HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, November 13, 1968

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

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

The SPEAKER: I notice in the gallery His Excellency the Ambassador of the Netherlands in Australia, Mr. W. G. Zeylstra. I know it is the unanimous wish of honourable members that His Excellency be accommodated with a seat on the floor of the House, and I invite the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition to introduce our distinguished visitor.

Mr. Zeylstra was escorted by the Hon. R. S. Hall and the Hon. D. A. Dunstan to a seat on the floor of the House.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: LICENSING BILL

Mr. CLARK (Gawler): I ask leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr. CLARK: Yesterday afternoon I was denied the opportunity of hearing the member for Light (Mr. Freebairn) speak on the Licensing Act Amendment Bill which, of course, as my colleagues have suggested, was my good fortune. I understand (and I have checked with *Hansard*) that during his speech the member for Light said:

One of my favourite Labor members in this House is the member for Gawler, a senior and respected member. When speaking to the Bill designed to lower the drinking age to 18 years, on page 1576 of *Hansard* he said, "The Attorney-General is a brilliant young man."

I fully agree with the honourable member's description of me as a senior and respected member, but his quotation of my words is completely inaccurate. What I said, as reported on page 1576 of *Hansard,* was:

The Attorney-General is a brilliant young man, according to his colleague for Light.

This is quite different. Whilst I have no desire to debate the brilliance or otherwise of the Attorney-General (I have my private opinion on that), I wish to correct the misquotation made (I am sure, accidentally) by the member for Light.

QUESTIONS

NURIOOTPA HIGH SCHOOL

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: For some years past I have made representations to various Ministers of Education in connection with constructing a new solid-construction high school building at Nuriootpa, and I have also introduced a number of deputations on the subject to the various Ministers. In September last, the Minister of Education was good enough to visit the Nuriootpa High School to make an inspection of the building and the numerous wooden classrooms erected there since 1937. On the same occasion, I introduced a deputation that urged that early consideration be given to the building of solid-construction additions at the high school. Will the Minister say what consideration has been given to the submissions made by the deputation introduced by me last September?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: As I promised when I visited the Nuriootpa High School in September, to which visit the honourable member has alluded, I have examined the case presented for the provision of major solid additions to the school buildings. The case presented notes that in recent years new solid-construction high school buildings have been erected only in areas of new population growth and asks that funds be allotted to the older schools also. This statement accurately reflects the difficulties that have been faced in providing new solid-construction buildings for high schools. It should be noted, however, that a schedule of requirements was prepared on January 6, 1965, for preparation of sketches and estimate for major solid additions to the Nuriootpa High School. During the period since 1964, available funds have been fully taken up by (1) the provision of new high schools and technical high schools in areas that lacked any such schools; (2) the completion of such schools as were built in two stages in order to husband resources; and (3) the consolidation of buildings at schools on restricted sites that could not cope with expected increases in enrolments unless such consolidation was undertaken. The present building rate now makes it possible to contemplate some limited replacement of large numbers of wooden rooms in some schools by more compact solid-construction buildings.

On October 21, Cabinet approved a project for the Nuriootpa High School, the estimated expenditure on which was $132,800 for the erection of both boys and girls craft blocks. The boys craft block accommodation will provide for woodwork room, metalwork room, planning room and staff accommodation, while the girls craft block will consist of a craft room, kitchen and staff accommodation. The approval of this expenditure will enable the planning programme to proceed, and it is

expected that construction will commence this financial year. The schedule of requirements prepared in January, 1965, will therefore be reviewed and recommended for submission to the Public Buildings Department for preparation of preliminary sketches and estimate as a preliminary step to obtaining Cabinet approval for reference to the Public Works Committee. Major solid-construction additions for the Nuriootpa High School can then be considered for possible inclusion in a school-building programme.

SILO STORAGE

Mr. McKEE: Has the Minister of Lands a reply to the question I recently asked about silo storage?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The Minister of Agriculture states:

In reply to the honourable member's question regarding the zoning and a quota system for wheat deliveries, it will be necessary before any action could be taken by the bulk handling authority for three things to happen: first, a request by the industry that it desires such a scheme to operate; secondly, an amendment to the Bulk Handling of Grain Act; and thirdly, legislation currently before the Commonwealth Parliament and legislation before this Parliament dealing with the wheat stabilization scheme must be passed before any amendment could be effective. I understand a meeting of representatives of graingrowers will be held tomorrow in Adelaide and a meeting of Directors of South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited will be held on Friday of this week, when this matter will be discussed. If, as a result of these meetings, an approach is made to me I will confer with Cabinet urgently on the matter.

SEED CERTIFICATION

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Has the Minister of Lands obtained from the Minister of Agriculture a reply to my recent question about the shortage of personnel for seed certification?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The Minister of Agriculture has forwarded the following memorandum of the Acting Director of Agriculture:

It is expected that the 1968-69 season will be an unusually busy one for the staff responsible for seed certification, and some concern has been felt regarding our ability to meet requirements in view of the staff vacancies which existed. However, recent events have substantially improved the position. Two officers (Mr. G. Cooper and Mr. I. Simmons) have been appointed to fill two vacancies, and it is most probable that Mr. P. Letheby, who at the time of his resignation last January was our most experienced seed certification officer, will shortly be appointed on a temporary basis. It is now considered that the staff will be able to handle the volume of work anticipated.

ORDERS OF THE DAY: OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. BROOMHILL (West Torrens) moved:

That consideration of Orders of the Day Nos. 1 to 6 be postponed and taken into account after consideration of Order of the Day No. 7.

The SPEAKER: Can the honourable member give an assurance that he has the concurrence of the members in charge of Orders of the Day Nos. 1 to 6?

Mr. BROOMHILL: Yes, Sir, I have spoken to each of those members.

Motion carried.

CHOWILLA DAM

Adjourned debate on motion of Mr. Hudson:

That this House:

(*a*) reaffirms the resolution passed unanimously in 1967, viz.—"That the State of South Australia has a fundamental and legal right to the construction of the Chowilla dam without further delay, and that assurances must be given by the Governments, the parties to the River Murray Waters Agreement, that pending construction of the dam South Australia will be supplied in dry years with the volume of flow of water which the dam was designed to ensure.";

(*b*) regards the actions of the present Government in withdrawing instructions given by the previous Government to South Australia's Commissioner to vote against any deferment or indefinite postponement of Chowilla, and creating a serious conflict with the Commonwealth Minister of National Development as inconsistent with the resolution and contrary to South Australia's interests; and

(*c*) calls on the Government to take those actions necessary to assert South Australia's fundamental and legal right to the Chowilla dam in line with the 1967 resolution—

which the Minister of Works had moved to amend by striking out all the words after "House" and inserting in lieu thereof "supports the action taken by the Government to secure for the people of South Australia the benefits of the Chowilla dam proposal".

(Continued from October 2. Page 1598.)

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE (Attorney-General): During the course of this debate and for a long time in this Parliament and

elsewhere in the community many hard things have been said about the action or lack of action by successive Governments and others with regard to the Chowilla dam proposal. I do not intend to canvass any of those things now, as they have been canvassed at great length, but I think it is fair to say that fundamentally we are all agreed on two things, and when I say "we" I mean the members of this House and of another place and the community generally in South Australia. The first of those things is that our State cannot expand and develop in the future unless it has an assured supply of water of good quality. Unlike the other States of Australia, we are dependent for that supply increasingly and already largely (as I will show) on the supply of water from the Murray River system. To show our utter dependence on that supply, I point out that, in the last financial year, 79.3 per cent of all water consumed in the metropolitan area of Adelaide was pumped through the Mannum-Adelaide main, and between 82 per cent and 83 per cent of all water consumed in the northern areas of the State was pumped from Morgan.

The second thing on which we agree is that the Chowilla site is the best to give South Australia the benefits it must have if this development and expansion is to proceed in the future. The reasons for this were set out at length by the Minister of Works and have been canvassed by other members in this debate. They are set out (and I intend to quote only briefly) in the statement of proposals for further storage on the Murray River issued by the River Murray Commission in September this year. This is a reference to the work of the technical committee in 1961:

The technical committee have supplied a report giving details of its findings, following an investigation of the then-known and likely future water resources of the River Murray system. The report related these resources to the Chowilla proposal and set out in tabular and graphical form anticipated benefits of Chowilla storage and the various methods of control and water usage. During the course of its investigations, the technical committee examined the effect of additional storages of various capacities above Hume reservoir, in order to determine if benefits greater than those of Chowilla could be obtained for a comparable expenditure from an Upper Murray storage. This 1961 investigation showed that, on the basis then adopted, Chowilla, as a River Murray Commission storage, would, for an equal expenditure, provide greater overall benefits than storage above Hume reservoir.

We believe that that is still the position, but the view taken in South Australia is not, unfortunately, shared in the other States concerned (Victoria and New South Wales), nor does it seem to be shared by the Commonwealth Government, the other partner in the River Murray Commission. Indeed, as all members know, alternative proposals are being considered at present and it is expected that the River Murray Commission report dealing with the questions of salinity, a hydrological study of the river, and the costs and benefits of an alternative site at Dartmouth is due to be received in December. Sir, besides the actions that have been taken by the Government, and by the Opposition when it was in Government, in this matter, a Chowilla Dam Promotion Committee has been set up in this State. That is a representative committee, presided over by Mr. Dridan and comprising members of both political Parties in both this Parliament and the Comonwealth Parliament. That committee met last Friday.

I intend to move a further amendment to the motion, and I assure the House that this amendment has the support of members of the Chowilla Dam Promotion Committee. I believe that it will have the support of all members of this House. The first purpose of the amendment is to emphasize our South Australian view that Chowilla would give this State, more than would any other site, the benefits that we must have if our expansion and development is to continue, whereas the alternative site at Dartmouth is open to very grave doubt.

The second purpose of the amendment is to ask all South Australian members of both Houses of the Commonwealth Parliament to support us in our belief and in the actions that we take to obtain for this State the construction of the Chowilla dam. I hope, indeed, that those members will not take amiss this urgent request to them. I hope that they will accept, as we accept, that, whilst they are members of the Commonwealth Parliament, they are also South Australians, they are elected by South Australian electors, and they have a duty to this State in all things. In particular we are now turning our attention to this matter of Chowilla, which is of such tremendous importance to our future. For the foregoing reasons, I move:

To strike out all words after "House" and insert "considers that the State of South Australia has a fundamental and legal right to the construction of the Chowilla dam without

delay and calls on all South Australian members in both Houses of the Parliament of the Commonwealth to support South Australia's case to the utmost".

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Leader of the Opposition): I support the amendment. Whatever has been said in the debate about who has done what in relation to Chowilla, one fact remains: it is essential for South Australia to have the dam, and for all South Australians to unite in fighting to get it. I know that perhaps there has not been much enthusiasm for Chowilla recently in the two other States that are members of the River Murray Commission but, at the same time, as Premier of the State I found little opposition in Victoria or New South Wales to proceeding with the project, provided that the Commonwealth Government was prepared to play its part. The major difficulty I found was with the Commonwealth Government: in fact, the excuse offered by the Minister for National Development that we would get a better guaranteed water supply from some other facility. But how can any South Australian be impressed by a proposition that puts the guarantee of water in some other storage six water-weeks away from South Australia? It is impossible, in those circumstances, to have the kind of guarantee for South Australians that Chowilla would provide. Indeed, there is no other facility that could provide South Australia with the guarantee to which it is entitled under the River Murray Waters Agreement through the provision of the Chowilla dam.

The advice to our Government and to the present Government has been that the Chowilla dam is possible as far as the engineering is concerned; that the doubts that have been raised in relation to salinity factors can be resolved adequately; and that this is the only way we can be sure that in a dry year (that is, in a year of restriction) South Australia will get its normal flow of water. South Australia has already more than committed the normal flow of water in the Murray River and, if faced with restrictions, South Australia may well lose some of its permanent plantings and be faced with an adverse effect industrially. We are the driest part of the driest continent. At present, we have enough water to get by, but if we are to develop we must have the dam.

There is no difference among members in this House on this score. Every member is concerned to see that we get the dam, but the major obstacle to our getting it is the attitude of the Minister for National Development, who is also the Chairman of the River Murray Commission. The things he has seen fit to say time and time again both inside and outside of the commission must have given every member of this Parliament, and every member of the Commonwealth Parliament who represents this State, grave cause for alarm. It must be brought home to the Minister by every member of the Commonwealth Parliament elected from this State that South Australia has a fundamental legal and moral right to the dam and that it is essential that the Commonwealth Government provide it. If there is anything that members on this side can do to unite with other members elected from this State, either to this House or to the Commonwealth House, to impress that on him and on other members of the Commonwealth Government, we are prepared to do it. It is with pleasure that I support this amendment, and I do so with the unanimous support of members on this side.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE (Minister of Works): As I am prepared to withdraw my amendment so that the member for Glenelg may exercise his right of reply, I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Leave granted; the Hon. J. W. H. Coumbe's amendment withdrawn.

Mr. HUDSON (Glenelg): In supporting the Attorney-General's amendment, I place on record my view that the original motion was certainly mistaken in one important respect, at least. The position of the Commonwealth Minister for National Development in the last three months has made it clear as to the role being played by this Minister, who is also the Chairman of the River Murray Commission and the Minister in charge of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority, which is currently investigating the Dartmouth site on the Mitta Mitta River. I make it clear that the allegation of a serious conflict with the Commonwealth Minister for National Development (and the implication that it should not be created) contained in the original motion has now been demonstrated to be mistaken. As I believe that where a mistake has been made it should be admitted, I now freely admit that. I think that the Leader and other members have made it clear that we have to get across to the Commonwealth Government, and particularly to the Minister for National Development, how we in South Australia consider the importance of the Chowilla dam to the future development of South Australia. It is for

this reason, and also because of the need to take united action in this matter, that I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse's amendment carried; motion as amended carried.

The SPEAKER: As the honourable member has replied and closed the debate, I think it would not be a breach of Standing Orders if I made it perfectly clear that this resolution has my full support, and that makes it completely unanimous.

NATIVE PLANTS PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 6. Page 2272.)

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Lands): Since speaking in this debate last week I have had further discussions and, as I pointed out then, a proclamation is to be made to name the Sturt pea as a protected plant. Why, then, should this debate continue? Last week I said that I had spoken to the Director of the Botanic Garden, who was preparing a report for me on native plants. I have now received from him an interim report in which he suggests that all native plants should be protected throughout the State, that is, on public lands, on roads, and on other areas referred to in this Act. Should that be done it could be done by proclamation, but there seems to be a doubt about whether this would be satisfactory.

It may be necessary to specify each native plant by name. I have not had time to obtain an opinion from the Crown Solicitor's Department, although I have spoken to officers of that department on the telephone. This matter would take some time to consider and in any case the whole question of whether native plants should be proclaimed should be further considered, in order to allow various organizations to express their views. It is not suggested that any action could be taken today. In these circumstances it would be sensible neither to pass nor to defeat this Bill because, as it is on the Notice Paper, it could always be revived during the session so that it could be amended. The member for Stuart, by introducing this Bill, has drawn attention to the problem concerning the Sturt pea and the other native plants. Having discussed this matter with him, I am sure that he agrees with me that at this stage it would be better if the Bill were to remain on the Notice Paper. Therefore, I ask leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from November 6. Page 2276).

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Leader of the Opposition): In replying to this debate last week, I complained about views expressed by the Attorney-General, and I am pleased to say that, having had a look at the file today, I have observed that my complaint has been heard, and I appreciate that. As it now seems that we can get somewhere with this measure, I think I should say no more about the matter and let the Bill pass its second reading.

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Leader of the Opposition) moved:

That it be an instruction to the Committee of the whole House on the Bill that it have power to consider amendments relating to the presence of barmen and barmaids in bars after lawful trading hours.

Motion carried.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—"Wine licence in gallery or museum."

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE (Attorney-General): I move:

In paragraph (*a*) to strike out all words after "except" and insert the following:

that if the court is satisfied that by so doing it would promote the sale of wines of good quality produced in this State, it may grant a wine licence in respect of the premises of a *bona fide* museum or art gallery situated in or close to an area of the State in which wine is produced.

I am almost glowing from the burst of amity that has come over this House both on the last motion and now on this Bill. I certainly always heed the words of my friend the Leader of the Opposition, and I always try to meet him if I can. The result is that on this occasion we have almost recast his Bill, but I am happy that these provisions which, as I said, I would have included in the forthcoming Bill, should proceed at this time, and if this gives the Leader some kudos, well, that is no doubt a good thing, by his standards anyway.

Mr. Casey: By your standards, too?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I am perfectly reasonable: it is good by my standards as well.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I am happy to accept the amendment, which I think is a real improvement.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I am delighted that the Leader is prepared to accept my amendment thus, of course, emphasizing the correctness of what I said of his Bill last week. The amendment recasts the Leader's proposals relating to the granting of licences for *bona fide* museums or art galleries. The subsection thus empowers the court to grant a licence, and makes it clear that the area referred to in the subsection must be an area in which wine is produced.

Amendment carried.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I move:

After paragraph (*a*) to insert "and"; and in paragraph (*b*) to strike out all words after "inserting" and insert the following:

after subsection (3) the following subsection:

(4) A wine licence shall not be granted under subsection (2) of this section unless the court is satisfied with the suitability of the premises in respect of which it is sought and any such licence renewed after the expiration of five years from the commencement of the Licensing Act, 1967, shall provide that any liquor consumed on the premises shall be consumed with substantial food.

The Leader's amendment to subsection (3) is inappropriate because that subsection is designed to deal with wine licences that were granted under the old Act and continued in force under the new Act. Subsection (3) thus provided that a wine licence could be renewed for five years after the commencement of that Act but thereafter it could not be renewed unless the court was satisfied as to the suitability of the premises. Of course, if a new licence is to be granted, the court should be satisfied with the suitability of the premises before that licence is granted. Consequently, the latter amendment inserts a new subsection providing that the court must be satisfied with the suitability of the premises in respect of which the licence is granted under subsection (2), and the latter portion of subsection (3), namely, the provision that after the expiration of five years liquor can be consumed in pursuance of a licence only when accompanied by substantial food, is repeated.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Although I am happy to accept these amendments, I gently point out to the Attorney-General that the amendments I am accepting, in fact, repeat a certain number of things to which he took signal objection last week.

Amendments carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 3—"Letting of permitted club premises."

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I move:

In new subsection (7) after "Act" first occurring to insert "or at common law".

This amendment repairs the deficieny in the Leader's amendment by providing that nothing in the Act "or at common law" shall be construed as prohibiting the letting out of club premises. The verbal inaccuracy of the Leader's new subsection (7) will be rectified by leaving out "other than periods in respect of which a permit under this section has been granted to the club" and inserting in lieu thereof "during which liquor may not be sold or supplied pursuant to a permit granted under this section". The passage will then read as follows:

Nothing in this Act or at common law shall be construed to prohibit the letting out of club premises or any part thereof on occasions during which liquor may not be sold or supplied pursuant to a permit granted under this section, etc.

The confusion that the Leader's amendment exhibits between the period that is the term for which a permit is granted, and the times during which liquor may be supplied pursuant to the permit, is provided for.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I accept the amendment, but I do so with a certain amount of worry. I do not see why the words "common law" have been used: I should have thought that, more appropriately, the amendment should read "at law". Common law is a term of art and I should have thought that the easiest way to cover the matter raised by the Attorney-General previously would be to insert the words "at law". However, I do not suppose too great a problem will arise, and I am not prepared to make an issue of this.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: As always, I take cognizance of what the Leader says. I will consider the point he has made and, if it is necessary, perhaps we can seek co-operation in another place. I point out that, if the phrase were simply "or at law", this could be construed to cover Statute law as well. To cover the point I made last week, I think the words "common law" are more suitable. However, we will consider the matter.

Amendment carried.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE moved:

In new subsection (7) after "occasions" first occurring to strike out "other than periods in respect of which a permit under this section has been granted to the club" and insert "during which liquor may not be sold or supplied pursuant to a permit granted under this section".

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 4—"Letting of licensed club premises."

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I move:

After "Act" second occurring to insert "or at common law".

The reasons for this amendment are the same as those I gave in relation to a similar amendment to clause 3.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 5—"Defence of under-age drinking."

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I should like this clause deleted because it will be rendered unnecessary by the insertion of new clause 2a.

Clause negatived.

New clause 2a—"Permits."

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I move to insert the following new clause:

2a. Section 66 of the principal Act is amended by inserting after the word "years" being the last word of subsection (10) the passage "but it shall be a defence to a charge under this subsection if the person charged proves that he had reasonable cause to believe that the person to whom the liquor was supplied was of or above that age".

This new clause establishes a defence under section 66 of the Act where liquor has been supplied to a person under the age of 21 years (as the Act stands at present) if the holder of the permit had reasonable cause to believe that the person to whom the liquor was supplied was of or above that age. This is the amendment which the Leader has attempted to make in section 153 but, of course, it is more appropriate in section 66.

New clause inserted.

New clause 4a—"Definition of 'excepted persons'."

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I move to insert the following new clause:

4a. (*a*) Section 158 of the principal Act is amended by striking out the passage "living or staying on the premises" after the word "licensee".

(*b*) Section 126 subsection (2) of the principal Act is amended by striking out the passage "living or staying on the premises" after the word "licensee".

The difficulty that has cropped up is that anyone other than an excepted person or someone who is otherwise permitted under the Act cannot be in a bar-room at a time other than during lawful trading hours. In fact, this means that, unless all the servants of the licensee are living or staying on the licensed premises, they may not be in the bar-room during the time when patrons are authorized to be there after closing time at 10 p.m. At the time when the barman would normally be saying, "Would you please drink up because before long you will have to leave?", unless he is an excepted person, that barman may not be there then or during the cleaning-up period. The licensee, members of his family or those living on the premises would be the only persons entitled to be in the bar-room during that period. Unfortunately, there have now been a certain number of barmen lumbered merely because they were in the bar after 10 p.m. but during the time that patrons are still authorized to be there or during the cleaning-up period. Although this is unfortunate, the provision is there, and some members of the Police Force, having caught up with it, have taken action in relation to it.

The difficulty arises from the definition of "excepted persons". Only excepted persons are entitled to be in the bar-room other than during lawful trading hours unless otherwise officially exempted under the Act as customers of the hotel (who are there during the period when they may drink their liquor after it has been served during normal trading hours). The definition of "excepted persons" includes the licensee, any member of his family living or staying on the premises, a *bona fide* lodger, or a servant of the licensee living or staying on the premises. Of course, this definition stems from the time when it was more often than not the case that all servants of the licensee lived or stayed on the licensed premises. However, with the development of modern hotel facilities, only a few of a licensee's servants live or stay on the premises. It is necessary that the licensee have those servants clean up the premises or ask patrons to leave at closing time, yet at present he may not do that. I do not think that by leaving out the reference to living or staying on the premises we are opening up a great loophole that will enable people to be on premises after hours. The Act still places an onus on a person to prove that he is a *bona fide* excepted person. I think this a sensible amendment that will obviate the trouble that has occurred.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I am flying rather blind on this amendment, because the Leader gave me a draft of it only a short time ago. As far as I can see, the substance of the amendment is all right. What he has said makes good sense to me and I cannot think of any other factor that we should consider.

Mr. Lawn: What he says always should commend itself to you.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: What he says should always commend itself to me, but it does not. I wish it did.

Mr. Lawn: It should.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: It should. I do not want this amity to come to an end but I am afraid that, in this case, the Leader's drafting sense has deserted him again. Obviously, from a drafting point of view, because he is amending two sections of the Act (sections 158 and 126), it is preferable that there should be two separate new clauses.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: There are two paragraphs to this.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: What is even more important, and I hope that the Leader will not mind my reflecting on his drafting ability in this way—

Mr. Lawn: Would you like to seek legal advice?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: No, I am competent to express an opinion on this. For some strange reason, the Leader has put the amendment to section 158 before the amendment to section 126, which is quite illogical. However, having made those reflections, I suggest to him that if he would like our help (and he obviously needs it) he should give me a little more notice of his amendments. I am prepared to let the amendment go.

New clause inserted.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

OPTICIANS ACT REGULATIONS

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr. Broomhill:

(For wording of motion, see page 2276.)

(Continued from November 6. Page 2278.)

The Hon. R. S. HALL (Premier): There seems to have been some hesitation on the part of the member for West Torrens (Mr. Broomhill) in regard to his motion, because it was on the Notice Paper for one week or two weeks and was then adjourned from week to week. I thought he would not proceed with the motion, because the amended regulation was fairly simple, as he said, and followed representations by the Australian Optometrical Association Incorporated (South Australian Branch) about advertising. As the honourable member has clearly said, the present regulation prohibits advertising by an optician but does not prohibit advertising for an optician. I have received the following letter from Mr. Knight (President of the association):

Regulation 36 deals with the subject of advertising by opticians. The effect of the proposed amendment is to close a gap which has been exposed in the wording of this regulation. At the present time, the regulation (in effect) prohibits any certified optician (which words in this letter include any person or company by whom a certified optician is employed or is about to be employed) from advertising, "for the purpose of obtaining or inviting patients for optical treatment or examination", but does not prohibit the "permitting" or "allowing" of those same acts by any other person or body. This is an anomaly which, undoubtedly, was not intended by the framers of the regulation or by the spirit of the regulations generally. The fundamental principle involved is that members of any qualified profession should not advertise for the purpose of commercial gain. It is not a matter of cutting the optician off altogether from the public, because subsection 5 of the regulation specifically allows certain prescribed notices to be inserted in the professional notice column of any daily or weekly newspaper and this regulation is being retained.

What the amendment is designed to achieve is a complete prohibition of advertising for commercial gain, whether the advertising is done by the optician or whether it is carried out by some other person or body which is associated with or in any way refers persons on to a particular optician. What is prohibited from being done by entry through the front door should be prohibited from being carried out by means of entry through the back door. The Board of Optical Registration, set up under the Opticians Act, prescribes certain courses of study, comparable with world-wide standards, and certain universities in Australia conduct examinations which must be passed before a person can qualify as a certified optician. As in any profession, there is also a certain code of conduct which is designed to maintain the highest possible standards of service to the public and my association is keen to keep this at the highest possible level. The effectiveness of all this and the protection to the public are substantially negatived if an important factor for survival as an optician is successful advertising. My association represents the vast majority of certified opticians in this State who believe that advertising, whether it be carried out directly by an optician or indirectly by it being permitted or allowed, is not in the best interests of the public, let alone opticians generally. Advertising by medical practitioners, dental surgeons, veterinary surgeons, legal practitioners and other professional persons is controlled by similar (and in some cases more stringent) restrictions to those now sought by the proposed amendment. So also is advertising by opticians in some other States and New Zealand. South Australia should demand a similar standard of professional conduct by opticians, and therefore, my association strongly urges members to vote in favour of the proposed amendment to regulation 36 of the regulations under the Opticians Act.

The argument advanced by the member for West Torrens is interesting. He seems to consider it wrong to advertise, except in this case. After referring to the original regulation and the amending regulation that we are discussing, he said:

On the surface this seems to be a fairly innocent sort of alteration to the regulation. All members appreciate that it is common in the medical, dental and legal professions to have prohibitions, for ethical reasons, against advertising by people in those professions. There is no need for me to go into detail about the reasons for these prohibitions.

He continued:

We should not observe these prohibitions in this case.

That statement needs a good deal of justification, but I cannot find any justification in the honourable member's argument. He said that if the Government genuinely wanted to prevent discounts being given it should take some other steps, but the Government is not making this regulation to prohibit discounts, nor has it any intention of doing this. It is the aim of this regulation to put all opticians on the same footing.

Mr. Broomhill: Are you suggesting that some opticians have been advertising, contrary to this Act?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I will not have words put into my mouth. I am examining the honourable member's argument when he said, "We should observe these rules of conduct except in this case." Why should some opticians have the privilege of having advertising conducted on their behalf and others not be able to have advertising conducted on their behalf and be left out in the cold? That is the justification he should give the House, but he has failed to give it. That is why the regulation has been amended. The new regulation does not aim to protect any individual: it has been designed in compliance with the request of the vast majority of certified opticians who want to protect their industry and the individuals in it.

The honourable member has said that there should be an exception in this case, but I see no justification for that. We must be fair to all: if we are going to have prohibitions and restrictions at the request of an industry, we should see that they apply to all concerned. Why should some people be excepted from such rules? I refer the member for West Torrens to a letter that I think all members have received. I spoke to a member of this association at a social function shortly before the letter was sent. I said, "I suppose you know what the regulations are. What is your opinion of them?" He said, "I did not think they were as current as this, but I strongly support the regulations that are going through." Obviously, this member had spoken to his association and, as a result, I received this letter.

Mr. Riches: Are you suggesting that they don't advertise for commercial gain?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: They are all on the same footing, on the basis of what they may do themselves.

Mr. Hurst: It's an outright monopoly.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Is the member for Semaphore suggesting that this association should be broken down if it is a monopoly, as he calls it? Who is the monopoly—those who advertise commercially on their own behalf, or those who do not? The member for West Torrens has not proved that there should be an exception. He has used one or two practical references to involvements at present, but the motion is not justified as it stands. It does not have the backing of the opticians themselves, nor does it comply with the general rule that one should apply to such organizations: that one must be fair to all. As no recommendation for disallowance has come from the Subordinate Legislation Committee, the motion is only the personal opinion of the member for West Torrens, and I therefore oppose it.

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER (Angas): I oppose the motion. This regulation was placed before the Subordinate Legislation Committee before its disallowance had been moved for in the Chamber, so no decision had been reached by the committee. However, I consider that the motion for disallowance should be opposed for a number of reasons. The Association of Opticians in South Australia has apparently requested that regulation 36 should be amended so that it can, in its amended form, effectively control advertising by persons registered under the Opticians Act. Some associations in this State (indeed in Australia) believe in certain ethical standards, at least within their own profession. I refer to the medical practitioners and the legal practitioners. In such cases, it is not in order for a member to advertise. If he did advertise, he would immediately get into difficulty with his association. Indeed, there are provisions of similar effect to regulation 36, as it is proposed to be amended, in the Medical Practitioners Act. The Dental Code regulations have similar provisions, as do the Veterinary Code regulations of this State,

the regulations under the Optometrists Act of New South Wales, the by-laws under the Opticians Act of Queensland and the Practising Opticians Regulations of New South Wales.

From information supplied by the Registrar of the Board of Optical Registration, I believe that most opticians practising in South Australia accept the fact that the regulations mean they should not advertise through a second party. That is what has happened hitherto. If this regulation operates, this will no longer be possible. The Registrar also stated that the amendments to regulation 36 had been referred to the professional association of opticians in South Australia, the Australian Optometrical Association of Australia (South Australian Division) Incorporated, that the association had advised that the amendments were considered to be a forward step in the direction of proper and ethical standards within the profession, and that they had the full support of the association.

In addition, the amendments to regulation 36 provide for two other matters: first, they provide for a slight increase in the registration and renewal of registration fees from $8.40 to $10; and secondly, the other important amendment to regulation 36 deals with reciprocity between the various States of the Commonwealth. If this regulation is not disallowed, it will permit the registration in South Australia of opticians qualified in Queensland. At present, I understand that there is reciprocity among the optical boards in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia, but not between South Australia and Queensland. In 1966, a new optometry diploma course of three years' full-time study was commenced at the Queensland Institute of Technology, and the first diplomates will complete the course at the end of 1968. The Queensland Board of Optometrical Registration has agreed to recognize this qualification for registration purposes. The South Australian board has examined the content of the Queensland course and is satisfied that the standard to be attained by diplomates is adequate to be registered to practise optometry in South Australia. The South Australian board has corresponded with the optical boards in New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia, the States in which reciprocity exists at present, and each State has made or is making an agreement with Queensland similar to that recommended by our board. In view of these facts, and after considering matters to which the Premier referred, I, too, oppose the motion.

Mr. HURST (Semaphore): I have the same opinion as that of most fair-thinking persons and support this motion, because the regulation is unnecessary and is specifically designed to attack a particular person. The Premier did not mention any specific case where these regulations had been breached. Often we have been told that an Act or regulation is useless unless it operates. The present regulations are ample, and no-one has given any valid reason why they should be altered. Trade unions, as well as the Housewives Association and other organizations, have informed their members where these concessions are available. I am wearing a pair of spectacles bought in this manner and I am not ashamed of doing so. The optician whom this alteration is designed to catch does not advertise himself: trade unions inform members where the service is available. He does not pay for any notice, because his reputation is high and people appreciate his work and service. If this motion is defeated nothing will prevent trade unions from advertising in their journals that concessions are available, the details of which members can obtain by ringing the office: this is done now. It seems that people are not opposed to advertising provided that those who wish to advertise follow the directions given to them. I am surprised at Government members trying to justfy this conscript regulation: they talk about freedom of the individual and freedom of movement. A letter from the Australian Optometrical Association states:

It is not a matter of cutting the optician off altogether from the public, because subsection 5 of the regulations specifically allows certain prescribed notices to be inserted in the professional notice column of any daily or weekly newspaper and this regulation is being retained.

Why should this organization be able to say to members of my organization and to other trade union members that they have to advertise in particular papers? The present regulations are not unfair, and nothing precludes Commonwealth organizations from advertising in their journals. This State cannot control what is published in papers in Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland, and most trade unions publish papers in other States. To allow this amendment would contravene section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution, and the Government should realize that. In this morning's newspaper a report states that a company in Western Australia is taking action against that

Government, and this matter should be considered. If the regulation is not effective it should not be allowed, and if it is passed it will do nothing but hamstring people. The Premier has not put forward a single argument why this regulation should not be disallowed. Because this person's business has increased beyond the expectations of his competitors, they have tried to obstruct him on a personal basis. I appeal to members to disallow this regulation, because it will not achieve the result for which it is framed and it will be a breach of section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution. The Attorney-General should fully consider these matters, rather than put the State to the unnecessary expense of lengthy and costly litigation over such a foolish matter.

The House divided on the motion:

Ayes (18)—Messrs. Broomhill (teller) and Burdon, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Casey, Clark, Corcoran, Dunstan, Hudson, Hughes, Hurst, Jennings, Langley, Lawn, Loveday, McKee, Riches, Ryan, and Virgo.

Noes (18)—Messrs. Allen, Arnold, Brookman, Edwards, Evans, Ferguson, Freebairn, Giles, Hall (teller), McAnaney, Millhouse, Nankivell, Pearson, and Rodda, Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Teusner, Venning, and Wardle.

Pair—Aye—Mr. Hutchens. No—Mr. Coumbe.

The SPEAKER: There are 18 Ayes and 18 Noes. There being an equality of votes, I give my casting vote for the Noes.

Motion thus negatived.

AGE OF MAJORITY (REDUCTION) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 2. Page 1579.)

Mr. RODDA (Victoria): This Bill has been on the Notice Paper for some time, and I know that several other members wish to speak to it. As there is urgency relating to this and a number of other matters on the Notice Paper to be dealt with, I will not speak for long. However, I oppose the Bill. I am mindful of the Premier's statement that this matter was considered by Premiers at their last conference, it being emphasized that matters such as this should be considered by the Commonwealth as a whole, and I agree to that contention. The Leader referred to the Latey Report and, acting on what he said, I took the trouble to read the report, which I found to be certainly well worth the effort. I was naturally interested to see that Mr. Geoffrey Howe and Mr. John Stebbings, members of the committee, saw fit to submit a minority report.

Some of us still apparently adhere to the "square" opinion that it may be desirable to think twice before the age of majority is lowered. In view of the importance of private members' business to be considered today (and I fully subscribe to the procedure in our Parliamentary institution allowing private members to bring various matters before the House), I merely indicate my opposition to this Bill.

Mr. LANGLEY (Unley): It is some time since the Leader of the Opposition introduced the Bill (on August 7), and I am sure that its contents have received much consideration in the interim. The Bill's main provisions relate to lowering from 21 years to 18 years the age at which people should have full voting rights and be able to drink and enter into contracts. Since the Second World War, there has undoubtedly been a vast change in the Australian people's way of life. Although none of us wishes to experience wars, the outcome of wars may well lead to better things in education and general living standards. Measures such as this one are of real importance to the people in this State.

We often see students visiting Parliament House these days. However, I doubt whether many present members ever visited Parliament House while they were at school. Students take a great interest in the affairs of the State, and I am sure they are responsible. Many Government members have 10c each way on matters such as these; this was apparent during the debate on lowering the drinking age. I have said before that I favour 18-year-olds being able to enter licensed premises, as I think most people do.

It has been said that South Australia must wait until the other States have introduced these reforms. However, I point out that, in relation to the drinking age, Victoria, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory stipulate 18 years; Western Australia, Queensland and South Australia, 21 years; and Tasmania, 20 years. Therefore, the position is not the same in all the States, although changes may soon be made. In relation to voting, I point out that South Australia was the first State to give women the right to vote. Since then we have reached the position where there are three lady members of Parliament, one of whom is a Minister. I am sure that, when women were first given the vote, no-one

expected that the present position would come about. As we were the first State to give women the right to vote, why should we not be the first to allow people to vote at 18 years? I do not agree with the argument that, because this reform has not been introduced in other States, it should not be introduced here. People between 18 and 21 years are responsible. I know they would look into all the factors associated with voting and use their vote properly. By having the vote, they would be able to play a more active part in the community. Many younger people perform an active role in community affairs now and do much work in various fields. It is no good for members opposite to say that the time is not right to introduce this reform, because if that attitude is taken we will never get anywhere. Young people are conscious of their responsibilities.

I also support the provision to enable young people to enter into contracts, a right that has so far been denied them. At present, these young people must have a guarantor, but they are well able to understand the wording of contracts and to understand what is involved. They should have an opportunity to act for themselves. As I did not want to record a silent vote on the Bill, I have stated why I support it. I hope that South Australia will join with other countries in the world in providing reforms of this type.

Mr. EVANS (Onkaparinga): I oppose the Bill. It is all-embracing, providing for 18-year-olds to enter contracts, vote, drink in licensed premises, and get married without their parents' consent. I believe that, until they are at least 20 years old (and preferably 21), persons wishing to marry should have to obtain their parents' consent. As I intended to speak at length on the Bill, I considered these matters carefully. However, I agree with the member for Victoria (Mr. Rodda) that the Notice Paper should be cleared up a little, and I have therefore decided to leave most of what I have to say until these matters are introduced as separate Bills (as I hope they will be), when there will be a better opportunity for discussion.

Mr. Lawn: You took a different view on another matter last evening.

Mr. EVANS: Last evening I was speaking not to this Bill but to a Bill dealing with a particular topic. If the member for Adelaide is prepared to listen, I will now speak to this Bill. The Latey Committee established in England to inquire into the age of majority reported that marriage was not just a private concern. It stated that the community had a legitimate interest in the stability of marriage as an institution, and I think that is most important. I intend to use figures in relation to England and, in this connection, I point out that the Leader of the Opposition used the English report as the basis for most of his arguments. I will use figures from that report to counter anything he may have put forward. The report showed that, where both partners in a marriage were under the age of 20 years, such a marriage had three times more chance of ending in divorce than a marriage between two people over the age of 20 years. In a marriage where one partner was over the age of 20 years, there was twice as much chance of a divorce as in a marriage where both partners were over 20 years. I do not believe that marriage at an early age is an advantage to the community or to individuals. At 18 years of age I was not mature enough to make a decision about marriage, and I believe that today many young people of that age are not mature enough to make such a decision. The report also states that the greater the temptation for speedy marriage, the greater the need to restrain the impulse, and I have the same view. The report refers to a poll taken of a 16-to-24-years age group (in two sections) on the following questions:

Do you consider that 21 is the right age for (*a*) signing a hire-purchase agreement; (*b*) buying or selling your own house; and (*c*) marrying without parental consent?

The result was as follows:

	Age	
	16-20 percentage	21-24 percentage
Hire-purchase agreements:		
Yes, right age ..	67	77
No, wrong age ..	30	22
Don't know	3	1
Buying and Selling your own House:		
Yes, right age ..	72	70
No, wrong age ..	23	28
Don't know	5	2
Marrying without Parental Consent:		
Yes, right age ..	62	65
No, wrong age ..	35	33
Don't know	3	2

If I am a member when changing the age for obtaining parental consent is considered in this House, I will not vote for any reduction below the age of 20 years. That is one reason why I object to this Bill: it has many implications. Increased costs, especially in exports, could flow from the reduction of the age of drinking, voting, marrying, or signing contracts, because people will say that the young

people are entitled to do all these things but yet are not entitled to the full adult wage. Whether these young people will be sufficiently able physically will not matter: all that will matter will be that they have reached maturity in all other matters covered by the law. I have much more information on the subject and I shall use that when separate Bills are considered. I strongly object to a Bill that embraces so many facets of life.

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE (Minister of Education): I have given much consideration to this Bill since it has been introduced and I did not intend to speak on it until I read in the Melbourne *Age* of Monday last a report of a statement by Sir Philip Phillips, the Royal Commissioner who investigated, and made recommendations to the Victorian Government on, the liquor laws in that State. Sir Philip is now the Chairman of the Victorian Alcoholism Foundation, and I will quote from his statement later. I will speak on only this aspect of the Bill, because I consider that, until uniformity throughout the Commonwealth is achieved, the voting age ought not to be reduced to 18.

It is incorrect to say that, because some people are drinking unlawfully at present, we must conform to the growing illegal practice rather than enforce the present law. At present many young people below the age of 21 years are drinking and, if we reduce the age to 18 years, many below that age will drink. Times are changing and, to a certain extent, I accept that, generally speaking, girls and boys are maturing much earlier. However, many 18-year-olds have not long left school, particularly since so many young people have been staying at school to take advantage of the new non-matriculation courses, the object of which is to give these students, so far as their age and level of maturity permit, a well developed personality with a broad understanding of what they may face on leaving school when they enter the exciting but strange contemporary adult world. The subjects that they study will have relevance to their future life as citizens and adults.

Not all young people, however general the acceptance of the contrary may be, mature at the same rate, because they come from a variety of home environments, which exert varying kinds of influence on them. Today we hear much about permissiveness, which seems to be a fashionable word that covers licence in many things. It seems that, regardless of propriety, the community, because we are advancing, looks at questions of moral and social value from a very different point of view these days. Permissiveness seems to be the yardstick by which attitudes to social practices are judged.

At present 16-year-olds can obtain a driving licence and, although this argument is advanced in support of lowering the minimum age for drinking in hotels, I suggest that the two matters are not as closely related as some people would have us believe. I think most people believe that most young people make good drivers: the earlier a person learns to drive, the better he or she knows how to handle a motor car. However, I ask the House to remember that most accidents, and fatal ones at that, occur in the early-20's age group. Who will say that, if we lower the minimum drinking age to 18 years, we will not add to the toll of road accidents, which has reached alarming proportions already and which all interested authorities are doing their best to reduce? I consider that the lowering of the minimum age for drinking in hotels to 18 years is much more likely to add to the road toll than to reduce it. The report in the Melbourne *Age* to which I have referred is important, because the statement was made by Sir Philip Phillips, who recommended the great changes in Victoria that have led to some other States, including South Australia, following suit. Sir Philip said:

Australians drank too much too soon, the chairman of the Victorian Alcoholism Foundation (Sir Philip Phillips) told the 21st anniversary meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous yesterday. Sir Philip, who conducted the 1964-65 Royal Commission on Victoria's liquor laws, said young people were seeking support from alcohol well under the age of 18—the legal drinking age. Up to now we have treated this matter by chance. We thought it was good enough to pass the responsibility. he said. We have to give these young people some appreciation of the part alcoholic liquor plays in our civilization. This, like other important aspects of our life which are not taught in schools, are things young people have to live with. Sir Philip said he was frightened by the number of teachers who turned education away from problems young people found the most difficult, dangerous and challenging. We must teach what will help young people to live, he said. We must equip them to face unavoidable problems. The more information we can give our young people about alcohol the better they will be equipped to find their own way. We are only slowly beginning to realize we have neglected the study of uses and abuses of alcohol until it has caught up with us in an extremely dangerous form.

Those comments, coming from a man regarded as being an authority on liquor reform, are most important for us to consider in the light of this legislation. I was prompted to speak because I read that statement. As Minister of Education I considered it was perhaps incumbent on me to say, in reply to some of the points raised by Sir Philip, whether or not the schools were approaching this important social and moral problem in the right way. This is one of a number of matters of a social nature which come particularly to a Minister of Education and on which we often seek information from the other States on what they are doing. We are not unique in this regard. Other State Ministers of Education are faced with the same kind of problem. Recently, I received a letter from the Baptist Union, which drew my attention to the effects of alcohol, asking whether a study of these should not be included in the schools' curricula. It might be pertinent if I told the House what is being done in this State to try to equip young people with the knowledge necessary to face up to these problems.

I think I mentioned what the non-matriculation courses in general education are doing for young people in the years immediately prior to their leaving school. In primary schools at present no direct reference is made to alcohol or its effects on the consumer. Teachers are expected to develop in their pupils a sense of the moral values necessary to the community. Moderation and temperance in all matters would be included in the set of desirable moral values. Teaching of such values is most successful when presented incidentally as opportunity occurs. Therefore, these topics are not included as part of the set lessons. There is no formal instruction on the use of alcohol in the secondary schools curricula. This permits schools to have objective discussions on such topics when desirable—and schools make use of such opportunities. Social studies syllabuses give ample opportunity for the discussion of community problems, of which alcohol is one. Alcohol is a subject of study in science courses, and as heads of secondary schools are aware of the need to counter the fashionable cult of social drinking among young people it would be unusual for a teacher not to refer to the social implications of the use of alcohol. It is considered that this method of making children aware of the dangers of the consumption of alcohol is the best way, and it is not desirable to use it as a formal part of school curricula. I believe that is how most State Education Departments deal with the question of helping children face up to some of the social and moral problems they will be faced with after leaving school. Victoria is the only State where this matter is dealt with as a special aspect of social studies.

Mr. Clark: We used to do that in the schools not very long ago.

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: If that is so, it must have been some time ago.

Mr. Clark: About 10 years ago.

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: Now it is dealt with in social studies as a part of a whole range of subjects that have social or moral import.

Mr. Clark: I agree with it.

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: I think the words of Sir Philip are a warning that something must be done to combat the tendency of young people to drink below the legally permitted age. They are permitted in Victoria to drink at 18 years. As the Royal Commissioner in Victoria in 1964-65, Sir Philip is concerned now at the result of the reduction in the drinking age in Victoria. He considers it his duty (and coming from him I think notice must be taken of his opinion) to point out that there are inherent dangers in the reduction in the drinking age. I believe there are, too, and for that reason, and because the comments Sir Philip made were made after he had studied the outcome of three years' operation of the new laws, I felt prompted to make my position clear on this matter.

Mr. HUGHES (Wallaroo): As this Bill has been on the Notice Paper for some time, every honourable member has had ample opportunity to study the Leader of the Opposition's second reading explanation. Having studied the Bill carefully, I find that it contains some good points. While the Bill does not please me in its entirety I indicate to the House that, because of the points that please me, I am hoping the Bill will pass the second reading to enable me to move amendments to certain clauses. The way the Leader explained the Bill showed his great concern for the young people of the State. The views he put before the House are views that have no doubt been obtained as a result of his practical experience with many young people. After reading the Leader's explanation, I was convinced that he had done his homework well. He dealt with the committee's report on the age of majority in Great Britain, quoted extensively from the historical background of

the age of 21, and quoted Holdsworth's *History of English Law*. That work contains many good points which, no doubt, prompted the Leader to use it.

The Bill is too sweeping, and there is one section of the Bill that I dislike very much: the reduction in the age of drinking from 21 years to 18 years. In Committee I will move amendments to the clauses that deal with the reduction in the drinking age to 18 years. Because I am opposed to the reduction in the drinking age to 18 years, I am prepared to compromise, even though certain honourable members take offence at my using the word "compromise", but I feel I am in order in using it because I am a compromising person that likes to listen to both sides of a question before deciding what to do.

Mr. Lawn: You are very fair.

Mr. HUGHES: I should like to think I was.

Mr. Lawn: You are not like certain members of a Select Committee who have already made up their minds.

Mr. HUGHES: No, I am not like a member of a certain Select Committee who indicated that he had already made up his mind about a question and told an inquirer that he had better see someone else.

Mr. Nankivell: You had better get your facts straight.

Mr. HUGHES: I think I have, but I think the honourable member and others do not have their facts straight. I have said that, because young men are called up for military service at 20 years of age and are prepared to sacrifice their lives if necessary in safeguarding this country, they should be considered. We have to examine the question in time of peace and not as though it were wartime.

Mr. Lawn: Our chaps in Vietnam don't say that.

Mr. HUGHES: I have great respect for those who have been called up and forced to go to Vietnam for service. We are not at peace in this country, otherwise our boys would not be forced to go there to fight.

Mr. Broomhill: Would you explain why things are different in time of war?

Mr. HUGHES: I do not think I need do that. Because these people are called up for military service at 20 years of age, we should allow them the privilege of planning their lives. If they are willing to defend this country we should allow them other privileges in various spheres. It has been said that if the permitted drinking age was reduced to 18 years much difficulty would be experienced in determining the ages of some people who were drinking. It has been freely admitted by many members that people of 18 years of age are breaking the law today, and that, if the permitted drinking age were reduced to 18 years, children of 16 years and even 15 years would be involved. I view that result with much concern, as does the Minister of Education. I have had close contact with many young people in schools, and I should hate to think that a large percentage of that age group would be going into a hotel to drink.

If the present law were policed more strictly it would not be necessary for us to be debating this part of the Bill. If young people of 18 years were not breaking these laws today, neither the Attorney-General nor the Leader of the Opposition would have to consider lowering the age of majority. I do not blame any particular section for not policing these laws, but I consider that the Government is as much to blame as is anyone, and not only the present Government. If laws are made they should be enforced so that, as near as possible, they may achieve what they were intended to achieve. According to some members the licensing law is being flouted by people who are 18 years of age. If the Government had been more severe, and more specific in its directions, the Police Force would have been able to carry out those directions, but because the Government of the day was lax, the Police Force, in turn, was lax also.

Mr. McKee: We would not have enough gaols to hold them all if the Police Force always enforced the law.

Mr. HUGHES: I do not agree with that argument. Why are not our gaols overflowing with young people who have driven motor cars under the age of 16 years? We know that there are many driving offences committed, and the number of these and other offences is causing grave concern to many people. However, there is no validity in the argument used by the member for Port Pirie. If the laws were administered as originally intended, there would be fewer problems. I know that some 18-year-olds drink today, but perhaps the member for Port Pirie and other members are partly to blame for this.

Mr. McKee: Will you explain that?

Mr. HUGHES: I will explain it, because the honourable member has not taken steps to see that the Government has directed the Police Force to carry out the job properly.

Mr. McKee: Do you think we should take over the policeman's job?

Mr. HUGHES: No. The honourable member has a full-time job representing the people of Port Pirie (representing them very well, I may say) and if he started to do the job of a policeman he would make a real bungle of the job, as well as letting down his constituents. My quarrel is not with the Police Force but with the Government of the day in not directing the force to administer this law more strictly, ensuring that it is complied with. What is the use of our sitting in this House day after day, often late into the night, making laws if those laws are only to be broken?

Mr. McKee: What should we do about a bad law?

Mr. HUGHES: Amend it.

Mr. McKee: Well, this is a bad law.

Mr. HUGHES: That is the first time I have heard that this is a bad law. It merely needs tightening up so that it may be policed effectively.

Mr. McKee: Do you think there should be prohibition?

Mr. HUGHES: I will not get on to that subject. I indicated earlier that, although there are some good points in the Bill, there is one particularly bad one, which I will take steps to rectify in the appropriate manner if I receive the opportunity.

Mr. VENNING (Rocky River): I rise to speak against the Bill, which seeks to reduce the age of majority, and all that is therein implied, from the recognized age of 21 years to 18 years. As has been said by other honourable members in this House, our young people of today mature earlier now than they matured in the past, but not to the degree that the age of majority should be reduced to 18 years. Although many of our young folk today are more mature than we may have been at their age, they still often lack intelligence and require continued protection and guidance.

Many of the so-called intellectuals of today in the group with which we are concerned are not sufficiently mature to conduct themselves in a desirable manner, let alone being able to make a decision in the governing of the State or in the acceptance of a contract. Unfortunately, some of our places of learning are not helping young people. On September 18 last the following report, referring to a statement made by Sir Mellis Napier, appeared in the *News*:

Universities and the intelligentsia were largely to blame for a fall in the moral values of young people. He accused them of tending towards arrogance in their knowledge. Sir Mellis said the previous discomfiture of the body politic was obvious and came back to the adage that a little learning was a dangerous thing. His criticisms were made before—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is out of order and in bad taste in referring in a debate to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor. Standing Order 149 refers to this.

Mr. VENNING: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If the age of majority had to be lowered, I would support a measure providing that it be lowered to 20 years. I am amazed that the Leader of the Opposition attaches so much importance to discussing the replacement of the present age of majority when so many really important issues should be exercising the minds of members of this House. It seems to me that tactics are playing far too an important role in politics today and that Leaders of Parties are endeavouring to hit the newspaper headlines by being the first to introduce the type of reform legislation contained in this Bill.

Mr. Hudson: Would you say that about your Premier or the Attorney-General?

Mr. VENNING: The member for Glenelg heard what I said. Having passed such legislation, the people concerned leave the aftermath and its complications to the social worker, church organizations and other benevolent societies to care for the victims. I believe it is the duty of Parliament at all times to pass legislation that will be for the betterment of the people of the State, but this Bill does not seek to achieve that objective and is far too embracing. I was rather interested to read in the newspaper the other day a letter written by a W. O. Williams of Port Lincoln which, under the heading, "Drinking Age 'Frustration'" states:

With the under-21 age group in Australia already spending more than $300,000,000 a year on liquor and cigarettes, vandalism is costing us more than $60,000,000 a year. If, as Mr. Dunstan says, the present generation is maturing earlier in life, why not pass legislation to conscript 17-year-olds? In the past two world wars our 18-year-olds proved themselves, and they were not reared on grog and cigarettes, either. I am frustrated for the want of capable and correct-thinking statesmen who will uphold the present legislation and assist the police to enforce the laws which lay down that no intoxicating liquor be supplied to anyone under 21 and that no cigarettes be sold to children under 16. Our Government's duty is to guard and preserve their future, not destroy it.

It is somewhat disturbing to me that this legislation should have been introduced by the Leader of the Opposition; I am afraid of his motives, for far too often one has seen the Leader in action, using his tactics of mass hysteria and urging our young people to demonstrate. We are reminded of the small type in such documents as a contract when the Leader tells these people to demonstrate lawfully. This happened outside the House following the last election, when the Leader and his Deputy addressed many young people, the Leader urging them to demonstrate.

Mr. Corcoran: He did not.

Mr. VENNING: I was there with them.

Mr. Virgo: Tell the truth.

Mr. VENNING: It is the truth. By this means, the Leader is able to sow discontent in the minds of young people at a time when many of them are still at school and should not be confronted with the issues in which the Leader would seek to involve them. Our young people should be permitted to develop in a more peaceful atmosphere. Metaphorically speaking, I believe that the Bill would seek to permit our young people to be thrown to the lions, so that men such as the Leader might further their philosophies regarding Socialism and, if necessary, demonstratism to the degree that has led to violence, unrest and much suffering in other countries.

It is true, as the member for Port Pirie (Mr. McKee) said, that 18-year-olds today make up a large part of the work force. Because of this, there is much money in the hands of our young people. I should have hoped that most of our young people would learn early to acknowledge the parental sacrifice made on their behalf. I should have hoped that they would endeavour in their early years of earning to repay to some degree their indebtedness to their parents for the sacrifices made and hardships suffered by the parents when the children were young. I should have hoped young people would follow that course rather than be encouraged to spend their earnings in what may develop into riotous living, when they can become victims of the "easy come easy go" or "fools and their earnings soon part" adages or of the "eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die" philosophy. I hope there are sufficient experienced statesmen (on this side of the House at least) to save our young people from the follies of young, notoriously inexperienced legislators, conspicuous in this House for their desire for fame. It has also been said that young people between 18 years and 21 years have fought for our country in times of hostility, but it must be remembered that enlistment has been by parental consent.

Mr. Corcoran: By conscription.

Mr. VENNING: If the age of majority is reduced to 18 years, this will then be the upset age for national service and the expected minimum age for universal enlistment for oversea service. It is rather significant that, in Communist countries, young people are drafted for military training at a very early age.

Mr. Clark: What age?

Mr. VENNING: I trust that in the coming years we will not necessarily have changes in this State for change's sake. Finally, as I said previously, I trust that members will not only display the integrity of their position as the representatives of the people of South Australia in this House but also give a lead to the young people of South Australia. I oppose the Bill.

Mr. VIRGO (Edwardstown): I have just heard one of the most reactionary, Tory speeches I have ever heard read; frankly, it would have been more appropriate in mediaeval days. The member for Rocky River is a disgrace to a Party that calls itself "Liberal".

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: Oh!

Mr. VIRGO: If the Attorney-General supports the honourable member's views, then all I can say is that he is just as reactionary and just as Tory in his outlook as the member for Rocky River. I had thought that the Attorney was a little more aware of present-day needs. The member for Rocky River said that he hoped there were sufficient experienced statesmen on his side of the House to defeat the measure. All I can say to that is that we will find out who the statesmen are when the Bill comes to a vote! We will then find out whether members opposite are acting and voting in the interests of the majority of the people of the State, whether they are up to date in their thinking, or whether they are still back in the seventeenth century. I sincerely regret that the honourable member saw fit to make some comments about His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. VIRGO: I do not intend to follow that line of discussion at all, other than to say that I appreciate that you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, pulled up the honourable member. I do not think the honourable member read his speech very well, and I should like to know who prepared it for him.

Mr. McKee: What sort of a man would have prepared it?

Mr. VIRGO: What I have said about the member for Rocky River applies equally to the person who prepared the speech. As I have said, the speech was reactionary and typical of the Tory attitude, which this country has unfortunately had to suffer for a long time. To suggest that the Leaders of the Parties (and he used the plural in both cases) were attempting to hit the headlines by introducing reform measures is typical of the backward thinking of the honourable member. I only hope that other members of his Party are not as backward in their thinking as is the honourable member.

Mr. Corcoran: He will take over as the leader of the backwoodsmen.

Mr. VIRGO: I think he has already taken over. Unfortunately, many members have dealt with only one topic and have used the discussion on this Bill as an opportunity to expound their pet views on whether a person of 18 years should be allowed to have a drink. However, had these members examined the Bill, they would have found that it provides for reducing the age of majority in relation to all things. Surely members who have spoken on only the one topic do not have such one-track minds and are not so narrow-minded that they can think of nothing but the evils of persons of 18 years to 20 years being served with liquor. Ample opportunity is being given on another Bill (which will probably be discussed this evening) for that topic to be discussed.

As I have said, this Bill provides for the age of majority to be reduced in relation to all things. As the member for Rocky River said, people under 21 years are regarded as adults today when they are put into the Army. Let us make it plain: no-one comes along and asks whether parents will consent to their son being put in the Army and sent to Vietnam. No consent is necessary: the marbles come out of the barrel and that is that. Many parents have directly opposed their boys being called up, yet those boys are conscripted. Of course, there are many instances today where a young person is regarded as an adult, even though he is under the age of 21 years. In the Army there are no junior or senior soldiers: if one is in the Army, one is a man, there to do a man's job for which one earns a man's pay. This has been going on for a long time. Many people who went to the First World War were treated as adults, so this is not revolutionary thinking that has occurred overnight. Those who went to that war were regarded as men even at 15 years and 16 years, and they did a man's job.

Mr. Broomhill: Is there a difference between being at peace and being at war?

Mr. VIRGO: No, a person can be regarded as being an adult, irrespective of that. There is no justification for the attitude of the member for Rocky River (Mr. Venning) and other members who have said that young people of 18 years to 20 years are not fit to participate in the election of a Government. What a hypocritical statement that is!

Mr. Hughes: I didn't say that.

Mr. VIRGO: I did not say that the member for Wallaroo had said it, but the member for Rocky River said it. Members opposite will admit that many people over 21 years of age are not fit to participate in the election of a Government. There is a fair example straight across the Chamber from me.

Mr. McKee: To whom do you refer?

Mr. VIRGO: I am referring to members of the Government as a whole: I would not be so unkind as to pick out individuals. No-one would be more aware than would the Attorney-General of what has happened to the type of person with whom he has been involved since he left school at the age of 18 years. He has appeared in the courts for people who he says are not men but who are regarded as men by the laws of this Parliament.

Mr. Ryan: He'd charge them adult rates, too.

Mr. VIRGO: Why can a person of 18 years be an adult for some purposes but a child in other respects? That does not make sense, and the arguments of members opposite do not make sense.

Mr. Hudson: How old do you have to be to be called before the Bar of the Legislative Council?

Mr. VIRGO: I do not know whether there is an age limit but I hope that we never see another sham similar to the one yesterday before the Bar of the Legislative Council, the greatest blot on the democracy of this country. However, I am sure the report in this morning's newspaper of this Kangaroo Court in the Legislative Council yesterday will adequately inform the public of the farcical position that can take place. A person has to be over 30 years of age to be eligible for election, although an elector need only be 21 years. It is time we looked for another section of the community that might put common sense into the Legislative Council.

Mr. McKee: What is this Kangaroo Court?

Mr. Hudson: Is a Kangaroo Court a court of gaolbirds?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Edwardstown.

Mr. VIRGO: I was staggered by the speeches of the Premier and the Attorney-General. The Premier's main objection to the Bill was that it was a dragnet that covered all aspects, whereas those aspects ought to be dealt with individually. This is one of the strangest arguments that could be advanced, because he supported the principle, yet claimed that it should be applied uniformly. What a backward State this would be if we followed that thinking! We are backward in many ways but, thanks to the Labor Government, we have been able to upgrade much of the backward legislation that South Australia has suffered for so long. We will never progress if we adopt a philosophy of not acting until all other States and the Commonwealth have acted.

Mr. Broomhill: We lived long enough like that.

Mr. VIRGO: Yes, and the Labor Government broke through in many instances. Thanks to that Government, South Australia broke the sound barrier by appointing the first woman judge. We did not wait for other States: we set the pattern. Unfortunately, many of the people do not realize that we set the pattern when we gave women a vote. This was the first State in Australia and the second place in the world to do that, and we were not worried about uniformity then. We want to show the other States how to do things. We do not want to be regarded always as the State that follows Victoria, but that is what the present Government is doing.

Mr. McAnaney: We were ahead of them in development until your Government got in.

Mr. VIRGO: If the member for Stirling is genuine in that statement, he will support this Bill, because the age of 18 years applies in the State of Victoria more than it does in South Australia. South Australia has led other States in many other fields. The Labor Government, about which the member for Stirling complains, was the first Government to introduce interim assessment of damages. We were not trailing Victoria in that: we were in front. Who introduced the five-day working week in banks? This is the sort of exercise that the member for Stirling and his colleagues ought to do before beating the drum of uniformity. The member for Stirling must accept responsibility for our having, until the Labor Government came into office in 1965, the worst Workmen's Compensation Act in Australia. No-one on the Government side said that we must be uniform with other States in that matter.

Mr. McAnaney: Everyone who wanted a job had one.

Mr. VIRGO: We did not hear the member for Stirling and other members opposite say, "Let us make the Workmen's Compensation Act uniform." The workers of this State were allowed to lag behind in relation to the so-called Workmen's Compensation Act: this was the last State to give them coverage to and from work. The member for Stirling knows this, and he also knows that if South Australia had not had a Labor Government the workers would still not have coverage to and from work.

Mr. McAnaney: That was part of our 1965 platform.

Mr. VIRGO: The member for Stirling talks about this platform. I should like to see him produce it. The question of uniformity deserves much consideration from other aspects. We have heard various Government members, including the member for Rocky River, say that young people are not fit to participate in the election of the Government of this State.

Mr. Venning: I didn't say that.

Mr. Rodda: He didn't say that at all.

Mr. VIRGO: The member for Victoria has said that the member for Rocky River did not say that. I do not know whether that is an admission by the member for Victoria that he wrote the speech for the member for Rocky River. Someone wrote it. I do not believe that the member for Victoria is the right-wing reactionary who wrote that speech. Regarding voting rights, some Government members have claimed that the principle of reducing the age is good but have said that the Government cannot introduce it unless there is uniformity. That is what the Attorney-General said.

Mr. Venning: He was quite right.

Mr. VIRGO: I am delighted to hear that interjection because, if the Attorney-General was right in saying that we should have uniformity, surely steps must be taken to see that the existing legislation affecting voting is made uniform with that of the other States. For instance, a South Australian who is conscripted into the armed services, who is under 21 years of age, who at any time before the

commencement of the service has lived in Australia as a British subject, and who is outside Australia at the time of the election, is entitled to vote and, furthermore, he is entitled to vote whether or not his name is on the roll. The member for Stirling does not know that. That same person is not entitled to vote in the State elections. Where is the uniformity we hear about from members opposite. He is entitled to vote in a Commonwealth election without being on the roll, but he is not entitled to vote in a State election.

Mr. Corcoran: That is if he is serving overseas.

Mr. VIRGO: Yes, he must be in a war zone. Polling booths are provided for men in the services. This is an example of the inconsistencies that exist in the electoral structure. If we are going to have uniformity of voting, why have we not got and why are we not getting support from members opposite for full adult franchise in the Legislative Council and for compulsory voting?

Mr. Jennings: The Queensland system is the best of all.

Mr. VIRGO: I agree with that, but we cannot get any support for it. Government members say that the age cannot be lowered because it would make South Australia different from the other States, but we are different now.

Mr. Rodda: Of course we are. We have got you.

Mr. VIRGO: That is true, and I am glad that is so. If members opposite were consistent and genuine in their attitude on this matter, they would advocate for a common roll for both Houses of Parliament and a common roll for the Commonwealth Parliament, but we do not get that from them. Voting for a Commonwealth election is compulsory. Enrolment is also compulsory, but that does not apply in the case of State elections. There is no degree of uniformity there, either. Under existing legislation a person of 21, but, if this Bill is passed, of 18, will be able to nominate for the Senate, the House of Representatives and the House of Assembly, but not for that august Chamber next door, for which a person is not considered to be mature until he is 30 years of age, when members opposite think he is ready to start his apprenticeship.

Mr. Corcoran: Andrew Jones could not be a member of the Legislative Council for another seven years.

Mr. VIRGO: That is so. If members opposite advanced the argument that the age of majority should be increased so that the "Andrew Jones" type would not be eligible, there would be some merit in it. I think I have shown that there are sufficient inconsistencies now regarding voting to show clearly that to talk as Government members, particularly the Premier and the Attorney-General, have done by saying that they support the principle of the Bill but that the Government cannot put it into operation until it has uniform application, is pure hypocrisy.

Regarding the drinking age, again this attitude of consistency does not apply, because in Victoria and New South Wales, the minimum drinking age is 18 years. Reference has been made to people in the armed services. Surely Government members know that any person who is a member of the armed services is eligible to enter a wet canteen. Where is the consistent attitude Government members are attempting to put up? I should have thought that the Premier and the Attorney-General, who build hurdles and seek to make them seem insurmountable, would have said that they supported the Bill although it contained deficiencies and, after supporting the second reading, would have amended it in Committee. However, we did not find this. Their facade of agreement in principle was nothing more than a sham to defeat the Bill and, from their attitude, one could say it was because they were jealous that the Leader of the Opposition had introduced it and that if it were carried the Labor Party might get some kudos for it. This was their only reason for opposing the Bill. I wholeheartedly support it: I believe that people of 18 years, 19 years, and 20 years of age are mature and I, unlike Government members, have full confidence in them. I believe we would be in a better position and that South Australia would be a better place in which to live if the people in that age group were recognized as adults, which, of course, they truly are.

Mr. FERGUSON (Yorke Peninsula): In opposing the Bill and its principles, I suggest that some extraordinary arguments have been put forward both in favour of and against 18 years of age becoming the age for adulthood. Most arguments seem to have been centred on the fact that a person at 18 years is more mature today than he would have been 30 or 40 years ago. I admit that educational opportunities and opportunities to be better informed are far greater today than they were when I was a young man of 18 years to 21 years of age. Perhaps because of that we

could suggest that, mentally, young people today are more mature than young people were 20 or 30 years ago. The Premier suggested that early maturity, both physically and mentally, occurred in 18-year-olds: I agree that 18-year-olds today are more mature mentally, but I do not agree that 18-year-olds are more mature physically today than they were perhaps 20 or 30 years ago.

Mr. Corcoran: What do you use to exercise your judgment when you vote—your mental or physical maturity?

Mr. FERGUSON: I think the total maturity of a person is established by his physical and mental maturity, and I think that physical maturity would be natural. The age of maturity is different in all cases, and both these matters are related when considering a person's maturity. I was interested in what the member for Port Pirie said; I take him to task not for what he said but for what he did not say. He said that he supported the Bill not because the Leader had introduced it but for other reasons, but he did not give those reasons. He said that he supported it because he could see no reason why adulthood should not start at 18 years of age, and that a large proportion of the 18-year-olds were engaged in the work force today.

Mr. McKee: And they shoulder arms.

Mr. FERGUSON: That is correct, but 30 or 40 years ago a large proportion of even the 16-year-olds on a pro rata population basis was engaged in the work force, and perhaps they had as much responsibility as, or more responsibility than, that age group today. The 16-year-olds or 18-year-olds of 20 or 30 years ago performed the duties of their day in a different manner, but that does not mean they had less responsibility. The tasks they had to perform required more responsibility than do some of the tasks youngsters are engaged in today. Do 18-year-olds of today want adulthood thrust upon them? I suggest they are more concerned with matters other than whether they are able to vote, to drink, or to do other things. Many of them are engaged in tertiary education and many are apprentices, and I believe that the people between 18 and 21 years of age are more concerned today about establishing themselves in life and making their positions secure than they are about voting, drinking, or doing other things.

Mr. Corcoran: Isn't part of making their future life secure wrapped up in government?

Mr. FERGUSON: Perhaps it is, but I believe that these young people are not concerned whether they should be able to vote or not.

Mr. McKee: Have you canvassed them for their ideas?

Mr. FERGUSON: I have, and many have told me that they do not wish that when they are between 18 and 21 years of age they should be able to do these things or have this responsibility. I oppose the Bill.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Leader of the Opposition): I have listened with interest to what has been said by members who oppose this Bill. The Premier and the Attorney-General did not oppose the Bill on any grounds of principle: that is to say, they agreed that ultimately the things proposed in the Bill should be achieved. However, they raised other objections with which I will deal. Listening to most of their supporters on the Government side, particularly the new members, I wonder what sort of a Liberal Party we have in this State now. In the days when the Attorney-General and the Premier were back-benchers in a Liberal Government in this State, they were both regarded as Conservatives in their Party.

Mr. Virgo: They still are now.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: It is all a matter of relativity. In those days we used to hear from the Attorney-General and the Premier about their attitudes to the economy and to administration which could only be called conservative, although certainly in a great many things they were much more radical than was Sir Thomas Playford. However, the Attorney-General used to fume about various things introduced by the Playford Government which were rather more radical than he could go along with.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: Why don't you get on with the Bill?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I will. After all, the Attorney-General gives me the benefit of a little analysis on occasions and, although it is not my wont to do this, I intend to do it now because I think it is time it was said. We find now that the Premier and the Attorney-General, in their statements on matters of principle in politics, are way out in front of a series of backwoodsmen (people whose statements of view upon matters of reform in South Australia sound as though they derive their political views and principles from the more remote and the stranger characters who occasionally appear from the backwoods of England to vote in the House of

Lords). The things that have been said by certain members opposite about 18-year-olds in this State—

Mr. Rodda: Are you talking about the Ostrich Club?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: No, I am not, but if the honourable member wishes me to deliberate on subjects of that kind I assure him I am willing to do so.

Mr. Clark: He's the chairman of that club.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: It seems that the Liberal Party in South Australia is growing more and more conservative and that, with every acquisition by that Party to this House, it takes a step back into the 19th century. I do not intend to answer at any length the things said by honourable members who have completely opposed the principles of this Bill, because I think they have already been adequately answered by my colleagues. However, I intend to say a thing or two about the excuses (poor excuses at that) advanced by the Premier and the Attorney-General for their opposition to the Bill. The first objection the Attorney-General took to the major provisions of this Bill (the provisions relating to the alteration in the general right of people to do things at the age of 18 years which they can now do at 21 years) was based upon some reports whose authors he did not name but whose terms he said he personally accepted. One therefore assumes that as the Law Officer of the Crown he paid due attention to the things he was saying to the House.

On the advice he was giving to the House as Attorney-General, I can only say that in adopting the report that he read he was extraordinarily careless. His objections were that it was not clear what were the implications of this Bill. When challenged, however, the Attorney-General could not point to one specific thing that would cause difficulty. However, he raised a series of matters and said that these were things that needed months of investigation. If he had given the matters five minutes' investigation, he would have known that the provisions of the Bill clearly coped with the questions he raised. Referring to the objections, the Attorney-General cited the following statement:

The implications of section 3 have clearly not been thought out by the draftsman of the Bill. A few of the things it would affect are: (*a*) powers of appointment—

I do not know whether he bothered to read clause 4 (3), which provides:

Subsection (2) of this section does not apply to any right, title or claim or any duty, liability or obligation devolving on any person under a will or other testamentary disposition or as the beneficiary under any trust or deed.

Obviously, that deals with powers of appointment. The Attorney-General continued to cite the following matters that would be affected:

(*b*) wards of court—

Obviously, wards of court will be affected, because the age of majority will be reduced to 18 years and, therefore, in future the court will generally have wardship only in relation to people of that age. This matter was dealt with in the Latey Committee report and the Judges of Chancery unanimously recommended that the age of wardship be reduced to 18 years. The Attorney-General then cited "(*c*) infant partners", with whom, of course, the Bill copes. Those who are infant partners at the moment are not affected, simply because their partnership arises under an agreement or contract at present in existence, but people who enter partnership in the future at the age of 18 years will be able to do so fully, and the position of infant partners is duly coped with. There is no difficulty about this. The Attorney-General then instanced the following:

(*d*) the law relating to perpetuities—is this now to be a life in being and 18 years thereafter?

The answer is as follows: only if the courts decide that it be so. The Attorney-General knows perfectly well that this is judge-made law, and it will be up to the courts to decide whether it is appropriate that that be altered in the circumstances. The next point was as follows:

(*e*) The law relating to accumulations because this will reduce the period of minority referred to in section 60 of the Law of Property Act.

Section 60 of that Act provides:

No person by any instrument or otherwise may settle or dispose of any property in such manner that the income thereof shall, save as hereinafter mentioned, be wholly or partially accumulated for any longer period than one of the following—

How do we settle or dispose of any property providing for settlement? It is either by testamentary disposition or by deed. What other instrument can we make to do this? Those things are excepted by clause 4 (3) of the Bill. The opinion further states:

(*f*) the law relating to undue influence where infants are concerned.

There is no difficulty about this. As infants will not be persons over the age of 18 years, where is the difficulty? Of course they cannot rely on infancy as to undue influence if

they are over 18 years. That is perfectly plain. The opinion also states:

(g) the law relating to adoption.

This law is also perfectly clear. There are two provisions in the Adoption of Children Act: the definition of "child" which at present relates to a person who has not attained the age of 21 years, and the provision that the court cannot make an order under this Act for the adoption of a child in favour of a person who has not attained the age of 21 years. The provisions of the Bill clearly state that, since that statutory instrument provides the age of 21 years as the age at which people are generally dealt with by the provision, then that age will be reduced to 18 years. Therefore, there is no difficulty in this case at all.

Where are the difficulties arising here, to which the Attorney-General referred? He has not even bothered to read the Bill. We have heard this sort of thing from the Attorney-General before: when he does not want something to be brought in from this side of the House he raises the most footling objections. He did not say much about the drafting on this occasion, and perhaps that is a little unusual. Perhaps he was aware that I was not the sole draftsman of this measure. I admit that my original draft got considerably knocked about by my advisers, and I think their proposals were wise.

Mr. Nankivell: The question arises as to the precision of their definitions.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The precision of their definitions is satisfactory: in fact, no difficulty could be pointed to by the Attorney-General. When he was challenged, he declined to name one. It is clearly desirable that people be able to contract at the age of 18 years, to deal with property, to bind themselves on contracts, to enter into business arrangements, and to take advantage of credit facilities, and that they should not be subjected to the present hindrances of the law. If they are capable of doing this (and the Attorney-General and the Premier have agreed in principle that they are and cannot point to any reason why the Bill does not provide them with the ability to proceed) then it seems to me that the other matters brought forward follow axiomatically. If they can discharge this responsibility satisfactorily, as well as the responsibilities they already have at the age of 18 years, there is no reason why they should not be able to do, in law, all the other things adults are capable of doing.

Mr. Corcoran: They can buy land at 18.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Yes, and they can dispose of it now as a result of the amendment to the Real Property Act we brought in during the previous session of Parliament. At present they may dispose of their property by will, and they must also accept full criminal responsibility at the age of 18 years. However, members opposite suggest that they should not have contractual responsibility at that age or be able to proceed with normal business transactions or give a valid and effectual receipt for moneys. The proposition maintaining this differentiation between classes of transaction is absurd. Nothing has been pointed to by the Government which makes it difficult for us to provide this here. The other and quite vapid excuse put forward by Government members is that, although it is desirable to do this, the whole of Australia must do it at the one time. As they do not see fit to act upon this principle in many other areas of legislation and administration in South Australia, one finds it hard to believe that they sincerely base their objection on that principle.

Mr. Broomhill: They believe in delaying action.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: That is it. They were reluctant that we should introduce this matter. They believe that they will be able to go ahead and do this in due course. Those of them who are in favour of the measure are sitting on the front bench and will rely on members on this side of the House to save them from their supporters on the other side in getting the matter through.

Mr. Broomhill: They are all on the front bench.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: One or two others cast sad looks about them on occasions when things are said by members opposite such as we have heard this afternoon and earlier in this debate. However, I am disappointed that the Government has not been prepared to be more reasonable on this particular measure. This is something on which we could establish a pattern which would affect other States in due course and upon which other States could model their legislation. We have satisfactory provisions here with which we ought to proceed.

I believe it is clear that the measure concerning 18-year-olds' drinking (though not the measure in this particular Bill) will pass the House. I believe that it should, that all the other measures relating to 18-year-olds should also pass, and that at the earliest opportunity.

I believe that South Australia should become in this matter, as it has become in so many other matters during the last three years, the leader of the movement of social and political opinion in Australia. There is a widespread movement for this social change not only in Australia (sponsored by my Party throughout Australia) but also in Great Britain. I may say that, although it is true that the Speaker's Committee in the House of Commons did not recommend the reduction of the voting age to 18 years, the Government, acting upon the Latey Committee's report, has resolved to proceed with the reduction of the voting age to 18 years in Great Britain, and I believe it is right in doing so. The responsibility which the Latey Committee found could and should be exercised by 18-year-olds involves necessarily the right to a say in the law which governs 18-year-olds. Therefore, I hope that some members opposite might have last-minute changes of opinion.

Mr. Broomhill: They have not changed their opinion in 30 years.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: We have had a break-through, in the past two weeks, from things said before. Perhaps we will get to the happy stage where, with the support of a minority of members opposite, members on this side of the House will be able to carry a bit of legislation. If that is so, I think it will be wholly to the good of the State.

The SPEAKER: As the Bill amends the Constitution Act and provides for an alteration to the constitution of the Legislative Council, its second reading must be carried by an absolute majority. In accordance with Standing Order No. 300, I will count the House. There being present an absolute majority of the whole number of the members of the House, I put the question, "That this Bill be now read a second time."

The House divided on the second reading:

Ayes (18)—Messrs. Broomhill and Burdon, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Casey, Clark, Corcoran, Dunstan (teller), Hudson, Hughes, Hurst, Jennings, Langley, Lawn, Loveday, McKee, Riches, Ryan, and Virgo.

Noes (18)—Messrs. Allen, Arnold, Brookman, Edwards, Evans, Ferguson, Freebairn, Giles, Hall (teller), McAnaney, Millhouse, Nankivell, Pearson, and Rodda, Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Teusner, Venning and Wardle.

The SPEAKER: There are 18 Ayes and 18 Noes. There being an equality of votes, I give my casting votes for the Noes and so the question passes in the negative.

Second reading thus negatived.

FLUORIDATION

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mrs. Byrne:

That in the opinion of this House a referendum should be held to decide whether action should be taken by the Government for the addition of fluoride to the water supplies of this State,

which Mr. Evans had moved to amend by striking out "a referendum should be held to decide whether action should be taken by the Government for" and inserting "is desirable" after "State".

(Continued from October 16. Page 1944.)

Mr. GILES (Gumeracha): I oppose this motion. I do not consider that we should incur the expense of a referendum to decide the fluoridation issue. There is ample evidence that the addition of fluoride to the water supply assists in the reduction of dental decay in a community. Regarding the general opinion of people throughout South Australia, in a recent Gallup poll 66 per cent of those interviewed favoured the addition of fluoride, 20 per cent were against, and 14 per cent were undecided. I should like to know in what section of the community this poll was taken, whether it was in a country area, where people not connected to a reticulated water supply would not be affected by fluoridation, or in a city area, where the result would probably show the real desire of the people. Many United States communities have fluoride in their water supplies. The Minister of Works said on October 9, as reported at page 1770 of *Hansard*:

The United States Public Health Service published census figures showing that the communities that instituted fluoridation between 1945 and 1966 numbered 3,252. In the same period the communities that discontinued fluoridation numbered 208; the communities that re-instituted fluoridation numbered 54, giving a net number of communities that were fluoridating as at January, 1967, of 3,098.

I consider that the fluoridation of water is, in a certain sense, a waste of money. Much of the water used is not consumed by people. More than 90 per cent of the water used by a community is used for irrigation, ablutions, and so on, very little actually being consumed by the people. The effects on health of fluoridated water are shown by this statement

by the Minister of Works, at page 1775 of *Hansard*, regarding the findings of the Commonwealth Health Department:

The decay rate in children's teeth in Canberra dropped 14 per cent since fluoride was added to the water supply three years ago, and there has been a 6 per cent reduction in all dental defects. By the late 1970's when we have the result for children who have had fluoride all their lives to compare with results from children who have had no fluoride, we hope to be able to demonstrate that an improvement of some 60 to 70 per cent in the decay rate can be achieved.

This statement is important, because I believe there is a better and more effective way of administering fluoride to the community. Because it is the children who benefit from fluoride, we should not add it to the water supply but should give it to children in a different way. My wife and I have administered fluoride tablets to our children. I believe that children between the ages of four years and 15 years can be given fluoride most advantageously, because the Director-General of the Commonwealth Health Department stresses its effect on children.

Mr. Clark: Should the Government pay for this?

Mr. GILES: Yes. In Holland fluoride tablets are administered to children at school and, although the cost is quite high compared with the cost of putting fluoride into the water supply, administering fluoride tablets is a more effective method of achieving the result. However, it is also expensive to administer fluoride through the water supply. The Minister of Works (*Hansard*, page 1773) said:

I told the member for Hindmarsh (Hon. C. D. Hutchens) that it is materially cheaper to put fluoride into the water supply than it is to issue tablets. I made my statement on the basis of every child receiving tablets. Even if we reduce by one-half or one-quarter the number of children willing to take fluoride tablets, there is still no comparison: the cost of fluoridating the water supply is much cheaper. My reply to the honourable member was that the total cost of giving tablets to children aged up to 14 years would be between $192,000 and $240,000 a year, even after taking discounts into consideration. The cost of distribution and wastage would be at least equal to the basic cost. So, the cost would be about $250,000 if fluoride was consumed in the form of tablets, whereas the cost of fluoridating the water supply is only $46,000 a year, the capital cost being $160,000.

However, more enters into this matter than the cost factor. Although it would be more expensive to give schoolchildren fluoride tablets, I believe we should give the people a chance to decide for themselves whether they want to take fluoride tablets.

Mr. Clark: None of it would be wasted!

Mr. GILES: Admittedly none would be wasted. Country people should receive the same advantage as city people, and by giving fluoride tablets to the schoolchildren we would observe this principle.

Mr. Clark: You should be supporting this motion, the way you are speaking.

Mr. GILES: We are here to make a decision for our constituents, and I believe we are capable of doing it. I oppose the motion.

Mr. HURST (Semaphore): I support the motion and I commend the mover for her initiative, whereby an opportunity has been given for discussing this very important and controversial issue. At the same time, I condemn the Government for its high-handed action in making a decision on a question of this magnitude which, in view of subsequent developments, ought to be debated more fully in this House. The Premier promised he would make ample time available in Parliament for discussing this issue, but what have we seen? Today is the last day on which private members' business may be dealt with. If the Premier had been genuine and sincere in making his promise, he should have made provision for enabling every member to voice his views on this matter.

This afternoon the Attorney-General said that this motion was low on the Notice Paper. There are some very important subjects on which there has been inadequate opportunity for debate. On June 30 the Premier made a Ministerial statement that Cabinet had decided to approve the addition of fluoride to the public water supply. On October 2 the member for Barossa (Mrs. Byrne) moved her motion. Some questions have been asked in this House and some answers given, but I say emphatically that some of these answers have been most unsatisfactory. I deeply regret that I do not have time to analyse the statements made and to point out all the misleading information given. However, in my limited time I want to refer to some such statements, because many speakers have taken this subject completely out of context.

The Hon. J. W. H. Coumbe: Have I misled you?

Mr. HURST: Yes, I believe the Minister has; at least, the information given in this House has been misleading. In my opinion there have been only two contributions of any consequence opposing the motion that need

any analysis at all. One such contribution was made by the Leader of the Opposition, but it was not made during the debate on this motion: it was made during the debate on the Loan Estimates. Time simply will not permit my referring to every aspect in detail. The Minister referred to referenda that had been held on this controversial matter. However, I cannot find one instance in which the Minister came out and said exactly on what basis the Government made its decision. The World Health Organization recommended the following:

(1) Drinking water containing about one part a million fluoride has a marked caries preventive action. Maximum benefits are conferred if such water is consumed throughout life.

(2) There is no evidence that water containing this concentration of fluoride impairs the general health.

(3) Controlled fluoridation of drinking water is a practicable and effective public health measure.

We have no guarantee that only one part a million fluoride will be added to the water supply. Whether or not it was by design, the Minister, on October 9, said:

All that is proposed in South Australia is to bring the fluoride content of the water to one part a million above the present fluoride content. The water we are now using in the metropolitan area is fairly hard, but hardness has nothing to do with fluoride.

The Hon. J. W. H. Coumbe: The content would be brought up to that figure.

Mr. HURST: No; that content will be added. I have obtained from the Engineering and Water Supply Department details of the chemical constituents of the metropolitan Adelaide water resources from which we see that, if the stipulated quantity of fluoride was added to the present water supply, the figure recommended by the World Health Organization would be exceeded.

Mr. Broomhill: The statements are full of inconsistencies.

Mr. HURST: Yes. The Happy Valley reservoir has a .29 average fluoride content (ranging from a minimum of .19 to a maximum of .42). That clearly illustrates a considerable variation, bearing in mind the recommendation of the World Health Organization.

Mr. Broomhill: Does that content alter at all in the reservoir?

Mr. HURST: Yes, from time to time. The fluoride content in the Hope Valley reservoir averages .29, minimum .14, maximum .37; Myponga reservoir, average .24, minimum .11, maximum .30; Barossa reservoir, average .35, minimum .29, maximum .41; and Mannum-Adelaide main, average .20, minimum .11, maximum .26. Although I realize that South Australia's water may be the hardest water in Australia, I point out that experts believe that hardness often helps in dental caries treatment, and calcium is another factor that helps in dental treatment. We often experience dry seasons during which we have insufficient storages in the reservoirs, and underground reservoirs have to be tapped. Indeed, this happens almost every year and last year was no exception: we were relying mainly on bore water.

In the Report of Investigations (No. 1) regarding fluoride in South Australia's underground waters, compiled by L. Keith Ward and issued under the authority of the Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin, M.L.C., Minister of Mines (as he then was), we find details of the analysis and the fluoride content of every basin located in South Australia. The fluoride content in the Adelaide Plains artesian basin is up to one part a million, and the World Health Organization has said that that figure is safe. Already, much of the water contains one part of fluoride to 1,000,000 parts of water. Yesterday, questions were asked about the location of the different plants, and it appears that they will be located mostly at the reservoirs. In answering a question from the member for Hindmarsh (Hon. C. D. Hutchens) about the cost of this work, the Minister said that the cost of fluoridating the water supplies would be $160,000 and the total annual operating costs would be $46,000. I challenge the Minister of Works to produce, for that money, specifications of plant that would automatically (because, inevitably, it would have to be done automatically) ensure that only one part of fluoride would be added to 1,000,000 parts of water.

The Hon. J. W. H. Coumbe: I shall be able to tell the honourable member as soon as it is settled.

Mr. HURST: If the Minister can install eight plants in the metropolitan area for $150,000, I will humbly apologize but I have had consultations with people responsible for making the components of the controls for these plants, and some of the minor components, representing about only 5 per cent of the plant, would cost anything up to $20,000. Yet, for $150,000, eight of these plants are to be built and are not to be located in areas where they can effectively control the supply of fluoride! This is a deliberate attempt to keep down the cost to avoid a reference to

the Public Works Committee, which would, if the matter was referred to it, investigate the cost thoroughly. This is not a good thing for a Government.

We were informed by the Minister that it would cost $46,000 annually to operate the scheme. He based much of his argument, when he rambled around that point, on the report of the Tasmanian Royal Commission. What did that report say about the cost? Where did the Minister get his figures? That is the answer we want. The Tasmanian Royal Commissioner found (and it can be checked from the volume that has been circulated to every member) that the minimum cost would be 20c a head of population—not for each child. I have done a calculation and find that, with a population of over 1,000,000 in South Australia (and this is the estimated minimum price, it being hard to determine) if we base it on the Commissioner's findings, it will cost over $200,000 a year. There are health problems in South Australia more vital than this. I am not opposed to children having fluoride: I am opposed to the way in which this matter has been handled by the Government, without a mandate from the people, and to the way it is spending money when every day in South Australia the people are faced with more vital problems. From a health point of view, the dictionary defines "vital" as pertaining to a fatality, but I point out that there is no evidence in regard to dental caries.

[*Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.*]

REGISTRATION OF DOGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Hon. R. S. HALL (Premier): I move:

That Orders of the Day, Government Business, be taken into consideration after Order of the Day, Other Business, No. 5.

I move this motion because the subject of fluoridation is significant for the Government, involving as it does Government expenditure. The Government believes that the expression of the opinions of members is important regarding what the Government will do about the fluoridation of South Australia's water supplies in the future. I move this motion—

Mr. Clark: Why didn't you bring the matter forward yourself?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: —and offer Government time, if the Opposition wants it, so that the motion on fluoridation can be discussed. If the Opposition does not want this opportunity, I will withdraw my motion. I think it would be reasonable to devote an hour or, at the most, an hour and a half of time normally set aside for Government business so that we can have a vote on this matter. I have spoken to the Government Whip, and members on this side who wish to speak about fluoridation have undertaken to be brief. If the Opposition cares to join in this debate for, at the most, an hour and a half, the Government is willing to devote that time to the discussion. As I have said, this is a measure of some significance on which the Government will spend considerable sums of money over the next few months. In view of this, the Government desires to have a decision on it. I will continue with my motion only if the Opposition agrees; if it does not, I will ask leave to withdraw the motion.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Leader of the Opposition): I am interested to know precisely what the Government is offering us here.

Mr. Lawn: Nothing.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I want to know what it is. The normal proceeding of this House, when the guillotine motion has been moved, has been that the remaining private members' business will, at any rate, be given time at some stage during the session to be voted on.

The Hon. R. S. Hall: That still exists, but it doesn't give much time for debate. I am offering an hour and a half for debate on this matter.

Mr. Hudson: How much time will you give for discussions on the festival hall?

The Hon. R. S. Hall: I have given reasons for what I have done in this case.

Mr. Broomhill: But not much notice, though.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Although it is not ungenerous for the Government to give us an opportunity for additional debate, we have not had an opportunity to discuss this ourselves.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: An Opposition member was in full flight before dinner.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: We are not in a position to say to members on this side, "If there is debating time, you are to curtail your speech." It is difficult for us to do this at short notice, if we are not told what is to take place. We need an opportunity to discuss how best to dispose of the debating time that the Government intends to give us. I suggest that the Premier go on with some other business for a short time, on motion,

while we have an opportunity to discuss his offer. For me to make a decision without consulting other members on this side, who have rights regarding private members' business, is extremely difficult.

Mr. Hurst: Fluoridation is a social question.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Yes, it is not something on which we bind our members. I am pleased about the debate on fluoridation proceeding, but many other items of private members' business remain on the Notice Paper, and this situation has caught me a little by surprise. If the Premier goes on with other Government business while we discuss his offer, we can possibly come to some reasonable arrangement. Personally, I see no difficulty about further debating this issue if we are given the right to vote on other private members' business before the end of the session.

Mr. Lawn: How much time will they give us on the motion regarding the M.A.T.S. Report?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I do not know and, having regard to the way other Governments, including our own, have acted on private members' business, we can demand more than the right to vote on such of that business as remains. I do not want to be unreasonable, but I should like the opportunity to discuss the matter with my members.

The SPEAKER: The Premier has, if no-one else wants to speak.

Mr. HUDSON (Glenelg): I am a little puzzled by the terms of the Premier's offer because I recall asking many questions of him and the Minister of Works, trying to find out whether Government time would be made available for the debate on fluoridation. The answer was, by implication, "No", and it took a whole series of questions to get even that answer. The Government said that it was prepared to go ahead with fluoridation, that this decision had been made.

The Hon. R. S. Hall: I'm prepared to be even more reasonable if you won't delay the debate.

Mr. HUDSON: I was told that the Government would go ahead and, if members on this side wanted to do anything about the matter, well and good, but it was up to members to use private members' time to do that. I suggest that the Premier delay the notice of motion he has given for next Tuesday, which motion is to not allow time for private members' business next Wednesday. Why should we not have more time to discuss the motion regarding the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study Report? Why select only fluoridation for discussion? Surely the motion moved by the member for Edwardstown (Mr. Virgo) regarding the M.A.T.S. Report is just as important as the motion on fluoridation. I am only guessing, but I think that, if we were offered the opportunity to debate private members' business next Wednesday afternoon also, the Premier could have the debate completed and the vote taken on fluoridation and the motion regarding the M.A.T.S. Report as well. I should also like the motion regarding the festival hall voted on. These other matters are of vital significance.

Mr. Lawn: He wants an hour to point the bone.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Glenelg.

Mr. HUDSON: The Government has been inconsistent in its attitude to this matter.

The Hon. J. W. H. Coumbe: Does the honourable member realize that this is a genuine offer?

Mr. HUDSON: We should like a genuine offer to help in respect of the M.A.T.S. Report, too.

The Hon. R. S. Hall: There is no need to stall for time. I am willing to put this on motion.

Mr. HUDSON: Why not allow us to discuss the M.A.T.S. Report?

Mr. HURST (Semaphore): Can the Premier say for how long he will permit the debate to continue?

The SPEAKER: He said "one and a half hours". If the Premier speaks he closes the debate.

The Hon. R. S. HALL (Premier): I think I have said fairly clearly why the Government wants this vote to be taken now. The Government does not envisage that there will not be votes on the other items of private members' business, but it is crucial that this vote be taken before we go on, because we do not know when the session will end—it could be at the end of next March. Consequently, it is important that, before we launch into Government business (which could lead to protracted debates), a vote be taken. I would not like to see fluoridation delayed because there had been no decision here. We would like a decision.

Mrs. Byrne: But you have already made the decision.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I have already said that, if this House votes against fluoridation, the Government will not go ahead with it.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Since the Government has this policy, I think all members can see that it is essential that a decision be made; otherwise, the Government may go on with a project that the House may later decide it does not approve. I think it is fair that the Government should allocate some Government business time to a matter on which it desires an answer. This matter has been raised in this House: it has been an item of private members' business and it has gone on for a long time. Surely it is now reasonable for the Government to say it would like a decision. However, it is not in the Government's hands, and it will not try to force a decision, but it is offering up to one and a half hours for debate. I can see that this has caught the Opposition by surprise. I shall be quite happy to withdraw this motion and have this item put on motion. I ask leave to withdraw my motion.

Leave granted; motion withdrawn.

TATIARA DRAINAGE TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE (Minister of Works) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Tatiara Drainage Trust Act, 1949. Read a first time.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this short Bill is to expand the powers of the Tatiara Drainage Trust. The trust at present has certain powers over drainage works relating to the Tatiara Creek. It does not have power over drainage works within the Tatiara drainage district constituted under the Act that do not relate to that creek. It is thought that if the trust is to act effectively within the district it should have power over all drainage works constructed or erected in the district, whether relating to the Tatiara Creek or not. This Bill therefore makes the necessary alterations to the Tatiara Drainage Trust Act, 1949, to enable it to exercise these powers.

The provisions of the Bill are as follows: Clause 1 is merely formal. Clauses 2 and 3 make formal amendments to the principal Act. Clause 4 amends section 44 of the principal Act. In its amended form the section will provide that a person shall not construct or remove drainage works affecting the flow of water in the Tatiara Creek or the drainage of other waters within the district. Clause 5 amends section 50 of the principal Act. The amendment corresponds with that made to section 44 and provides that, where the trust is of opinion that drainage work constructed before the commencement of the amending Act will cause injury to any land, the trust may require the occupier of the land to remove the drainage works.

I commend the Bill to the House. It will be necessary for it to be referred to a Select Committee subsequent to the passing of the second reading. I understand that the Opposition will co-operate to enable the Bill to proceed to that stage forthwith so that I can move that a Select Committee be set up to consider the whole matter.

Mr. CORCORAN (Millicent): I support the Bill. As the Minister has pointed out, it is a hybrid Bill and it is necessary that it be referred to a Select Committee. Its purpose, as I see it at this stage, is simply to expand the powers of the Tatiara Drainage Trust, and as the matter will be considered in detail by the Select Committee I see no point in delaying the debate. I support the second reading in order that the matter can proceed to the stage where the committee can be appointed.

Bill read a second time and referred to a Select Committee consisting of Messrs. Burdon, Corcoran, Nankivell and Rodda, and the Hon. J. W. H. Coumbe; the committee to have power to send for persons, papers and records, and to adjourn from place to place; the committee to report on November 28.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

AGED AND INFIRM PERSONS' PROPERTY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

OATHS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

CROWN LANDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Lands) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an act to amend the Crown Lands Act, 1929-1967. Read a first time.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It proposes amendments to the Crown Lands Act which are designed to achieve five principal objects, as follows:

(*a*) to remove the limitations upon the allotment and granting of Crown perpetual leaseholds, agreements to purchase and grants, both as to value as well as area which at present are included in the Act;

(*b*) to provide a more secure form of tenure for relatively isolated business and residential developments in outback areas which can at present only be proved by annual licence;

(*c*) to increase penalty interest rates in the Act from 5 per cent a year to 10 per cent a year;

(*d*) to make certain amendments of a machinery nature to facilitate the administration of the Act; and

(*e*) to make certain amendments arising from an examination of the Act by the Commissioner of Statute Law Revision.

The first two of these objects are of the most significance. The decision to propose the abolition of limitations in the Act has been reached after lengthy and very careful consideration, and I believe that these considerations should be given. Limitations have existed in the Act from its very early days and in times of easy availability of land, it has been considered desirable to take measures to ensure that undue aggregation of land holdings did not take place. This policy was sound from sociological as well as economic considerations as it would be against the interests of a community, particularly a community which draws much of its strength from rural activities, to allow the control of land to become or remain in the hands of relatively few people. However, while such a policy is commendable in its intent it is necessary from time to time to examine it in the light of prevailing conditions, and to consider whether such a policy operates to the general advantage of the State.

Limitation of holdings under the Act can be imposed by reference to one of two criteria: (*a*) the physical area of a holding can be fixed at some arbitrary figure; or (*b*) an upper limit can be set on the unimproved value of holdings. It was the practice for many years in this State to limit holdings only by reference to their unimproved values, but it was thought desirable in 1966 to introduce an area limitation to establish some degree of equity between individual landholders in the various parts of the State. This action was brought about by a very wide disparity in unimproved valuations. Landholders in the older-established area would, under the unimproved value criteria, have been severely limited in their ability to acquire additional areas of Crown leaseholds, whereas those in the more recently developed parts of the State could have obtained and held areas to an almost unlimited extent. It was accordingly felt that if the policy of limitation was to continue some attempt should be made to deal equitably as between people in all parts of the State.

It should be observed that limitation on the physical area of holdings in this State poses some difficulties due to the considerable variations in types and productivity of land, and there have been some difficulties in administering the area limitations. Limitation by unimproved values overcomes some of the difficulties which arise from area restriction as in a general way unimproved values should be related to productivity. However, such values must bear a close relationship to the market price of land, and in this State, where the demand for land is high and the area available decreasing, prices of rural land have risen with increasing rapidity. Values are now more attuned to demand for land than to productivity. This situation makes it difficult to ensure that the unimproved values in one area truly relate to unimproved values in another area and, in this period of fluctuating but generally rising prices, it is almost impossible to maintain an equitable position.

In reviewing the limitations in the Act, consideration has been given whether some variation in the present level should be made or whether, under existing conditions, the limitations serve a useful purpose at all. It is concluded that they no longer do so. It is noted that over the years a substantial area of the State has been granted in fee simple, and at present the agricultural areas of the State comprise about 16,000,000 acres of land held in fee simple and some 20,000,000 acres under Crown perpetual leasehold. In these circumstances, it is apparent that, had landholders wished to aggregate, substantial opportunity has long existed for them to do so with freehold land. However, it is considered that the high prices which prevail do not encourage undue aggregation as in general the productive capacity of the land makes it increasingly difficult to obtain a reasonable return upon the capital investment involved.

Honourable members are aware that Part VIa of the Act, Special Development Leases, was enacted in 1967 to cover the development of the County Chandos area. Under its provisions limitations of holdings do not apply. In perhaps no other State has the potential for agricultural development been reached to

the extent which it has in South Australia. As a consequence, considerable pressure exists to obtain land, with a corresponding rise in prices. It is clear that the limitations which apply under the Crown Lands Act can affect the demand for freeholds and the price which is paid.

The original intention of limitation, to prevent undue aggregation of land, has been substantially attained. Today the current trends in agriculture are changing rapidly, and require a change in the present limitations. It is noted that the results being achieved by settlers who operate under stock mortgages and budgetary control with the Lands Department show conclusively the effects of rising costs and lowering returns during the past three years. Returns have barely been maintained despite substantial increases in per acre production. It is apparent that in some areas holdings are not large enough for the benefits of technology to be effectively used, and a reduction in unit costs achieved. Such a cost reduction can be brought about only by a more intensive use of plant and the spreading of overheads over greater volumes of production. This problem is causing concern in other States and in Comonwealth administration also.

Capital involvement in today's farms is heavy. It should be made possible for sufficiently large areas to be held to justify investment. Increasing costs, which make it so difficult for the small farmer to prosper, can best be met by allowing the holding of larger areas. Today there are many people with farming experience and ability and with recourse to capital who are restricted in their holdings. For our industrial development, we search overseas for people to come to South Australia to invest in this State. We should not ignore the potential which already exists in our community to significantly advance our primary industry. Only by encouraging economic primary production can we expect to hold export markets.

Experience in administering drought relief shows us the grim position of farmers on areas of land that are too small. Some of these are unable to bear any additional commitments whatever. The Crown Lands Act provides that, although the Minister shall not capriciously refuse consent to transfer, he may decline to consent to a transfer in circumstances where he or the Land Board considers it is undesirable. In considering any application to transfer I believe that it would be appropriate to prevent subdivisions which seek to create holdings which are uneconomically small or undue aggregation of land in an undeveloped state. As a matter of policy I would propose to act accordingly.

The other matter of significance is the provision of a more secure form of tenure for business and residential development in outback areas. As the Act stands at present, permanent tenure cannot be granted outside of hundreds, and the amendments now proposed eliminate this restriction and will enable perpetual leases or agreements to be offered to people who have either established or intend to establish permanent improvements on the land. This provision is sought by business people in these areas who are providing or intend to provide facilities for the public in the established mining settlements, and for the benefit of the tourist industry, particularly along the roads leading to the Northern Territory and to Queensland. Already there has been substantial investment. I believe that it will result in further desirable development of tourist facilities in these areas. The other objects of the Bill will become clear as I give details of the various clauses.

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal. Clause 3 effects certain consequential and form amendments to section 2 of the principal Act which sets out the arrangement of sections therein. Clause 4 again effects certain consequential amendments to section 4 of the principal Act. The definition of "homestead block" being a form of lease which is no longer offered is inserted in consequence of the revision of the provisions relating to the few leases of this land which still exist. Clause 5 will somewhat decrease the number of signatures required on a land grant by dispensing with need for the signature of the Under Treasurer.

Clause 6 amends the paragraph of section 9 of the principal Act that provides, in effect, that particulars of any remission of the covenant, agreements or conditions contained in any lease shall be annually laid before Parliament. The amendment proposes that remission of personal residence conditions, which are frequent and nowadays of no great significance, will not have to be so laid before Parliament. This should result in some saving of work and expense on the part of the department. Clause 7 amends section 22, which relates to the offer of Crown lands on perpetual lease or agreement and in effect provides for the direct offer of Crown lands to persons who (*a*) already occupy the lands under licence from the Crown, and (*b*) have erected or intend to erect permanent improvements on the land.

This amendment would enable inhabitants of mining settlements that do not justify being laid out as towns to get a sufficient permanency of tenure to justify substantial improvements. The settlement of Coober Pedy falls into this category. Clause 8 repeals section 31 of the principal Act, which relates to the limitation on the unimproved value of holdings where new allotments from the Crown are concerned. Clause 9 amends the provision in section 42 of the principal Act that relates to the early completion of an agreement for purchase. Under the section as it presently stands, the purchaser cannot complete his purchase until the expiration of six years after he enters into the agreement. This does not seem to be justified when the agreement is itself for less than six years, and accordingly provision is here made for completion on the expiration of the agreement where the period is less than six years.

Clause 10 amends section 50 by deleting the reference to "leases with the right of purchase", since leases of this kind no longer exist. Clause 11, by amending section 58, increases the interest on amounts owing in respect of any lease or agreement and in arrear from 5 per cent to 10 per cent. This increase is justified if only to preserve the concept of a penalty to encourage the clearing of arrears. Clause 12 amends section 66a by increasing the upper limit on the value of small parcels of Crown lands which may be allotted directly to adjoining leaseholders. In the light of present land values, the limit of £200 ($400) is considered to be rather too low and the figure of $2,000 seems rather more appropriate. Clause 13 amends section 66b by removing a limitation similar to that referred to in section 66a but applying to the case of adjoining freeholders. Clauses 14 and 15 amend the provisions of the Act in section 77 and 78 that deal with miscellaneous leases and provide, in effect, that they must all be allotted by the Land Board. Previously, miscellaneous leases for grazing and cultivation were allotted by the Land Board, the remainder having to be offered by public auction. It is felt that the circumstances of the granting of leases of this type do not justify the inconvenience and expense of a public auction when there is often only one person interested in the lease. The amendment will enable land to be allotted more expeditiously.

Clause 16 repeals section 81 of the Act. This section provides that the holder of a forest lease, granted under the Woods and Forests Act, 1882, may apply to surrender his lease for a perpetual lease or agreement. The effect of issue of such lease or agreement would be to remove the land from the control of the Woods and Forests Department. This section is now repugnant to the Forestry Act, 1950, as the only forest leases remaining are leases issued under the Woods and Forests Act, 1882, over portions of forest reserves, and on expiry these lands will pass to the control of the Woods and Forests Department pursuant to the Forestry Act, 1950.

Clause 17 effects a Statute law revision amendment. Clause 18 effects a Statute law revision amendment by repealing a provision that is obsolete. Clauses 19 to 27 repeal and amend such provisions of Part IX of the Act, which deals with homestead blocks, as are necessary to recognize that this form of tenure is no longer applicable to present conditions and at the same time to ensure that such homestead blocks as still remain can continue to be dealt with under the Act. Clause 28 effects a Statute law revision amendment. Clause 29 strikes out section 170a (6), which relates to a limitation on the size of the holdings.

Clause 30 again amends section 170b by striking out a provision relating to the limitation on the size of holdings. Clause 31 amends section 171, which limits the size of a divided closer settlement block to one having an unimproved value of $14,000, by striking out this limitation. Clauses 32 and 33 are Statute law revision amendments which strike out reference to an already repealed provision. Clause 34 repeals section 181, which sets forth a limitation on the size of holdings. There has been no activity under the foregoing sections for some years and the amendments, though of little consequence, are included for sake of consistency.

Clause 35 amends section 192 of the Act and increases the rate of interest on arrears of rent from 5 per cent to 10 per cent. Clause 36 increases from 5 per cent to 10 per cent the interest charged on extensions of time for the payment of rent. Clauses 37 and 38 are Statute law revision amendments. Clause 39 repeals sections 203 and 204a of the Act which again relate to limitations on holdings.

Clause 40 repeals section 211 of the Act, which limited the power of the board to fix rents or purchase money on perpetual leases or agreements. In the light of present-day conditions, it is not thought that this limitation is justified. Clause 41 amends section 212 of the Act by striking out the provision relating

to limitation of holdings. Clause 42 repeals section 220 of the Act, which relates to limitations on holdings. Clause 43 repeals section 221 (2ab) of the principal Act, which again places what is considered to be an undesirable limitation on the power of the board to fix rents. Clause 44 amends section 225 of the principal Act by repealing those subsections relating to limitation on holdings.

Clause 45 amends section 228b of the Act by including district and municipal councils in the bodies that may be sold lands direct. Clause 46 repeals section 237 of the principal Act, which relates to a limitation on commission for bidding at an auction. While such a provision may have been useful in the past, it is felt that it has no application in the world of today and accordingly it is proposed to repeal it.

Clauses 47 to 49 are Statute law revision amendments. Clause 50 repeals a provision now obsolete having been superseded by section 50b of the Act. Clauses 51 and 52 make a Statute law revision amendment. Clauses 53 to 56 are amendments consequential on the repeal of the sections to which the schedules proposed to be repealed by these sections relate.

Mr. CORCORAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Hon. R. S. HALL (Premier) moved:

That Orders of the Day, Government Business, be taken into consideration after Order of the Day, Other Business, No. 5.

Motion carried.

FLUORIDATION

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mrs. Byrne:

That in the opinion of this House a referendum should be held to decide whether action should be taken by the Government for the addition of fluoride to the water supplies of this State,

which Mr. Evans had moved to amend by striking out "a referendum should be held to decide whether action should be taken by the Government for" and inserting "is desirable" after "State".

(Continued from November 13. Page 2451.)

Mr. HURST (Semaphore): I now wish to show how the money to be spent on fluoridation could be spent on more necessary health measures. There are three automatic analyser-12 blood-testing machines in Australia, two of them in South Australia. According to the Minister, these machines cost about $36,000. I believe that those machines are much more necessary to health than is the addition of fluoride to our water supply. These machines are capable of conducting and recording 12 tests at a time. The costs to the people have been reduced considerably with the advent of those machines, because for one single test from which I believe one can get these 12 results the costs is $4.80, whereas if a person was required to go to a specialist to have this test taken the cost would be considerably more than $100. Also, this would take time and cause inconvenience.

We also know that there are numerous cases of unsuspected tumour of the parathyroid gland. These cases are detected but many people do not know of these ailments and are not treated because we have not the facilities and the equipment available to serve the public. We know, too, that there is a dialysis machine, which takes the impurities from the blood and replaces the blood when purified. There is only one of these machines in South Australia. I do not know the cost of it, but people waiting to undergo treatment by this machine have to wait two or three years.

Mr. Ryan: Which hospital has this machine?

Mr. HURST: The Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Only last week I was speaking to a friend of mine who informed me that one of his close friends had died because, through lack of equipment, he could not have his blood purified by this machine. I believe these machines are more vital to health than is fluoridation. In South Australia we have a much larger medical school than have the other States but we have only about 60 per cent of the number of training beds available in Western Australia. Everyone knows there is a scarcity of medical practitioners in this State.

I am giving these details because I feel that in any efficient management first things must come first, and these matters have been completely overlooked. It was only on October 23 that we read an account of the technological progress being made almost from day to day bringing more medical advantages essential for the health of the people. There was a report in the *News* of October 17 of a physician who was in South Australia with an electronic instrument for the detection and treatment of cancer. In my opinion, these things are more important than fluoridation.

There is a grave need in this State for therapeutic pools. To my own knowledge, there

is one of these pools in South Australia, at the rehabilitation centre at St. Margaret's Hospital on Payneham Road. Last year I was approached by the Lions Club in Port Adelaide and by officers of the Paraplegic Association to take a deputation to the then Premier (Hon. D. A. Dunstan). That deputation consisted of officers of the Lions Club and the Paraplegic Association together with Dr. Barber, a highly respected medical practitioner. They wanted the Government to make available money to subsidize the money that had been raised by public appeal.

Only the other day I was speaking to an officer of the Lions Club and was reliably informed that the club had raised $6,000 towards therapeutic pools. I believe the Paraplegic Association has raised a similar sum which is awaiting subsidy. There is an urgent need for these pools in South Australia to treat the poor unfortunate people who could, as a result of such treatment, be rehabilitated and rendered fit to do useful work in industry for the benefit of the State. I am criticizing the Government's action in spending money on fluoridating the water supply when, in fact, medical aids are urgently required. A Select Committee of this Parliament reported on October 21, 1964, to the effect that fluoride was an aid to reducing dental caries and that fluoridation of the water supply was the most convenient, the cheapest, and the most effective method; it was completely safe; there were no engineering problems; and it was a desirable public health measure.

With great respect to that committee, I point out that its recommendations are at variance with those of the World Health Organization. I do not think any member of this Chamber would try to deny that fluoride, if applied in the correct quantities and at the appropriate age, helps eliminate dental caries in children. However, no recommendation made by that Select Committee refers to the safe quantity recommended by the experts to be applied. The committee's recommendations depart from those of the World Health Organization, which recommended that "drinking water containing one part a million fluoride has a marked caries preventive action; maximum benefits are conferred if such water is consumed throughout life". It is interesting to read the findings made by committees in various countries.

The SPEAKER: Does the honourable member intend to go right through that report?

Mr. HURST: I deeply regret that the Government has limited the time of this debate, because despite the fact—

The SPEAKER: Order! That was a decision of the House.

Mr. HURST: I wish to refer to some valuable material; indeed, if one does not do this, one is criticized for not having said certain things in the first place. If we examine the findings of all the various bodies throughout the world that have investigated the matter, it is difficult to discover two findings that comply exactly with the principles enunciated by the World Health Organization, that fluoridation is completely safe, that no engineering problems are involved and that it is a public health measure. Paragraph 972 at page 238 of the report of the Tasmanian Royal Commission states:

> There is just a possibility that some individuals may be found who will react abnormally to fluoride at levels far below those which will affect normal beings. The possibility is very remote, but it cannot be dismissed. If such people exist, and their existence has not been clearly demonstrated, the consequences are not serious.

Paragraph 973 of the report states:

> Fluoridation at 1 p.p.m. is not known to aggravate, dispose to or be cause of: diabetes, kidney disease, cancer, goitre, diseases of the cardio-vascular system, periodontal disease, enzymatic malfunction, teratogenism and disorders of pregnancy or childbirth, mongolism, and ectopic calcification within the human body.

The Royal Commission was careful to state that one part per million of fluoride was the safe minimum to be used with no possibility of side effects to those suffering from the many complaints referred to. Many people suffer from kidney complaints, and recently I have read that at least one person in every six suffers from some form of diabetes. The incidence of cancer is unknown, because it does not always show up. Therefore, this clearly illustrates that there is at least some element of danger. The Commission undertook an investigation, but I am afraid I cannot agree with its findings. The statement made about industry is contrary to fact. The Government has set up a Clean Air Committee, which has met many times. It has endeavoured to devise regulations to provide for the extraction of fluoride from the air and from industrial systems. Many industrial chemists have told me that an enormous sum of money is being spent in trying to solve this problem. Men are employed to try to evolve some form of

chemical that will eliminate fluoride from engineering and workshop systems.

There are various methods of taking fluoride, and medical experts say that, if it is taken through food, it does not remain in the system, whereas if it is taken through water it does remain. I do not know whether that is correct, but the position should be clarified. About four or five years ago some councils in New South Wales added fluoride to water supplies and it has been reported that the effect of the fluoride on pipes and water heaters is extensive. I understand that some persons have been forced out of the industry because of their inability to cope with the problem and meet guarantees given on bath-heaters and other appliances.

It is rather strange that the Government is adding fluoride to the water supply and at the same time a special committee has been established to investigate ways of taking fluoride out of the air because of its injurious effects. That it is injurious has been known for some time. In 1962, when I was privileged to represent Australia overseas, I gave particular attention to safety and the effect of the use of detergents in industry, because South Australian industries had been having difficulties with many liquids purchased overseas in that they caused incurable complaints and diseases, as well as other problems. The publication *Accident Prevention Manual for Industrial Operations*, 4th edition, issued by the National Safety Council of Chicago, Illinois, deals extensively with these topics and the different aspects of industrial usage of detergents. The manual is used by Government departments in their endeavour to find out the effects of various detergents. Yesterday I spoke to an officer of the Electricity Trust who deals with safety matters. We recalled one occasion at Port Augusta when I was secretary of a union; the union members sent down a liquid detergent that they had been instructed to use for cleaning diesel engines.

The SPEAKER: I do not think I can allow the honourable member to pursue this line of argument. He must link it with the motion.

Mr. HURST: I am pointing out that these other detergents—

The SPEAKER: These other detergents are not fluoride.

Mr. HURST: They contain fluoride, and their effect is disastrous.

The SPEAKER: This motion deals only with fluoride.

Mr. HURST: Fluoride is in these detergents. The manual I have referred to is used by industries, Governments and trade unions throughout the world; it says:

Fluorides in the form of the soluble inorganic salts which can hydrolyze to form free hydrogen fluoride in contact with the tissue are severely irritating, and many of them can produce skin burns which are both extensive and painful. The less soluble inorganic salts are not irritating but may produce a type of chronic poisoning by long-continued inhalation. The fluoride ion tends to accumulate in the skeleton. Osteomalacia has been considerably more of a problem with cattle exposed to fluorides than it has been with people so exposed.

This manual has been published and is widely used. It is evident from this and other reports that fluoride is poisonous. I was intrigued to read a report dated March 24, 1966, by Doctor George Waldbott, who gave evidence in the United States of America before a Congressional subcommittee inquiring into this matter. He had been examining the question of fluoridating water supplies. The testimony deals with three deaths from fluoridated water and 100 fluoridation poisoning cases. This gentleman has very good qualifications—he is a Bachelor of Medicine.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: Was his evidence accepted?

Mr. HURST: It appears to me that the evidence that is accepted depends upon the attitude of the persons dealing with the problem. A short time ago I read to this House the findings of a Select Committee set up by this Parliament which was asked to investigate the matter. I do not know how it arrived at its decision, but it has been clearly pointed out that the number of witnesses who appeared before the committee in opposition to the question far exceeded the number in support of the question.

The South Australian Select Committee did not see fit even to follow the recommendations of the World Health Organization. If one goes through the preamble to its findings one realizes that that body believed that fluoride in excess quantities could cause poisoning. Fluoride in the air and in certain other forms is poisonous. I do not deny that in mild quantities it does do good in certain instances. However, the findings of the Select Committee completely disregarded the findings of the World Health Organization. While it referred to the findings of these bodies to support its argument, one of its members now questions whether the arguments of authoritative sources were accepted.

It seems that the acceptance or rejection of this particular matter is determined by the individual's attitude towards it. I do not believe that sufficient thought has been given to the matter. If it is a question of public health, then I believe it is the responsibility of every Government to expend the moneys available to it in the most effective manner in order to get the maximum results.

This matter has been referred to in this Chamber as a vital health matter, and I do not deny that it is an important phase in health. However, we should understand exactly what is meant by "vital". Certain statistics have been produced in Adelaide by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics and published in a booklet that is circulated to all members of this House. Those statistics list the most vital things that cause death. We find that, in 1965, .28 per cent of the population died as a result of tuberculosis. It lists also malignant neoplasms, asthma, diabetes, and cerebral haemorrhage.

About 30 other items are listed in those statistics. However, I cannot find any record of a death being caused as a result of dental caries. I believe that when members use the word "vital" in relation to this matter they are guilty of gross exaggeration, because when the word is used in connection with health matters it carries the definite implication that something can be fatal. However, as I said, there is no evidence that any person has lost his life as a result of dental caries. This is the type of exaggeration used in connection with this subject to try to justify the individual's particular point of view.

Reference has been made to the responsibilities of Parliament in making a decision. I, for one, do not shirk my responsibilities. If this action is taken by the Government, the rights of the individual will be affected. It will be contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 2 of which provides:

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Article 3 provides:

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 6 provides:

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

If those people who advocate that fluoride is perfectly safe are prepared to face up to their responsibilities, they should provide for those unfortunate people who, because they may be suffering from certain ailments, may be adversely affected by the addition of fluoride to the water; it may cause them suffering or loss of life. If the Government sees fit to protect only a small section of the community (because, after all, only a very small part of the community will benefit from this measure) and makes an additional charge on water consumers to meet these expenses, then, if the Government is really facing up to its responsibilities, it ought to levy charges and make provision whereby anyone who suffers as a result of the introduction of fluoride may be compensated.

The very fact that the Government intends administratively to introduce fluoridation but is not prepared to face up to its obligations in other fields shows it is entirely wrong. Rather than the Government's doing it in this way, the matter should be further investigated until the Government is sure of what is happening and where it is going in these matters. After all, all people are different. Sometimes, it is beyond them to know just what minor ailments they already possess will be aggravated as a result of the Government's administrative action. I believe that my neighbour should have a say in this matter equal to mine but, as a result of the Government's action, people will not be given an opportunity to have a say. People will be charged additional water rates to cover this project. You, Mr. Speaker, have heard the present member for Eyre (Mr. Edwards) and his predecessor (Mr. Bockelberg) advocate the installation of a water main from the Polda Basin to Kimba. However, the money spent on fluoridating our water supply will no doubt delay the installation of that facility, which is so essential for many people of Eyre Peninsula.

I have asked questions of the Minister of Works about when areas in my district will be sewered, only to be told that the necessary finance is not available. I know of cases of disease arising in those areas, and the residents concerned have every reason to believe that this disease is the direct result of the lack of adequate sewerage facilities. Is it not more efficient, when dealing with health problems, first to solve those problems that are vital to public health? Measures have been completely set aside because of the lack of finance, yet over night Cabinet decided to fluoridate the water supply. The Government led by Sir Thomas Playford did not see fit to

fluoridate the water supply, nor did the Labor Party that was in office during the last three years see fit to give effect to the findings of the Select Committee that investigated this matter. One of the reasons for the lack of action may have well been the inconsistencies in the findings of that committee. However, this Government, which was elected by a minority, has made a decision that will affect the whole of the people in the metropolitan area, even though it gave no indication of its intentions during the election campaign.

I believe the member for Barossa did a service to the electors in raising this matter. The people should have a say in any social matter, particularly when such a matter has not been raised at an election and particularly when it has such an important bearing on the community. I thought, prior to the dinner adjournment, that my time would be limited, and the order in which I intended to present my argument in favour of the motion moved by the member for Barossa has become somewhat disorganized. I have previously referred to the publication that gives statistics of the fluoride content in various underground water basins throughout the State. This report was complied under the authority of the Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin, then Minister of Mines, in 1952. On the first page the following appears:

In recent years, the importance of fluorine in natural waters has come to be recognized because of its physiological effects both in man and animals. Fluorosis, the condition arising from fluorine intoxication, has been observed in many parts of the world, and has been studied particularly in the United States of America. The publication is the result of investigation by Dr. L. Keith Ward, former Government Geologist, over a period of several years, and represents the first attempt to evaluate the problem in South Australia.

The publication continues:

It has been found, within comparatively recent years, that certain characteristic symptoms exhibited by both human beings and domestic animals are due to chronic fluorine intoxication. These symptoms include dental abnormalities and, where the fluorosis is more serious, osteosclerosis (especially of cancellous bones). The dental changes are seen not only in "mottled enamel", which is an affection in which the teeth become chalky, opaque and discoloured, but also in the malformation of the teeth in size, shape and position. These symptoms of chronic fluorosis depend on the dose, the time factor, the animal species, the age of the individual, the composition of the diet, and perhaps on other factors. Fluorosis has been observed to occur in many parts of the world and has been studied particularly in the United States of America, the Argentine, Northern Africa (Algeria, Morocco and Tunis), and in Iceland. Symptoms characteristic of chronic fluorosis in human beings are reported from all continents and from many oceanic islands.

It appears certain that most cases of fluorine intoxication arise from ingestion through the gastro-intenstinal tract; but gaseous fluorine compounds may be absorbed through the lungs. Thus, while most cases of fluorosis are traceable to the presence of appreciable proportions of fluorine in drinking water, other cases have been traced to the absorption of fluorine in factories where fluoric dust is produced. Also, in areas where grazing animals feed near these factories, they also may be affected. Thus stock grazing near superphosphate works in France, Germany and Italy, and near aluminium plants (using cryolite) in Italy, Norway and Switzerland are reported to have suffered from fluorosis. These alternative possible sources of intoxication must be borne in mind when the effect of fluorine in waters is being studied.

Although I do not intend to read it all, I have another reference here.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has touched on various reports. I think he had better get back to the basis of the motion.

Mr. HURST: The basis of the motion is that this question should be referred to the people by way of referendum. I believe that, if there is to be a referendum, the people should be fully informed on what is involved.

The SPEAKER: That is a matter at the referendum.

Mr. HURST: Possibly so, but I am saying why I consider the referendum to be necessary. In view of the conflicting views expressed on this subject, I consider that a referendum should be held. As a responsible body, Parliament shold be aware of all the relevant factors involved. That is particularly so in relation to one dealing with the health and rights of the people. Although the Minister of Works, in supporting the Government's action, referred to many countries that had added fluoride to their water supplies, he did not name the countries that had taken fluoride from their water. Of course, each member refers to matters that he considers suit his own ends. I have not time to read the names of the countries that have ceased fluoridating their water supplies, but as many have done that as have added it. Some countries tried fluoridation and then, after holding referenda, decided to cease fluoridating. The Tasmanian Royal Commission found that the fluoride tablet was reasonably effective for a time in Western Australia but that its effect then declined.

The Government's action is a rebuff to the ready response of the people of the metropolitan area to calls made on them in civic affairs. The response of the people to the Government's appeal last year to conserve water showed the civic pride and responsibility of our people, and this pride and responsibility should have been recognized by the present Government before it made its decision on fluoridation. It is still not too late for the Government to campaign in schools and other organizations and, if people were given the opportunity to express their views, the desired results would be obtained without heavy expenditure. The Labor Government was criticized last year because it would not impose water restrictions, and members opposite said, "The public will not respond." This is a defeatist attitude: the public did respond. This is a vital measure, but the Government is depriving the public of the opportunity of voicing its opinion.

I spoke to you, Mr. Speaker, some months ago about this matter. People have told me about the effect of trace elements and fluoride on bones, and I could exhibit examples of these bones. I regret that more people have not paid attention to this problem. Many members of this House represent country people, many of whom are experiencing problems in connection with fluoride and trace elements and are spending much money to solve these problems. If the Attorney-General had any thought for his supporters he would not treat this matter lightly. I have been informed by a person who has done much research into various aspects of trace elements that there is a grazing property near the metropolitan area where the underground water has 1.4 parts a million of fluoride. This high concentration causes large losses of lambs at birth, and the grazier has tried to evolve means of adding minerals to the water to counter its fluoride content. I am pleased to say that his research has been effective.

The grazier tried to have the bones analysed at the Government laboratory but he was told that it did not have sufficient facilities to do the work. Because such facilities are essential to public health, they should be provided before we race on to a measure that will result in more charges being imposed on the public, because fluoridation will have to be paid for. We as a responsible Parliament must look to methods whereby we can get the utmost efficiency and value for our money without putting an additional impost on the people, which would be unfair. It seems that the country people are again to be overlooked. If this thing is as valuable as members opposite say it is, why is it that only one section of the State is to benefit as a result of it?

I acknowledge that there are areas where the water supply contains the required quantity of fluoride. However, if the Government is going to view this thing on a State-wide basis, and if it is convinced that its action will be so beneficial, why should it not see that everyone gets fair and just treatment? However, I doubt that it will be so beneficial. With those few remarks, I commend to members the motion of the member for Barossa. If members are going to act as statesmen, they should at least have cognizance of the opinion of the other people on such a complex question as this. Parliament should give the people an opportunity to make up their own minds, for many people do not want other people's ideas thrust down their throat.

Mr. ARNOLD (Chaffey): During the last few months we have all received much literature on the pros and cons of fluoride, and all members have spent much time studying this literature. While we have been given lists of very eminent people in our community who are totally opposed to fluoridation of the water supply, we have also been told of vast numbers of eminent people who are completely in favour of fluoridation.

We need only one part a million of fluoride in our water supply for the prevention of dental caries, and this is indeed a minute amount when we consider that the average concentration of fluorine in tea, for example, is about 100 parts a million. Fluoride itself is not something that is foreign to the body, for it is an essential part of our make-up and without the balance of fluoride in our system we would have a considerable medical problem.

Various doctors have told me that in their opinion the fractures of bones and limbs, especially broken legs, in elderly people are caused not so much by the result of falls but by bones fracturing and giving away, thus causing people to fall. This, in their opinion, is due to a breakdown of the structure of the requirements of these various things such as fluoride that are necesary to maintain the strength of our bones.

The report of the Tasmanian Royal Commission on fluoridation also supports this view, as it states that fluorine is vital to skeletal and dental health. In the summary to that report, the following is stated:

Fluoridation at optimum levels will act to reduce the prevalence of caries in the community. The evidence substantiating this claim is overwhelming and cannot be doubted . . . It is also confirmed by clinical observation and experience.

Another extract from the report is as follows:

The extent of the benefit to be anticipated from community fluoridation will be of the order forecast by Arnold in 1943: that is, amongst other benefits, it will lessen the prevalence of caries among 12 to 14-year-old children by a figure which will approximate 60 per cent.

The following extract, which I consider important, is to be found at page 239:

Whether or not to fluoridate communal water supplies requires a decision on a major matter of public health and a decision should be made by Parliament. It is not a matter of water supply for water purposes and to regard it as such is to confuse the principle with the vehicle of administration. The decision required transcends the capacity of local government. It is not a suitable subject to be decided by popular referendum and in any case to entrust the decision of such a serious matter of public health to a referendum would be an abrogation of Parliamentary responsibility.

That is probably one of the most important points brought out in this report. Much of the fear I have discovered in the community arising from the proposed introduction of fluoride stems from a lack of knowledge by the public. In many instances, when I have quoted from this report in answer to queries raised by the public on this matter, they have been completely satisfied with the answers given in this report and, as a consequence, have been happy to see the Government proceed with this project, although five minutes earlier they had been opposed to it, largely through lack of knowledge. I believe that the summary of this report by the Tasmanian Royal Commission should be published in the press for the benefit of the people of South Australia. Then, I think that many of their fears would disappear. I support the amendment.

Mr. FERGUSON (Yorke Peninsula): On October 4 of this year the *News* made an accurate forecast: that the bid for a poll on fluoride would fail. The press report of that date is as follows:

The move by Mrs. Molly Byrne for a referendum to decide whether fluoride should be added to South Australia's water supplies seems destined for defeat.

Before the *News* could make that forecast, it must have had information that this motion would be defeated. The report continues:

The only Government back-bencher in the House of Assembly who it was considered might vote with the Opposition said today he would not support Mrs. Byrne.

That Government back-bencher was I. Early on the morning of October 4, a staff member of the *News* telephoned me, saying, "You are aware that Mrs. Byrne, the member for Barossa, has moved a motion in the House for a referendum on fluoride." After I had replied that I was aware of that fact, the person concerned told me the member for Barossa had said that, if at least one member of the Government supported her motion, she thought it would be carried, and he then asked, "In view of the fact that on the Select Committee you opposed the fluoridation of the water supplies, how do you feel about supporting Mrs. Byrne's motion for a referendum?" I said that I would vote against the motion because I believed that members were elected to Parliament for the purpose of making decisions on behalf of their electors—

The Hon. B. H. Teusner: Hear, hear!

Mr. FERGUSON: —and not to spend huge sums in having referenda to decide matters that could easily be decided by members themselves. Previous speakers have already said that the Tasmanian Royal Commissioner stated definitely that this was not a matter to be decided by way of a referendum, because it was too emotional. The member for Semaphore has said that if the people are to indicate, through a referendum, whether or not fluoride should be added to the water supplies, they should know the facts of the matter. However, if any one should know those facts, it should be members of Parliament, representing their constituents.

Mr. Riches: To which member do we listen: the member for Semaphore or the member for Yorke Peninsula?

Mr. FERGUSON: The member for Stuart can make up his own mind on that.

The SPEAKER: At present we are listening to the member for Yorke Peninsula.

Mr. FERGUSON: I have no doubt that fluoride benefits children's teeth, but I am opposed to administering it through the whole of the State's water supplies. I believe it has been estimated that only 1 per cent of the State's water supply containing fluoride would be consumed by human beings, the rest being used in gardens and for stock and industrial purposes. Being in an opposing mood today, I oppose the motion.

Mrs. BYRNE (Barossa): I have listened to the debate, in which nine members and I took

part. Had this one and a half hours' extra time not been provided this evening, only two hours would have been spent discussing this matter, which is a matter of magnitude and importance. The question whether fluoride should be added to the water supplies of the State interests everyone because it will affect everyone. My action has caused press articles to appear. I point out that one recent press article (the member for Yorke Peninsula referred to another) was inaccurate in some respects. My moving this motion has caused thousands of circular letters to be sent to members, which shows that the motion has caused much public interest. As I have received, in addition to the circular letters, many personal letters from people in various parts of the State, I believe that my action in moving the motion was correct. When I moved the motion I said that I believed the Government's action was high-handed and arbitrary, and I still hold that opinion.

It has been said that we now have had an opportunity to discuss this matter here. I admit that, when the Premier announced the proposal to fluoridate the water supply, he said that members could ask questions or move motions in relation to it. However, had I not moved my motion, no discussion would have taken place in this House on the matter. Although an amendment to the motion has been moved, that would not have been possible had I not moved the motion in the first place. The Minister of Works made the main speech on behalf of the Government. In his informative address, he referred six times to the report of the Tasmanian Royal Commission on this subject, and he used that as a basis to bolster the Government's action. On August 6, the member for Hindmarsh asked the Premier the following question:

I understand that, prior to the Premier's announcing to the House that the Government had decided to fluoridate water supplies in South Australia, Cabinet had studied the report of the Tasmanian Royal Commission on fluoridation. Will the Premier say how many copies of that report were in Cabinet's possession and when those copies were ordered to be printed?

In reply, the Premier said:

I am sorry if I gave the impression that the Government had studied the Tasmanian report. I think at no time did I state that. However, I received one inquiry on the weekend along these lines from a person who was interested in the matter and who believed that we had based our action on the Tasmanian report. We have not done this and it is somewhat coincidental that the report arrived at the same time as the Government arrived at its decision. I can say that we did not base our action on this report.

Therefore, on the Premier's own admission, the Tasmanian Royal Commission Report was not considered when the Government took action, and the Government has not given the House the basis for its decision. The member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Evans) said, when moving the amendment, that some of the material was boring and some hard to follow. He was referring to some of the literature received by members, and he said that this was especially so when one authority contradicted another. I said when I moved the motion that a referendum should be held on this subject because experts were divided in their opinions. I have heard it said outside the House that some of these people are crackpots, but this seems to be a loose term used to bolster an argument and criticize those opposed to a certain idea.

I also said that Government members were divided, and this has been proved by a vote taken in another Chamber. I also said that Opposition members were divided on the issue. Indeed, I have been told that Cabinet was divided when the vote was taken. The Government has not a mandate for its action, because fluoridation was not mentioned by either major political Party at the last election and the electors did not consider the matter. If they had considered it, they might have voted differently. I again point out that the Government is a minority Government. It did not have the right to make the decision that it made: the matter should be decided by the people.

The Minister of Works, the member for Onkaparinga, and two other members said that members of Parliament should be prepared to accept their responsibility. However, members on both sides who have been in Parliament for more than one term have already accepted this responsibility. During the term of office of the previous Government, controversial matters, such as the extension of liquor trading hours, the introduction of dog racing control, the establishment of the Totalizator Agency Board, and Sunday sport, were considered and never did the members who now support a referendum on fluoridation shirk their responsibilities. Therefore, this statement is unfounded. I have already outlined my reason for proposing a referendum: the public should be consulted because the Government does not have a mandate to fluoridate the water supply—it was not an election issue. Consequently, the electors have not had an opportunity to reflect

their views on this subject through the ballot-box. I am sure the public is quite capable of making a rational decision on this issue, and it should be given the opportunity to do so. We should accept our responsibility as members of Parliament: we are not here to be dictators.

The House divided on the question "That the words proposed by the member for Onkaparinga to be struck out stand part of the motion":

Ayes (14)—Messrs. Broomhill and Burdon, Mrs. Byrne (teller), Messrs. Casey, Clark, Hughes, Hurst, Langley, Lawn, Loveday, McKee, Riches, Ryan, and Virgo.

Noes (23)—Messrs. Allen, Arnold, Brookman, Corcoran, Coumbe, Dunstan, Edwards, Evans (teller), Ferguson, Freebairn, Giles, Hall, Hudson, Jennings, McAnaney, Millhouse, Nankivell, Pearson, and Rodda, Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Teusner, Venning, and Wardle.

Majority of 9 for the Noes.

Question thus resolved in the negative.

The House divided on the question "That the words proposed by the member for Onkaparinga to be inserted be so inserted":

Ayes (21)—Messrs. Allen, Arnold, Brookman, Corcoran, Coumbe, Dunstan, Edwards, Evans (teller), Freebairn, Hall, Hudson, Jennings, McAnaney, Millhouse, Nankivell, Pearson, and Rodda, Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Teusner, Venning, and Wardle.

Noes (16)—Messrs. Broomhill and Burdon, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Casey, Clark, Ferguson, Giles, Hughes, Hurst, Langley, Lawn, Loveday, McKee, Riches, Ryan, and Virgo.

Majority of 5 for the Ayes.

Question thus resolved in the affirmative; amendment thus carried.

The House divided on the motion as amended:

Ayes (21)—Messrs. Allen, Arnold, Brookman, Corcoran, Coumbe, Dunstan, Edwards, Evans (teller), Freebairn, Hall, Hudson, Jennings, McAnaney, Millhouse, Nankivell, Pearson, and Rodda, Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Teusner, Venning, and Wardle.

Noes (16)—Messrs. Broomhill and Burdon, Mrs. Byrne (teller), Messrs. Casey, Clark, Ferguson, Giles, Hughes, Hurst, Langley, Lawn, Loveday, McKee, Riches, Ryan, and Virgo.

Majority of 5 for the Ayes.

Motion as amended thus carried.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9.58 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, November 14, at 2 p.m.