australian cream to 35 per cent. It became permissible to add approved thickeners specified in the regulations and approved by the Central Board of Health, provided that the cream was labelled as having been thickened. At present, the South Australian cream is sold in many cases with thickener added, and it is labelled as having been thickened. However, Victorian cream is still sold in this State, although it is not, as a rule, labelled as containing thickener, although it is understood that it contains, or has contained, thickeners. The authorities have been vigorously tackling this problem for some time, and at present no evidence is available to prove definitely that thickeners have been added. The sale of Victorian cream is at present under close scrutiny, not with any idea of restricting trade with another State but to see that both States' industries are placed on a level footing and to ensure that South Australian producers are not at a disadvantage compared with other

suppliers. These investigations are in progress and, later, I shall be able to give the honourable member more detailed information than I have been able to now.

#### BELTANA SCHOOL.

Mr. CASEY: I understand that the Minister of Education has a reply to my recent question about toilet facilities at the Beltana Primary School in the Far North?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: The Director of the Public Buildings Department was asked in November of last year to provide additional toilets and to install a septic disposal system at the Beltana Primary School. A report has now been received from the Public Buildings Department that the present water supply, which would be used to flush the proposed toilets, comes from a Government well approximately 300 yards away from the school. This well also supplies water for the school residence. It is considered that its capacity, about 50 gallons a day, is insufficient to operate a toilet system at the school as well as at the teacher's residence. The Director of Mines will therefore be asked to investigate the matter with a view to suggesting a suitable alternative supply of water.

#### FOSTER CLARK (S.A.) LIMITED.

Mr. BYWATERS: Both the member for Chaffey and I have asked several questions about the disposal of the assets of Foster Clark (S.A.) Limited, and whether another firm will be operating this year to process fruit during the coming fruit season. As the time is rapidly drawing near when fruit will need to be processed, can the Premier say whether any firm is interested in taking over Foster Clark's assets so that it can process fruit next season?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: We have been trying to get a firm to take over the premises on a walk-in-walk-out basis, so that it would be available to the industry this year. We have been negotiating with one firm, but I regret to say that it advised by telegram this week that it did not intend to proceed with the proposition. We have been negotiating with another firm, and will communicate with all principal canning interests in Australia in the next few days, informing them of the plant available and that it will be available on particularly favourable terms if acquired for fruit canning. I assure the honourable member that the Government appreciates the problem that has arisen because of the lack of canning facilities in this State. On the other hand, I can say from discussions I have had, that another firm that

had been operating previously intends to expand its operations and become a co-operative project. Its plans are well advanced in this connection. Further, I believe that the cannery at Murray Bridge has had a successful year and intends to expand its production and activity. The Government will do all it can to enable these projects to materialize.

#### KALANGADOO SCHOOL.

Mr. HARDING: Has the Minister of Education a reply to my recent question about the possibility of constructing a new primary school at Kalangadoo?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: I have received a report from the Deputy Director of Education which states that the Kalangadoo Primary School has an enrolment of 147. The children are accommodated in four classrooms, two of which are in the original stone building, which is more than 50 years old. The other two classrooms are timber portables. The area of the school property is 1½ acres, but a rented piece of land of approximately a quarter of an acre about a quarter of a mile from the school provides additional space for recreation.

It has been recognized for some time that the premises at Kalangadoo are unsatisfactory judged by modern standards, and the purchase was completed in 1960 of a new site of 7½ acres for a future school. It has not been possible, however, as yet, due to the heavy demand for new schools in growing areas, to replace the existing school. In addition there are a number of other schools in similar circumstances to Kalangadoo. It cannot be stated at this stage when the construction of a new school to replace the existing one can be commenced. I assure the honourable member that it will be commenced as soon as is humanly possible.

#### NORTHERN RAILWAY LINES.

Mr. RICHES: Can the Premier say whether any firm decision has been reached on the standardization of the railway gauge between Adelaide and Port Pirie? When I last asked this question he said that the subject had not been discussed with the Commonwealth Government. Most people assume that the work will be undertaken concurrently with the standardization of the line between Perth and Kalgoorlie. Upon the proclaiming of Port Augusta as a city the Premier sent a greeting to the city in which he referred to the possibility of a rail connection between Port Augusta and Whyalla. This information was joyfully received. Can he say whether any further discussions have

taken place on this subject and can he elaborate on the brief reference in his message to Port Augusta?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I cannot report progress on the first proposal. However, the second suggestion was first raised when the steelworks was planned for Whyalla. At that time the Commonwealth Government was not prepared to consider the proposal for a rail link with Whyalla. However, since then the Commonwealth Railways Commissioner of his own volition has had investigations made and a survey taken. He has found that the proposal is financially attractive. Naturally since the first mention of this project the development planned for Whyalla is taking active shape on the ground. I believe that the survey taken by the Commonwealth has proved satisfactory. At recent discussions with the Commonwealth Minister for Railways and the Commonwealth Railways Commissioner this matter was mentioned and the Commissioner said he strongly favoured the project and could accomplish it without requesting additional funds from the Government. I gained the impression that the Commonwealth Government's approach to the proposal had changed completely and that a line from Port Augusta to Whyalla could now be regarded as within the realms of possibility. True, there is no specific Cabinet approval of this and the discussions have been informal, but the project is strongly supported by State railway officials and I have told the Commonwealth Minister that I have no doubt that this Parliament would approve of the project.

#### RAMCO HEIGHTS IRRIGATION AREA BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

#### MANNINGHAM RECREATION GROUND ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

#### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY (INDUSTRIES) BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

#### WHEAT INDUSTRY STABILIZATION BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

#### SUPREME COURT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

### ROAD MAINTENANCE (CONTRIBUTION) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 12. Page 1593.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): Let me say at the outset that I have always firmly expressed the view that the owners of our heavy transports have no wish to evade their responsibility towards making their fair and reasonable contribution towards the upkeep costs of our roads and highways, but the many arguments and numerous court actions that have taken place in the Eastern States have resulted from the fact that the operators of the heavier vehicles maintain that they are being singled out for the imposition of a charge to remedy damage which is being caused by all persons who use the roads. I do not claim to be an expert in these matters of the excessive maintenance cost of our roads, because I realize that it is a very complicated problem, but I also realize that two factors have a very high impact on road maintenance costs and they are the weight of the vehicle, together with the speed of the vehicle. It has been argued that the lighter vehicles driven at high speed do just as much damage as the heavier vehicles. I realize that we have to draw the line somewhere because of the administrative difficulties involved in policing a Statute once it is passed, but the method that is applied in the other States and has withstood the challenge to the High Court is for the legislation to apply to any vehicle which has a load capacity of four tons or more. My understanding of the position is that there are various classes of commercial goods-carrying vehicles and in general terms they are classed as 1-3 tons, 3-5 tons, 5-7 tons and 7-9 tons, and of course after that one gets into the articulated vehicles. However, the way that this legislation is framed, it will apply only to portion of the 7-9 ton group and the last class I have mentioned, for in clause 4 (a) the Bill states:

This Act shall not apply with respect to—  
(a) any vehicle the load capacity of which (together with any trailer for the time being attached thereto) is not more than eight tons.

The Government's reason for making our legislation different from that of Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, where the exemption applies only to vehicles which have a load capacity up to four tons, has not been explained to my satisfaction. Members will notice that if the exemption applied only to vehicles with a load capacity of up to four

tons, the only vehicles exempted would be private motor vehicles, the small commercial utilities and trucks in the 1-3 tons class. Our legislation then would be in conformity with what is provided in the Eastern States, and it would not run the risk of criticism that it is aimed mainly at the big interstate semi-trailers. In addition, if the Government desires to raise only £150,000 to £200,000 as mentioned in the second reading, then it would be possible to reduce the tax rate per ton-mile to one-sixth of a penny or even one-ninth of a penny, and still obtain the same amount of revenue by spreading the charge over a greater number of vehicle users. I now wish to draw attention to what I consider are weaknesses in the various clauses of the Bill. Clause 3 deals with various matters of interpretation, and in particular refers to "load capacity". In accordance with the interpretation, "load capacity" in the case of a motor vehicle or trailer means:

- (a) the load capacity thereof as shown in the certificate of registration issued in respect thereof under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1959-1962, or under any corresponding legislation or ordinance of any State or Territory of the Commonwealth; or
- (b) where in such certificate there is shown the maximum permissible gross weight of the motor vehicle or trailer together with the load which may be carried thereon and also the tare weight of the motor vehicle or trailer, the difference between such gross weight and tare weight; or
- (c) where no such load capacity or weights are shown in such certificate, or no such certificate is in force, the load capacity aforesaid of a similar motor vehicle or trailer registered under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1959-1962.

My understanding of the position is that vehicle registration forms in accordance with the Motor Vehicles Act as regards weight contain a figure for the power-weight of the vehicle and not any figures or weights relating to the load capacity of the vehicle. As far as I am aware, there is no provision in the Motor Vehicles Act that load capacity figures have to be shown, and therefore I conclude that additional legislation will be necessary—possibly regulations to empower the Registrar of Motor Vehicles to determine the load capacity of commercial vehicles in order that this legislation may be made operative if it is passed in its present form.

Clause 4 relates to the exemption of vehicles which have a load capacity of less than eight tons, and I have already referred to the various factors that I consider to be undesirable. No

doubt the Government will give further consideration to these matters. Clause 5 lays down the basis on which the owner of a commercial goods vehicle shall contribute towards the maintenance of roads in South Australia. Even with this clause, I am not completely satisfied, for the charge is based on the second schedule of the Bill which states:

1. The rate of the charge to be paid in respect of every vehicle shall be one-third of a penny per ton of the sum of—

- (a) the tare weight of the vehicle; and
- (b) 40 per cent of the load capacity of the vehicle—

per mile of public road along which the vehicle travels in South Australia.

This means that the levy is not imposed in accordance with the total weight of the vehicle which is passing over the roadway and thus causing the extra wear and tear, but is based on the tare weight of the vehicle which, as members know, is the unladen weight of the vehicle plus 40 per cent of the load capacity, namely, 40 per cent of the load that the vehicle is capable of carrying. Thus the charge bears no relationship to the actual overall weight of the vehicle travelling on the road, and I can envisage many instances which could lead to serious anomalies. Clauses 6 to 8 deal with the various returns and forms that owners of commercial vehicles are obliged to keep and forward to the Commissioner of Highways. I am sure that the Government realizes that all owner-drivers of heavy transports are not fully trained clerks, and I am sure the Commissioner of Highways will make due allowance for any clerical errors that result from the complicated returns required by this Bill.

Clauses 10 to 13 deal with various offences and penalties and formal matters of evidence to which I do not object, and clause 14 of the Bill is a machinery measure that states that this legislation will in due course replace the special transport permits that at present are issued by the Transport Control Board. So far I have not mentioned the fact that these charges will lead to increased costs in other directions. In the long run the additional tax will be handed on to the consumer. No doubt the Government is aware of this and has already instructed the Prices Department that it is Government policy for increases to be granted in cartage and haulage rates on account of this legislation. A more equitable apportionment would have been achieved if this Government had approached its counterpart in Canberra for the payment of the whole of the petrol tax, including diesel tax, to be refunded to the States by the Commonwealth Government. This approach would have received the

unanimous support of members on this side of the House, and perhaps this legislation to raise additional revenue from a section of our community would not have been necessary. Although I support the second reading, I am concerned that the Government has approached this matter entirely differently from the way in which it was approached in the Eastern States. The Premier will know better than any other member in this House the complex legal questions that may arise as a result of this type of legislation. In his second reading explanation the Premier admitted most of these things but believed that this legislation would not be challenged in the court. Why was the weight of four tons increased to eight tons under this legislation? The member for Frome will have further information to put before the House regarding this Bill and that information will reveal a serious challenge to the earning capacity of the Railways Department. The Railways Department provides essential transport facilities and this legislation will weaken its position as a revenue-earner for this Government. The Premier, in his second reading explanation, said that the existing road transport control legislation had been subjected to serious challenge in the court. If that statement is correct why has this Government not followed the example of other States? I do not approve of hauliers dodging the road tax that should be paid by them and I believe that this State's legislation should be more or less uniform with that operating in other States, particularly in regard to provisions that would protect the railways. I support the second reading.

Mr. CASEY (Frome): I support the Leader in this matter. When the Bill was first introduced by the Premier I thought that it was legislation that was long overdue in this State. I believe that its introduction was prompted because the Broken Hill mines, particularly the North Mine, were not satisfied with the freight rates charged by the South Australian Railways, and as a result pressure was brought on the Government to reduce freight rates or the companies would freight their ore by road from Broken Hill to Port Pirie. That is the whole crux of this Bill. It is a mistake to introduce legislation such as this when it can have far-reaching effects on a large part of the community in this State. The Railways Department, which is a public utility, has to be safeguarded. Members should not misunderstand me when I say that. I maintain that competition is a good thing and that even the Railways Department must

be prepared to meet it. This legislation goes much further than we think it will because, under its provisions, many people will go into the trucking business. In competing with each other many will fail and become bankrupt. I hope that I am wrong in that conclusion.

The weight of eight tons provided for in this Bill is out of all proportion. We know that uniformity is an ultimate aim of the Commonwealth Government, because it has been often stated. Similar legislation operates in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria so why should we differ in this State? In those States the legislation has been tested before the High Court so that our legislation should conform with that operating in the Eastern States. Why should we differ? Admittedly, some carriers will be better off, but with new business offering many more carriers will be available. Eventually they will compete among themselves and many of them will not survive.

Mr. Hall: Do you advocate a 4-ton limit?

Mr. CASEY: Definitely, because it would conform with Eastern States' conditions and I believe wholeheartedly in Commonwealth uniformity.

Mr. Shannon: Even to the disadvantage of some of your people.

Mr. CASEY: No. It would not penalize anyone, for in the Eastern States it has worked well. Last week, in answer to a question, the Premier informed me that about 50,000 bales of wool a year, for the last five years, were transported by rail from the West Darling district in New South Wales via the Silverton Tramway Company. Much, but not all of this wool will go by road transport from that area, and many vehicles used will be of less than eight tons. I see the trucks operating on the North-East road practically every week.

Mr. Shannon: Many of them over 4-ton.

Mr. CASEY: Yes. With a 4-ton limit they could be caught.

Mr. Shannon: You want to catch the grower?

Mr. CASEY: The grower can be protected. Don't misunderstand me on this.

Mr. Shannon: I am not misunderstanding you!

Mr. CASEY: The honourable member is inferring something that I have not said. The primary producer is protected under the Victorian and New South Wales legislation. Many primary producers own vehicles of less than four tons. A 4-ton truck can transport 60



bags of wheat. After all, a primary producer does not use the roads extensively. He does not travel hundreds of miles to deliver his wheat to the silo. The primary producer is entitled to protection. He has to market his goods and the most effective way he can do so is by using the roads. He can be protected by our inserting a special provision in the Bill.

I remind members that up to 60 bales of wool can be transported on a 6-ton vehicle. Surely no member will suggest that carriers do not overload their vehicles. A 5-ton load can be put on a 4-ton vehicle and an 8-ton load on a 6-ton vehicle. I have referred to the notice of the Minister of Lands the Mount Bryan to Saddleworth road in his district. It is in a bad state of repair and has potholes 6ft. to 8ft. wide and up to 1ft. deep in parts. This is a recently constructed road. That damage has been caused by New South Wales traffic. If we permit carriers to use vehicles of up to eight tons, where will we finish?

Mr. Coumbe: You want to slug the carriers a bit more?

Mr. CASEY: No. I say that the weight should be reduced to four tons. Let us be uniform with the legislation in the Eastern States. If it is good enough for Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, why should it not apply in South Australia? In the north-east of this State pastoralists transport much of their wool by road because the Railways Department's freight charges are too high. The Railways Department has not reduced its prices to compete with road transport. Road transport will put the railways out of business, so far as the cartage of wool is concerned.

Mr. Heaslip: Only because the railways have put their charges up.

Mr. CASEY: No, because road hauliers have reduced their charges. The Railways Department has not increased its charges. Make no mistake, I believe in competition and the railways should try to compete with road transport in this part of the State. However, I am afraid the Railways Department has left its run too late. If we permit road transport operators to use vehicles of less than eight tons we will not recoup sufficient to maintain our roads. If the limit were reduced to four tons sufficient revenue would be obtained. Originally this type of legislation was directed at preventing the Broken Hill mines from transporting ore traffic by road to Port Pirie. New section 39 (d) states:

When all the licences in force to operate vehicles on a controlled route for the carriage of goods for hire have expired the Minister shall by notice in the *Gazette* declare that as from a date specified in such notice that controlled route shall be a route in respect of which the provisions of this Act relating to the operation of vehicles for the carriage of goods for hire shall not apply.

This means that in future there will be no controlled routes, and so there will be increased competition with our railway system. I support the second reading but hope that the Premier, in his wisdom, will reduce the tonnage from eight to four tons.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga): The member for Frome attempted to enlighten us. However, I have not before heard so many contradictions in one speech. I do not think for one moment that the honourable member seeks to do a disservice to the man on the land.

Mr. Casey: I thought I made that clear.

Mr. SHANNON: Yes, but the honourable member then set about advocating a 4-ton limit which would immediately impose a tax on most primary producers. At present most primary producers have their own vehicles. They find it more economical to transport their wool by road than by rail.

Mr. Casey: I agree with that.

Mr. SHANNON: These are the facts of the case. The honourable member wants these people to be brought within the ton-mile tax.

Mr. Casey: I did not say that. I said that a clause could be inserted in the Bill to exclude primary producers.

Mr. SHANNON: A thorough investigation was made to determine whether this legislation could stand a challenge in court. The question of whether there should be a 3-ton, 4-ton, or even 10-ton limit was not considered. The point at issue was whether or not the State had the right to differentiate in its taxing system for the upkeep of roads. The member for Frome says that this legislation will be challenged, but I seriously doubt whether it will be.

Mr. Casey: I did not say that.

Mr. SHANNON: If the honourable member reads his speech tomorrow he will see that he almost promised that this legislation was likely to be attacked because it was not uniform.

Mr. Lawn: He said the Bill was not uniform.

Mr. SHANNON: The Leader of the Opposition said it in so many words, too. I wish to correct some of the statements made by

the Opposition. The Leader said he was putting his big gun up, but on hearing the speech I thought that it was a pop-gun and that the honourable member did not seem to know what he was shooting at. The member for Frome did not seem to have a target at all.

Mr. Casey: Sarcasm is the lowest form of wit.

Mr. SHANNON: Members must agree either that they wish to protect primary producers from these attacks or that they do not. This Bill, as drafted, was designed to protect the primary producers.

Mr. Casey: Rubbish!

Mr. SHANNON: I know of very few primary producers who have a vehicle that is rated at eight tons by the manufacturer, and, as the member for Frome will know, a vehicle rated at eight tons will carry 15 tons. I have seen vehicles of that weight in the hills with loads of up to 15 tons. Obviously, this legislation is aimed at gathering into the tax-paying field certain people who have been avoiding it entirely; that is the only purpose of this legislation. I consider that what the Government has brought forward is the best we can do in this respect. We have long distances in South Australia over which to carry produce, and in this respect we are vastly different from Victoria, and even New South Wales to a certain extent. I admit that Queensland has long distances, but that State has more seaports to which produce may be taken. South Australia suffers this disability of long distances, and it would be a great penalty to the primary producers if we brought them within this ton-mile tax. I would heartily oppose any such suggestion.

Mr. Loveday: Are not many primary producers already exempt from these provisions?

Mr. SHANNON: Some of them, but not all; the ones the member for Frome was referring to are not exempt.

Mr. Loveday: Why couldn't they be added?

Mr. SHANNON: They are not carrying perishables. I know that the member for Whyalla would have studied the effects of the High Court action. The provision regarding the exemption of perishables in the Eastern States has been preserved. I think that if we extended exemptions beyond perishables we would be asking for trouble. I do not think perishables could possibly include wheat, wool, superphosphate and such goods. Very rarely would even a 4-ton vehicle be used to carry the types of perishable included in the schedule to this Bill, and normally one would never think of putting 15 tons of tomatoes on a truck.

I am convinced that, as the legislation is designed, it is as fair as it is possible to get it. I think the member for Frome was correct when he said that there would be a flurry in this road-hauling business. However, I am not concerned about people who try to start up in the road-hauling business and compete with somebody who is already established in it by trying to cut prices. That person will be cutting his own throat, and if that is the way he wants it we cannot stop him. I do not think the legislation should be so framed that anybody who gets into this business is bound to make a profit; there is not room for everybody to go into it, in any event. I am convinced that there will be a squeal from the people who have a licence from the Transport Control Board to operate on a controlled route. Those people will now have competition, but they have enjoyed the privilege of a monopoly for a long time, and I do not like monopolies: I like a bit of healthy competition, which is good for everybody.

I was interested in the question the member for Angas (Hon. B. H. Teusner) asked the Premier this afternoon. To my mind, this matter provided what is probably a pretty good excuse for having another look at whether the Transport Control Board is doing any real service at all. I doubt whether we are getting real value from the operations of the board. In the case mentioned by the member for Angas, the railways cannot meet the requirements; people do not travel that way these days, so the railways will have to sacrifice that type of traffic. I consider that many of the operations of the board will not be missed to any great extent.

Mr. Hall: Its operations will still apply to passenger traffic.

Mr. SHANNON: Personally, I would give the board a permanent holiday, because I do not think it is giving real monetary value to the community for the money we provide for its operations. I consider that the Bill as drafted will help maintain our roads in South Australia. The shoulders of our hills roads, which have many sharp bends, show that weight is doing most harm; the shoulders break away and it is necessary to repair them almost continuously. We all know that the higher the speed the greater the wear and tear, not only on tyres but on roads. However, I do not agree with some of the things said in pamphlets sent to me about what experts in America say about the problem, as I think the problem in America is different from ours. We cannot afford expensive highways such as America has; our

distances are too great and we have too few people to pay for our highways. Until we have sufficient population, we must put up with what we have. I think the Highways Department is doing an excellent job; by and large, our highways are excellent and are standing up remarkably well. They need assistance, and I have seen the results of the inefficient driving of people who drive vehicles containing heavy loads on our roads, even though possibly they were designed for heavy loads. If they took more care to keep well on the crown of the road when taking sharp turns and covered an extra three feet of ground, the rear wheels would not go over the shoulders of the roads and damage would not be done.

Mr. Hall: They should not go over the crown of the road.

Mr. SHANNON: I am talking about negotiating curves. When these vehicles are taking sharp curves the rear wheels are about three feet out from the track of the front wheels, so the front wheels must be well over the crown to prevent the rear wheels going over the edge of the pavement. I support the Bill, which I hope will not be torn about in Committee.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Interpretation."

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

Before "registered" in the definition of "owner" to insert "includes any person in whose name a vehicle is".

This is purely and simply a drafting amendment.

Amendment carried.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I find it difficult to be sure just what is meant by the definition of "load capacity". Representations have been made to me about ready-mixed concrete vehicles operating in and around the city and throughout the State. I understand that the normal maximum load these vehicles carry is six cubic yards, which is about 11 tons. However, there are different makes of vehicle, and the carrying capacity as rated by the manufacturer is sometimes much higher than the maximum legal permissible load. For example, the rated carrying capacity of an Albion is between eight and nine tons; of an International, between seven and eight tons; and of a Foden, 26 tons. However, the maximum load these vehicles carry is about 11 tons. It has been suggested to me that it would be inequitable for these vehicles to be taxed on their rated carrying capacity when in fact they never carry anything like it.

A fairer way of rating them would appear to be to assess them on the load they can carry within the legal limit, which is eight tons to each axle. What is the purport of this definition?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The member for Port Adelaide (Mr. Ryan) raised a similar problem in relation to special vehicles carrying timber, and I told him that I would make a special study of the problem. These vehicles operate mainly on and near the docks; a further complication is that they do not have speedometers. The definition depends on the interpretation of the Registrar of Motor Vehicles. In another Bill earlier this year we provided for the Registrar to determine the carrying capacity of vehicles. I will have a special examination made of the problem raised by the honourable member; I hope I shall be able to find some solution through the interpretation of the Registrar.

Mr. COURCE: My question has been partly answered, as I am concerned about the timber-carrying vehicles referred to by the Premier, the tare weight of which is about 6½ tons and the carrying capacity about 15 tons. These vehicles have no speedometers and they run mainly on the wharves. As the Premier is to consider this matter, I shall await the result of his inquiry.

Clause as amended passed.

Clause 4.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: As the other States have a 4-ton limit, why has an 8-ton limit been provided here?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The second reading debate to a great extent dealt with extraneous matters and did not deal with the real extent of this Bill, the purpose of which is to provide additional revenue for the maintenance of our highways. When the Government looked at the registrations in operation and the use of the roads, it concluded that it would be more equitable not to provide as many exemptions as were provided in the schedules of other States but to provide a greater capacity before a vehicle became involved. Most primary producers' vehicles (for instance, those of the wheat-carrying variety) use the highways very little. They mainly take wheat to local sidings or silos, so the Government concluded that it would be better to limit the number of exemptions and provide for a greater capacity before a vehicle came within the ambit of this legislation. I believe that this will give the best results and will cause less dislocation to the community. A new system, when introduced,

always brings new problems. The heavy vehicles cause most problems in the upkeep of roads. The Government considered a 12-ton exemption, but decided that most vehicles using the highways consistently were in the 8-ton to 12-ton bracket and that these vehicles should pay their share. The Government desires that road users shall pay for the upkeep of the roads.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (5 to 14), schedules and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

#### PHYSIOTHERAPISTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

#### CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (GOVERNOR'S SALARY).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 12. Page 1594.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): In supporting the Bill, which increases the salary of His Excellency the Governor from £5,000 to £7,500, I commend His Excellency and consider that he has performed his duties so as to make a valuable contribution to this State. Sir Edric and Lady Bastyan have been well received by people throughout the State, and it is often hard to understand how they manage to do all the things they do so well in the interests of the people of South Australia.

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

#### HIGHWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 12. Page 1612.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): I have examined this Bill and have compared it with the principal Act. The Commissioner of Highways has requested these provisions in the interests of road safety; therefore, I support the second reading.

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

#### STATUTES AMENDMENT (PUBLIC SALARIES) BILL (PUBLIC SERVANTS).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 13. Page 1666.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): This Bill increases the salaries of senior officers of the Public Service—the

Agent-General, Auditor-General, Commissioner of Police, Public Service Commissioner, President and Deputy President of the Industrial Court, and Public Service Arbitrator. Each of these officers has much responsibility and I believe that these increases will make their salaries commensurate with their responsibilities. I support the second reading and hope that the increases meet with the approval of the officers concerned.

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

#### STATUTES AMENDMENT (PUBLIC SALARIES) BILL (MEMBERS).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 13. Page 1668.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): This Bill, which deals with the salaries and allowances of members of Parliament, results from a report submitted by two responsible officers—the Public Service Arbitrator and the Auditor-General. These officers are to be commended for the way they received the submissions presented by members of Parliament. I think members can agree that they have made a reasonable report after having considered not only those submissions but also comparisons of Parliamentary salaries and allowances payable in this State with those payable in other States and in the Commonwealth Parliament. However, may I be permitted to say that since the report has been submitted to the Government there has been an increase of £300 in the salary and £100 in the allowance of members of the New South Wales Parliament, and a committee has been appointed in Queensland to review the salaries and allowances of members there.

An increase of £500 in basic salary is recommended for all members of Parliament in this State. Increases have also been recommended for members of the Subordinate Legislation Committee, and the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council has been recognized. I am sure that the Leader in the Council will be pleased to acknowledge the expense allowance of £300 a year. I believe that the provision made for members representing country districts will help defray the added expenses involved as a result of the remoteness of those members from the city, and also that it will help pay for their accommodation while it is necessary for them to stay in the city. It is well known that accommodation, whether it be in the city or in the country, is always expensive, and the extra allowances will certainly assist in that direction. I support the second reading.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham): I wish to say a few words on this measure. I think it is important that when this matter comes forward members of Parliament should be prepared to speak on it. Let us face it, whether we like it or not, outside this Chamber it has become almost a joke that a Bill to increase the salaries of members of Parliament is rushed through with little or no debate. People claim that it is one of the few things that every member agrees on, and that members do not bother to say anything about it. For that reason, if for no other, we should be prepared to state our own personal views on this matter. We have here a heavy responsibility. As I have said before in this place, of all sections of the community we alone have the right to fix our own salaries. It is a right, an obligation, and a duty because, for the life of me, I cannot see how any other body can in the final analysis take this responsibility for us: we have to do it.

This means that we must be very careful in exercising the right. It is all very well for us to say we are underpaid and so on, but I suppose if we went out into the street nine people out of 10 would tell us the same thing about themselves, whatever their occupation happened to be. I will say frankly that it did not occur to me personally (and I am speaking only for myself and bearing in mind my own personal circumstances) that a rise in the salary of members was required at this particular time; but on the other hand, having said that, I will also admit that in one way I am hoist with my own petard, because in 1958 when the salaries of members of Parliament were increased I said that I thought the rates ought to be left to the recommendation of some outside body. I referred particularly (I notice from looking at a copy of the remarks that I made on that occasion) to the President of the Industrial Court, and I said that Mr. President Morgan (as he then was) had previously undertaken this job. Therefore, I can hardly complain now, I suppose, that the Government has taken the advice I gave in 1958 and has referred the matter to an outside body consisting of the Auditor-General and Mr. Deputy President Williams of the Industrial Court.

As I say, I personally would not have felt that the rise was justified, but the Government has done what I previously suggested should be done and has referred the matter to an outside committee. Therefore, I have no hesitation in saying that I am willing to accept what the committee has recommended, even though I have made one qualification and I

shall make another. I did not give evidence before the committee, so I suppose in one way I have nobody but myself to blame for what it has or has not done or for the principles on which it has acted, because I did not try to suggest that it act on any other. However, I personally consider that it has proceeded on rather a wrong line. I consider that it would have been far better (and again, of course, I speak only from my own personal standpoint) if the basic salary had been left substantially at the figure at which it was fixed in 1960.

I think that in two other ways the salaries could and should have been increased. I feel that there is still not nearly enough differentiation between the members with small compact districts (such as all metropolitan members and some country members who represent cities like Port Pirie and Mount Gambier) and those with large and far-flung districts, such as Eyre and Albert. I can see the member for Frome (Mr. Casey) asking by his look for a mention, and I certainly do not begrudge him a mention. Even under these new provisions, I consider that the differentiation in electoral allowance between metropolitan members and members with larger and more difficult districts is not enough, and I am sorry that the committee did not proceed further along that line than it has proceeded. The other thing I consider the committee should have done (but failed to do) was to recommend an increase in Ministerial salaries.

Mr. Jennings: That is the Ministers' own fault.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I am not saying whose fault it is. Maybe they are in the same position as I am; I think that as a group they did not give any evidence. However, I feel that a substantial increase in Ministerial salaries would have been abundantly justified for the work done and for the responsibility carried by the Ministers. Compared with men in private commerce, industry and the professions, they are grossly underpaid. There is no doubt at all about that, and I am disappointed that the committee did not proceed along that line and recommend substantial increases in Ministerial salaries. For the reasons I have given, I am prepared to accept the recommendations that have been made. I can never see that it leads anywhere to say, "I am against it, I will not take it," because that is an insoluble problem. Sooner or later in our society money values change.

Mr. Jennings: I think you are being sanguinely hypocritical.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: No, I am not: I am trying to make my own position clear, and I hope the member for Enfield will do the same thing.

Mr. Jennings: My attitude is perfectly clear: I need the increase.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: The honourable member has made his position clear in one way, and I am trying to make mine clear in another way. If it causes him displeasure, I am sorry, but there it is. I do not think any good ever comes of saying, "I do not think this is justified and I am not going to take it," because sooner or later in our economy the value of money decreases to a stage where the increase is justified and one gets just as much if not more criticism when that point is reached and one thinks that it is justified and starts to take it as do members who accept immediately what is recommended. Because it has been recommended by an outside body, which is what I wanted to see set up in 1958, I certainly will accept the increase, although I regret, as I have said, that there has been such a substantial rise in the basic salary of members rather than a greater differentiation in electoral allowances and an increase in the salaries of Ministers.

Mr. HALL (Gouger): I share many of the sentiments expressed by the member for Mitcham. I am sorry that a rise in salary has been recommended, although adjustments could have been made to expense allowances for certain areas of the State. I say this bearing in mind that members are to receive a £500 increase in their basic salary. The last rise was in 1960, but what rises have other people in the community received since then?

Mr. Jennings: Are you going to take it?

Mr. HALL: Yes, but I find it difficult to express opposition to this legislation because, immediately one does, one is labelled a freak.

Mr. Millhouse: No. One is labelled, as the honourable member for Enfield labelled me, a hypocrite.

Mr. HALL: Yes. It is remarkable that if we do not agree with all other members of this House, we are considered hypocritical, but that does not mean that we should like to see the basic salary increased. Since our vote will have no effect on the outcome of this Bill, it will be impossible to prove whether we are hypocritical or not. Why is it necessary to label anyone opposing this legislation as someone with an ulterior motive? I genuinely share a concern for those people in the community who have received only a small rise since our last increase. I do not know what increase

the age pensioner has received since 1960, but one could double that rise and it would not compare with this increase for honourable members. Of course, this legislation deals with a few in the community to whom it is economically possible to give a large rise. We know that it is not possible to give a large rise to the many people to whom I have referred.

Mr. Fred Walsh: Your Party's Government has not given them anything at all.

Mr. HALL: I know that in relation to these rises it is almost insignificant. What is going to happen in this country if 10 per cent increases are made in the future? What will happen at every 10 per cent rise? What will our relationship be with the people we represent? What will our salary be? Many higher positions are available in our society. These are not isolated rises because we have seen this happen before. It is difficult to visualize what will happen if the present system continues.

Mr. Coumbe: Wasn't this system approved by the court?

Mr. HALL: Can this go on for ever without alteration? The persons in our community on the basic wage and those receiving pensions and other social service benefits will be placed in a most difficult position.

Mr. Jennings: You are very much concerned about them?

Mr. HALL: The honourable member for Enfield can call me hypocritical if he wants to.

Mr. Jennings: I have already done that.

Mr. HALL: I do what I can to assist all people in the community and do not apologize for my action on this occasion. I ask honourable members opposite to visualize what will happen in the next 20 years if this type of increase is applied to all sections of the community. We will create widely separated classes in this country and honourable members will be among those in the extreme upper limit. I know how futile it is for me to protest.

Mr. Jennings: You are right there.

Mr. HALL: Members opposite, who often maintain that they represent the underprivileged in the community, should have some concern about this ever-widening division that is being created between the higher and lower-paid people in the community.

Mr. Clark: Take your tongue out of your cheek.

Mr. HALL: I am concerned about it.

Mr. McKee: It is the first time you have shown any concern.

Mr. HALL: I am not a Communist. I believe that people should receive their just desserts and that we as members of Parliament should set an example.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. HALL: The last Commonwealth increase had a nation-wide influence, resulting in much hardship to the lower-paid people in the community because of the inflationary trend.

Mr. Clark: Are you going to carry your protest to its logical conclusion?

Mr. HALL: This legislation will be passed, but I believe that it should not be passed in the spirit that is being shown by members opposite. I have not heard any express concern—

The SPEAKER: I suggest that the member for Gouger does not provoke interjections.

Mr. HALL: I am putting my case and if members opposite are interested, then I am pleased.

Mr. Loveday: Are you speaking for your side of the House?

Mr. Clark: You have no right to mention members opposite.

Mr. HALL: If members opposite are riled by what I say, that is all right. I am expressing my views as a member of this House. Many other people in this community are not receiving an increase. The Wheat Industry Stabilization Bill was passed by this House recently. We know that the home production price of wheat has been reduced because of increased productivity.

The SPEAKER: Order! The House passed that Bill last week. The honourable member is out of order.

Mr. HALL: I submit, Sir, that payments to other members of the community have a bearing on the salary honourable members receive.

The SPEAKER: That has nothing to do with any clause in this Bill. The honourable member is out of order.

Mr. HALL: It has some relation to the economic situation in the community.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member can disagree with my ruling if he wishes, but I cannot see that this has any relation to the subject. The honourable member is out of order.

Mr. HALL: In accepting this increase members are not recognizing that other members of the community are not receiving an increase, and that we represent many of those people.

Mr. Millhouse: They have given a rise to some civil servants.

Mr. HALL: If members accept this increase they are guilty of encouraging a system of

adjustment that is not just. I represent wheat-growers who are individuals in the community.

Mr. Jennings: You mean you misrepresent them!

Mr. HALL: Wheatgrowers have made representations to me regarding these salaries, because their incomes will be reduced this year even though they have increased their productivity. Their reward for working harder was less per unit of their production, and that is an illustration of how we are getting away from standard economies. Rural production is the foundation of our economy.

Mr. McKee: Would you favour awards for rural workers?

Mr. HALL: I agree with the member for Mitcham that an increase in Ministers' salaries is justified. Their work is entirely different from the work of back-benchers. I would not oppose a larger increase than is provided for them now. I oppose the Bill, knowing that my opposition is futile.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla): I would not have risen but for the remarks of the last two speakers. Time and again the member for Gouger has opposed measures before this House that would, directly or indirectly, have been of financial assistance to the people he today claims he is protecting—the low-salary earners. He has opposed measures that would be of the greatest benefit to those on low incomes. I was absolutely disgusted to hear the type of speech he made. He attacked members on this side as though they were the only ones concerned about the salaries of members of Parliament.

It is interesting to note that the only criticism of the method of determining the increases has come from a member who has claimed to favour the fixing of salaries by an outside body. An independent inquiry recommended these increases. No member has requested that increases exceeding those recommended should be provided. The only criticism of the independent inquiry has come from the member who has said he favours independent inquiries; yet he is not prepared to accept the recommendation brought down.

Mr. Millhouse: I am entitled to express my personal views, aren't I?

The SPEAKER: Well, you have already done so.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Concerning the general question of members' salaries, I am sick and tired of reading the nonsense in the press about members' salaries, particularly when one realizes that every officer of every reasonably sized company has his air travel, accommodation at the best hotels, and expenses paid. For

an equivalent amount of work he receives a better salary than do members of this House. The community pays for all the travelling expenses, all the hotel accommodation, and all the high salaries of the executive officers of companies indirectly through the prices paid for commodities. It is sickening to read in the press the rubbish about members' salaries. It is time that members in this House and in every House of Parliament spoke their piece on this subject.

Mr. Millhouse: Hear, hear! I could not agree more, and that is why I spoke.

Mr. LOVEDAY: In this House only three members are supplied with air travel—those from Eyre Peninsula. I enjoy that privilege, but I can travel only one way by air on account of the time table and my travelling by air is restricted when the House is not sitting. Yet, on every plane I fly on I find several commercial travellers and other businessmen, and their costs are paid for by the community. Fitters and foremen from the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited travel by air whenever they travel on company business and they stay at the best hotels. Their expenses are all paid. The executive officers of that company receive better pay than we do for equivalent work. The community pays for all these expenses through the prices it pays for the company's products. It is time that this was realized and it is time people realized that unless they pay members of Parliament adequately they will not get service. They want to attract the best brains into our Houses of Parliament. It is time these things were said. I am heartily sick of hearing the type of nonsense we heard from the member for Gouger this afternoon, especially when we all know that he has violently opposed every Opposition measure that has been designed to help directly and indirectly the people on the lower wages.

Mr. HARDING (Victoria): I support the Bill. I am in a different position from most members. I am retiring and have little to gain from supporting this Bill. If people want the right men to represent them in Parliament, they must pay them adequately. It has been my experience that a member of Parliament is not in a money-making position. I am not a wealthy man but, since becoming a member, I have received handsome rebates from the Commissioner of Taxation. This illustrates that there are means by which members can make more money other than by being in this House.

Mr. Jennings: Any member who does his job properly cannot make a profit out of this game.

Mr. HARDING: I agree. If a member and his wife are conscientious the State has two employees, yet it pays only one. The wife's services are not recognized. I conscientiously believe that these salary increases are warranted. I am pleased, too, that the present trend is for young men to enter Parliament. This is good: it will provide for better and keener competition at elections, and ultimately we will get the best men in Parliament legislating for the wellbeing of this country.

The Hon. P. H. QUIRKE (Minister of Lands): I have never let an opportunity like this pass without voicing my opinion. The increases in salaries and allowances are justified in every way. I have been a member for 23 years. When I first came here I received a salary of £400 a year. In that period of 23 years, were it not for the fact that at all times I had other income I should never have been able to represent a country district. I have one objection to this Bill. I do not believe that Parliament should permit an outside body to say what members should receive as salaries. Parliament is the premier legislative body in the State. Today we have agreed to pay increased salaries to our top-ranking public servants. It is completely unfitting that we should ask two of them to do for us the job that we do for them. We should have the internal machinery to do it ourselves. That has always been my belief and I will never depart from it.

Mr. Jennings: In other words, we should show a bit of guts!

The Hon. P. H. QUIRKE: That is what we have to do. If our salaries were then insufficient, we should have no-one to blame but ourselves. We have departed from the original scheme of determining our own salaries. Now we believe that there will be less criticism if our salaries are determined by outside arbitration, but we should determine our salaries here. That is the way it should be done. After the experience I have had in Parliament, I would divorce the Parliamentary machine from everything else and let it run itself internally. In that way I think we would remove it (not as a place apart, standing out as an ivory tower, but so that it takes the responsibility of running its own destiny just as it is employed in running the destiny of the people). I thoroughly support the measure. There are some particulars in which it could have been better, but seeing that we



gave the matter to outside people to decide, if the increase is insufficient we only deserve what we get. I support the Bill.

Mr. FRED WALSH (West Torrens): I, too, support the Bill. Like the member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday) I am disgusted at the attitude adopted by the members for Mitcham and Gouger, mainly because their criticisms were levelled at this Bill and the same arguments they have used could easily—and in those cases justifiably—have been used against the two other Bills we have had before us this afternoon. However, they saw fit to remain silent on those two Bills.

Mr. McKee: They thought this was a good publicity stunt.

Mr. FRED WALSH: That is exactly what it is. The member for Gouger (Mr. Hall) got headlines in the press when the question of an increase was first referred to, and I think he had his photograph in the newspaper. I join the member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday) in criticizing the member for Gouger because never in this House has he subscribed to the provision by the courts and other tribunals set up by the Commonwealth and the State of any benefits to the people he claims to represent. To my knowledge, he has never supported the insertion of a provision in the Industrial Code to cover rural workers, of whom he has many in his district. If the honourable member believes he is not justified in accepting this increase there is no law to compel him to take it.

Mr. Lawn: He will, don't worry.

Mr. FRED WALSH: That goes for the member for Mitcham also. I compliment the member for Victoria (Mr. Harding) on his attitude. The honourable member, the member for Semaphore (Mr. Tapping) and I are in a similar position, for we are all retiring at the end of this term and will receive but little benefit from the increase. I remember when the salary of a member of Parliament was increased to £400, and I remember the outburst in the press at the time. The same outburst always occurs. However, on this occasion this Parliament saw fit to refer the fixing of Parliamentary salaries to a committee comprising the Deputy President of the Industrial Court and the Auditor-General (Mr. Jeffery). Irrespective of what the committee's recommendations might have been, I believe we were obliged to accept them. The salary of South Australian members has been brought up only to about the average of the other States, and soon the members in some of the States with whom we are now level will apply for

further increases because it is some time since their salaries have been adjusted. It is regrettable that two members opposite should single out members on this side of the House for criticism.

Mr. Millhouse: Why do you resent any debate on this matter?

Mr. FRED WALSH: I do not; I only wanted to reply to what has been said.

Mr. Jennings: He is not resenting debate: he is debating the Bill now.

Mr. FRED WALSH: I have never said that I resented anything; I said I was disgusted with the attitude of the two honourable members to whom I have referred. As pointed out by the member for Enfield, I believe the attitude of those members was hypocritical, and to some extent they were speaking with tongue in cheek because apparently their speeches will go down well in their districts. Those members were criticizing members of the Opposition.

Mr. Millhouse: I certainly did not criticize Opposition members.

Mr. FRED WALSH: The member for Gouger did, anyhow.

Mr. Millhouse: Leave me out of that.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no need for heat in this discussion. This debate should be conducted with dignity. This is a dignified House and we are a dignified profession, and my view is that this salary increase is justified in view of the dignity attaching to the position.

Mr. FRED WALSH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members on this side of the House are more or less victims of circumstances. Except for three or four of us, Opposition members have no outside income at all. I have been a member of this Parliament since 1942, and I should like to exchange my bank book for that of the member for Gouger, or that of the member for Mitcham for that matter.

Mr. Millhouse: You might get a nasty surprise.

Mr. FRED WALSH: I would take that risk. If a member of Parliament with no outside income lives up to his obligations and plays his part as he should in his district, he has practically no prospect of saving money: at any rate, no more than has the average man in industry. We should not look at this matter from the point of view of attacking one another, but should accept it in the way the member for Victoria and the Minister of Lands have done. Members should express their views in the right way without criticizing those people who are not in such lucrative positions,

who must depend entirely on their Parliamentary salary, and who therefore find it very difficult to meet their commitments. In the short time during which I shall enjoy the increase it will not mean much to me, but others will be here and others will be coming on. My own view is that the salary should be related in some way to changing money values, and in time perhaps even automatic variations could be considered by Parliament.

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

#### BALHANNAH AND MOUNT PLEASANT RAILWAY (DISCONTINUANCE) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 22. Page 632.)

Mr. JENNINGS (Enfield): I have given long, earnest, sincere and assiduous attention to this Bill—I have had plenty of time to do it! I have produced voluminous notes, but unfortunately I have lost them. I seem to remember that I formed a certain conclusion—that the railway line should be closed. I therefore support the Bill.

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER (Angas): I support the Bill, but wish to say a few words about it before I resume my seat. I speak to the Bill because Mount Pleasant is in my district. The Bill empowers the Railways Commissioner to remove and sell the railway line between Balhannah and Mount Pleasant, which is a distance of about 20 miles. The construction of this line, which is of 5ft. 3in. gauge, was authorized by Statute as long ago as 1914. As a matter of interest, it was the same Statute in the same year that authorized the construction of another short line to Truro, which is in my district. The construction of the line from Mount Pleasant to Balhannah was completed in 1918. I do not doubt that before 1914 there would have been considerable agitation for the construction of this line, which over the years has certainly done a tremendous amount of good in the development of the rural areas it has served. Perhaps the necessity for its removal is to be regretted.

Power to close the line is vested in the Transport Control Board under section 10 of the Road and Railway Transport Act, which provides that if, after an inquiry and investigation, the board is of the opinion that it would be in the best economic interests of the State to close the whole or any part of a line, the board may order such line to be closed. I understand that the Transport Control Board has made due investigation and inquiry; it conducted an inquiry and took evidence at

Adelaide, Mount Pleasant and Woodside. However, section 10 goes further than this as it provides that, before an order for the closing of a railway line may be made, the board must give notice to the Public Works Committee of its intention to make the order and the Public Works Committee must report within 21 days to the board. If the committee reports within that time that it is expedient to keep the line or part of it open, no order shall be made.

The Public Works Committee conducted an inquiry into this matter, and its conclusions were reached in a report that favoured the closing of the line. However, in paragraph 39 of the board's report it was stated that the Public Works Committee recommended closing the line but expressed the opinion that where a railway service was lost all restrictions on road transport should be removed. I regret that, although this recommendation was made, the restrictions on road transport from Mount Pleasant to Adelaide have not been removed. The Transport Control Board has licensed several carriers to operate between Mount Pleasant and Adelaide for the carriage of goods, so there are still restrictions: there is not free and unrestricted trade between Mount Pleasant and Adelaide, as carriers have to be licensed. I regret this, as I consider it is no longer a question of competition between road transport and railways—the railway line has been closed for passenger and goods traffic. Consequently, I consider that no restrictions whatever should operate in respect of the carriage of goods and passengers between Mount Pleasant and Adelaide. I believe that this Bill should be supported. On inquiring of the District Council of Mount Pleasant, I ascertained that no enthusiasm had been displayed in the district for the continuance of this line.

Mr. Bywaters: Hasn't portion of it already been sold?

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: That may be so. The evidence submitted to the board of inquiry was that an annual loss of between £14,000 and £17,000 had been sustained in the last few years. Further, if the line continued to operate, an expenditure of about £54,000 for special maintenance would be expected over the next five years. In view of the findings of the committee, I support the Bill.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.59 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, November 19, at 2 p.m.