HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, October 15, 1964.

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:

Appropriation (No. 2),

Road Traffic Act Amendment (Tyres).

QUESTIONS.

OFF-COURSE BETTING.

Mr. HARDING: Has the Premier anything further to report on the position regarding negotiations for a totalizator agency board system of off-course betting in this State?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: This morning I wrote to the Chairman of the off-course totalizator committee. I do not know whether he has yet received the letter and in those circumstances I would prefer not to discuss its contents, although they can no doubt be made known to members later this afternoon if they wish.

PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE.

Mr. JENNINGS: I direct this question to you, Mr. Speaker, and ask your leave and the concurrence of the House to explain it.

Leave granted.

Mr. JENNINGS: You, Sir, will have undoubtedly noticed from a report of a debate in another place that an honourable member there has taken up the fight with a public officer of this State that was precipitated by remarks of an honourable member of this House. Much has been made in this controversy about Parliamentary privilege, but nothing has been said about the use of Parliamentary privilege and its abuse. Sir, would you explain to the House how the authority of the House can be exerted to protect respect for the House against the irresponsible use of its privilege by an individual member and, in turn, what the House can do to answer any reflection on it by a public officer or any other person?

The SPEAKER: The matter of privilege is important. The honourable member's question relates to the difference between the two Houses and the rights of each House. Members of this House are governed by our Standing Orders and we have no official recognition of the other House in that matter. The statement in issue, as I understand it, came from a press report. The honourable member realizes that there are matters in respect of which each House has its own rights. It is a question whether the House would be in order in discussing, on the basis of a press statement, a question raised in another House. That is a matter on which I am not at this stage prepared to give an opinion.

WEST COAST ROADS.

Mr. BOCKELBERG: Will the Minister of Works ascertain from the Minister of Roads whether there is a programme to seal the main streets of Port Kenny, Yeelanna, Poochera, Warramboo, Wirrulla and Penong? If there is, when is the work likely to be commenced?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will obtain the information for the honourable member. As I think he knows, it is the policy of the Minister and the Highways Department to seal the principal streets or street in country towns as it becomes possible to do so, having regard to the availability of the necessary plant in that area. It is extremely costly to move the plant and the labour force over long distances to do small jobs, and to overcome that problem the Commissioner of Highways has co-ordinated his street-sealing programme with the activities of the road gangs and availability of plant generally. A programme has been organized for certain districts on Eyre Peninsula this year, and I shall ascertain from the Minister of Roads what that is.

LIBRARIANS.

Mr. LAUCKE: I seek information concerning facilities available for training librarians in South Australia. Many practical librarians are in charge of institute libraries, and they could render more extensive service to this State if they had access to training facilities through adult education. Can the Minister of Education say whether there is a course in adult education for training librarians? If there is not, could one be introduced?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: There is no specific adult education course for training librarians. There is one, instituted by the Public Library of South Australia, which is of a fairly high standard, requiring a matriculation certificate as a starting-off point. That is a three-year course. There is also a course instituted by the Education Department's Superintendent of Recruitment and Training for the training of teacher librarians, but no modified course exists under the auspices of the adult education branch. However, I should be pleased to take the matter up with both the Director of Education

and the Superintendent of Technical Schools (who is the superintendent immediately in charge of adult education) and to discuss the matter with them during the next few days. If possible I shall bring down a considered reply for the honourable member next week.

FRUIT CASES.

Mr. BYWATERS: Last Tuesday I asked the Premier a question relating to the price of case-making materials. In an earlier question I had said that the prices of shooks, as they are known, had increased considerably (I believed by 5d. a bushel case) and that this was causing hardship to those engaged in the tomato, cucumber and citrus-growing industries. Has the Premier a reply?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Prices Commissioner states:

Inquiry disclosed that the casemaker at Murray Bridge purchases bushel cases from the South-East in shooks (*i.e.*, timber cut to size but not assembled) and then makes up the finished cases. The price of 3s. 1d. each previously charged was for second-grade cases manufactured from reject pinus. The new price of 3s. 6d. each is for the supply of first-grade cases made from first-quality timber. As the first-grade cases are costing the casemaker 3s. 2d. each in shooks at Murray Bridge, it is apparent that his margin to cover the cost of nails, making up and other expenses, is by no means excessive. It has also been ascertained that there has been no recent general increase in prices of either first-grade or second-grade bushel cases in this State; in fact, in the main, prices appear to be lower now than they were 10 years ago. However, as the supplies of reject timber available fall far short of requirements to meet the demand for second grade cases, casemakers have no alternative but to make cases largely from the more expensive first-quality timber. It was due to this situation that first-grade cases in shooks were supplied to the Murray Bridge casemaker in this instance.

SURVEYORS.

Mr. NANKIVELL: On September 29 I asked the Minister of Lands a question concerning the availability of surveyors in the Lands Department, and the Minister indicated in his reply that he would be interested in any suggestions to overcome this problem. Has the Minister seen a statement in this morning's *Advertiser* headed "Costly delays in S.A. survey work"? Part of the article states:

South Australian shortage of land surveyors, and unnecessary duplication of their work, is contributing to costly delays in carrying out essential works such as road building, drainage and the extension of water and sewerage services. The shortage of surveyors is world-wide. But, it was claimed this week, there is a simple way to cut out work duplication to ease the South Australian shortage and at the same time bring South Australia into line with other States to facilitate survey mapping on a national scale. South Australia's biggest need, members of the Institution of Surveyors say, is for a Survey Co-ordination Act.

I understand that this co-ordination is legislated for in all States except South Australia. Will the Minister of Lands obtain a report on whether the substance of this article is correct and on whether the proclaiming of an Act for the co-ordination of survey would ease the shortage of surveyors and speed up work in this State in that regard?

The Hon. P. H. QUIRKE: I saw the article referred to by the honourable member. I do not know the answer to it, but I have called for a report and when it is available I will let the honourable member know.

MERRIMELIA GAS.

Mr. CASEY: Will the Premier comment on a report released by the directors of Delhi-Santos Limited that a flow of gas at the rate of 234,000 cubic feet a day was recorded yesterday afternoon from the Delhi-Santos Merrimelia No. 1 wildcat well in northern South Australia? This flow came from permian sands at between 7,996ft. and 8,024ft., and according to the report the well will continue coring and testing operations. Can the Premier say what significance this will have in the future of gas exploration in this State?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have not received an official report from the Director of Mines on this matter so I would not be competent to express a view upon it, except to say in general terms that every new occurrence is significant in the general picture that is gradually emerging, and it is extremely pleasing to see the continued success that is being achieved. I presume the honourable member wishes to know how much closer this makes the consideration of a pipeline. I would hesitate to say anything on that until the Director of Mines had commented on the matter and this report had been properly evaluated.

POTATOES.

Mr. McKEE: Yesterday I asked a question of the Minister of Agriculture regarding the high price of potatoes, and I noticed a press statement this morning that gave a fairly good explanation. Has the Minister anything further to add to that statement?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The Secretary of the Potato Board reports that the present wholesale price of unwashed potatoes is £101 a ton. The price of washed potatoes is

£110 a ton. Potatoes are generally sold in ½-cwt. cases at 55s. a ½-cwt. New grade potatoes washed and packed in bushel cases range from 50s. to 55s. a case. Supplies of South Australian grown potatoes are very short at present, but the Secretary expressed the opinion that supplies will improve soon. South Australian prices are adjusted to follow interstate market price trends. The board is meeting tomorrow to examine the position and will decide upon the prices to apply next week.

SUBSIDIES.

Mr. RYAN: Several weeks ago I raised with the Minister of Education the subject of the confusion that exists in the minds of school committees, councils and staff generally regarding the payment of subsidies to schools, and the Minister promised that he would hold a Ministerial inquiry so that this matter could be ironed out to the satisfaction of all concerned. Last night I attended a meeting of a school committee in my district and those present at that meeting were confused regarding the operation of subsidy payments. However, they made a suggestion. As the Minister is holding an inquiry into this matter (and I appreciate that this will take a little time), will he see that, if a decision is made on this matter so that a comprehensive list can be compiled and issued to those that are concerned, this list can be issued before next year?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: Yes, I shall be pleased to consider the suggestion. I have commenced a Ministerial inquiry and I find that the position is confusion worse confounded. Subsidies have been granted on an infinite number of subject matters, as a result of Cabinet, Ministerial and departmental decisions and some have been granted because, like Topsy they have just "growed up". However, I hope soon to have some semblance of order in the matter and to make some alterations, deletions, and corrections in time for the next school year.

GAS ACCOUNTS.

Mr. LANGLEY: In recent weeks many of my constituents have complained about the means available to make payments of accounts to the South Australian Gas Company. Many people, especially old people, find it difficult to make the trip to Adelaide. As the Electricity Trust has provided for payments of accounts in suburban banks, will the Premier see whether the South Australian Gas Company could arrange to have its accounts paid in suburban branches of the Savings Bank of South Australia?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will obtain a report on this matter.

CHAFFEY CHANNELS.

Mr. CURREN: Has the Minister of Irrigation a reply to my question of September 30 regarding the failure of a pressure line in the disposal system of the Chaffey irrigation drainage scheme?

The Hon. P. H. QUIRKE: During the construction of the Ral Ral comprehensive drainage scheme, the rising main from No. 1 caisson to the evaporation basin was the first work constructed and was laid in July, 1962. This main was used from the inception to dispose of construction water. The main discharges into the evaporation basin through a combined outlet with the Renmark Irrigation Trust's block "E" rising main. The outlet was designed so that the effluent could be discharged either through the floodbank in normal river times or over the floodbank during flood conditions. This second outlet involves an additional head of about 10ft. on the rising main and was put into operation a short while ago on account of the present high river.

The additional head has caused the rubber rings on the 15in. section of the rising main to blow and the main to leak. A similar trouble occurred on a section of 15in. rising main which was laid at about the same time on the Loxton comprehensive drainage scheme and investigations currently being carried out suggest that the trouble is due to either an incorrect rubber ring thickness, hardness of the rubber ring or an incorrect shape of pipe faucet. This matter will be taken up with the pipe manufacturers. The leaks are currently being repaired as they occur, by means of lead caulking, but it may be necessary to re-lay the rising main using thicker section rubber rings. The split-up of the cost of such replacement will depend on the negotiations with the pipe manufacturer.

BRIDGES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Has the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Roads, a reply to my recent question regarding the erection of bridges by the Highways Department in the current financial year?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: A contract has been let for the construction of a bridge over the railway line on the deviation of the South Road at Pedlar Creek. Although there is little rail traffic on the line, a crossing has to be provided, and at the locality the

railway is in a cutting. It is therefore not much more expensive to construct a bridge than to construct a level crossing. The road between Adelaide and Bordertown is known as the Dukes Highway only from Tailem Bend to Bordertown. The department has no proposals for any additional construction on that length. Between Adelaide and Tailem Bend the road is known as the Princes Highway, and departmental proposals include the construction of a freeway between Crafers and Verdun, the section between Crafers and Stirling to be commenced during the current financial year. Beyond Verdun, preliminary investigations only have been carried out and the survey and preparation of plans have not commenced. From Callington through Murray Bridge to Tailem Bend the existing road is adequate to cope with traffic for some years to come.

NARACOORTE SOUTH TANK.

Mr. HARDING: My question refers to a 30,000-gallon squatters tank being erected at Naracoorte South school grounds. Can the Minister of Works say what progress has been made on the construction of this tank?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I assured the honourable member on September 17 that the necessary approvals had been given by the Minister of Education and me for the installation of a water supply for the playing field of this school, and that the Engineering and Water Supply Department, as technical adviser to the Education and Public Buildings Departments, would do everything in its power to get the scheme into operation as early as possible. The Engineer for Water Supply advised me this morning that the installation of a 30,000-gallon squatters tank will be finished next week. The school committee only recently advised the department of the details of the sprinkler system required, this being essential to the design of the necessary pumping plant by the department. This design work has now been completed and the Chief Storekeeper has today been asked to make a short call for offers for such plant. As soon as an offer has been accepted, the manufacturers will supply the department with details regarding the size of the base, pipework, fittings and the starting and switch gear required, so that the department can proceed with the departmental work associated with the installation of the equipment.

BIRDSVILLE TRACK RAMP.

Mr. CASEY: Recently I interviewed the Minister of Lands about a ramp on the dog-proof fence on Lake Harry on the Birdsville track. The Minister is aware that the ramp sands up quickly, often only a few days after it has been cleared. To substantiate this claim I have a photograph of the dog fence which clearly shows the build-up of sand after a few days of sand storms in the area. The photograph was taken only a fortnight ago when a sand storm in the area lasted about 24 hours. Has the Minister of Lands anything to report on this matter?

The Hon. P. H. QUIRKE: The report I have on the Lake Harry road bridge states that this matter has been considered by the Dog Fence Board, which recommended that it be referred to the Crown Solicitor for an opinion. The letter concerning this matter is now in the departmental correspondence. The question of who is responsible for maintaining a bridge on what is now a highway where the general set-up of the dog fence is involved, has been referred to the Crown Solicitor, and we are awaiting his report.

BARLEY.

Mr. McANANEY: In reply to my recent question about the differential between prices of grades of barley, the Barley Board stated that the differential was based on the higher realizations for malting barley. This grade is mainly used for the local market and is sold at a negotiated home consumption price. For many years this price was below the export price and the lower grades subsidized the malting grades. For several years this position has been reversed and there is a greater realization for malting barley. I think that that aspect should be brought into the determination of the price and that prices paid should be now based on export realizations. Can the Minister of Agriculture say what is the approximate differential in the price a bushel for the various grades of barley sold on world markets?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The honourable member understands that the marketing of barley is controlled by the Australian Barley Board. In South Australia and Victoria, Parliament merely sets up the organization by Statute and lets the board run its own affairs. I discussed the previous question with the board and received the reply that the honourable member has just referred to. I take it that he is disputing the wisdom of the board's decision. I suggest that he give me details of what he thinks the board should do and I will discuss the matter with the board along those lines. The board may be influenced by such information in their future decisions.

INTRASTATE AIR SERVICES.

Mr. RYAN: It has been reported in the press that four States have bitterly complained about, and have lodged objections to, the interference by the Commonwealth Government in State rights concerning civil aviation. Can the Premier say whether the South Australian Government has lodged such a complaint with the Commonwealth Government? If it has not, does it intend to do so? Further, if the matter is to be decided by litigation will the South Australian Government collaborate with the other State Governments for the purpose of deciding this important issue?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The South Australian Government was the first Government to bring this matter publicly before the people of Australia. The Government has instructed officers of the Crown Law Department to draw up a letter setting out its objections to the regulation, and there are a number of grounds for objection. When the letter is prepared I should be happy for it to become public property by placing it before this House. If the honourable member asks the question next week I shall be happy for a copy of that letter to be placed in *Hansard*. In South Australia, we have never had more than one intrastate service operating because the Commonwealth Government has always refused to allow Trans-Australia Airlines to operate in this State, and as the Commonwealth Government controls its own airline we have never had more than one company operating in this State. At least twice we have written to the Commonwealth Government asking that T.A.A. be allowed to operate here. Once, about a year ago, the matter was raised by the Leader of the Opposition by way of question. The problem existing in New South Wales does not exist in this State because we have never been able to secure more than one company to operate in this State. The South Australian Government is opposed to the Commonwealth Government's regulations, and our views will be placed officially before the Prime Minister. There is no objection to those views being made public after the letter is in his hands.

PARACOMBE SCHOOL.

Mr. LAUCKE: Can the Minister of Works say when the proposed toilet block will be erected at the Paracombe Primary School?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The highest priority has been given by the department to this urgent job, and it will be possible to commence the erection of these facilities either at the end of this month or early next month.

AIRDALE SCHOOL.

Mr. McKEE: Can the Minister of Education say when tenders will be called for the proposed Airdale Primary School at Port Pirie?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: I have not yet been informed when tenders will be called but I will try to ascertain an approximate date and inform the honourable member, possibly next week.

POWER BOATS.

Mr. CURREN: On Wednesday, September 30, I introduced to the Minister of Marine a deputation representing the Local Government Association, the Municipal Association and the South Australian Boatowners Association. The deputation requested that a committee be set up to consider the desirability of central registration of power boats, and the Minister undertook to take that request to Cabinet. Can he say whether that matter has been discussed by Cabinet and, if it has, what decision has been made?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The honourable member's statement of fact is correct: I undertook to take the matter to Cabinet for consideration. We have had an extremely busy time in Cabinet in the last week or two, even busier than usual, and I have not yet been able to present the matter to my colleagues. I will do so and tell the honourable member the result of the discussion as soon as a decision has been made. As the honourable member is aware, lengthy discussions took place with the deputation on the advisability and effectiveness, or otherwise, of licensing and identifying power boats, but these matters have been freely discussed before and, as I told the deputation, Government policy on this matter up to the present has been that the benefits to be derived from this rather lengthy and widespread requirement would not justify the amount of work and cost involved in respect of the many owners of small boats being used purely for pleasure. I am not suggesting for a moment that these boats create no difficulty, for that position is well known and understood. Indeed, local government authorities have been given the opportunity, by legislation, to control the operation and behaviour of boats within their areas. What the committee particularly asked for was that a committee of inquiry be set up to investigate the matter further, and I intend to take that request to Cabinet at the earliest opportunity.

PETROL.

Mr. CASEY: Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked last week concerning arrangements between the Commonwealth Government and the States as to the price of petrol being reduced in country areas to within 4d. of the price in city areas?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The position is as I stated it: the Commonwealth Government has no power to make this arrangement, except by providing financial grants to the States to give effect to it. I have now received a letter from the Prime Minister calling for a conference between the States and the Commonwealth, which I have agreed to attend. The date of the conference has not yet been fixed.

WHYALLA SCHOOLS.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Will the Minister of Education ascertain when the Stuart Avenue Primary School in Whyalla is likely to be completed? Secondly, when is work likely to commence on the McRitchie Crescent school in Whyalla West? Can steps be taken to expedite the commencement of work on that school?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: I shall endeavour to obtain the information as soon as possible, and let the honourable member know.

GRASSHOPPER PLAGUE.

Mr. CASEY: Has the Minister of Agriculture more information relating to the question I asked yesterday about grasshoppers in the north of the State?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The Director of Agriculture reports:

Many different species of grasshoppers and locusts cause trouble from time to time in South Australia. The serious plague in 1955 was caused by the Australian plague locust which has its main breeding grounds in the north-eastern pastoral country. A plague in the settled districts of South Australia is preceded by a southerly movement of flying swarms in the autumn, as a result of which, extensive egg laying occurs in the agricultural areas and adjacent pastoral country. No movement of this kind was observed last autumn and it is almost certain that the infestations reported concern one of the grasshopper species which is native to the area fringing the northern agricultural areas of the State. In these areas there is always a population of grasshoppers—the numbers fluctuating with seasonal conditions. Unlike the Australian plague locust which has up to four generations a year, these grasshoppers have only one generation and it is uncommon for them to migrate very far from the breeding grounds. They may, however, cause considerable damage to feed in the locality where hatchings occur. No reports of damage have been received by Agriculture Department officers at Jamestown. The Research Officer specializing in entomology, Mr. P. R. Birks, will visit the areas referred to early next week and report on any action that may be desirable.

PORT PIRIE TO COCKBURN RAILWAY DEVIATION 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 authorize alterations and deviations of the route of the railway between Port Pirie and Cockburn and for purposes incidental thereto or consequent thereupon.

Motion carried.

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

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

I desire to indicate to honourable members that the Government is not asking them to consider this Bill this afternoon, beyond hearing the second reading explanation. The object of this Bill is to authorize the South Australian Railways Commissioner, in connection with the conversion of the Port Pirie to Cockburn railway to standard gauge, to make alterations and deviations in the route for obtaining easier gradients or better serving the public convenience. The Bill also authorizes the Commissioner to alter the route of the line between Terowie and Peterborough in connection with its conversion to broad gauge. Honourable members are already aware of the fact that agreement has been reached with the Commonwealth for proceeding with the standardization of the Port Pirie to Cockburn line, and in the course of discussions with Commonwealth authorities it has been decided that certain alterations to the route should be made in the joint and public interest. At the same time the Commonwealth authorities have agreed with the State that it is desirable to convert the Terowie to Peterborough line to broad gauge. This latter conversion will, of course, mean that heavier rolling stock will be used and travelling will be at a higher speed. The present route, although satisfactory for narrow gauge traffic, should, in the Commissioner's opinion, be altered in such a way as to make it more suitable for the heavier traffic on the broad gauge. The Commissioner is unable to alter the route of any railway already in

existence without statutory authority which it is the aim of the Bill to confer.

The Bill follows the usual form in such cases. Clause 3 contains the necessary definitions, the principal one of which is the definition of "the railways". The lines between Port Pirie and Cockburn on the one hand and between Terowie and Peterborough were constructed in various portions under several Acts of Parliament, all of which are set out in the Schedule to the Bill, and it is necessary to make references to these Acts in the definition. From the definition the Bill excludes that part of the various railways which lies between Peterborough and Pichirichi. Thus, for the purposes of the Bill, the expression "the railways" includes only the line between Port Pirie and Cockburn and the line between Peterborough and Terowie. Clause 4 confers the necessary authority on the Commissioner to make alterations and deviations, with the proviso that before undertaking the work the alterations must be set out in plans deposited in the office of the Surveyor-General.

Clause 5 is in the usual form, providing that the lines as altered are to be deemed to be the lines originally authorized. Clause 6 empowers the Commissioner to discontinue the working of such parts of the line as will be taken up and to use and dispose of the materials. Clause 7 is a necessary provision which will confer upon the Commissioner in connection with the alterations all the powers which he would have if the alterations were new lines of railway. Clause 8 is the usual financial provision. The Bill is necessary, as a considerable amount of preliminary work has been done and it is desirable in the public interest that the Commissioner should have a full discretion to make such alterations as he considers expedient from time to time. Some proposed alterations have not yet been decided upon, and it is for this reason that the authority is in general terms. Honourable members know that the South Australian Government insisted that with the relaying of the line from Broken Hill to Port Pirie we should get a much better gradient, if possible, particularly from east to west, because the heavy haulage of the Barrier ore is from Broken Hill to Port Pirie. In some instances the present gradients are very steep and are a severe limiting factor to the train service that can be given.

The Commonwealth Government has agreed to accept these deviations as part of the standardization work, and under the Bill I think we are getting a gradient of one in 120 from east to west and one in 80 from west to east, although I speak subject to correction regarding those figures. To achieve this it is necessary to avoid certain of the high spots in the existing line, and therefore small deviations are involved.

Mr. Fred Walsh: Does that conform to the plans submitted to the Public Works Committee?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I think the general plan of deviations was explained to the committee. Although the actual surveys had not been completed when the matter was before the committee, the present proposals, as far as I know, do not add anything beyond what was explained to the committee. Members may ask why the specific deviations are not referred to in the Bill. The answer is that some surveying is still to be completed before the plans can be set out. Although the general position of the line is known, the precise position is not known because some surveying particulars still have to be obtained. Unless we give the Railways Commissioner this authority, delays will occur from time to time as various surveys are completed and tenders are desired, therefore the Government has introduced a Bill on a general basis rather than one specifying precise small deviations.

Mr. Riches: Has anything been decided regarding closing the line from Merriton to Port Pirie?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Bill does not deal with that matter in any way. That subject has not yet been before the Public Works Committee. No survey has been made by the Commonwealth department, and it would be premature to intrude that issue into this legislation which relates only to the line between Port Pirie and Cockburn and the small section of line between Peterborough and Terowie, the only lines that have been investigated up to the present.

Mr. CASEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

FESTIVAL HALL (CITY OF ADELAIDE) BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council with amendments.

PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council with amendments.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (GENERAL).

In Committee.

(Continued from October 13. Page 1427.)

Clauses 12 to 16 passed.

Clause 17—"Portion of body protruding from vehicle."

Mr. MILLHOUSE: As there is no need for a regulation in respect of this clause, or any modification of equipment required, can the Minister of Works say why the year 1966 is inserted and why the clause cannot come into operation immediately the Bill is passed?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON (Minister of Works): Apparently the attitude taken in another place is that the practice of "hood clutching" is of long standing and much beloved by many motorists, particularly older motorists. Many a motorist is in the habit of driving with the driver's side window of his car down, his arm through it, and his hand resting on the guttering of the hood. It was suggested in another place that an educational period was desirable. Although this habit was considered dangerous it was thought that some time should be allowed to elapse before the new provision operated.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I move:

In new section 94a(1) to strike out "sixty-six" and insert "sixty-five".

I do not think we should be bound by what happens in another place: we have to make up our own minds on this matter. This practice is dangerous and should be stopped as soon as possible.

Mr. FRED WALSH: I hope that the Committee will not accept the amendment. I am not happy with new section 94a(1)(*b*) at all. I have driven for many years and have never been involved in an accident. I know that nearly every motorist at some time or other drives with his elbow resting on the door of his car and this involves no risk to him. The practice of driving while clutching the roof of the car should be stopped because it could give the wrong impression to a driver following. Nearly every motorist driving in the country has some part of his arm protruding from the window of his car.

Mr. Millhouse: That means you are against the clause?

Mr. FRED WALSH: Against paragraph (*b*). Many cars do not have an arm rest. People driving in and around the city in heavy traffic find that with their elbow resting lightly on the window ledge they can give signals more quickly than with their arm inside the door and many people drive in this manner. I know the need for quick signals when driving along King William Street in heavy traffic.

Mr. SHANNON: Either the legislation is a reasonable approach to the Road Traffic Code or it is not. I understand that this clause was recommended by those responsible for investigating road traffic problems, and I cannot see any virtue in any date being inserted. It is a common practice for drivers to rest an elbow on the window ledge when driving. If this becomes an offence, some time must be spent in educating people before prosecutions can be launched.

Mr. HEASLIP: I agree with the member for Mitcham on this matter; I cannot see anything wrong with the amendment, apart from the time factor. No reason exists why it should not come into force immediately. Most new laws are accompanied by a warning period during which police will not charge offenders. I favour the amendment.

Mr. HALL: I am sure that the inclusion of 1966 as the commencement date for this provision is really an admission by those in favour of the amendment that a period of education is needed for drivers. If it is to be an offence to rest one's elbow on the side of the car, motorists should be given another year so that this prevalent habit can be suppressed. It is quite unrealistic to impose a £25 fine from the beginning of next year for something that is practised by almost every second motorist. A compromise should be reached on this matter.

Mrs. STEELE: I agree that the amendment should be incorporated in this legislation. I do not think it would matter for how long a person was educated on this matter, for we would always find the habit continuing up to the last minute. Clause 14 has been passed, which means that it will not be necessary to have the elbow in such a position that will facilitate giving a hand signal. A friend of mine who is an orthopaedic surgeon has told me that over the years she has operated on many people who have received smashed elbows and who have said to her afterwards, "Well, it was my own fault; I had my arm resting on the window and protruding outside the car." She has said that, if people could only see the suffering and distortion of limb that have been caused by such accidents, they would immediately refrain from driving with any portion of their bodies protruding from the

vehicle. When I read the explanation of the Bill given in the Upper House I was very glad indeed to see that this provision had been made.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I did not mean to imply a few moments ago that the Minister was relying only on what was said in the Upper House to support this clause. Holding a hand out and putting it against the hood is misleading to a following motorist and can be dangerous. I believe that if we are going to make this amendment to the law it should be done soon. Not one member who has spoken has suggested what we would do in the interim of 12 months to instruct and educate people against this practice.

The Committee divided on the amendment:

Ayes (9).—Messrs. Bockelberg, Coumbe, Ferguson, Harding, Heaslip, McAnaney, Millhouse (teller), and Shannon, and Mrs. Steele.

Noes (26).—Messrs. Brookman, Burdon, Bywaters, Casey, Clark, Corcoran, Curren, Dunstan, Freebairn, Hall, Hurst, Hutchens, Jennings, Langley, Laucke, Lawn, Loveday, and McKee, Sir Baden Pattinson, Mr. Pearson (teller), Sir Thomas Playford, Messrs. Quirke, Riches, Ryan, Frank Walsh, and Fred Walsh.

Majority of 17 for the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. FRED WALSH: I move:

In new subsection (1) to strike out paragraph (*b*).

I have no objection to paragraphs (*a*) and (*c*). Paragraph (*b*) is aimed solely at those people who drive with an elbow resting on the car window. I know what it is to drive in peak traffic in Adelaide and the other cities and what a disadvantage it is for one to have his hands inside a car and not be able to give signals quickly. It is an advantage to be able to give hand signals as quickly as possible. If this clause is given effect to, the driver will be prevented from doing that: his arm will have to be inside the door. There is nothing to be gained by including this provision in the Bill: the motorist is only being put at a disadvantage, for no additional safety is provided.

It has been suggested that some people have had their arms injured because they had been protruding out of the car window. In my opinion, they would have had their arms injured anyway in most cases, in the case of an accident. If a car is involved in an accident, the driver is to some extent protected by the bumper bar and the engine in front of him before his body is reached.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I have no objection to the amendment.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I am very much against this amendment. The practice of protruding one's elbow out of the car window and leaving it protruded is most dangerous. I am amazed that the Minister is prepared to accept the amendment.

Mr. Hall: Will not paragraph (*c*) cover that?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: No; I think not. If it does, why are honourable members opposing paragraph (*b*)? Some people have had their elbows smashed in this way. The member for West Torrens (Mr. Fred Walsh) referred to his driving record. Curiously enough, the last case of this kind that I can recall (not very long ago) was that of a man driving in the district of West Torrens. He had his arm smashed in this way because a girl on a motor scooter coming towards him got out of control, spun across the road and smashed his elbow with her head as she went past. This type of accident often happens. In clause 14, which apparently was passed without the member for Gouger (Mr. Hall) realizing it, we have provided that it is not necessary to give a "stop" signal if brake lights are applied. That is a sufficient warning to a following motorist. These mechanical devices on cars have been developed so that people do not have to have any part of their body protruding outside the vehicle. Stop lights and trafficators have been developed so that this practice, recognized by everybody who studies road accident statistics as dangerous, can be eliminated. It will be a retrograde step if we delete paragraph (*b*).

Mr. HEASLIP: The deletion of paragraph (*b*) will give the motorist the right to have his elbow resting on the driving window. Paragraph (*c*) states that it shall be an offence if any portion of the body or limbs extends or protrudes beyond or hangs over a side, the front or the rear or any other external portion of the vehicle. That means that a motorist will be committing an offence if he puts his elbow on the window ledge; therefore by deleting paragraph (*b*) we should not accomplish anything. I oppose the amendment.

Mr. HALL: Under paragraph (*c*) a driver would be able to put his elbow on the window ledge so long as it did not protrude over the side of the vehicle. It is possible to do this with most modern vehicles. I believe that legislation for self-protection can be taken to ridiculous extremes, and that paragraphs (*a*) and (*c*) are sufficient.

Mr. LAUCKE: I am sorry that the Minister is prepared to have this paragraph deleted. Any protrusion of a limb outside a car is dangerous, and removing this paragraph will weaken the ability to enforce the provision that there shall be no protrusion. I oppose the amendment.

The Committee divided on the amendment:

Ayes (25).—Messrs. Brookman, Burdon, Casey, Clark, Corcoran, Curren, Dunstan, Ferguson, Freebairn, Hall, Hurst, Hutchens, Jennings, Langley, Lawn, and McKee, Sir Baden Pattinson, Mr. Pearson, Sir Thomas Playford, Messrs. Quirke, Riches, Ryan, Stott, Frank Walsh, and Fred Walsh (teller).

Noes (11).—Messrs. Bockelberg, Bywaters, Coumbe, Harding, Heaslip, Laucke, Loveday, McAnaney, Millhouse (teller), Shannon, and Mrs. Steele.

Majority of 14 for the Ayes.

Amendment thus carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 18 to 23 passed.

Clause 24—"Information to be painted on certain vehicles."

Mr. COUMBE: Section 163, which this clause amends, requires vehicles plying for hire or carrying goods to have the name and address of the owner painted on the side of the vehicle. This clause provides exemptions. Why are they required?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The explanation is contained in the second reading explanation of the Bill. The amendment is intended to be applied to certain hire cars, wedding cars and funeral cars. For instance, it is not always possible to know why a vehicle may be standing in front of a home. Some confidential inquiries may be involved and embarrassment could be caused to the people concerned if the vehicle had the full description on it. It will be in the hands of the Road Traffic Board to exercise the exemption, which will not be exercised unwisely because it is desirable that the ownership of vehicles should be displayed unless there is a good reason to the contrary.

Clause passed.

Clauses 25 and 26 passed.

Clause 27—"Evidence."

Mr. FRANK WALSH: In the second reading debate I said that the radar method of apprehending offenders was being used to produce revenue. I have here a few comments made by Mr. Neville Williams, who is editor of Australia's national electronics journal *Radio, Television and Hobbies* and is qualified as a member of the Institute of Radio Engineers (Australia). Consequently I am sure that Mr. Williams is suitably qualified to give expert comments regarding the reliability or otherwise of certain electronic equipment. In the February issue of that journal, Mr. Williams, in the leading article in reference to traffic radar, stated:

Against official claims that the equipment is accurate, Sydney magistrates, on at least two recent occasions, have seen fit to set aside the radar reading in the face of contradictory evidence. In West Germany, similar equipment was discredited over a year ago by a couple of proven errors in actual operation, and in searching tests conducted by traffic authorities . . . The tests indicated possible error modes arising, in the main, from multiple reflection paths and from adjacent oscillating or rotating surfaces. Statements have been made that the Australian system is not prone to such error, being a local development, not radar at all, but utilizing the Doppler principle. In fact, the German system also uses the Doppler principle, as do others overseas, and there is no apparent reason why one should be less prone to error than another. . . . Pending a full investigation, a traffic radar reading should be regarded as important but not conclusive evidence and defendants should not be faced with the cost of a separate inconclusive technical investigation if they elect to question its validity.

All of these comments are completely in accord with the views I put forward during the second reading debate. I have suggested that discussions be held at the Thebarton Police Barracks where there are competent instructors on road traffic provisions. I do not believe radar should be used to detect speeding offences because more competent means are available. I oppose the clause because I believe the use of radar is obnoxious.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I am completely in favour of the use of radar.

Mr. Frank Walsh: It is revenue-producing.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Apart from that, it is the most effective way of catching law breakers. Until a few days ago I had doubts about the use of radar equipment. Last Friday I appeared in the Elizabeth court on behalf of a defendant charged with having broken the speed limit. He was caught in a radar trap. The defence we put up was a novel one but it did not come off and the man was convicted. Whilst there, I had the opportunity to see the equipment tested when the police demonstrated the unit to me. As a result of that I have no doubt about its accuracy and efficacy. The unit is like a big black box with an ordinary battery, and the police set it up on the side of the road with a separate piece of equipment showing a dial or meter face. Two police officers are required to use the unit. One is at the set, and he sets it up with the beam across the road.

When the vehicle goes through the beam the reading is shown on the dial and the needle holds there for 1½ seconds, or sufficient time to get an accurate reading of the speed. The officer then radios the other officer who is 200 or 300 yards down the road and he stops the vehicle.

On the black box are two switches used to test the accuracy of the machine and, by flicking a switch, one can see whether it is accurate at the speed of 40 miles an hour. The police work on the principle that it must be accurate within the bracket 38 to 42 miles an hour. By flicking the other switch one tests its accuracy, because of the built-in mechanism, at 70 miles an hour, and again it is tested for accuracy between 68 and 72 miles an hour. Those tests are done, literally, by the flick of a switch. I was told by the sergeant in charge of the radar unit that it had been operating since March, 1963, and it is tested, not once a day but a dozen or one hundred times a day as they use it. That equipment has been used since March, 1963, and has never been found to be inaccurate during that time. That is the in-built way of testing the equipment by the flick of a switch. Another method of testing, and what would be required under this section before a certificate could be given, is to test it against the speedometer of a motor car. The speedometers of police cars are tested: under section 175 it is permissible to produce a certificate as to the accuracy of the speedometer in a police car. These speedometers can be taken as accurate.

Before the trap is set up a police car is driven through the beam of the radar equipment as set up, with a man with a radio in the car giving the speed of the vehicle as it approaches the other man reading the dial, to ensure that the speed as given over the radio as the vehicle passes through the beam is the speed shown on the radar unit. That test was done for me three or four times, and the learned magistrate who was with me drove his car through it with a police officer in it with a wireless. Every time, that equipment was spot on: there was no doubt about it. That test would have to be done before a certificate could be given, and the only way in which this certificate could be abused would be for the police to be dishonest in giving it. I do not think the Commissioner of Police, a superintendent or an inspector would give a certificate in this case unless he personally was satisfied the test was made. Far from being an abuse of the liberty of the citizen, it is a safeguard because it will ensure that a competent responsible person has made the test before the certificate is given. I believe, from my experience with the police and from what I have seen, that the equipment is foolproof. However, it must be tested in the way I have described before a certificate can be given. I do not agree with what the Leader of the Opposition has said, that this is only used as a revenue-producer. That is a most prejudiced observation.

Mr. Frank Walsh: From your point of view, too!

Mr. MILLHOUSE: No it isn't, because it is so foolproof that few people fight a prosecution based on a radar trap. In last Friday's case evidence was given that the police had received complaints that this strip of roadway had been used by motorists for speeding. It was in the district of the member for Gawler.

Mr. Clark: I can tell you the piece of road, too.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Probably. The police set up the trap: it is a powerful deterrent to people not to speed in that area in the future. We should have more regard for this aspect and I am surprised that the Leader of the Opposition does not have more regard for it rather than for the side which he emphasized, that is, of a revenue-producer. This matter was exhaustively tried out in the courts about 12 months ago in the case of *McNamee v. Norman.* Eldred Norman was charged with having gone through Virginia, I think, at a speed of 47 miles an hour. Expert evidence was called by both sides and the learned magistrate (Mr. Redman) had no hesitation in accepting the accuracy and reliability of this equipment. If any member wants to read the report of the judgment and of the case, he is welcome to borrow my copy. I support the clause.

Mr. DUNSTAN: I join issue with the member for Mitcham as to the conclusions reached in the case of Eldred Norman. The evidence that was given to the court in that case, by experts both for the prosecution and the defence, was that there were three ways in which this equipment could have faults that would give an inaccurate reading. Two of the ways, according to the experts' evidence, could produce a reading that would show fairly quickly to the person in charge of the instrument that there was something wrong with it. These were faults of deterioration that would show up in the in-built checks to which the honourable member has referred. Experts

called from the Weapons Research Establishment at Salisbury gave evidence that this equipment could go wrong without prior warning and without subsequent evidence that it had gone wrong, and that electronic equipment of this kind could go on the blink without discernible deterioration in the equipment. Therefore, it could not be said that on every occasion this equipment, even though tested with the in-built devices, was necessarily accurate.

By defeating this clause we do not make it impossible for the police to use radar equipment in detecting people speeding. All we do is retain the position that previously existed, that this equipment can be used and the result of the test can be given in evidence, but it is evidence in support of the independent evidence of police officers (that may be tested in the normal way of the court) of their estimates of the speed. Indeed, in Mr. Norman's case the magistrate found that the electronic device was, in these circumstances, accurate on this occasion, and he used this fact as strong supporting evidence for evidence of the police officer concerned that his estimate of the speed was that at which Mr. Norman was charged. If the police officer's estimate is to be tested, a document will be produced certifying that the electronic traffic speed analyser was accurate to the extent appearing in the certificate, on the day in question. A further objection to this is that the manufacturer himself recommends more tests than are specified in this clause; he recommends not only tests with the in-built testing device but that immediately before and immediately after a reading there should be a driving through the beam. All this proposes that that shall be done once a day on the day in question, and that once that is done the motorist is faced with *prima facie* proof that the device was accurate at the time. This is on the say-so of a device that is much less safe than the manufacturer himself requires and much less safe (in view of the nature of the electronic equipment) than the manufacturer suggests should be the tests undertaken by the person using the equipment.

Mr. Millhouse: Have you seen the manufacturer's handbook?

Mr. DUNSTAN: No, but I understand that it was quoted in another place during a debate on this clause, and I have seen an extract from it. Recently, in two court hearings in Germany, conclusive proof was given that vehicles were driving at a different speed from that recorded on the radar equipment. The whole question of using this device as completely open and shut proof of the speed went by the board. I do not suggest for one moment that this cannot be a useful device in support of the evidence to be given by police officers, but, in fact, we are now saying it will not be necessary to test the device in the way the manufacturer suggests it should be tested. By saying that it shall be *prima facie* proof, it is putting a heavy burden on the defendant, which is difficult to discharge because he is not in a position to test the equipment himself on the day in question. Since the device can become faulty and since the clause provides for something less than the manufacturer's test, I do not think this is a safe step to take. The radar equipment should be used the same as blood tests are used in supporting clinical tests made by a doctor. We do not say that blood tests are *prima facie* proof of the quantity of alcohol in the bloodstream or of the effect of alcohol on a certain individual. Very often the blood test accurately supports the doctor, but such tests can go wrong, and cases have arisen where the doctor, on clinical examination, has found a man to be only slightly affected, when the blood test has shown a quantity of alcohol in the bloodstream that would cause anybody to be comatose! This clause goes too far.

Mr. Clark: Why do you think this amendment was introduced?

Mr. DUNSTAN: The police officers in charge of the device have simply stated publicly why it should be introduced, namely, because it will make their task rather simpler. They will not be subject to the same examination, as to the use of the equipment, as they are under the present law. Why should they not be subject to examination? It is important that a man have an opportunity to examine the case against him, but this clause would not allow him to test the equipment himself. I am informed that the only really reliable tests of the equipment are those conducted by the Commonwealth authority, but we are not making any provision for that here. If we are not to make either the provisions recommended by the manufacturer or provision for proper tests by the Commonwealth authority, and if we are simply to make it an open and shut business in this way, I think we are taking away the rights of citizens who might genuinely dispute their driving at the speed alleged against them. I cannot see why it should be considered a difficulty for the prosecution to operate under the existing law, which at least allows it to call evidence as to what the

radar device shows and as to what such tests of it reveal on the day in question. In most cases, as I have no doubt the member for Mitcham has found, the prosecution secures a conviction under the present law.

The Committee divided on the clause:

Ayes (18).—Messrs. Bockelberg, Brookman, Coumbe, Ferguson, Freebairn, Hall, Harding, Heaslip, Laucke, McAnaney, Millhouse, Sir Baden Pattinson, Mr. Pearson (teller), Sir Thomas Playford, Messrs. Quirke, Shannon, Mrs. Steele, and Mr. Stott.

Noes (18).—Messrs. Burdon, Bywaters, Casey, Clark, Corcoran, Curren, Dunstan, Hurst, Hutchens, Jennings, Langley, Lawn, Loveday, McKee, Riches, Ryan, Frank Walsh (teller), and Fred Walsh.

Pair.—Aye—Mr. Nankivell. No—Mr. Hughes.

The CHAIRMAN: There are 18 Ayes and 18 Noes. There being an equality of votes, I record my vote in favour of the Ayes. The question therefore passes in the affirmative.

Clause thus passed.

Clause 28 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

BULK HANDLING OF GRAIN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Consideration in Committee of the Legislative Council's amendment:

Page 6, Schedule—Leave out the two lines commencing "Section 19" and ending "in each case".

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Agriculture): The draftsman's explanation of the amendment is that it merely corrects a printing error. If the amendment were not made, the words would be superfluous. I support the amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 8. Page 1364.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): A similar procedure has been adopted to that adopted when the principal Act was introduced in 1962. For example, it was prepared under the direction of the Standing Committee of the Attorneys-General. The Government has had the assistance of the Australian Associated Stock Exchanges, legal, accountancy and secretarial professions, and representatives from finance, insurance and trustee organizations. The Government recognized it as important, complex and difficult legislation, and members of Opposition Parties should have been given opportunities to have been represented at talks and discussions with particular experts in the financial field. When we agreed in 1962 that the principal Act was important and necessary legislation, we also recognized that amendments to it would be necessary from time to time under the recommendations of the Standing Committee of the Attorneys-General, and that is what has occurred on this occasion. Primarily, the amendments are an effort to give increased protection to members of the public who lend money to or deposit money with companies as provided by clause 6 enacting new sections 74 to 74i. The Minister has agreed on the importance and complexity of the legislation, for in the introduction of the Bill he said:

The Bill is extremely important and complex and is designed primarily to afford increased protection to members of the public who lend money to or deposit money with companies in response to invitations issued by those companies to the public. The Bill can be said to be a direct result of the recent disastrous failures of certain corporations which had borrowed from the public large sums of money running into many millions of pounds.

However, I am sure that the Bill introduced into this place does not represent the recommendation from the Standing Committee of the Attorneys-General. I believe the Bill that was introduced in another place did embody the recommendation but the Government members in that Chamber proceeded to remove the fangs from the Bill and, therefore, defeated the very thing that the original legislation was attempting to achieve. The aim of the original legislation was to make information available promptly so that debenture holders could receive reasonable protection for their investment.

The major amendments in this Bill are contained in clause 6 and, in particular, the enactment of new section 74f dealing with the obligations of borrowing corporations, and this is the clause in which the main alterations were incorporated in another place. The new section 74f is a good one, and is designed to give trustees an opportunity to do their job. For example, some trustees are debenture holders and have been unable to perform their duties satisfactorily owing to lack of information available to them. The new section applies particularly to reports on subsidiary companies whose progress or decline vitally affects the security of the debenture holders of the holding company. Subsection (4) provides for the presentation of half-yearly accounts. If it is possible and reasonable for companies to prepare half-yearly

accounts in other States, then it is in South Australia. I know that these provisions were objected to in another place, but those opposed to this kind of legislation appear to be directors that become engrossed in seeking and securing board appointments and naturally the generous fees that go with these appointments. They object to price control and the adjustment of wages. One such honourable gentleman I have in mind is a member of the boards of directors of Advertiser Newspapers Limited, Bennett & Fisher Limited, Executor Trustee and Agency Company of South Australia Limited, G. & R. Wills & Company Limited, South Australian Brewing Company Limited, Wallaroo-Mount Lyell Fertilizers, and the Bank of Adelaide, and perhaps others I may have overlooked. They are the people who take a vital interest in this matter, and apparently they are the same people who defeated the clause to which I have referred.

Mr. Hutchens: In other words, they are just using Parliament.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Yes, and they scream in other directions on other occasions. No doubt the requirement of six-monthly accounts will add to the responsibilities of gentlemen such as this, will increase the amount of work they have to do to keep control of each company and abreast of its affairs, and ultimately may reduce the number of directorships they can safely and effectively handle. Consequently, their biased views, arising from personal interest, should be disregarded by members in this place. Most companies prepare half-yearly accounts in any event in order to make a decision on the payment of half-yearly dividends. It is readily admitted that the preparation of a balance sheet and profit and a loss account requires extra work, but most large well-run companies have accounting systems which minimize the work and continuous audits are in operation. The biggest problem is stock-in-trade, but prudent auditors can satisfy themselves as to whether or not the stock figure in the balance sheet is reliable. In my view, half-yearly accounts, even if not signed by the auditor, and even with an estimated stock figure, are better than having the recent substantial losses imposed on debenture holders. Twelve months is too long a period for a company to run without reviewing and revealing its position and trading trends. In any case, if the half-yearly accounts have been prepared on an estimated stock figure, the auditor could qualify his report on the balance sheet and profit and loss account to that exent. This is already common practice where an auditor is not entirely satisfied. Half-yearly accounts have been accepted as reasonable practice in the other States, and it is a reflection on the boards of directors, the managements, and general efficiency of South Australian companies to suggest that the position is different in South Australia.

Although the Premier has an amendment on file, it will not exactly provide what was contained in the original draft submitted to another place. However, it will certainly restore the principles that were contained in that original draft. Further, I believe the main concern now associated both with the second reading and, for that matter, the proposals obtained by the amendment, is to have as near an approach to uniformity throughout Australia as may be possible. I intended at one stage to ask the House to restore the Bill to the form in which it was originally introduced in the Legislative Council, but, in view of the amendment the Premier has on the file, I do not now intend to do so. I will support the Premier's proposed amendment as well as the second reading.

Mr. McANANEY (Stirling): I, too, support the second reading. No doubt many expert opinions have been gathered to arrive at these amendments and, therefore, one perhaps should hesitate to suggest how the Bill could be improved. However, I make suggestions to the Government regarding an amendment to the Fifth Schedule, portion of which states:

> A copy of a written valuation of the corporation's interest in the land so mortgaged . . . by a person competent and qualified to make the valuation in the place where the land is situated.

This appears to me to be somewhat vague. Just who is a competent and qualified person? Under the South Australian legislation only a person qualified under the Appraisers Act is qualified to value. That Act states that a licence for an appraiser shall be issued to an applicant who satisfies the person issuing the licence of the character and qualifications of the applicant. To obtain a licence, one requires only two references from licensed appraisers, two character references, and some vague qualifications that are not determined by any examination. Also, under the Appraisers Act an auctioneer is exempt even from obtaining these qualifications, and a duly licensed auctioneer may act as an appraiser without taking out a licence under the Act. To obtain an auctioneer's licence one has to apply to the court and, as far as I can gather, the only qualification required is that he be a fit and

proper person to be licensed: he does not necessarily require qualification regarding valuation.

I suggest that the Government consider this part of the clause and prescribe something more definite. The only institute of valuers in South Australia is the Commonwealth Institute of Valuers, and to get a certificate from that institute one must pass nine subjects relating to valuing. In addition, there is an oral test, and one must have had four years' practical experience. Although this might not necessarily be a part of this Act, I maintain that the Government should consider defining "a fit and competent person" to value. In a recent case concerning an olive farm in the South-East a valuer valued the trees in the orchard at £2 each and this resulted in a total valuation of about £2,000,000. At about the same time this same company purchased an area in Victoria that had bearing trees of a greater age for only a fraction of this basis of valuation of £2 a tree. The result of the valuation was that a person who had a £250 deposit in the company received share scrip for a holding of £750. However, within a year the company was insolvent and the shareholders did not get one penny. The Act seems a little loose regarding valuation and I ask that the Government consider tightening up the provisions. Competent and qualified persons should be more clearly defined. I cannot forecast an amendment at this stage, but the Act should say what qualifications are required of a competent valuer.

Another matter, which was stressed in the finance section of the *Sunday Mail* last weekend, concerns the fact that in Australia a director can still be a member of a Stock Exchange. That is not desirable. In the United States of America it is not allowed. In Melbourne recently a company failed in which a director was a member of the Stock Exchange. When the Stock Exchange inquired into the matter it gave a clean sheet because it thought the directors had acted in good faith. Just how the Stock Exchange came to describe that as good faith when the company had not complied with the requests of the Melbourne Stock Exchange is hard to follow. Some improvement could be made to our company legislation, but one hesitates to suggest further control of companies. I had the experience recently of floating a company and know that the issuing of a prospectus and complying with the regulations is a difficult, expensive and exasperating experience.

Another matter was brought home to me by a registered liquidator who had been dealing with David Murray Holdings Limited. He suggested an amendment to the Act which, in my opinion, would be too far-reaching. He suggested describing which companies could act as trustee companies. Banking corporations are covered by the Banking Act and they have reasonable security to act as trustees. New section 74(1)(*e*) provides for a corporation being approved by the Minister for the purposes of the subsection. This man suggested that a company should have a registered company liquidator residing in the State, with complete control of its operations. We could not go so far as to take that out of the hands of the directors, but the fact is that a company can be a registered company in which the secretary needs no qualifications and no accountancy degree. Indeed, he may not have got beyond the seventh grade, yet he can be the secretary of a company and be required to make a statement that the company's books reflect the true position of the company. If we analyse the affairs of the companies that have become insolvent, we find that the secretary and, in most cases, the directors have had no accountancy experience. As long as we permit a person with no qualifications to be the secretary of a company, we are liable to run into difficulties. I ask leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.54 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, October 20, at 2 p.m.