HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, November 19, 1968

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

QUESTIONS

PAROLE

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I refer to questions I have asked over the past two weeks about the position of prisoners seeking probation. The Attorney-General said that this matter was being urgently dealt with. However, the relatives of some of the men have been alarmed to be informed that it is not likely that any action will be completed this year. Can the Attorney-General say when we may expect either an alteration to the regulations or an amendment to the Act so that the matter may be speedily disposed of?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: For the life of me, I cannot understand where a rumour such as that which the Leader has now repeated in this House could have come from; it certainly did not come from me. As I think I explained in the House last week, Cabinet instructed me to bring the law into conformity with what has been the practice and indeed with what successive Governments have believed the practice to be. Immediately after I received those instructions, I conferred with the Crown Solicitor and the Parliamentary Draftsman with a view to drawing an amendment to, I think, the Criminal Law Consolidation Act, as that is the most proper way to get over the problem which has arisen. I think I did that last Tuesday. I must confess that I have not discussed the matter again with either of those officers, but I have every expectation that whatever needs to be done is being done, because I emphasized the need for speed. As soon as I have a Bill to introduce into the House, it will be introduced. As I think we have another four weeks of sitting likely before the Christmas break, I hope we can get the matter fixed up in that time.

EMPLOYMENT

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: I noticed in this morning's newspaper that, according to the Commonwealth Minister of Labour and National Service, there had been an appreciable drop in the number of persons unemployed in most States, including South Australia, and that the percentage drop was greatest in South Australia, there being a decrease of 491, leaving a total of 5,716 unemployed. Yesterday a building contractor in the Barossa Valley told me that his building activity had been retarded by his inability to get skilled tradesmen. Can the Minister of Labour and Industry comment on the South Australian unemployment figures and on the availability of skilled tradesmen in the building industry in this State?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: The honourable member is correct in both assertions. I noted with much interest the report in this morning's newspaper of a statement by Mr. Bury, the Commonwealth Minister for Labour and National Service, and I had some notes prepared, because I thought the information would be of particular interest to honourable members. I can also give the honourable member information about the building industry. Mr. Bury's statement recorded that, for the fourth successive month, the employment situation in South Australia had improved substantially. During October there was a reduction of 491 in the number of persons registered. This means that, in the past four months, the number of persons registered for employment in South Australia has decreased by 2,643. The present number registered for employment (5,716) is the lowest number recorded at the end of October since 1965. The number of adult males decreased by 100 during the month, 166 fewer junior males were registered, and there was a decrease of 68 adult females and 157 junior females. Even though there was this decrease of 491 in the number of persons registered for employment at the end of October, 310 more vacancies than had been available a month earlier were recorded. This increase during the month of October follows increases in each of the three preceding months and, notwithstanding a reduction of 2,643 in the number of persons seeking employment, 809 more vacancies are available than were available at the end of June. It is important to note also that the number of persons receiving unemployment benefits continued to decrease, there having been a decrease of 271 for the month. In the last four months the number of persons receiving unemployment benefits has decreased by 1,325. The number of persons registered for employment in South Australia was 1.15 per cent of the estimated work force, the lowest it has been for many years. Honourable members will realize that the building industry has been going through an extremely difficult period. Mr.

Bury, in his news release from Canberra, also gave figures dealing with this position. We are already noting some shortages of skilled tradesmen in the metal industry, and the position in the building industry has, for the first time for a lengthy period, reversed compared with that of a few months ago, and the table of skilled persons employed in the building industry shows that the number registered for employment in South Australia now has been reduced to 131 and the number of vacancies in the same classification has increased to 190.

POLICE INVESTIGATION

Mr. HUDSON: Earlier this year a person, who shall be anonymous, was arrested on a charge and, before any conviction was recorded, he was involved in a line-up in the presence of police officers. The individual concerned then wrote to the Commissioner of Police about the matter and was informed, in a reply by Superintendent Lenton, that the line-up was to enable police officers to familiarize themselves with the identity of members of the criminal classes. The individual concerned was guilty, but the line-up occurred before any conviction was recorded in the court and before the individual was classed as a criminal. The matter came to the attention of the Council for Civil Liberties through this individual's lawyer, and that council ultimately took up the matter with the Chief Secretary in a letter written on July 13, 1968. The aspect raised in this letter related to the practice (or what was assumed to be the practice) of requiring a line-up and what steps would subsequently be taken, if a man was not convicted, in order to remove the impression in the minds of those who viewed the line-up that the person was a member of the criminal classes. The Chief Secretary replied to this letter in a way suggesting that any individual who considered that police officers had improperly exceeded their authority on any occasion should seek legal advice with a view to instituting legal proceedings against the officer or officers concerned. The effect of the reply was to ignore the problem raised by the Council for Civil Liberties, namely, the general practice of lining up before police officers someone who had been arrested, to enable the officers to familiarize themselves with alleged members of the criminal classes. This seems to be an undesirable practice, particularly if done before any conviction has been recorded.

The SPEAKER: Order! Can the honourable member ask his question?

Mr. HUDSON: Will the Premier obtain from the Chief Secretary a decision on the general policy of whether this practice is desirable?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I shall be pleased to take up this matter with my colleague, but I think my inquiry would be facilitated if I were given, in confidence, the name of the person to whom the honourable member refers. The details would probably be known to the Chief Secretary but, in order to avoid a lengthy search and to facilitate the inquiry, I should be pleased if the honourable member could make that information available to me.

MURRAY BRIDGE WATER SUPPLY

Mr. WARDLE: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question concerning the replacement of cast water pipes in Fourth Street, Murray Bridge?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: On October 15, 1968, Cabinet approval was given to lay 7,900ft. of 4in. asbestos-cement main replacing 4in. and 3in. unlined cast-iron mains in various streets of Murray Bridge. Fourth Street, between Sixth and Seventh Streets, was one of the streets included in this approval. The Engineering and Water Supply Department has programmed to carry out the re-lays during the latter part of this financial year in the May-June period, which should cause a minimum of inconvenience to consumers.

RENMARK IRRIGATION

Mr. CORCORAN: Has the Minister of Irrigation a reply to the question I asked last week about the replacement by pipeline of the open-channel system of water reticulation in the Government-irrigated areas?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The department has given consideration to the replacement of open channels with pipe main when the channel system needs to be replaced. In fact, over the past eight years portions of the channel systems at Barmera, Berri, Chaffey and Waikerie have been replaced with pipe main especially where the open channels were through township areas and such replacement could be effected in conjunction with new pumping facilities and rising main. Forward planning over the next five years includes proposals to replace more open channel with pipe main and this will no doubt be implemented provided funds are available. In addition, arrangements are in hand to collate the

data required to plan a long-term programme of headwork replacement. Information for such a programme needs to be in considerable detail and in such form that the department will be able to make a proper assessment of requirements, fix priorities for, and within, districts and use the best materials available whether such materials be in the form of pipe or channel, having regard to the relevant merits and economics of the water conveyance methods open to use.

ASBESTOS DUST

Mr. EVANS: It was reported in the *News* on November 14 that a strike might occur at the Whyalla shipyards, because of health hazards caused by asbestos dust. It has also been reported to me that studies of asbestos miners in Western Australia, South Africa, England and America have shown a high rate of death and disablement among those exposed to the dust for any considerable period. In 1954 Dr. I. J. Selikov, head of the Division of Environmental Medicine at Mt. Sinai School of Medicine, carried out a survey on 17 workers in a New York asbestos insulation factory, and this survey now shows frightening results. Today, 11 of those people are dead, four having died of lung cancer, three of another type of cancer, two of asbestosis, and one of mesothelioma; in addition, two of the remaining six are disabled with fibrosis in the lung, and one has recovered from cancer surgery. Will the Premier ask the Minister of Health to have investigated the suggested connection between asbestos dust and the diseases to which I have referred?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The honourable member has raised an important matter concerning health hazards arising from work methods. Although I know that the Minister of Labour and Industry occasionally deals with this matter, I will bring the honourable member's question to the notice of the Minister of Health and, if any liaison is required with the Minister of Labour and Industry, I am sure it will be forthcoming. I will obtain a report for the honourable member.

WESTERN TEACHERS COLLEGE

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: Can the Minister of Education say whether the Government still intends to build the new Western Teachers College on the site of the old Adelaide Gaol or whether some other site has been selected? Will she also say whether the Government is considering an approach to the Commonwealth Government for additional assistance, in order that the existing Western Teachers College may be replaced earlier than otherwise would be the case?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: I have not much more to add to the answer I gave the honourable member some months ago, except that Cabinet has approved of my asking that investigations be carried out regarding an alternative site. This was necessary because it did not appear that the Adelaide Gaol site would become available, at least for some years. Regarding the honourable member's second question, the funds for this triennium from the Commonwealth Government for such purposes have been completely committed, so it will be necessary to apply to the Commonwealth Government for funds in the 1970-72 triennium to build a new Western Teachers College.

SUPERPHOSPHATE REBATE

Mr. VENNING: I understand the Minister of Lands has a reply to my question of August 27 about extending the closing date for rebates on superphosphate deliveries from the end of December to the end of January. At present, the companies make rebates on superphosphate delivered by the end of December, but at this time there is a high demand for rail trucking during the harvest period. Will the Minister give me the reply?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The Minister of Agriculture reports that the rebate on superphosphate was introduced in the 1963-64 season by the South Australian superphosphate manufacturers to encourage a spread of deliveries over a longer period of the year, thereby avoiding problems for manufacturers, rail and road carriers, contract spreaders and the customers. The application of the rebate, which has been operating between August and December (inclusive) in each year since its introduction, has had the desired effect; but manufacturers are doubtful whether an extension of the period of the rebate to the end of January, as suggested by the honourable member, would assist in correcting the imbalance of deliveries and make additional rail trucks available for the cartage of grain. In fact, the contrary view has been expressed that, having regard to the excellent harvest prospects this year, it will be necessary to encourage deliveries before the end of December to relieve congestion on transport systems during the autumn.

STUDENT TEACHERS

Mr. CLARK: Over the weekend I was contacted by a constituent from Gawler whose son is a first-year teachers college student who travels to and from Gawler each day. The constituent told me that her son's travelling allowance claim for the first term was queried but eventually paid, but he is still awaiting payment in respect of his second term travelling claim. I understand, incidentally, that other students are also waiting to be paid. Will the Minister of Education ascertain the reason for this in general and, in particular, if I give her the name of the Gawler student concerned will she see why his travelling allowance for the second term has not yet been paid?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: To answer the general part of the question, I will call for a report on this matter and, if the honourable member will give me the name of the Gawler student concerned, I will also have that inquiry made.

CHARLESTON SCHOOL

Mr. GILES: On visiting the Charleston school this morning, although I was most impressed by what I saw inside the school building, I was not impressed by the toilet facilities. On two of the toilet buildings the brickwork is loose and it is simple to push bricks out of the wall with one finger. As there is no mortar at all between some of the courses, a dangerous situation exists. I understand that an approach has been made to the Public Buildings Department for something to be done about it. As the position is dangerous, particularly for smaller children, will the Minister of Education see whether repair work can be speeded up?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: I will call for a report in order to try to expedite this matter.

SELECT COMMITTEES

The SPEAKER: On Thursday last, the honourable member for Adelaide (Mr. Lawn) asked me whether a witness before a Select Committee of the House of Assembly would be entitled to challenge the impartiality of a member of the Select Committee should the witness feel justified in doing so and, if he were entitled to do this, how should the challenge be made. As I promised to look into the matter, I have honoured that undertaking, but I should like it to be understood that my action in answering a hypothetical proposition should not be taken as a precedent to permit the submission of further hypotheses for examination by the Chair. The prime object in bringing witnesses before a Select Committee is obviously to enable evidence to be tendered which is relevant to the subject of inquiry before the committee. To complain that a member who had been nominated a member of a Select Committee of the House of Commons would be unable to act impartially upon it has been held by the Commons to constitute a breach of the privileges of that House, and this seems to me to be an adequate explanation why this House, whose privileges are those of the House of Commons, has made no express provision to enable a witness to challenge the impartiality of a member of a Select Committee.

Whether a witness would be allowed in practice to make submissions, in evidence before a Select Committee, which called into question the impartiality of any of its members would be a matter initially to be decided by the members of that committee. In the somewhat discursive informality of Select Committee proceedings, it is conceivable that a witness may well feel at liberty to make such observations. Any member of Parliament worth his salt will usually have formulated opinions on any important subject of the day. However, when a member is appointed by the House to a Select Committee, he is enjoined by conscience and concept of duty to evaluate the evidence submitted to the committee and to exercise his judgment on the issues raised in the light of all the information and evidence available to him. In my long experience in the House of Assembly, I have found members on Select Committees to be so motivated. If warranted by the circumstances, an explanation of this general Parliamentary attitude and approach might serve to allay any fears that witnesses may have as to the treatment of their evidence.

In the 111 years' history of the House of Assembly, no punitive action against a stranger has been taken by the House in pursuance of its privilege powers. On only one occasion—in 1870—have any persons been adjudged by the House to be guilty of a contempt of this House; and in that case gratuitous observations made by the publishers of the *Wallaroo Times* included an allegation that "certain members of Parliament, being in a chronic state of impecuniosity, have basely and treacherously agreed to sell their votes for a mess of pottage". No further action

was taken by the House. It will be appreciated that the final decision in all matters of privilege rests with the House itself. I do not intend here to dilate upon the complex and controversial subject of Parliamentary privilege. It is my view that Parliamentary privilege ought always to be kept in proper perspective, as an ultimate sanction to be invoked only in a confrontation of some gravity. However, in the context of the question raised by the honourable member for Adelaide, it may be timely to refer to some pronouncements on the Law of Parliamentary Privilege made in 1959 by the then Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain, the Right Honourable the Viscount Kilmuir, G.C.V.O.:

Another very difficult problem for Parliament is that of deciding where to draw the line between legitimate criticism of Parliament and its members and attacks requiring action for a contempt . . . Although no two cases are identical, one can say broadly that the historic attitude of Parliament has been to require an imputation of *mala fides* and also clarity and definiteness in the imputation before action is taken on an attack. As I have often said, most politicians hope that before the sausage machine of politics finally expels them, it will have given them a thick skin, and I think that it is helpful to everyone to remember in this connection the wise words of Lord Atkin with regard to criticism of the judiciary:

> But whether the authority and position of an individual judge, or the due administration of justice, is concerned, no wrong is committed by any member of the public who exercises the ordinary right of criticizing, in good faith, in private or public, the public act done in the seat of justice. The path of criticism is a public way: the wrong headed are permitted to err therein: provided that members of the public abstain from imputing improper motives to those taking part in the administration of justice, and are genuinely exercising a right of criticism, and not acting in malice or attempting to impair the administration of justice, they are immune. Justice is not a cloistered virtue; she must be allowed to suffer the scrutiny and respectful, even though outspoken, comments of ordinary men.

Lord Kilmuir continues:

. . . Most importantly, Parliament is very jealous of its own reputation for honest and fair dealing . . . In the long run, as with other great organs of the State, so with Parliament. Power must be entrusted to it and in the last resort the only safeguard against abuse lies in the commonsense and responsibility of its members.

ADVERTISING

Mr. VIRGO: A couple of weeks ago a newspaper report contained details of touting for funeral business in Sydney, and, to say the least, I think that report met with a very cold reception in South Australia. Unfortunately, it appears that something similar is taking place in this State. My attention has been directed to a booklet (and I will hand this to the Attorney-General if he has not already seen a copy) entitled "When Need Arises", which is put out by a company of funeral directors. I am informed that it is presently being distributed on a house-to-house basis touting for general business. To say the least, I think this is one of the most revolting, uncouth, unethical types of advertising that can be undertaken, particularly as the book requires to be filled in a person's most personal and private details as well as requesting the person concerned not to place it in a safe deposit box, with a trustee or with a solicitor. Therefore, one wonders whether there is something in it that solicitors should not see. I am concerned about the effect, on a person who is aged or who is in ill health, of a booklet of this kind, stating the type of arrangement he or she ought to make for a funeral. One wonders whether the distributors of the booklet are instituting a "die now and pay later" programme! Will the Attorney-General urgently and seriously consider whether he can prevent this type of material being thrust on the people of this State?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: If the honourable member gives me the pamphlet, I will certainly look at it with a view to considering whether action should be taken.

GOOLWA BARRAGES

Mr. McANANEY: Last week I asked a question about the effect on fishermen of the opening and closing of the Goolwa barrages. The people on the Murray River and around the lakes are always anxious to know when the barrages are opened or closed, and much criticism of the department would be avoided if this information were broadcast by the Australian Broadcasting Commission. Will the Minister of Works find out whether particulars of the dates of opening and closing of the barrages can be given when A.B.C. news reports of river levels are broadcast?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I will find out whether this additional information can be given. I said, in reply to the honourable member's earlier question about fishermen, that the A.B.C. would have difficulty because of the short notice involved. However, as the honourable member has now couched his question in much wider terms, I will consider the matter again.

INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

Mr. HURST: The Minister of Labour and Industry was good enough to invite me, with others, to attend the seminar on industrial accidents now being held. I congratulate the Minister and his department on organizing this seminar, which is one of several that have been held regularly since 1962. Has the Minister any information about the improvement in the industrial accident position in South Australia?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I commend the honourable member for his interest in this matter and I know that for some years he has been personally involved in it. I am pleased that the conference, which opened this morning and which the honourable member was unable to attend, has so far been a great success, about 500 delegates from all States except Tasmania having attended. The figures that the honourable member asked for were released at 10 a.m. today by the Commonwealth Minister for Labour and National Service (Mr. Bury), dealing with the statistical position as at June 30 this year. These figures show a marked improvement in the industrial accident rate in South Australia. Let me say at once that I attribute this improvement to greater awareness in industry regarding the incidence of accidents, consequent upon not only the activities of the Department of Labour and Industry over a number of years but also the co-operation of organizations (such at the National Safety Council) and of management and labour. It is most encouraging that statistics published by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics show a reduction of 8 per cent in the number of industrial accidents involving loss of time from work of one week or more. A reduction in the number of such accidents from 10,453 in 1966-67 to 9,562 in 1967-68 occurred, notwithstanding an increase in the number of persons in civilian employment in South Australia of 13,000 (an increase of 4 per cent) from June, 1967, to June, 1968. This reduction followed decreases in the two previous financial years. Indeed, in the three years since 1964-65 the total number of accidents has been reduced by about 20 per cent, the number of accidents in manufacturing industries having been reduced by 25 per cent, from 5,478 to last year's figure of 4,105. I consider this position particularly pleasing, as it supports the industrial accident prevention and education programme introduced some years ago.

The number of fatal accidents in 1967-68 was only 12 and, although that was too many, it was fewer than half the number of fatalities in 1962-63, when 25 occurred, and the total number of effective workmen's compensation claims lodged decreased from 56,500 in 1966-67 to 54,200 in 1967-68, despite the increase of 4 per cent in the number of people working in South Australia. Although I appreciate all that is being done by all sectors of industry, much remains to be done, and the number of accidents can be reduced only if everyone is vigilant. Accidents are likely to occur the moment there is any slackening of effort.

ROAD WIDTHS

Mr. EDWARDS: Most country roads have been constructed to a width of three chains or five chains so that the roads may be used as stock routes. However, as such roads are not now used for this purpose, they have become extreme fire hazards in years such as this. Therefore, to help eliminate this hazard, will the Attorney-General ask the Minister of Roads and Transport to consider having new roads in country areas constructed to a width of only one chain?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: Yes.

JUVENILE EMPLOYMENT

Mr. McKEE: Has the Minister of Labour and Industry a reply to my question about the employment of female juveniles in Port Pirie?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: The honourable member asked a series of questions, one having been whether I could tell him how many married women whose husbands were in full employment were employed in the Public Service. I said that it would be difficult to obtain this information, and this has been found to be correct: it is impossible to obtain that information except by asking each married woman employed by the Government whether her husband is in employment. The question regarding employment at Port Pirie was referred to the Regional Director of the Commonwealth Department of Labour and National Service, who states that the Commonwealth Employment Service office at Port Pirie services a very wide area and separate records of applicants for employment are not kept in respect of any one town in that area. Therefore, the information sought could not be obtained without much detailed work. The honourable member asked about preference being given to single women over married

women, but I point out that the Public Service Act passed in 1967 removed any restriction on the employment of married women in the Public Service. Further, under the Industrial Code, which was also passed last year, the section dealing with equal pay extended to women the opportunities already extended to men.

Mr. McKEE: I should like the Minister to give my apologies to the Regional Director of the Department of Labour and National Service, who stated that it would be impossible to obtain the information I sought about employment of juveniles at Port Pirie because records were not kept for particular towns in the area served by the Port Pirie office of the Commonwealth Employment Service. True, it is a big area and, doubtless, the unemployment figure is kept in one office. However, will the Minister find out from the Regional Director how many juveniles or single girls are unemployed in the area?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I will try to get this specific information. I know what the honourable member is asking for. Apparently, he missed my earlier comment that in the last month the number of junior females registered for employment in South Australia had decreased by 157. However, the honourable member is now referring specifically to Port Pirie, and I will take this question further.

ROSEWORTHY COLLEGE

Mr. FREEBAIRN: As representations have been made to me about women not being accepted as students at Roseworthy Agricultural College, will the Minister of Lands ask the Minister of Agriculture whether he plans to provide for women as students at that college?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: Yes.

PORT ADELAIDE SCHOOL

Mr. RYAN: At a meeting of the Port Adelaide Girls Technical High School Council, of which I am a member, the council decided to install an air-conditioner in the canteen shell that has been one of the first to be incorporated in a school building under the new scheme. A wellknown architect made certain recommendations; three quotes were received by the council; and the architect then recommended the type of air-conditioner and the firm to install it. The brand of air-conditioner was extremely wellknown and the architect recommended a highly reputable firm, which has installed many of these air-conditioners in numerous schools in this State. Before placing the order on the quote given, which was the price at that time (and this is an important point), a letter was written to the Education Department seeking approval for the installation of the air-conditioner in the canteen. As no subsidy would be payable on the cost, all that was necessary was the department's approval. An officer of the Public Buildings Department inspected the building, but since then nothing has been heard of this matter although the written application was made on October 24. The council is alarmed because, as it will pay for the air-conditioner, it wishes to install it in order to combat the hot weather, a burst of which we have had recently. Can the Minister of Works say why this delay has occurred, as all that was necessary was for the department to approve the installation of the air-conditioner, many of which have been installed in recent years in Government departments and Government buildings?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: This is the first I have heard of this item and I do not know why the delay has occurred, but I will immediately ascertain whether this matter cannot be brought to a fruitful conclusion.

HOLDEN HILL HOUSES

Mr. JENNINGS: On November 5 I asked the Minister of Housing a question concerning an inspection that he made, with the member for Barossa and with me, of houses in the Strathmont and Holden Hill area, and I received a reply that I made available to as many people in that area as I could. I have received many expressions of disappointment at the Minister's reply and I, too, was disappointed at it, even though I know he was confronted with a difficult problem. Nevertheless, showing great enthusiasm in pursuit of this matter, he worked hard and co-operated as far as he could. The Minister amplified privately the reply he gave in this House, but I cannot use publicly what he said to me in private. However, as I think it is fair to say that the Minister's reply was fairly vague, will he elaborate on it now?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I think the honourable member appreciates that the problem as we saw it, and as he knows it to be, is one that does not lend itself either readily, or even after exhaustive examination, to a simple solution. I think that is recognized by the owners of properties in that area and, indeed,

this is probably one of the principal reasons for their concern. I do not know, nor can I get anyone to suggest to me, any way of remedying the situation, at least in the short term, other than by virtual demolition, and rebuilding on a type of sub-frame basis that would take the whole of the load bearing so as to remove any effect of soil movement on the structure. As that solution is impracticable, we are forced to look at what measures are available to us in order to alleviate the situation. I say "alleviate", because at this time I think there is no other word that I can logically use. I told the honourable member in conversation, and repeat, that I am concerned to see (and I know the General Manager of the Housing Trust is concerned to see) that everything practicable that can be done is done. In the last week or 10 days I have not discussed the problem with the General Manager. The honourable member did not say whether there was any lack of activity by the trust in the area, nor did he say anything about any complaints on that score. However, if he does have any comment to make publicly or privately on that matter I shall be glad to hear him.

Mr. Jennings: At any time?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes. I believe, and I think this is the honest view of the trust, that it has no desire to side-step this problem, but desires to solve it in every practicable way, and that is my view of the matter. I think the honourable member appreciates that that statement is correct. If at any time there is any matter to discuss with me I welcome the honourable member's mentioning it, and I will immediately discuss it again with the Chairman of the trust, because I know he is as concerned as I am to see that what can be done is done. More than that, with the best will in the world, I cannot say.

Mrs. BYRNE: On October 15, I asked the Minister of Housing about 63 brick-veneer houses built by the Housing Trust in an area at Holden Hill bordered by Southern Terrace, Lyons Road and Valiant Road, and I requested that, as there was evidence of cracking in some of the houses, arrangements be extended to the occupants of these houses similar to those made between the trust and occupants of houses in an adjoining subdivision at Holden Hill. The Minister replied that, when visiting this area on October 21, he would inspect some of these houses and examine the matter after the visit. The Minister will be aware that during the course of his visit to Holden Hill he inspected two houses in this particular brick-veneer subdivision. Can he now say whether similar arrangements to those already outlined have been extended to the subdivision in question?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Although I would have to check on the locality to ensure that I am correct in this matter, I understand that the general policy of the trust is that the area I inspected, and probably also the adjoining area, are included in the trust's maintenance programme. I am not aware of any part of the area in that general locality to which the trust is not prepared to extend the same conditions. If the trust is not attending to any problem in that locality, and if the honourable member will tell me about it, I will discuss it with the General Manager. However, concerning that general area, I believe the trust's policy is a common one in respect of owners of houses.

PORT AUGUSTA BARYTES

Mr. RICHES: Has the Premier a reply to the question I recently asked about a report concerning a Melbourne firm's establishing a barytes works at Port Augusta?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The report quoted from the Melbourne *Age* cannot be substantiated. There are no known areas near Port Augusta containing significant deposits of barytes, nor are any mineral claims or leases held by the company named or by the gentleman reported to be associated with it. Total Australian production of barytes is about 15,000 tons a year for all purposes, the great bulk of this being produced in this State.

ATHLETICS FIELD

Mr. CASEY: Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked last week about the desirability of the South Australian Amateur Athletic Association's obtaining an additional field?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: There is no record in the Chief Secretary's Department or the Premier's Department of a request for assistance in establishing an additional field for the South Australian Amateur Athletic Association.

CANNERY CLOSURE

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Has the Premier a reply to my recent question about the closure of the Moray Park cannery?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Much of the fruit latterly supplied to the Moray Park cannery came from growers already members of the Riverland Fruit Products Co-operative or the Jon Preserving Co-operative, and no particular problem will arise in diversion of their produce. Further applications from these suppliers for membership of Riverland Co-operative are likely to be approved if made within the next three or four weeks. Of the fruit supplied to Moray Park by persons not members of the two co-operatives, there is available a ready alternative outlet for apricots and pears in drying. For some small suppliers of peaches, the share subscriptions to become members of the co-operatives could be regarded as out of proportion to the amount of fruit to be supplied, but I understand such small suppliers are likely to be able to forward their fruit for processing to the Jon Co-operative by way of either the Renmark Fruit Growers' Co-operative Limited or the Berri Co-operative Packing Union, both of which are members of the Jon Co-operative.

I am informed that the closure of Moray Park has not resulted in loss to growers in respect of fruit supplied during the last 10 years. Over that period the State Bank has financed the undertaking upon a season-to-season basis under which all obligations have been met, including fruit payments, before the bank has received any contribution in reduction of its outstanding debt. The only loss to growers was in respect of the 1958 season for which the cannery had offered abnormally high prices and found itself unable to meet those prices in full. The amount remaining unpaid to growers on account of the 1958 season is between $19,000 and $20,000. The principal loss, other than that borne by the proprietors, has been borne by the State Bank, but the exact measure of the final loss will not be known until complete winding-up of the business.

ROAD TAX

Mr. EDWARDS: Has the Attorney-General obtained from the Minister of Roads and Transport a reply to the question I recently asked about road tax?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: There is no provision under the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act 1963-1968 for exemption of vehicles used for the cartage of water for stock purposes. The charge levied is imposed to compensate for the additional wear and tear caused to roads by heavy loads, and all moneys received are applied toward road maintenance. Road charges while carting water are deductible from gross income for taxation purposes and, in the drought last year, were subsidizable on application to the Minister of Lands.

TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Mr. VIRGO: Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked recently about a re-examination of part of the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study Report?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The Minister of Roads and Transport states that a number of submissions has been received in connection with the proposals of the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study. This follows the Government's action in making the report available for public review for a period of six months and inviting submissions from any individuals or groups that may wish to offer such. All submissions made will receive close consideration, and investigation work has already commenced in connection with some of the submissions presently in hand. In due course the report on the submissions received and any actions taken in response to the submissions will be available. It is not proposed, at this stage, to issue any interim report on this matter.

With regard to the recent seminar arranged by the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Adelaide, it is understood that various speakers offered suggestions relating to the M.A.T.S. proposals and that information on this will be published in due course. Such information will be regarded as a submission and will receive careful consideration along with other submissions received. The final session of the seminar also adopted a resolution that is understood to call for a complete review of both the Metropolitan Development Plan and the M.A.T.S. proposals. Consideration of alternative land use patterns, including higher-density development and a public transport dominated transportation system, is called for. As such alternatives have been considered in the studies already undertaken, it would appear that the adoption of this recommendation would largely involve going over the same ground again. However, as has already been stated, the Government intends to look closely at the views expressed at the university seminar.

KULPARA SCHOOL

Mr. HUGHES: Has the Minister of Education a reply to my question of September 17 regarding the new school residence for the head teacher at the Kulpara Primary School?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: Advice has now been received from the Lands Department that allotment 6, town of Kulpara, which is Crown land, is available as a site for the proposed new school residence for the head teacher of the Kulpara Primary School. Approval is now being obtained by the Public Buildings Department for the necessary finance for the building.

ELDERLY CITIZENS

Mr. LANGLEY: In yesterday's *Advertiser* appears an interesting report of a comprehensive plan by the Commonwealth Minister for Health (Dr. Forbes) for aid to elderly citizens. Over the last decade many elderly citizens in the Unley District have been helped by the provision of facilities, such as the building of clubs and Meals on Wheels, and by the activities of social workers and voluntary organizations. From talking to some of these elderly citizens, I believe that hospitalization is their greatest worry. As the Commonwealth Government's recently announced plan covers this important facet, will the Premier, representing the Minister of Health, ascertain what action will be taken by the Government, as a result of the plan, to ensure that adequate hospitalization is provided for the aged, whether the Commonwealth Government will subsidize the cost of the plan, and when the plan will be implemented?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The Government will be interested to know what the Commonwealth Government has in mind regarding assistance. Unless the Minister of Social Welfare has more recent information than I have, I believe the Government is still awaiting information from the Commonwealth Government on this matter. The honourable member is correct when he refers to advances made over the years in South Australia in this regard. My Party is proud of the initiative it took in providing homes for pensioners: I believe that Sir Thomas Playford initiated the scheme that was subsequently adopted by the Commonwealth Government. South Australia leads Australia in this field. From the record of progress in these matters I assure the honourable member that the State Government is as eager today as it was in former years to participate in any scheme that will benefit these citizens. I will therefore take up this matter with my colleague and obtain the most up-to-date information, but I believe that my Government is still waiting on the Commonwealth Government to exercise its initiative.

STRUAN RESEARCH CENTRE

Mr. RODDA: In the limited office and laboratory space at the Struan Research Centre, there are now an officer-in-charge, two research officers, three field officers and a part-time accounting officer, with the result that they must all work on top of one another. As these field officers are doing valuable work on research and as, for the reason I have given, their efficiency is in danger of being impaired, will the Minister of Lands discuss this matter with the Minister of Agriculture and arrange for provision to be made in next year's Estimates to alleviate this acute shortage of accommodation?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I will discuss this matter with the Minister of Agriculture.

PARAMEDICAL SERVICES

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: The Minister of Education may recall that in 1966 she presented to the South Australian Institute of Technology a report prepared by a committee under her chairmanship, requesting the institute to sponsor a school of occupational therapy. Since then, the need for more trained occupational therapists in this State has increased, the establishments needing their services having become grossly understaffed with none of these therapists working outside the metropolitan area. As I think the only practical solution to this problem is the establishment of an occupational therapy centre in South Australia, will the Minister have this matter considered urgently, with a view to establishing a school involving, for example, the appointment of a director and catering for about eight students at the outset, in premises already available?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: As the honourable member has indicated, this is a subject in which I have been personally interested over the years. True, I was a member of a delegation of three that waited on the honourable member when he was Minister of Education, and on the Minister of Health, and presented to them a case that followed a survey that had been made of the need for occupational therapists in South Australia. As the honourable member knows, his Government took no action to implement the report's recommendations. One of the first things I undertook to do on being appointed Minister of Education, not in isolation but as part of a whole examination of the State's paramedical services, was to have this matter examined. To this end, a committee has now been set up

and it is currently considering the matters included in its terms of reference, that is, on paramedical studies. A representative of the Occupational Therapists Association of South Australia is on that committee which, I hope, will present its report to me by December 15. It has been suggested that the establishment of a school of occupational therapy should be treated in isolation, but I believe this would be a pity because the expert committee is currently considering the whole question of paramedical disciplines. In any case, the suggestion that it should begin initially with about eight students is at variance with the facts that were provided for me by, I think, the Vice-Chancellor of the Adelaide University at the time (Sir Henry Basten) that a viable and economic number would be about 30-odd students. Anyway, this is one of the questions directed to the committee which is presently sitting. This committee is concerned not only with the establishment of a school of occupational therapy but also with the establishment of a school of speech therapy, because in all these disciplines we are woefully short in South Australia, and have been short for a long time. When I convened the original committee to present the case to the then Minister of Education and his colleague, about 50 occupational therapists were needed whereas, in actual fact, there were only about nine in South Australia, and I understand the position is even worse at present. I am cognizant of the fact that it will take some time for a school to be set up and put into operation. I can well understand the anxiety of the people particularly interested in this paramedical discipline to have a director appointed as soon as possible. As the honourable member will appreciate, many factors must be considered, one of which is the attraction of Commonwealth finance at an appropriate time in a triennium to enable this school to be set up. I believe that is the complete answer at present, and I await with interest the presentation of the expert committee's report, about the middle of next month.

MILLICENT RAILWAY YARD

Mr. CORCORAN: Has the Attorney-General obtained from the Minister of Roads and Transport a reply to my question of last week about the condition of the Millicent railway yard?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: With my usual efficiency, I have the answer here. I am informed that the Railways Commissioner inspected the Millicent station yard yesterday, and that the honourable member will be further advised.

HAM PRICES

Mr. VENNING: Has the Treasurer a reply to the question I asked a few days ago about ham prices?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The Prices Commissioner has reported that the figures stated in the question are based on the assumption that the wholesale price last year of Christmas leg hams was 70c a pound whereas the price fixed by the Smallgoods, Ham and Bacon Manufacturers' Association was 80c a pound. The price fixed for this year is 77c a pound, a reduction of 3c a pound. To enable the demand for Christmas hams to be met, manufacturers commence storing them from about June onwards. Because of this requirement, the wholesale price a pound for these hams is fixed in September each year, and the price fixed is based on the average prices of pigs purchased during the months of July and August. Even though market prices may vary either upwards or downwards between this period and December, the price fixed is not altered until the new year. The prices paid by manufacturers for pigs having been examined, it was found that the average price paid in July-August this year was between 2c and 3c a pound less than in the corresponding period last year. Current market prices are around 4c a pound below the July-August average. However, the position was the reverse last year, when market prices increased up to 3c a pound after the wholesale price was fixed in September, with the additional cost being carried by manufacturers. As a result of the lower market prices since July-August this year, manufacturers reduced bacon prices by 2c a pound in October. The matter has been taken up with the manufacturers and, although they consider that they are unable to reduce the price of Christmas hams in view of the cost of stocks being carried, bacon prices have been further reduced by 3c or 4c a pound as from November 18, 1968. Prices of these products will continue to be kept under review by the Prices Commissioner.

MOONTA RAIL SERVICE

Mr. HUGHES: Has the Attorney-General a reply to my recent question about the Moonta rail service?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: The Transport Control Board has not yet invited applications to conduct a road passenger service between Adelaide and the upper Yorke Peninsula towns of Kadina, Wallaroo and Moonta. However, it does not expect this alternative service to proceed past Moonta to Moonta Bay and Port Hughes except for the possibility that there may be sufficient patronage during the summer months to warrant such extension. Fares are expected to be lower than those charged by rail, and the board will also give consideration to an applicant who will grant concession fares to pensioners. Existing road services between the towns on lower Yorke Peninsula and Adelaide permit passengers to travel from the peninsula in the morning and return home in the evening. It is expected that a similar service will be provided for residents of Moonta, Wallaroo and Kadina. The board intends to discuss the alternative road passenger service with local councils prior to the commencement of this service.

HOMES FOR AGED

Mr. GILES: Has the Premier a reply to my recent question about Commonwealth assistance for aged persons' homes?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The Chief Secretary states that the Commonwealth Government has published a booklet setting out in great detail assistance available from the Commonwealth Government for the construction of aged persons' homes, and a copy is available to inquirers at the Social Services Department. I have a booklet here for the use of the honourable member.

CARLTON SCHOOL

Mr. RICHES: The Minister of Education will recall her visit to Port Augusta when the new Carlton school was opened, and the representations made to her about the erection of awnings over some windows at the school. As the school is of standard design, it is obviously not suited to the climate in this area. Parents have told me that they had hoped awnings would be erected by the beginning of this summer. In recent weeks they have experienced some trying days. As the matter is urgent and as there seems to have been no action by the Public Buildings Department (the Education Department has made all the arrangements, and I understand that a tender has been let for the work), will the Minister use her good offices to see what can be done to speed up the erection of these awnings?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: I certainly will.

MOTOR VEHICLE CONSTRUCTION

Mr. EVANS: A constituent approached me yesterday about his standard model motor car having been pronounced defective by the police. The vehicle is a Morris Cooper "S" and, I believe, in common with some other types of sports car it has tyres protruding outside the line of the bodywork. The police have claimed that these tyres must be protected by a guard. My constituent works in the Railways Department and, as no public transport is available in this area, he needs the car to travel to work. On going to the police barracks, he was told by an inspector-in-charge of motor vehicles that his car did not conform to the law and that he would have to have flaps (plastic or fibre glass—metal flaps were not acceptable) attached to the front and rear fenders. In the city, he was quoted a price of $40 for the flaps, but that price did not include fitting. I would like this matter investigated, because I believe that it is a serious matter when a young man, who has purchased a car that is standard in all ways, can be placed in this position where the car cannot be used. Can the Premier say whether it is right that manufacturers can produce a car that does not conform to the law and make it available in the State, or that distributors can sell such a car to a person who walks in from the street and purchases it in all good faith, thinking he is purchasing a car that is up to standard and conforms to the laws of the State?

The SPEAKER: The question calls for an expression of opinion of law. Does the Premier wish to reply?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I take it that the honourable member is inquiring on behalf of a constituent who is having difficulty about using his car, because its mode of construction is different from that of normal cars. Apparently, the car does not comply to the letter with the requirements of the Motor Vehicles Act. I do not know what controls there are on the manufacture and distribution of motor vehicles, but I will find out as soon as possible so that the honourable member may tell his constituent.

PENSIONERS' CONCESSION FARES

Mr. CASEY: Has the Attorney-General a reply to my question about concession rates for rail travel by pensioners?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: It is not intended at this stage to extend the concession beyond that already approved.

M.A.T.S. DEBATE

Mr. HUDSON: On October 3 I asked a question of the Minister of Works (and subsequently the Premier pre-empted the right of the Minister to reply) about whether the Government would make available Government time for the fluoridation debate, pointing out the importance of that matter and the need to get a more or less continuous debate and a solution of the difficulty. The Premier, in reply, showed considerable ability in not replying to the question. However, ultimately the implication was that Government business time was not being made available, plenty of private members' business time being available to debate this matter. Last Wednesday, the Premier, in offering additional time for the debate on fluoridation, said, as reported at page 2452 of *Hansard*:

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 . . . a vote be taken.

The Government published the details of the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study Report on August 13, saying that six months would elapse before the Government announced whether it accepted the report or part of it. This means that the Government will have to make a decision on M.A.T.S. and announce it by February 13 next. Because of the extremely important matters involved in the motion on the Notice Paper in the name of the member for Edwardstown (Mr. Virgo) about the M.A.T.S. Report, will the Premier make available sufficient Government time (about 1½ hours or two hours) to enable the debate on the honourable member's motion to be concluded, so that the decision on this matter will have been made by this House before the Government decides on the M.A.T.S. plan recommendation on February 13?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: My reply to a previous question about whether the Government would make available time to complete the debate on the fluoridation motion was governed by my opinion that sufficient private members' time was available to enable a decision to be made. However, there was not sufficient time, and Government business was so arranged last Wednesday evening as to allow time for the debate, and I appreciate the action of members opposite in proceeding with it. They decide (and I suppose they almost always do) how they wish to conduct private members' business on Wednesday afternoon before Government business takes precedence. Because of pressure of business, it is unlikely that there will be further time to devote to private members' business. It is for the Opposition to decide how much time to devote to matters of importance. The motion on fluoridation was moved by an Opposition member and the Opposition, if it had considered the matter to be of great importance, could have devoted more time to it. There has been debate on the motion and there has been a reply from this side: the motion was not ignored. The Opposition could have allotted more time for the debate, by either limiting the time for each speech or substituting time that otherwise would have been devoted to matters that the Opposition considered to be less important. Because of this, it is unlikely that further time will be available for private members' business, especially as I have had to ask Ministers to indicate a priority for business in hand. The amount of work to be done is almost overwhelming and we are unlikely to be able to deal with it in this session, even if the session continues until March or April.

PLANT HIRE

Mr. GILES: Has the Attorney-General a reply from the Minister of Roads and Transport to my question about the method of hiring council plant to the Highways Department?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: The cost of operating identical machines throughout the State can vary according to location. The policy of the Highways Department regarding the determination of hire rates for machinery operated by local authorities on roadworks involving the expenditure of departmental funds is to ensure that the councils neither gain nor lose by the use of their equipment on such works. Road grants for specific amounts are made for work on main and district roads under the control of councils and, consequently, the councils that operate their machines with the maximum efficiency benefit to the extent

that they are able to carry out a greater amount of roadwork with the fixed funds allocated by the department.

TARCOOLA PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: Has the Minister of Education a reply to my recent question about the Tarcoola Primary School cooling system and water supply?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: The Public Buildings Department has advised that a contract has been let for the installation of a water supply and cooling system at the Tarcoola Primary School. The contractor is making immediate arrangements for the purchase of the necessary materials so that he may carry out the work at the earliest possible date.

SCHOOL SITES

Mrs. BYRNE: Will the Minister of Education obtain details of sites held by the Education Department in the outer suburban sections of the District of Barossa for the erection of high and technical high schools, particularly in the suburbs of Tea Tree Gully, Banksia Park, Redwood Park, Vista, Fairview Park, Modbury, Ridgehaven, Hope Valley, Valley View, Highbury, Dernancourt and Holden Hill? Also, can the Minister say whether the department has plans to erect such schools soon?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: I will obtain a report.

BREATHALYSERS

Mr. EVANS: Will the Attorney-General tell the House in which States the breathalyser is used as an aid to detecting offences for driving under the influence of alcohol; what percentage of alcohol registered on a breathalyser is considered the maximum limit in each State; of the States that use breathalysers as a detecting device which ones use it mainly after an offence has been committed; do any States conduct spot checks, similar to checks on driving licences in this State; and has there been any effect on the accident rate in this State as a result of the use of breathalysers?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: These questions could more appropriately have been asked of the Premier for transmission to the Chief Secretary, as they could best be answered by reference to the Commissioner of Police, but I shall be happy to see that this is done. I should like to comment on one point. My recollection is that the Royal Commissioner suggested that, after about 18 months of operation, the breathalyser legislation should be considered by the State Traffic Committee. Of course, one of the Labor Governments (I can't remember which one) unceremoniously disbanded that committee and did not see fit to replace it with any other body.

Mr. Hudson: Because you were on it.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I think it was because I was the Chairman at that time, as the honourable member says. The body to investigate the matter still remains to be cited, but the time for the investigation, if the recommendation of the Royal Commissioner is to be accepted, has expired, if my arithmetic is correct, and that is a matter that the Government will have to consider, too.

SCHOOL CLASSIFICATION

Mr. HUDSON: The Minister of Education may or may not be aware that the Headmaster of Glengowrie High School will be leaving at the end of this year, which is the first year of the school's existence. I have no quarrel with that: he and everyone else knew that this was the arrangement made before he came to Glengowrie. However, the problem that arises is that a new school that starts off with first-year classes is not classified in such a way as to rate a top headmaster but, as the school grows with the addition of a full year of extra classes, its classification is altered, and during its first three or five years of existence, because of the alteration in its classification, the school may have up to three headmasters. This leads to discontinuity in the general running of the school.

Mr. Broomhill: It happened in another place.

Mr. HUDSON: Yes. This circumstance caused the problem that arose at Underdale last year. It also means, as in the case of Glengowrie, that the school loses a good headmaster. Everyone associated with the school will be sorry to see him go, and his departure raises the question of the appropriateness of this form of classification. Will the Minister instigate a complete re-examination of the method of classification currently adopted, to see whether it is possible to evolve a system of classification similar to that in Victoria and Western Australia that would permit the appointment of a headmaster to a new school and enable that headmaster to remain at the school during its initial years, because these

are the formative years of any school, and it is important that it should be controlled by one headmaster who can then administer a consistent policy?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: I will call for a report on this matter.

TEXTBOOKS

Mr. FREEBAIRN: The Auditor-General has criticized the arrangement for students to borrow books from teachers college libraries, because sufficient steps are not being taken to ensure the return of overdue books. As the smooth working of the multiple textbook collection scheme will depend on the efficient circulation of books among students, can the Minister of Education say what steps are being taken to improve the present system?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: I will obtain a report for the honourable member.

WHYALLA LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Hon. R. R. LOVEDAY: Has the Attorney-General received from the Minister of Local Government a reply to my recent question concerning the proceedings before the committee inquiring into the granting of full local government for Whyalla?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: The Whyalla Local Government Committee considers that any discussions which may be desirable following the receipt of written submissions (due on November 20) should not be held in public. The committee will, after it has concluded discussions with invited organizations, invite, by public notice, representations from other interested persons. The committee will consider holding these meetings in public.

HILLS RESERVOIR

Mr. GILES: I believe that all thoughtful South Australians realize that if there is a possibility of preserving water it should be preserved. To the casual observer there seems to be an ideal situation for constructing a reservoir in the Sixth Creek area, which is adjacent to where Corkscrew Road joins the Gorge Road. This reservoir would be reasonably close to the Kangaroo Creek reservoir, and the catchment area would be from Carey Gully down. The excess water from the Kangaroo Creek reservoir could be transferred to this proposed reservoir through a short tunnel. The main carrying the water from the Kangaroo Creek reservoir to Adelaide comes down the Gorge Road and would be easily accessible from a reservoir constructed at this point, so that the water could be fed into the Adelaide water system. Can the Minister of Works say whether his department has considered constructing a reservoir in the Sixth Creek area?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I thank the honourable member for his interest in this matter. This is certainly a novel suggestion but, as I am not aware of what investigations have been made into this matter, I will call for a report on the whole subject, and inform the honourable member when I have it.

BANK HOLIDAY

Mr. HUGHES: I have received correspondence today from the Secretary of the Bank Officials Association confirming the resolution which I read to the House last week and which was contained in a telegram that I used to explain a question. The last paragraph of the letter states:

> We hope that in view of the very strong feelings in this regard expressed by bank officers in your area you will support this matter and represent their interests.

That would indicate that the association is asking for my support in urging the Government to reconsider its refusal to grant members of the association a bank holiday on December 31 of this year. As the Premier replied to my question last week that he would discuss this matter with his colleagues, I now ask him whether he has had an opportunity to do so and, if he has, what is the result of that discussion.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Following the reply I gave to the honourable member last week, I discussed this matter with my colleagues, and Cabinet has decided that it cannot alter its previous decision on the matter. Having received today a further telegram from the Australian Bank Officials Association asking whether I would meet its representatives, I dispatched a reply telegram saying that I would. That is the chronology of the events and the decision made by the Government.

EYRE PENINSULA WATER SUPPLY

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (on notice):

1. Is the present consumption of water on Eyre Peninsula estimated at 1,435,000,000 gallons annually, while the estimated "safe output" from all known resources is only 1,370,000,000 gallons?

2. Has the estimated "safe output" from Polda Basin dropped from 200,000,000 gallons in 1963-64 to 98,000,000 in 1967-68?

3. If so, is there any danger that further drawing from Polda may seriously affect the quantity of water available to present consumers?

4. What consideration has been given to the possibility of supplying Kimba with water from Iron Knob?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The replies are as follows:

1. The maximum consumption which has been recorded to date on Eyre Peninsula, excluding small independent supplies such as Streaky Bay, Elliston and Kimba, is 1,425,000,000 gallons, which was the consumption in 1967-68. The consumption this financial year up to the present time is 23 per cent below the consumption for 1967-68 up to the same time.

The estimated "safe output" from the Tod reservoir, the Lincoln Basin, the Uley-Wanilla Basin and the Polda Basin is about 1,600,000,000 gallons a year, and other underground basins which are under investigation will enable this figure to be further increased. These sources are the Uley homestead area and other basins in the vicinity of the Polda Basin in County Musgrave.

2. No. The 98,000,000 gallons of water pumped from the Polda Basin in 1967-68 was all that was required to supplement the water obtained from the Tod reservoir and the Lincoln and the Uley-Wanilla Basins.

3. This danger would only exist if very large quantities of water were pumped from the Polda Basin for several years. At the present time it is considered that more than 400,000,000 gallons of water can be safely withdrawn from the Polda Basin each year without seriously affecting the quality of the water. Of the total of 400,000,000 gallons just mentioned, 200,000,000 gallons is the amount which has been allocated to the Lock-Kimba main.

4. The laying of a main from Iron Knob to Kimba was considered by the Public Works Standing Committee in 1963 and, on August 7, 1963, the committee presented an interim report finding as follows:

In view of the high cost of bringing water from the Murray River to Kimba the committee finds—

(1) That it is expedient to defer consideration of the proposed water main from Iron Knob to Kimba.

(2) That the investigation into the potential of the Polda Basin recommended by the committee in its report on Eyre Peninsula water supply (augmentation from Polda Basin) should proceed.

(3) That it is desirable for an alternative scheme based on a supply for Kimba from Polda Basin to be submitted for the consideration of the committee when the potential of the basin has been established.

OUTER HARBOUR

Mr. HURST (on notice):

1. How many tons of steel have been purchased for the Outer Harbour terminal construction?

2. When was the steel purchased?

3. What was the cost of such steel?

4. What steps, if any, have been taken to prevent deterioration of this steel?

5. When the work is commenced, will the steel be satisfactory for the purpose for which it was purchased?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: The replies are as follows:

1. About 330 tons.

2. Delivered September to December, 1965, inclusive.

3. $47,000.

4. Cleaning and painting with a protective coating was authorized on August 14, 1968. Work will commence as soon as the weather improves, as the steel is stored in the open.

5. Yes.

RAILWAY HOUSES

Mr. RYAN (on notice):

1. How many houses owned by the South Australian Railways are vacant in the following districts:

(*a*) Woodville Gardens;
(*b*) Woodville North;
(*c*) Athol Park;
(*d*) Mansfield Park; and
(*e*) Kilburn?

2. What are the individual addresses of these vacant houses?

3. How long has each of these been vacant?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: The replies are as follows:

1. (*a*) 9.
(*b*) Nil.
(*c*) 4.
(*d*) 11.
(*e*) 20.

2 and 3. See attached schedule.

Departmental No.	Postal Address	Vacant Since	Remarks
	Woodville Gardens		
640	5 Third Avenue, Woodville Gardens	10/1/68	
643	1 Chesson Street, Woodville Gardens	22/4/68	
645	4 Chesson Street, Woodville Gardens	4/7/68	
646	2 Chesson Street, Woodville Gardens	18/11/67	
647	11 Third Avenue, Woodville Gardens	24/7/68	Awaiting repairs
650	12 Third Avenue, Woodville Gardens	7/4/67	Awaiting repairs
651	10 Third Avenue, Woodville Gardens	2/3/68	Awaiting repairs
654	2 Danvers Grove, Woodville Gardens	19/8/66	
656	4 Third Avenue, Woodville Gardens	2/2/68	Awaiting repairs
	Woodville North		
	Nil		
	Athol Park		
433	1A Glenroy Street, Athol Park	4/3/68	Awaiting repairs
434	13 Glenroy Street, Athol Park	10/3/65	Awaiting repairs
876	20 Athol Street, Athol Park	11/10/67	
674	191 Hanson Road, Athol Park	23/3/66	Awaiting repairs
	Mansfield Park		
679	204 Hanson Road, Mansfield Park	10/2/68	
682	210 Hanson Road, Mansfield Park	21/4/68	Awaiting repairs
686	218 Hanson Road, Mansfield Park	25/7/68	
687	220 Hanson Road, Mansfield Park	30/1/68	
688	222 Hanson Road, Mansfield Park	23/12/67	
690	226 Hanson Road, Mansfield Park	11/6/68	Awaiting repairs
691	228 Hanson Road, Mansfield Park	14/4/67	
692	230 Hanson Road, Mansfield Park	14/10/67	
693	232 Hanson Road, Mansfield Park	5/9/66	
694	234 Hanson Road, Mansfield Park	10/3/68	
696	236 Hanson Road, Mansfield Park	14/11/66	Awaiting repairs
	Kilburn		
340	408 Churchill Road, Kilburn	17/6/68	
341	408 Churchill Road, Kilburn	17/10/68	Awaiting repairs
343	412 Churchill Road, Kilburn	8/11/68	Awaiting repairs
346	418 Churchill Road, Kilburn	16/12/67	
349	424 Churchill Road, Kilburn	4/2/67	Awaiting repairs
403	426 Churchill Road, Kilburn	21/6/68	Awaiting repairs
404	428 Churchill Road, Kilburn	16/5/68	Awaiting repairs
408	7 Carrol Avenue, Kilburn	17/8/68	
409	9 Carrol Avenue, Kilburn	9/11/68	Awaiting repairs
410	11 Carrol Avenue, Kilburn	28/6/66	Awaiting repairs
411	13 Carrol Avenue, Kilburn	18/3/68	Awaiting repairs
415	21 Carrol Avenue, Kilburn	5/4/68	
416	23 Carrol Avenue, Kilburn	15/4/67	Awaiting repairs
419	29 Carrol Avenue, Kilburn	22/4/67	
603	5 Galway Avenue, Kilburn	3/6/67	
608	16 Galway Avenue, Kilburn	11/9/68	Awaiting repairs
739	5 Lancaster Street, Kilburn	20/5/67	Awaiting repairs
744	3 Sunnybrae Avenue, Kilburn	9/10/67	
747	14 Railway Terrace, Kilburn	28/1/68	
752	24 Railway Terrace, Kilburn	9/9/67	

CORRECTION OF DIVISION LIST

The SPEAKER: I have ascertained that in the division in the House on Thursday last, on the second reading of the Licensing Act Amendment Bill (No. 2), the vote of the honourable member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Burdon), who was present in the Chamber at the count, on the right-hand side of the Chair, was not called and recorded. With the leave of the House, I instruct the Clerk to make the necessary correction.

Leave granted.

TRUSTEE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council with amendments.

RAILWAYS STANDARDIZATION AGREEMENT (COCKBURN TO BROKEN HILL) BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

WHEAT INDUSTRY STABILIZATION BILL

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Since 1948 there has been in operation a scheme for stabilizing prices in the wheat industry. Provision has been made in Commonwealth legislation for the establishment of the Australian Wheat Board to undertake the marketing of wheat at home and abroad, and the board is also empowered to administer the price stabilizing aspects of the scheme. On September 30 of this year the scheme covering the five seasons prior to that date came to an end. The legislative framework of that scheme was, as far as this State was concerned, the Wheat Industry Stabilization Act, 1963, of the Commonwealth and a complementary Act of this State (the Wheat Industry Stabilization Act, 1963-1964).

As a result of discussions between the responsible State and Commonwealth authorities and representatives of the industry, it is proposed that the stabilization scheme will be continued for another five seasons within a not dissimilar legislative framework. For its part, the Commonwealth is in the process of enacting a Wheat Industry Stabilization Act and this Bill is, as regards this State, the necessary piece of complementary legislation. Honourable members, on examining the Bill, will find that in substance it closely follows the Wheat Industry Stabilization Act, 1963-1964, of this State, except, of course, that it is expressed to apply to the five future seasons, whereas the 1963-1964 Act applied to the five past seasons. Thus, the mechanics of the proposed scheme are for practical purposes the same as those for the former scheme.

However, before proceeding to a discussion of the detailed provisions of the Bill, I will indicate the principal differences between the scheme that operated over the past five seasons (which, for convenience, I will call the "previous scheme") and the scheme that it is proposed will operate over this and the next four seasons (which, again for convenience, I will call the "proposed scheme"). Although both schemes were expressed to operate for five seasons under the proposed scheme, the Australian Wheat Board has been given a statutory life of seven seasons. This is to enable the board to make forward contracts during the last years of the proposed scheme. Under the previous scheme a guaranteed price was fixed at the equivalent of $1.44 a bushel for the base year; that is, the first year of the scheme. This price was an f.o.r. one and was based on a "cost of production" formula that used data obtained from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics survey of the wheat industry, together with certain other items. The whole formula was based on a yield of 17 bushels to the acre. During the five years of operation of the scheme, annual variations have advanced the guaranteed price to $1.64 a bushel.

The proposed scheme has a base guaranteed price of $1.45 a bushel f.o.b., which is not related to the "cost of production" formula used in the previous scheme but which was fixed after negotiation between the Commonwealth and the Australian Wheat Growers' Federation and which has regard to the availability of Commonwealth funds. Annual variations up or down are provided for and the variations are to be based on producers' cash cost movements together with an allowance in respect of the interest on notionally borrowed capital. It is obvious that the annual variations under the proposed scheme will be less than the annual variations under the previous scheme, since more items were included in the "cost of production" formula than are represented by cash costs and interest on borrowed capital. The quantity of wheat the subject of a guaranteed price has, under the proposed scheme, been increased by 50,000,000 bushels to 200,000,000 bushels.

In the calculation of the home consumption price there is a significant variation between the schemes. Under the previous scheme the home consumption price was fixed at the guaranteed price plus a loading on account of Tasmanian freights. Under the proposed scheme the home consumption price of $1.70, plus a loading for Tasmanian freight of 1c, has been fixed and this price is subject to annual cash variations equal to the annual cash variations on the guaranteed price. While the home consumption price is in advance of the home consumption price for the last year of the previous scheme, I point out to honourable members that, if the previous scheme had been projected into this

year, the home consumption price arrived at would have been rather more than the effective $1.71 proposed.

The ceiling of the stabilization fund has been raised by $20,000,000 to $80,000,000, and under the proposed scheme a significant concession has been made in relation to the tax levy necessary to support the fund. Previously the tax, up to a maximum of 15c, has been levied on each 1c by which the guaranteed price is exceeded; under the proposed scheme the tax will only operate up to the same maximum when the guaranteed price is exceeded by more than 5c. This then represents the substance of the variations between the schemes, and I will now deal with the details of the Bill.

Clause 1 is quite formal. Clause 2 is intended to ensure that this Bill has effect in this State on the same day as the Commonwealth Bill has effect in this State. Clause 3 is formal; clause 4 repeals the previous Wheat Stabilization Act of this State and makes appropriate transitional provisions; and clause 5 provides a number of definitions necessary for the Act. Clause 6, in effect, provides that, while the Act itself is capable of applying for seven seasons to ensure that the board will be able to make forward contracts, the stabilization provisions provided for in section 14 (7) and (8) will apply for the period of the scheme, that is, five seasons. Clause 7 ensures that this Act will, if any constitutional difficulty arises, be as effective as it validly can be.

Clause 8 sets out the powers of the board in substantially the same form as they were in the 1963 Act of this State with the exception that the power has in paragraph (*c*) been extended to cover forward sales of wheat. Clause 9 is a new provision which is thought to be desirable and is intended to protect the members of the board while acting in their official capacity. Clause 10 confirms the board's power to grant licences and subclause (2) continues in force licences in existence immediately before the commencement of this Act. Clause 11 deals with the delivery of wheat to the board and generally follows the provisions of the 1963 Act. Clause 12 relates to delivery to a licensed receiver and in effect provides that delivery is not effective until the wheat is received by a licensed receiver. Subclause (2) coupled with a corresponding provision in the Commonwealth Act will enable this State to legislate effectively to provide rationalized delivery schemes. Previously it would not have been possible for the State to do this.

Clause 13 deals with unauthorized dealings in wheat and again follows the corresponding provisions of the 1963 Act. Clause 14 deals with the price to be paid for wheat and its determination by the board and is generally self-explanatory. The references to guaranteed price are to the guaranteed price of wheat fixed by the Commonwealth after consultation with the States in accordance with the provisions of the Commonwealth Act. Clause 15, which relates to payments by the board, is again generally self-explanatory and quite closely follows the corresponding provisions of the 1963 Act. I draw honourable members' attention to the provisions of subclauses (6), (7) and (8), which are peculiar to this State and which were last enacted as an amendment to the 1963 Act. Clause 16 relates to declarations to accompany delivery of wheat of a season prior to the season in which it was actually delivered.

Clauses 17 and 18 are self-explanatory and in general arm the board with appropriate powers to cause entry and search of premises for wheat to be made and also allow the board to call for returns. Clause 19 is intended to ensure that wheat, the property of the board, will be properly looked after. Clause 20 fixes the home consumption price of $1.70 and provides for that price to vary up or down by the same amount as the guaranteed price varies from $1.45. Clause 21 continues in operation the special account for freight to Tasmania. Clause 22 will permit the use of the board's funds in any State subject to the board's meeting its obligations in this State. Clause 23 is a fairly usual general offences provision, and clause 24 is a general regulation-making power. I thank honourable members for allowing me to proceed with the second reading explanation.

Mr. CASEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

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

That for the remainder of the session Government business take precedence of all other business except questions.

Mr. HUDSON (Glenelg): I do not intend to vote against this motion, for I believe the Government has given private members a fair go in the time it has provided for debating their business this session (that is, very fair when fairness is judged in terms of what was done by the Playford Governments, although the equivalent of what was done by the Walsh

Labor Government in its first session). However, I am concerned that there is still a most important matter of private members' business that I believe should be concluded before February 13 next year. In view of the action taken by the Government on fluoridation, the debate on which the Government considered it necessary to conclude before the end of the session in March, I believe a decision should be reached on the motion of the member for Edwardstown (Mr. Virgo).

Mr. Broomhill: In fact, that's more important.

Mr. HUDSON: Yes. Last Wednesday the Premier said:

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.

It was crucial to have a vote taken on fluoridation before the end of next March so that the Government could proceed, although I pointed out in explaining a question I asked the Premier this afternoon that, on October 3, in answer to a question I asked on that day, the Premier said he would not make Government time available for a debate on fluoridation, because the Government would go ahead and assume it was all right to fluoridate as long as an adverse vote was not taken in this House. Apparently between October 3 and last week the Premier changed his mind about fluoridation and decided the Government could not go on with that matter, presumably because of the problems it was having with members of the Legislative Council, without a favourable vote of the House of Assembly. By implication, it seems that we are to be given the opportunity to vote on the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study Report at the end of the session which, according to the Premier's own words, could be at the end of next March. However, the Government will have to reach decisions on the M.A.T.S. plan by February 13, because that is six months after the release of the M.A.T.S. Report. By February 13, the Government will have to determine what part of the M.A.T.S. recommendations are within the financial resources of the State, whether there should be any alteration in freeway routes, and whether the rail rapid transit recommendations are feasible. All of those matters will have to be determined by the Government by February 13 and all of them are surely critical from the point of view of the State—surely more critical than was fluoridation. Surely before the Government can reach a decision on what it will do about the M.A.T.S. Report, it will want this House to have determined its attitude on the motion of the member for Edwardstown, which states:

That this House is of the opinion that, whilst accepting the need for long-range planning for freeways and public transport for metropolitan Adelaide, the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study Report should be immediately withdrawn in order to prevent continuation of the serious harm inflicted on citizens and also because—

(*a*) the recommendations with respect to railways are unsound in principle and excessively costly;

(*b*) the Government should consider alterations to the proposed freeway routes which would minimize the direct and indirect interference with the lives of citizens; and

(*c*) the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Survey proposals as published are beyond the financial resources of the State.

Surely the Premier is not prepared for the Government to take decisions on the M.A.T.S. Report and then to find that the House votes in favour of the motion and finds that the railway recommendations are unsound, that there should be an alteration to the proposed freeway routes—

The SPEAKER: Order! I cannot allow the honourable member to speak about that debate as that matter is not before the Chair.

Mr. HUDSON: No, Mr. Speaker, but the point is that the motion, which the Premier is moving this afternoon, cuts out private members' time and further debate on that motion. If the session continues beyond February 13, it means that the House will not reach a decision on the motion of the member for Edwardstown until after the Government has determined what parts of the M.A.T.S. Report it is prepared to accept. You, Sir, could be placed in the invidious position of voting in favour of or against the motion of the member for Edwardstown after the Government has announced its own attitude.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member is not in order in anticipating a debate or the result of a debate.

Mr. HUDSON: I am not anticipating the debate because, you, Sir, as Speaker would not be able to participate in the debate: I am talking about the frightful dilemma in which you could be placed. This Government has had enough of splits between one section of the Party in this House and another section

in another House, and we are concerned that there be no split between you and the Government forces. After all, we do not want to have to recall the remarks of Mr. Wilson, who said in the House of Commons:

Talk about splits in the Labour Party! Every time Mr. Macmillan comes back from abroad, Mr. Butler goes to the airport and grips him warmly by the throat.

We do not want to find you, Sir, in the position that every time you are greeted by the Premier he grips you warmly by the throat. The M.A.T.S. Report is obviously a matter of some importance. If the Premier considered that fluoridation was an important issue and was prepared to allow an hour and a half of extra time in order to have a vote on it, then surely it follows that the matters raised in this House on the M.A.T.S. Report are even more important and that the Premier and his Cabinet should not proceed to determine what they will do in relation to that report until such time as the motion of the member for Edwardstown is voted on.

I have spoken on the Premier's motion in order to ask the Government to extend the same courtesy in relation to the motion of the member for Edwardstown as was extended in relation to the motion on fluoridation, and to provide another hour and a half debating time on that matter so that it can be finalized. I am sure members on this side would readily agree to co-operate to conclude fully the debate within an hour and a half. In reply to my question this afternoon, the Premier said that we had had plenty of time on private members' afternoons. We have not had plenty: we have had a fair amount, compared with past practice. The Premier said that the Opposition had determined the priorities and should have arranged the private business in its own way in order to get a vote on the M.A.T.S. Report motion if it wanted to do that.

Many significant matters have been discussed in private members' time. These include the festival hall, the amendment of the Licensing Act, the Age of Majority (Reduction) Bill, fluoridation, a Bill amending the Constitution regarding the Legislative Council franchise, the M.A.T.S. Report, student teachers' allowances, and a motion regarding Chowilla dam (probably one of the most important matters, and it was resolved only last week). Rarely during a session has private members' time been concerned with matters of such significance and, although the Government has given us a fair go compared with past practice, the time available was not adequate to debate all these matters. It is in the Government's interest to grant our request.

Mr. VIRGO (Edwardstown): I join the member for Glenelg in his plea to the Government to allow time for my motion to be debated. However, this request will be denied if the motion now being considered is carried in its present form. The House ought to realize that, although I moved my motion on October 9, only one other member, the Attorney-General (Hon. Robin Millhouse), has spoken on it. Although, as the member for Glenelg has said, it may be argued that private members' business is in hands of the Opposition, which ought to arrange the schedule—

Mr. Broomhill: We had to wait until the Minister was ready to reply.

Mr. Jennings: The business of the Opposition is in the hands of the House.

Mr. VIRGO: Yes. Much important business has been discussed on Wednesday afternoons during this session.

Mr. Broomhill: Fluoridation should have been discussed in Government time.

Mr. VIRGO: Yes. Fluoridation was one important matter, and it occupied much private members' time before being discussed in Government time. If this matter had been raised as Government business, more time would have been available for the discussion of other private members' business, such as the M.A.T.S. Report. That report must, of necessity, be controversial and the Government should regard it as important, because $574,000,000 is involved. Surely, because of this cost the matter cannot be—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member can make only passing reference to that.

Mr. VIRGO: I am just passing by on one of the freeways costing part of the $574,000,000, Mr. Speaker. Surely the Government regards this report as being important, and surely it wants the views of the House and of the public. The Premier said at the outset that the Government wanted to know what the public thought. Surely the views of the House are also important. The Premier is laughing about the matter, but this issue is important. Unfortunately, if the Government does not provide time to debate it, the Minister, who knows that the debate will be closed by this motion, will rush to the press with statements that should have been made in a debate in this House. Because of this, the Government

ought to reconsider the matter. The Government has already established a precedent by allowing Government time for the discussion of a private member's motion regarding fluoridation. The effect of the M.A.T.S. Report on the people is equally important: certainly, it is far more important financially. The cost of fluoridation is peanuts compared with the cost involved in the M.A.T.S. Report. The Premier knows as well as I know that the reply which was given to me today and which has a bearing on the motion was completely unsatisfactory, as it did not answer the question. The Opposition has been receiving this kind of run around since the M.A.T.S. Report was released. The Premier's stock reply is, "You are not going to fence me in."

Mr. Clark: That is not confined to replies on M.A.T.S.

Mr. VIRGO: He is a past master at using it regarding M.A.T.S. If the Government does not provide time to discuss this important matter, that will be a travesty of justice that will go down in the history of this Parliament.

Mr. HUGHES (Wallaroo): Doubtless the Premier is surprised that I, a country member, am speaking. However, I protest against the inconsistency of the Government. It provided an hour and a half last Wednesday evening for the discussion on fluoridation, and it did that entirely to suit itself, because it was not prepared to accept responsibility for introducing fluoridation of the water supply and wanted to lumber Parliament with that responsibility. The Government's action resulted from the strong objections taken by the public. I am speaking because of the large amount of money involved in the M.A.T.S. Report. The Government, by not allowing even a short period of time for debate, treats $574,000,000 as peanuts.

Mr. Hudson: The money will go to the city: you won't get any.

Mr. HUGHES: The money will be spent to the detriment of country people.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member is getting on to the motion regarding M.A.T.S. I ask him to get back to the motion before the House.

Mr. HUGHES: I am referring to the large sum involved in the M.A.T.S. Report.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member is out of order in debating the motion regarding M.A.T.S.

Mr. HUGHES: I think I ought to be able to refer to the large sum involved and to the Government's not allowing additional time to debate the report. That is my objection to the Premier's motion. As you, Mr. Speaker, would know as a country member, primary producers will be vitally affected by this expenditure. The grants to councils will be particularly affected because expenditure of this sum that the Government is treating so lightly will be very detrimental to the future progress of country districts. I, as a country member, would be doing an injustice to the people I represent—

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I think the House need not be regaled with details of the private member's motion with regard to its application and its details, when we are discussing whether this motion should be carried to give precedence to Government business.

The SPEAKER: The motion before the Chair is that Government business should take precedence of private members' business. I can allow only passing reference to the M.A.T.S. Report. The motion really is for the postponement of private members' business. I cannot allow the honourable member to pursue the merits or demerits of money spent in implementing the M.A.T.S. Report.

Mr. HUGHES: I respect your ruling on this matter, Sir. The point I was trying to drive home to the Premier, as the mover of the motion, was the effect it would have on country people. I think an injustice is being done to country people in not allowing this House more time to discuss this very vital measure.

The Hon. R. S. HALL (Premier): If the House needed any reinforcement of its opinion that this motion should be carried, that reinforcement was given by the three speakers we have heard. Time has gone by (possibly 20 minutes) on what is always taken to be a formal motion here, after the Government has co-operated with the Opposition in providing the normal amount of time. I have not looked up to see what was the "cut-off date" last year or in the first year of the previous Government, but I accept the statement of the member for Glenelg (Mr. Hudson) that the Opposition has been given a fair amount of time this year.

It is quite evident, from the way some members opposite have debated, that they believe in taking 20 minutes to say what can be said in 10 minutes. The honourable member has raised Party issues in this debate. What has talk about splits in the Government got to do with the motion? The honourable

member has been wasting the time of the House and I do not intend to waste further time. The Government adheres to this motion and asks the House to support it. I make this request in all fairness, especially in view of the actions of the previous Government.

Mr. Hudson: You won't answer any simple question—not a single thing.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Hudson: You duck every question we ask you, and never reply.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Glenelg is out of order.

Mr. Hudson: So is the Premier: he was talking to me as well.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member for Glenelg is out of order and, if he is not going to obey the Chair, I will have to insist on Standing Order No. 55.

Motion carried.

ABORIGINAL LANDS TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE (Minister of Aboriginal Affairs) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Aboriginal Lands Trust Act, 1966. Read a first time.

DAIRY CATTLE IMPROVEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

STAMP DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 3)

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON (Treasurer) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Stamp Duties Act, 1923-1967. Read a first time.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Stamp duty has been charged since 1959 on the net cash price payable under a hire-purchase agreement, and since 1964 on the principal amount of a loan lent by a money-lender under a contract in writing. The present rate of duty payable in each case is 1½ per cent. The duty in each case is payable on a document and in relation to a transaction of a specific nature as provided in the Act. There is a fairly wide range of comparable financing transactions that have been free of duty and, besides, it is not surprising that some financiers and financial institutions have sought and found ways and means of so arranging their affairs that duty would be avoided or reduced to a minimum. The purpose of this Bill is to bring as far as possible all comparable financing transactions within the field of dutiable transactions.

This Bill accordingly extends the duty charged on hire-purchase and money-lending contracts to other forms of instalment-purchase agreement such as credit purchase and rental agreements. It also applies the same rate of duty to other forms of business transacted in the field of money-lending, the granting of credit and the renting of goods irrespective of the existence of an instrument evidencing the transaction. The Bill follows in substance the comparable legislation in other Australian States. The Bill is in two parts. The first part falls under the heading of "credit and rental business" and deals with credit and rental business generally and applies to those persons who carry on the business of making loans, of entering into credit arrangements or discount transactions or of granting to any person the right to use goods on a rental basis. Duty will no longer be payable directly on a money-lender's contract and this new part will apply to all dutiable credit and rental business which is not evidenced by an agreement upon which duty is payable under the provisions in the Bill falling under the heading of "instalment purchase agreements". These agreements are hire-purchase agreements, credit purchase agreements and rental agreements.

Under the new provisions, all personal loans made at a rate of interest exceeding 9 per cent per annum, including those which are evidenced by some form of documentation which for some reason has avoided the duty which would have been payable if a money-lender's contract had been issued, will be dutiable. For credit arrangements and loans, the duty will apply only to such arrangements as bear interest at a rate that exceeds 9 per cent per annum on the balances from time to time outstanding. The provisions of the Bill do not apply, therefore, to the ordinary commercial lending of banks, but they do apply to loans made by banks or their subsidiaries that carry an interest rate in excess of 9 per cent, and to discounting of bills of exchange and promissory notes where the rate of discount exceeds 9 per cent per annum.

The duty will apply only to those persons who conduct credit and rental business, within the meaning of the Act, and, therefore, isolated lending by private individuals and internal lending by inter-related companies will not be

dutiable unless, of course, the transactions are evidenced by a document which is itself dutiable under the provisions of the second part of this Bill or under the existing provisions of the Act. All persons who carry on credit or rental business as defined in the Bill will be required to register with the Commissioner of Stamps and, being so registered, will be required to submit a monthly return showing the extent of all dutiable credit and rental business conducted during the month. They will then be obliged to pay duty to the Commissioner on the basis of the business, subject to allowable deductions, as shown in the return.

The person making the return will not be required to include in the return loans made for housing purposes, where, by declaration, the borrower has stated that the loan is required to assist in financing a house or flat which is intended for the borrower's own occupation and the loan is made on the security of a mortgage over the land on which the house or flat is built or is being built. It will not be necessary to include in a return amounts debited pursuant to a credit arrangement associated with the sale of goods unless: (*a*) a charge in excess of 9 per cent per annum on the amount outstanding is made; and (*b*) the amount of credit granted is in excess of $300. Thus, no duty will be payable in respect of normal monthly charge accounts, nor will what are known as "budget accounts" attract duty unless the amount of credit obtained exceeds $300.

In Victoria and Queensland, budget accounts with a credit limit of $200 are exempted from duty. In New South Wales duty is payable only where individual items costing in excess of $200 are financed under a credit arrangement, and it has been announced that this limit will be raised to $400 in January next. This Bill adopts the Victorian and Queensland approach but fixes the exemption limit at $300. This will exempt most budget accounts operated by the average person. Larger budget accounts than $300, by whatever name they might be described, will be dutiable if, as is usually the case, the rate of interest charged exceeds 9 per cent per annum on the balances outstanding. The registered person will also be required to include in the return the amount expended on discount transactions, but this applies to the discounting of bills of exchange and promissory notes only if the rate of discount exceeds 9 per cent per annum on the amount expended in the purchase of the bills or notes. The term "discount transactions" includes the factoring of book debts, but does not include, for the purpose of inclusion in the return:

(*a*) the purchase of book debts relating to export sales; or

(*b*) the purchase of book debts by a related company purely for the purpose of operating a centralized credit accounting system.

In connection with the second of these exclusions, I am informed that it is common practice for credit sales of subsidiary companies to be transferred to a central company which, in fact, buys the debts of the subsidiary at face value less a charge to cover accounting and administrative costs. The customer then receives his monthly statement from the central company and not from the related store at which he made his purchase. In this Bill, as long as the consideration is not less than 96 per cent of the face value of the book debts transferred, this sort of arrangement is not regarded as a "discount transaction" which has to be included in the return. It has been noted that in some cases lending and factoring is essentially a short-term operation. Much factoring of book debts, for example, has an operation of 30 to 90 days. The essence of short-term lending and factoring is to achieve a frequent turnover of capital, with fine profit margins. Thus a given amount of capital engaged in short-term lending has to be lent, recovered, and re-lent several times a year to achieve an earning rate comparable with a loan made for a year's duration.

However, if a loan is made for, say, one year, duty is payable at 1½ per cent on the amount of the loan only once during the period of the loan. If the same amount is lent, recovered and re-lent, say, 10 times during the year there would be payable as duty, in the absence of any special arrangements, 10 times the amount of duty. This could seriously inhibit such short-term lending, and the Bill, therefore, makes provision for a person to elect to have a loan or a discount transaction treated as a short-term loan or a short-term discount transaction. In such case the person is required to pay duty at the rate of ⅛ per cent per month in a fashion which equates the duty to be paid to the rate of 1½ per cent per annum on the amount financed. By definition, a loan on current account is considered to be a "short-term" loan and, in such case, duty is payable on the maximum amount of principal outstanding during the month.

Since many loans which are described as "personal loans" are made on the security of a bill of sale, it is apparent that duty would,

in the absence of other arrangements, be payable in these cases at 1½ per cent in respect of the loan and at ¼ per cent in respect of the bill of sale. If a hire-purchase agreement is executed the total duty for the same loan is 1½ per cent. The Bill allows a deduction to be made in the return of duty payable in respect of loans made to the extent of duty already paid in respect of a mortgage or bill of sale document which secures the repayment of a loan included in the return. This means that effectively duty is paid at the rate of 1½ per cent on the loan as included in the return and the documentary duty combined.

Leasing of all forms of goods will be dutiable. Of recent years the practice has become common for goods such as television sets, motor vehicles, office machines, heavy equipment, etc., to be leased rather than purchased, with finance made available under a hire-purchase agreement or by personal loan. Where the hirer is engaged in business there are some taxation advantages, in certain circumstances, for such equipment or goods to be leased rather than owned. The Bill requires a person who carries on a rental business to include in his return the amounts received in respect of rental business for the month in question, and to pay duty at the rate of 1½ per cent on such amounts. "Rental business", for the purpose of liability for duty, excludes the business of granting to any person the right to use goods in conjunction with a lease to occupy or use land. Thus no duty is payable in respect of, for example, the farming plant included with the lease of a farm or in respect of the household effects included in the lease of a furnished house.

Provision is included in the Bill to deal with those cases where a person engaged in rental business engages also to provide service in respect of the goods rented. In Victoria and New South Wales a person engaged in this type of business is permitted to exclude from his return such proportion of the amount of rental received as, in the opinion of the Commissioner, is properly attributable to the servicing of the goods. Information available suggests that the fixing of these proportions to be excluded in respect of the numerous and growing categories of goods being leased is creating a task of administration in the other States that is out of proportion to the revenue being received. Inquiries have been made into the experience in the other States and, on the basis of their experience, this Bill has been drafted to permit persons carrying on rental business to exclude from their return up to 40 per cent of the rental received as being a proportion that is required to cover servicing costs.

It is considered that this percentage will cover most cases. Provision is included in the Bill to permit persons to apply to the Commissioner to fix a higher percentage if they can show that the 40 per cent allowed by this Bill is inadequate to meet the servicing costs in their particular rental business. Where a person carries on rental business only and the extent of his rental business in the preceding year was not in excess of $2,000, the registered person may elect to lodge an annual return instead of a monthly statement. If the amount of such rental does not exceed $2,000 in any one year, such a registered person is not obliged to pay any duty. If the volume of business rises above $3,000 the registered person is obliged to resume submitting monthly returns.

I should like at this stage to draw the attention of honourable members to the fact that, by definition, the business of lending books by a library is excluded from rental business on which duty is payable. The policy that has been adopted in this State in relation to duty on hire-purchase agreements and money-lenders' contracts has been to place the onus of payment on the lender or the vendor and to prohibit recovery of the duty from the borrower or purchaser except where the agreements are terminated before the due date. This same policy has been continued in this Bill in relation to duty paid in connection with credit and rental business and to the several dutiable documents of agreement.

The second part of the Bill relates to instalment purchase agreements. At present duty at the rate of 1½ per cent is payable only on hire-purchase agreements that in essence are agreements under which the ownership of the goods concerned does not immediately pass from the vendor to the prospective buyer. Duty at the same rate will now be payable in addition on credit purchase agreements, where purchases of goods are made by at least six instalments over at least six months, and on rental agreements. Duty will not be payable, however, where in terms of a rental agreement goods are merely ancillary to the leasing of properties and business. As far as rental agreements are concerned, duty will be payable at 1½ per cent on the price at which the goods being rented could have been purchased at the time of entering into the rental agreement. The

duty in these instances may be paid, as is the case with hire-purchase agreements at present, by either impressed or adhesive stamps.

Persons who sell or rent goods under agreement may, however, be declared by the Commissioner to be approved vendors, in which case they are relieved of the responsibility of affixing adhesive stamps or having impressed stamps affixed to the document, but they must pay duty on the basis of a monthly statement of amounts financed by dutiable agreements. The Bill requires the vendor under an instalment purchase agreement to prepare an instrument containing information relating to the loan similar to that required under the Hire-Purchase Agreements Act or the Moneylenders Act. The only exemptions provided in the Bill are:

1. Instalment purchase agreements involving a purchase price that does not exceed $20.
2. Any instalment purchase agreement where the parties are in the nature of wholesaler and retailer in the sale of goods of the same kind; for example, motor vehicle "floor plan" financing.
3. Any rental agreement for the renting of goods together with real property of any business.

The purpose of the last exemption is to exempt from duty agreements covering goods that are included in the leasing of farms, shops, milk rounds, etc.

I refer now to the Bill itself and its specific clauses. Clause 1 gives the short titles to the amending Bill and the principal Act as amended thereby. Clause 2 provides that the Act will come into operation on a day to be fixed by proclamation. Clause 3 repeals the provisions of the existing Act relating to hire-purchase agreements and enacts new sections 31b to 31t relating to credit and rental business and to instalment purchase agreements.

New section 31b defines certain terms that are essential in the interpretation and implementation of the Bill. I have already discussed the important features of these. In the definition of "credit business" the exclusion in paragraph (*b*) of any business evidenced by an instrument under the heading of "instalment purchase agreement" is not to exempt the business but to avoid such business being dutiable under both of the two separate parts of the Act. Subsections (2) to (8) of new section 31b define the term "interest at an annual rate per centum" found in the definitions of loan and credit arrangements and explain how the annual rate of interest is to be determined in cases where no such rate payable on the balances outstanding from time to time has been agreed between the two parties involved. This procedure is necessary, particularly with personal loans wherein a so-called "flat" interest rate is applied. The formula is the one most commonly used for these purposes and, though not completely accurate from an actuarial viewpoint, it is sufficiently accurate to determine whether a rate of more than 9 per cent per annum on decreasing balances is imposed. It is essential to have a fairly simple formula capable of being calculated by persons without actuarial training. It gives a slight exaggeration of the interest rate as applied to decreasing balances, but if a lender may feel aggrieved by the operation of such a formula he has available the very simple alternative of agreeing to an interest rate applied to outstanding balances instead of imposing a "flat" rate.

New section 31d imposes heavy penalties for persons who carry on any credit or rental business without being registered. The provisions of this section are wide enough to extend to persons who, without an established place of business in South Australia, undertake negotiations for any credit or rental business in South Australia, or who enter into discount transactions relating to book debts and other negotiable instruments that are situated or are enforceable in South Australia.

New section 31e requires the Commissioner to register a person who applies for registration and allows such a person to cancel his registration if he ceases to carry on a credit or rental business in South Australia. New section 31f requires registered persons to lodge with the Commissioner a monthly statement setting out details of their transactions and to pay the duty calculated on that statement. I have already referred to the special rate of duty applicable to short-term loans and short-term discounting transactions. The registered person is required to set out amounts of short-term loans and short-term discounting transactions separately from the amounts of other loans and other discounting transactions. As I explained earlier, were it not for these provisions the aggregation of short-term and long-term transactions would result in money with high rate of turnover being subject to the duty of 1½ per cent every time it was used to make a loan or a discount transaction. The rate of duty proposed by this Bill in such cases is one-twelfth of 1½ per cent or ⅛ per cent. Thus the duty, for example, on an amount loaned for a period of one month at a

time would be equal to 1½ per cent of that amount at the end of 12 such transactions.

The registered person is also required to set out the amounts debited for the sale of goods or the provision of services pursuant to every credit arrangement under which credit in excess of $300 has been provided. In addition, the statement must show amounts which in the past have been debited for the sale of goods or the provision of services under an arrangement that is interest free (such as a monthly account) but which subsequently became part of such a credit arrangement. This could happen where an interest charge in excess of 9 per cent per annum on the balance of credit outstanding is made in respect of a monthly account which is not settled by the due date. It is quite usual for retailing firms to provide credit to their customers for the purchase of goods under arrangements which bear a variety of names such as budget accounts, No. 2 accounts, household accounts, optional charge accounts, etc., where a charge is made which, when converted to an annual rate of interest in accordance with new section 31b, is in excess of 9 per cent per annum. It should be noted that the dutiable amounts relating to credit arrangements will not include the value of goods returned or services not provided.

Subsections (2), (3) and (4) of new section 31f have the effect of exempting from duty a person who is carrying on rental business but no credit business if the amount of rental received by him during the prescribed 12-month period did not exceed $2,000. Such a person is allowed to lodge annual statements with the Commissioner instead of monthly statements. The subsections go on to provide that if the amount received by him thereafter during any period of 12 months exceeds $3,000 the arrangement may be cancelled and he would then have to revert to lodging monthly statements with the Commissioner. New section 31g sets out various conditions under which amounts relating to loans, discount transactions, credit arrangements and rental business should be included in the statement referred to in section 31f of this Bill. New section 31h provides for the duty to be denoted by cash register imprint on the statement or in another manner which may be found to be more efficient.

New section 31i sets out the amounts which should not be included in the statement referred to in section 31f of this Bill. The effect of subsection (1) (*d*) is to eliminate the further duty under these sections which otherwise would become payable in cases where book debts, loans, instalment purchase agreements or leased goods, upon which duty has already been paid, become the security for a further loan. Subsection (1) (*e*) eliminates the further duty under these sections which otherwise would be payable in cases of re-discounting book debts and other things in action or in cases of discounting instalment purchase agreements which have been subjected to duty under these sections as credit or rental business or where duty has been paid on the instrument. Subsection (1) (*f*) exempts from duty an amount relating to the cost of servicing leased goods which may be as high as 40 per cent of the rental collected. As I have pointed out, experience in other States has shown that in the majority of cases the servicing cost does not exceed 40 per cent of the rental. For isolated cases, however, where such cost is shown to exceed this limit the Commissioner is given power to fix a higher percentage. Subsection (1) (*g*) exempts from duty any amount relating to the leasing of goods owned by one company to another related company. The purpose of subsection (1) (*h*) is to exempt from duty any business which is transacted outside South Australia and which is not connected with the South Australian operations of a person registered in South Australia. Therefore, a firm with branches in South Australia and Victoria will not pay duty in South Australia for any business conducted between the Victorian branch and a Victorian person.

New section 31j provides for books and working papers to be kept by a registered person for a period of three years or any other lesser period as the Commissioner allows. New section 31k allows the Commissioner to determine the basis upon which calculation of the amounts required to be shown on the statement is to be made if it is impracticable to calculate them precisely, and it also allows him in special cases to accept statements relating to a period other than a month. Such arrangements, however, may be cancelled by the Commissioner by giving notice in writing to the registered person. New section 31*l* provides that the duty payable on any credit or rental business cannot be passed on to the person who receives the loan, credit, or proceeds of a discount transaction or to the person who is going to use the leased goods except in the case of early termination of a loan, in which case, where no agreement covers the situation, a formula is set down for apportioning this duty paid between the lender and the

borrower. This formula has similar effect to that presently provided in the Money-lenders Act.

New section 31m defines the three types of agreement which fall under the heading of "instalment purchase agreements" and other related terms. Credit purchase agreements are agreements under which goods are purchased where, irrespective of the time the property in goods passes, the purchase price is payable by six or more instalments over six or more months with at least one instalment being payable after delivery of the goods. Agreements relating to lay-by transactions therefore will not be dutiable. The new definition of hire-purchase agreements enlarges the area covered by the existing definition, as it extends to agreements under which provision for credit is to be made in the event of a subsequent purchase of goods and as it does not exclude agreements under which the property in the goods passes at the time of the agreement or upon or at any time before delivery of the goods. Rental agreements cover agreements which in the last few years have taken the place of hire-purchase or other credit agreements. For the purposes of such agreements, duty is payable not on rental received as in the case of "rental business" but on the price at which the goods rented would have been purchased for cash at the time of entering into the rental agreement.

New section 31n imposes duty on all instalment purchase agreements and provides that the duty denoted by impressed or adhesive stamps shall be paid by the vendor unless the vendor is not bound to comply with the section. In cases where the vendor is not bound to comply with the section, the purchaser is required to pay the duty within 15 days after the making of the agreement. This latter provision follows a comparable one in the Victorian Act and is designed to deal particularly with the case of the Commonwealth Banking Corporation, which does substantial business in hire-purchase and comparable lending. The Commonwealth Statute exempts the corporation from State stamp duties. As a consequence of the Victorian provision placing the responsibility of paying the duty in this instance on the purchaser, the corporation has in that State arranged to ensure the impressing or affixing of the appropriate duty stamps, and it is expected that it will act similarly in this State when such a provision is enacted. New section 31o allows the Commissioner to declare a vendor to be an "approved vendor". Such a vendor is then relieved of the responsibility of paying the duty by impressed or adhesive stamps but is liable to pay the duty on a statement lodged with the Commissioner monthly. The duty payable is calculated at 1½ per cent of the sum of the "purchase prices" of all dutiable instalment purchase agreements entered into during the previous month. The Commissioner, however, may revoke such a declaration. The approved vendor must keep books and working papers for a period of at least three years or any other lesser period as the Commissioner allows.

New section 31p prohibits the passing on of the duty from the vendor to the purchaser except in the case of early termination of agreements where, in the absence of agreement, a formula for apportioning duty between vendor and purchaser is provided which has a similar effect to that provided in the Hire-Purchase Agreements Act. Under new section 31q a vendor, whether he is an approved vendor or not, must prepare an original instrument where the purchase price of the goods obtained under an instalment purchase agreement exceeds $20. Such instrument containing the information set out in subsection (3) of the section must be stamped within seven days after the agreement is entered into or, in cases where the vendor is an approved vendor, it must be suitably endorsed with "approved vendor: duty payable on monthly return". The original instrument so prepared must be kept and be made available for inspection during the period the goods are bailed or while any rent or instalments are payable under the agreement.

New section 31r re-enacts the existing section 31d, which, together with the other sections relating to hire-purchase agreements, is repealed by clause 3 of this Bill. This provides for a duty of 10c a $100 on the assignment of a hire-purchase agreement. New section 31s provides that duplicates or counterparts of an original agreement that is chargeable with duty shall not be chargeable with duty. New section 31t contains the necessary transitional provisions relating to hire-purchase agreements entered into before the commencement of this Act. For such agreements the existing provisions relating to stamp duty shall continue to apply after the commencement of this Act as if they were still in force and had not been repealed.

Clause 4 repeals the provisions of the existing Act relating to stamp duty on money-lenders' contracts, which it is proposed will in the future be covered by provisions of this Bill. Clause 5 enacts transitional provisions

relating to money-lenders' contracts entered into before the commencement of this Act. For such contracts the existing provisions relating to stamp duty shall continue to apply after the commencement of this Act as if they were still in force and had not been repealed. Clause 6 inserts in the principal Act the usual provision for the prosecution of a person who has committeed an offence. Clause 7 allows regulations made under the provisions of the principal Act to prescribe matters necessary to be prescribed for the purposes of that Act.

Clause 8 amends the Second Schedule of the principal Act by striking out the items under the headings "Contract or Note or Memorandum of a Contract" and "Hire-Purchase Agreements" and inserting the item entitled "Instalment Purchase Agreement", together with exemptions. The new provisions require the payment of duty equal to 1½ per cent of the purchase price as set out in the original instrument constituting or evidencing an instalment purchase agreement. These provisions, however, are subject to the exemptions to which I have earlier referred. I commend the Bill to honourable members.

Mr. HUDSON: I rise on a point of order. A short while ago, Mr. Speaker, you spoke to me regarding Standing Order 55, which deals with a quorum in the House. It reads:

The doors of the House shall be unlocked whenever the Speaker is engaged in counting the House, and the bells shall be rung, as in a Division, two minutes being allowed before the Speaker adjourns the House.

I should be interested, Mr. Speaker, if you would explain to me in what way I contravened Standing Order 55 in the conversation proceeding across the floor of the House.

The SPEAKER: Now is not the time to raise a point of order. The question before the House is "That this Bill be now read a second time".

Mr. HUDSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

FRUIT AND PLANT PROTECTION BILL

In Committee.

(Continued from November 14. Page 2508.)

Clause 8—"Notifiable pests and diseases."

Mr. CORCORAN: I move:

To strike out subclause (3).

By subclause (3) the onus of proof is placed on the owner of the orchard. The authority concerned does not have to prove that the owner was negligent, that he did not take the necessary steps to notify the chief inspector that this pest or disease existed on his property: on the contrary, it is said, "They were there. You prove that they were not." The penalty for failing to do this is $200. Can the member for Gumeracha explain to me how the onus of proof does not lie on the owner of the orchard in this case? It does, and that is what I and others object to. It is commonly recognized that a person suspected of committing an offence is not guilty until proved guilty by the appropriate authority. However, in this case the onus of proof is placed not on the authority but on the owner of the property.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: I can remember arguing with the honourable member about this.

Mr. CORCORAN: Perhaps the Attorney-General can. When things are different they are not the same. Will he argue with me that what I have said is not correct? Is it a fact that the onus of proof is placed on the owner of the orchard in this case? Clearly, the Attorney-General knows that it is. While the departmental officers might view this as a convenient method, which would no doubt cause orchardists or people affected by this clause to be alert, I contend they would be alert anyway because it would be in their interests to notify the chief inspector of any disease or pest, as this could directly affect their livelihood. I cannot conceive that any orchardists would be foolish enough to recognize something and not bother to report it so that further measures could be taken. The member for Gumeracha may say, "You do not know all the people I know engaged in this industry; there are people in the city who pay little attention to their properties, and these are the people about whom we are concerned." There is a penalty of $200 if they are careless in the supervision of their properties. Surely it will not be difficult for the department to prove that and ask the court to apply the prescribed penalty. It is not reasonable or fair that the onus should be placed on the owner of a property.

Mr. ARNOLD: This clause is necessary to safeguard the majority of the people. To the best of my knowledge, the department has never gone to any undue length to try to convict a grower. The point has been raised that some growers are alert, but many growers are not alert to this point. Officers of the horticulture branch have stressed the great importance of this provision in preventing the spread of known diseases. I said last week that the cost involved in eradicating these diseases is great and, consequently, any measure

that will help to eliminate them from the word "go" is in the interests of the grower. I support the clause as it stands.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The general principle that has been adopted in this Chamber on most occasions previously in relation to onus of proof clauses is that one does not alter the onus of proof from the prosecution to the defence unless the particular matter concerned is peculiarly within the knowledge of the defendant. In cases, for instance, of unlawful possession the onus of proof shifts to a certain extent, simply because this is a situation where it would be impossible in many instances for the prosecution to obtain the necessary evidence to prove the normal offence. Because the material facts are peculiarly within the knowledge of the defendant, some burden is placed upon him before the court.

In this particular case, the knowledge of the particular facts is not peculiarly within the knowledge of the defendant. What we are saying here is, in effect, "If there is any pest or notifiable disease found on the property, then you will have to show that you did not know about it." This is an extraordinarily difficult thing for anyone to do. Does one say, "I can show you I have done my normal rounds, but I just did not find it"? How is the court to take the say-so of the defendant here? It is not an onus, in the circumstances, which it is easy to discharge, because one cannot get any corroborative evidence in the matter as to lack of knowledge.

Basically, this proposal runs counter to the general proposition that the onus of proof ought not to be shifted. If the Government were concerned to make this an offence bearing absolute liability, that is another matter, but I would not have thought that absolute liability should apply in this case, because we are in the same position as we were in when a matter was legislated by the last Parliament: those people whose stock strayed because of someone else's fault ought not to be liable for damage that resulted on the road. Here, precautions may have been taken. The orchardist concerned may still not know of the existence of a pest or disease, but how in the world does he prove he did not know it and discharge an onus in that regard before the court? It would be a difficult thing to do. I do not think we should shift the onus of proof in this fashion.

Mr. GILES: What would happen if the situations were reversed? An orchardist may know that a disease was on his property for some years until it had spread to a large portion of his property. Nevertheless, he may not feel responsible to notify the authorities of its presence. This would adversely affect the industry.

Mr. Corcoran: Why isn't he responsible? Of course, he is responsible to notify if he finds a disease.

Mr. GILES: If the positions were reversed the property owner would be responsible to report it, but he might be able to dodge reporting it because of the law.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: It would be easy to prove.

Mr. GILES: If the property owner has to report it, it would have a better effect.

Mr. Corcoran: The department could say he should have been able to notice the disease and should have notified it. That could be proved to a court.

Mr. GILES: Not necessarily. I support the clause because I consider it will have a greater effect in the industry to reduce the spread of disease than it would have if it were in the opposite vein.

Mr. Broomhill: It's not in the opposite vein.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Lands): As I said last Thursday, I could not accept the deletion of subclause (3) without some protest. I have examined the position to ascertain whether the Agriculture Department considers this an important provision and, as I suspected, the department considers it of major importance.

Mr. Corcoran: Why?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: At the moment, without such a provision there could be considerable and blatant attempts to disregard the proclaimed disease. Although the member for Millicent said, "Well, any grower in his own interest would report a disease," I think he understands, as well as other honourable members understand, that, while that is sensible and while the majority of growers in their own interest and in the interest of their neighbours would notify the presence of a disease or pest, there are always some who would not make such notification. In a horticultural area this could be a burdensome matter. I have asked whether there have been cases of deliberate concealment of diseases where an all-out attempt has been made to control them, and I have been told that there have been and that there have been many more of gross negligence by people who just do not look.

Mr. Riches: Have there been prosecutions?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: Previously there was no power to prosecute; the power to do so is included in this provision, and without it the Bill would be much less effective. There are many pestilent diseases some of which are widespread, and it is urgent that we see that others do not spread. For instance, in the case of a fruit fly outbreak in a horticultural area, any failure to notify the department or any case of a person's taking a few infested peaches, for example, throwing them in a bin and destroying them or taking some other action on his own and saying nothing about it in the area, could be absolutely disastrous to the industry. I am sure that almost all those in the industry entirely favour this kind of provision; I have no doubt they support the Government's action in this respect.

Last Thursday I pointed out that no Government likes to include in a Bill a provision that puts the onus on a person to take action of the type provided in this Bill. We do not like doing this and we would not do it if it could be avoided. I acknowledge that the Opposition does not like putting into Bills this type of provision, but it has done so over and over again. The Licensing Act has in it an onus of proof provision, and this is also provided in section 14 of the Electrical Workers and Contractors Licensing Act. In 1966, the Labor Government inserted a similar provision in the Motor Vehicles Act, dealing with the words "prima facie" in that case. As the Opposition has found at times, it is necessary to provide for the onus of proof to be on the defendant. The Leader has said how important it is in cases of unlawful possession that there should be an onus of proof on the person being apprehended. He is right when he says that. However, in saying it, he draws attention to a provision in the law which I believe could have much more drastic repercussions than the provision in this Bill could ever have. The law relating to unlawful possession may make one nervous because of what could happen through the misdirection of justice. That position applies far more in relation to that law than is the case with the provision in this Bill.

Earlier I stressed that the Agriculture Department is the least likely of all organizations to bully or hector people or to use these powers unreasonably. I believe all members will support that statement. I have assured myself that the department has no intention of bullying householders who may not understand the provisions of the Bill. No attempt will be made by the authorities to bring before the court someone who, in perfectly good faith, has failed to notify the department and who has no reasonable cause to know about this provision. However, the department considers it necessary that experienced fruitgrowers should be vigilant and should know what is happening in their orchards. In the event of fruitgrowers knowing about these things, they should be forced to notify the occurrence of a disease. Some diseases affecting horticulture are difficult to detect. San José scale is a most obscure and trifling infestation in its early stages. All the scale and most of the fungus diseases are not easy to detect at first, anyway. There would be no intention of, and no sense in, applying the law to someone who, in all good faith, failed to notice something happening in his orchard.

However, it should not be left to the few departmental officers to have to roam through all the orchards of South Australia to find new pests and diseases, yet in practice that is the way most pests and diseases have been found. In many cases they have been found too late for counter measures to be effective. This should not all be left to the departmental officers. If people have an orchard in an area of orchards, they have a responsibility to their neighbours and to the State to see that they are vigilant. As I cannot agree with the Opposition that this provision should be deleted, I ask members to leave the Bill as it stands.

Mr. CORCORAN: I accept the Minister's assurance that no officer of the Agriculture Department would be likely to go around bullying orchardists. However, can the Minister say how on earth an outbreak of a disease would be discovered and a person's negligence in respect of that outbreak discovered unless an officer of the department saw it or unless it was reported to the department by someone else? In this connection, I argue that it would be far simpler (and much fairer) for the department to prosecute in a case where this proof was readily obtainable than it would be for officers to go around saying, "As we have found a disease on your property, you will have to go before the court and prove that you do not know about it." Surely the fair thing in this case is to put the onus on the department or the officer involved to prove that, in fact, the person did know about an outbreak.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: How would the prosecution discharge that onus?

Mr. CORCORAN: Why would it not be able to? If a disease is on the property, the prosecution has the proof. Surely it could be argued in court that an outbreak was readily discovered by officers of the department and should have been discovered by the owner of the orchard.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: That is exactly what this provision states.

Mr. CORCORAN: No, it does not. The orchardist has the onus of proof; he must prove that he did not know about it and the court must decide whether the owner or the prosecution is right.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: You just spelt out what is in this provision.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: What you are saying is that the case is deemed to be the way the Deputy Leader has stated.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: He is saying that, surely if the facts were put before the court, the case would be proved.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. CORCORAN: I say that it should be the responsibility of the law and not that of the orchardist to prove whether or not he knew about the disease. Although the Minister says (and I mainly agree with him) that officers of the department will not go around doing the sort of thing that would upset people, this is a possibility. An inspector could make things difficult and the grower would have to bear the brunt. Inspectors who were fair and reasonable would have adequate proof that they were correct and no onus of proof should be placed on the orchardists. I do not understand how a charge could be laid unless the departmental officer inspected and found grounds for the charge. He could not make a decision from his office in Adelaide. The provision of a $200 fine is one incentive for an owner to do the right thing, and the Minister's arguments do not justify our departing from normal practice regarding the onus of proof.

Mr. ARNOLD: I consider that most growers favour having this added responsibility. Their close liaison with horticultural advisers and inspectors enables pests to be controlled, and this control enables the growers to stay in business. Subclause (2) refers to a person who discovers any fruit or plant affected by pest or disease and, although a grower might have known for years of the presence of a pest, how could the department prove that the grower had discovered it? It is a matter of placing more responsibility on the grower.

Mr. Corcoran: I am complaining about the injustice of the provision.

Mr. ARNOLD: The provision is just if it helps the grower and I am sure that, if the matter of giving added responsibility to the grower were discussed at meetings of horticulturists, they would realize that it was in their interests to do what the subclause required. I represent the people in the industry, and arguing a legal point is not helping those people.

Mr. Corcoran: So you create injustice to do it, do you?

Mr. ARNOLD: That is rubbish. The increased costs today require us to keep pests to a minimum to help the industry. I do not consider the provision unjust.

The Committee divided on the amendment:

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

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

Pair—Aye—Mr. Hutchens. No—Mr. Allen.

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

Amendment thus negatived; clause passed.

Remaining clauses (9 to 19) and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

In Committee.

(Continued from November 14. Page 2515.)

Clause 5—"Power of company to hold licence."

Mr. HUGHES: Last Thursday I objected because Bill files were not in front of several members. As I believe that the messengers have been blamed for something of which they were not guilty, I should like to clear up any wrong impression that may have been given by what I said then. I said that it was not the fault of the messengers or of members of this House that the Bill files were not available. The messengers have a duty to perform in adding amendments to the files

and that is why the files were missing at that time. On no account do I blame the messengers. Because the Bill files were not before members, I could not refer to clause 2 which, as the Attorney-General knows, I opposed vigorously during the second reading debate. It deals with licence fees. I could ask that the clauses be recommitted, but I shall not do that because there would be no gain and I do not intend to call for a division, even though I vigorously oppose the increase in licence fees.

Clause passed.

Clauses 6 to 9 postponed.

Title passed.

Bill No. 2 read a third time and passed.

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 3)

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE (Attorney-General) moved:

That the Licensing Act Amendment Bill (No. 3)—in Committee—be now proceeded with.

Motion carried.

In Committee.

Clause 3—"Certificate."

Mr. EVANS: I move:

To strike out "eighteen" and insert "twenty". Members will recall that I foreshadowed this amendment during the second reading debate.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I previously indicated that I was in favour of a substantial lowering of the minimum drinking age below the age of 21 years which now exists by law even though it does not exist in practice. Although I believe that 18 years would be a reasonable age, it seems that many members of the community object to the lowering of the drinking age from 21 years all the way down to 18 years. The member for Onkaparinga is very much in touch with the younger members of the community. Indeed, I suggest he is more closely in touch with them than is anyone else in this Committee. He is certainly more in touch with them than are many of the Socialist members opposite, who are not even interested in the young people in our society, and who do not have to be, because their policy on all things is decided by the Trades Hall. The member for Onkaparinga, who plays football with young people and coaches them at tennis and cricket, knows the way they think, and I accept his opinion (that it is desirable to reduce the drinking age by one year) as being the opinion of a man who understands what he is talking about. The honourable member is not bound to a fixed platform as are members opposite, who are bound by their Party Platform, I believe, to supporting the age of 18 years. They certainly must be bound, because all, or at least most of them, supported their Leader.

Mr. Hudson: Oh!

Mr. FREEBAIRN: No-one in this Chamber is bound more to the Party Platform than is the member for Glenelg. I know members opposite are bound by their Party now to vote for the age of 18 years, but perhaps they will show the Chamber that they are not really bound by their platform and will support the amendment. This is a great chance for members opposite to show us that they are not really bound by their Party Platform on social matters.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think the honourable member had better come back to the clause.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I am challenging members opposite to show that they are not really bound by their platform on social matters, so that they will then be free to vote according to their consciences.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member must adhere to the amendment.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I support the amendment.

Mr. RICHES: On a point of order, I think the member for Light has cast a reflection on members. He did so three times, although I hoped he would have the decency not to repeat it. He has cast a reflection on us which I resent very strongly, and I ask that his remarks be withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Light.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I do not know what reflection I cast on members opposite. I thought every word I uttered concerning members opposite was the truth.

Mr. Lawn: They were all lies.

The CHAIRMAN: As I pointed out earlier, the honourable member must speak to the amendment.

Mr. RICHES: The honourable member said all members opposite were bound by the Trades Hall on social matters. He kept on in that strain. He was lying; he knows that what he said is a lie; and he knows what members on this side have said when speaking to this measure. He has kept on repeating a certain statement when he knows better. I take strong exception to the words he has used, in connection with me at any rate. I am not bound by anyone on this question. The honourable

member knows that, and he has known it all along. We have to protect ourselves by taking exception when these statements are made. Mr. Chairman, I want a withdrawal.

The CHAIRMAN: My own view is that the statements are not unparliamentary. Statements are made on both sides of the Chamber from time to time which are somewhat objectionable but I do not consider them to be unparliamentary.

Mr. Lawn: No, but it is a reflection on other members.

The CHAIRMAN: I regret that certain statements are made in Committee but, although they may be somewhat objectionable, I do not consider this to be an unparliamentary statement.

Mr. RICHES: On a further point of order, I claim that the statement is a lie, and it is a lie concerning me. It is unparliamentary, and I take exception to it. If the honourable member made it in ignorance, I would have accepted it, but he knew the statement was a lie when he made it. He said it concerning me, and I think that, when a lying statement is made about a member, it is unparliamentary and unnecessary, and that we must have some protection.

The CHAIRMAN: If the honourable member wishes to withdraw his remark, I give him the opportunity to do so.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I cannot really grasp what the member for Stuart is getting at. I do not believe I have passed any remark relating to the member for Stuart at all. I do not really believe that I said that members opposite were bound to their Party Platform on social matters. What I did was to invite members opposite to show that they were not bound to their platform and to support the member for Onkaparinga.

Mr. Hughes: You said three times that we were bound.

Mr. RICHES: I regret that the debate has got into the state it has, and I believe it is incumbent on me to reply to the member for Light. If he cannot remember what he said, I remind him that he said three times that members of the Socialist Party were bound by Trades Hall to vote for a reduction of the age to 18 years, and he challenged us to show that we were not bound. He said that at least three times. I assure the honourable member that he is not helping his cause at all by making statements which he knows to be wrong.

Mr. Clark: And then denying them!

Mr. RICHES: He knows the member for Wallaroo (Mr. Hughes) is not bound, and he knows that none of us is bound on this matter. No member has taken stronger action in this regard than has the member for Wallaroo; no-one has been more vocal in expressing his opinions than has the honourable member, to whom a tribute has been paid by members of the member for Light's own Party.

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

Mr. RICHES: When the Committee adjourned I was taking exception to remarks by the member for Light that were offensive to me and, I have learnt since, to other members. I understand the honourable member desires to correct the impression that we have on this side of the Committee. I invite him to do so now.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: No remarks made by me were intended to be personally offensive. If they were, I apologize and withdraw them.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON (Treasurer): When I spoke on the second reading of this composite Bill, I said it would be detrimental to the well-being of the people as a whole if the proposed reduction from 21 years to 18 years was accepted. I still hold that view. I have amendments on members' files, the object of which is to retain the age at 21 years, but I will support this amendment only because I prefer 20 to 18. If I cannot retain the present age of 21 years, I shall be happier to see it reduced only to 20 years rather than to 18 years. I support this amendment only because I prefer 20 years to 18 years and not because I favour any reduction from 21 years. If the amendment is carried, I will still oppose the clause, and I intend to divide the Committee on it, as I will divide the House on the third reading of the Bill. I take this attitude because of my conviction that this move is unwise.

Mr. RODDA: As I should prefer the age to be lowered (if it has to be lowered) to 20 years rather than to 18 years, I support the amendment. However, as I agree with what the Treasurer said, I will support him in his attempt to have the age left at 21 years. I know people want to do things for young people (who I believe are the most precious possession in our community), but for the life of me I cannot see that allowing them to drink strong liquor at a tender age will be good for them or for the community, and for that reason alone I oppose the Bill. I have strong convictions about this matter, having children of my own and having seen them

grow up, and I have had some heartaches on this score. We cannot put old heads on young shoulders.

We are told that there is a cry up and down the land that South Australia is a blot on the escutcheon of democracy, but the actions of the people show that this is not true. I believe that, as our people are looking for good government with practical legislation, we should be looking to provide that rather than going into great detail on these social measures. I support the amendment and, if it is successful, I will follow the course proposed by the Treasurer.

Mr. LAWN: I agree with the member for Victoria that it is impossible to put old heads on young shoulders, but I oppose the Bill and the amendment. If the amendment had any chance of success, that chance was destroyed by the member for Light. On a previous occasion, he said he favoured reducing the drinking age to 16 years. It shows what experience he has had of the young people of the State. On this question the honourable member has danced like a will-o'-the-wisp, so nimbly from one unstable foothold to another, that he would not convey conviction to anyone, irrespective of age. It was an accident when he fell into the Torrens River but a calamity when he was pulled out. About eight members opposite said during the second reading debate that they would oppose the Bill. That means that they opposed this clause but, although seven of my colleagues and I voted against the second reading, those members opposite who had opposed the Bill voted for the second reading. The whip does not crack on this side: we are not instructed how to vote. The matter would not now be before this Committee if every Government member who had said he opposed the reduction of the minimum drinking age to 18 years had voted in terms of his statement. When the next few votes are taken I will prove to the member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Evans) that there is no point in his waiting for the third reading to throw the Bill out. That will be too late, as members opposite had their opportunity to do that on the second reading. I oppose the Bill and the amendment and, for the reasons I have given, I will vote against any alteration in the present age.

Mr. McANANEY: I still consider that 18 years is the correct minimum drinking age, but I am sufficiently democratic to be dictated to by the people of my district, and I find that those people are strongly against any reduction in the minimum age. I am a little influenced by those members who advocate that the minimum age be 21 years, because those members are not irresponsible parents. Parents who allow their children to go to work or attend university at 18 years without being trained in such matters as handling money and drinking are not responsible, and the children have to be protected. I would support the provision to have 18 years the minimum age if the penalties were increased and made similar to those in Victoria. If a minimum age of 18 years is provided, young people should have to carry their birth certificates, although the Council for Civil Liberties would probably object to such a requirement. Regarding what the member for Victoria (Mr. Rodda) has said, I think many old shoulders have not wise heads on them, and we cannot be proud of our world. On the other hand, the children of today have demonstrated in many ways, including by their public service, their ability to improve the world. I favour 20 years as the minimum drinking age, although in certain circumstances I would support 18 years.

Mr. HUGHES: Last week I said I would seriously consider the amendment foreshadowed by the member for Onkaparinga but, after the episode concerning the second reading last week, I wondered whether I would be doing right in supporting it. Several Government members said they would oppose the Bill but, when the vote was taken and a division called on the second reading, each of those members voted in favour of the Bill. This afternoon the member for Light said that Opposition members were bound by the Trades Hall to vote for 18 years to be the minimum age, and threw out a challenge to us. This incident convinced me beyond reasonable doubt that I would be doing wrong if I did not support the *status quo*. I was most concerned about the remarks made by the member for Light. Mr. Chairman, I have just been told by the member for Gawler that the member for Light has withdrawn his remarks and apologized to the Chamber. Being called out of the Chamber at 7.30 p.m. by one of my constituents and not returning until 7.35 p.m., I did not know that this had happened.

Mr. Lawn: That is only for what he said this afternoon.

Mr. HUGHES: I realize that.

Mr. Lawn: He will say it again tomorrow.

Mr. HUGHES: I know it is done for a purpose, because I realize what the honourable member's tactics are.

Mr. Lawn: It has not been deleted from *Hansard*.

Mr. HUGHES: I realize that.

Mr. McAnaney: Are you going to apologize for getting abusive since the tea adjournment?

Mr. HUGHES: I do not think that the member for Stirling is in order in asking me to apologize. I do not think I have been abusive, but I remember being called a liar by him.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member should be speaking to the amendment.

Mr. HUGHES: When one hears a remark such as that made by the member for Stirling one must reply to it.

Mr. McAnaney: You did not deny it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Wallaroo.

Mr. HUGHES: I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that if the member for Stirling persists with his rude interjections you should name him. I am deeply concerned at statements made by Government members, particularly one or two in the back-bench, because they are irresponsible statements. These members have said, and have been recorded in *Hansard* as saying, that they opposed the Bill, but they voted in favour of it. They seem to be unreliable, and this fact must be obvious to their constituents. Last Saturday, Sunday and again yesterday afternoon I was approached by many constituents from the townships of Kadina, Wallaroo and Moonta, to whom I explained the present situation. However, those constituents maintain that, as their representative, I must seek to maintain the *status quo,* namely, 21 years. I have always said in this Chamber that when I receive a request from a number of people in my district I should heed that request. Had a larger number of people approached me in connection with 18-year-olds being given the privilege to drink, I would have had to consider that also. However, once again I stand in this Chamber, the same as the member for Gumeracha, the member for Murray and others have stood, and say that I have not been approached by one of my constituents to support the lowering of the drinking age from 21 years to 18 years. But those members, within a few minutes, proceeded to vote for the very thing that they condemned. Indeed, they stand condemned, not only in my eyes but also in the eyes of their constituents.

Mr. McKee: Hypocrites.

Mr. HUGHES: They are hypocrites, and no other name can be found for them. For them to ask for my support on such a measure is most unreasonable. I will support the amendment.

Mr. Langley: You're dropping down on it.

Mr. HUGHES: No, not at all. I have a specific reason for doing this. I was man enough to ask the Treasurer about it myself. As I pointed out, I was called out on an important matter concerning a constituent who is an 88-year-old lady and, so that I might be put in the picture, I asked the Treasurer what he had said. I will vote for the amendment but, when at the third reading, I will vote to retain 21 years.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Although the member for Wallaroo and I are traditionally good friends, he has within the last five minutes called me a hypocrite. I am not sure whether the member for Adelaide also said it, and, if he did not, I do not want to involve him. However, it has been alleged that certain members on this side, when speaking to the second reading last week, indicated, as I did, that they opposed a reduction in the drinking age. The Bill at that time contained two separate parts, and it has now been divided. One of those parts was a tax measure which I, as Treasurer, had foreshadowed in the Budget speech. In order to preserve that measure, I said I would vote for in favour of the second reading but would oppose the reduction in the drinking age when the Bill was divided and the matter came before the House separately. That is exactly what I am doing.

The honourable member said a moment ago that he had a good reason for supporting the amendment. I had an equally good reason for voting in favour of the second reading when the Bill was before us last week. If the honourable member stopped to think about it a second time, he would not have used the word "hypocrite", because it is perfectly clear that members on this side who voted in favour of the second reading did so in the full knowledge that the Bill was to be divided. Contingent notice had been given; it had been announced in this place and in the press that the Bill would be divided into two parts after the second reading had been passed, and it could not be done before that stage. I make those remarks to the honourable member in as kindly a way as I can. I do not think he really wanted to brand me a hypocrite, and I suggest that perhaps he made his comment without having a real knowledge of the facts. Therefore, I say that I forgive him but that I do not altogether condone the mistake that he made. Other honourable members can speak for themselves, but I say that when I spoke in the second reading debate last Thursday I made perfectly clear the course I

intended to pursue, and I have confirmed that again this evening.

The Hon. R. S. HALL (Premier): I have been rather interested in the tenor of the debate, although I missed some of the proceedings prior to the adjournment. I heard the member for Wallaroo say that somebody was holding up proceedings and stopping me from doing something I wanted to do. To that stage, I had not entered the debate or given an opinion about the matter for some time. Some of the speeches that have been made have been more in the nature of a confession than a statement.

I make the perfectly plain statement that I believe the minimum drinking age should be reduced to 18 years. Despite the controversy that surrounded the change to 10 o'clock closing, and the fears expressed that this would be a change for the worse, that change has been successful. In fact, unless one travelled around looking for signs of 10 o'clock closing, one would not know that this change had been made. It was a move that a large majority of people wanted, and now they have this facility they have not misused it.

Have the young people of South Australia progressed in their attitude to responsible citizenship? An examination shows clearly that they have a greater responsibility in many spheres and that their general attitude to life is certainly better than it has been in the past. I believe that, if they want this concession, they have earned it by their responsible attitude. Young people are drinking at 18 years of age, whether we like it or not, and if they cannot get liquor legally they will get it from friends. We must face facts: young people drink liquor at parties, and they drink it up the road. Sometimes they might have too much.

Mr. Langley: The law will look after that.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I think it is accepted that if the age is reduced to 18 years the provision must be policed fairly strictly. We still allow young people to drive at the age of 16, a right that I want to preserve for them. That is no less a responsibility than being able to drink at the age of 18. It may be a difficult equation, but that is my personal belief. I do not know how many years ago (let us say 40) the age of 21 was chosen but 18 is good enough today as our young people have progressed so much in their attitudes, responsibilities and general level of education. Therefore, I support the Bill as it stands.

Mr. HURST: I intend to oppose both 18 and 20 as an age at which drinking is permissible. I do so because I feel that those members who spoke about the responsibility of young people did so with their tongue in their cheek. In my opinion, the right of an individual to vote is far more important than his right to drink. When citizens are given the right to vote at a certain age, these other rights should follow as a matter of course. If people are not mature enough to have a say in electing the Government that makes the laws, I find it hard to accept that they are mature enough to drink. After listening to what the member for Light (Mr. Freebairn) said this afternoon, I fell to wondering whether we should not seriously review the situation because his performance was far worse than what we would get from some people highly intoxicated. When he puts on a performance like that when he is cold sober, we should consider protecting individuals like him and possibly raise the drinking age to 40 or 45, because it is obvious he has not reached maturity.

Mr. Lawn: You do not think the honourable member knows anything about juveniles merely because he acts like one?

Mr. HURST: I do not think he does. He is over 21 years of age, otherwise he would not be eligible to be a member of this Chamber. He has been here for some time but his actions leave us in serious doubt about his maturity. I vote for the *status quo.*

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Leader of the Opposition): My attitude to the responsibility of 18-year-olds has been made evident to honourable members on previous occasions. People at 18 years are capable of full adult responsibility for all purposes. Although I am distressed that we have not succeeded in achieving that particular goal at this stage, I believe that at any stage we can take a step in that direction it is the logical result of any belief that full adult responsibility should occur at 18 years. If one believes that everyone is capable of exercising full responsibility at 18 years, then I do not think one can make exceptions. With great respect, I do not think it is logical for a person to say that he believes that everyone should have full responsibility at 18 years but that, if they cannot have the lot, they cannot have any. I believe that any step we can make in this direction flows from the principle of support for full adult responsibility at 18 years.

Regarding those members who have expressed great alarm at the possibility of lowering the drinking age, I respect their opinions but cannot agree with them. I do not believe that the results they fear have flowed from the provision for 18-year-olds to drink in Great Britain, New South Wales or Victoria. Indeed, there was no question at all before the Latey Committee in Great Britain of changing the minimum drinking age from 18 years—no-one even suggested it ought to be increased. Rather, it was suggested that every other area of responsibility should be brought to the age of 18 years. In these circumstances, I believe it is sensible for the Committee to make this move. As I say, I am sorry we are not going further to give full adult responsibility, but I am prepared to support any step in what I believe is the right direction.

Mr. GILES: I wish to read from my speech of November 12.

Mr. Hudson: Is that your second reading speech?

The CHAIRMAN: To what speech is the honourable member referring?

Mr. GILES: I am referring to the second reading debate.

The CHAIRMAN: As we are in Committee at present, the honourable member cannot quote from the second reading debate.

Mr. GILES: Without quoting, I will state that the member for Wallaroo was incorrect in what he claimed was the effect of the support of certain members on this side of the Chamber to the second reading of the Bill. The Treasurer has plainly stated what happened. We opposed the part of the Bill that related to reducing the drinking age to 18 years, but supported the part that proposed an increase of 1 per cent in licence fees. Some of what was said by the Premier and the Leader in opposing the amendment was valid, but I think all members realize that the most difficult aspect of reducing the age to 18 years will be in policing such a provision. The difference in age between a 16-year-old boy and an 18-year-old boy is less than that between an 18-year-old and a 21-year-old. With all members of the Police Force, I believe that they will have extreme difficulty in policing the law, if the minimum age is reduced to 18 years, because of the difficulty of knowing the age of people in this younger group. Admittedly, many 18-year-olds drink liquor now. We accept this position, but that is not a reason for reducing the minimum age to 18 years. If we so reduce the age, before long 16-year-olds will be drinking. I should like to know how many letters those honourable members who support this provision have received from their constituents in support of their stand. I have received a great many letters that support a provision to keep 21 years as the minimum drinking age. The people of my district are extremely worried about this change. I am staggered to think that some members opposite would change their mind on such a moral issue as this because of something that had been said by the member for Light (Mr. Freebairn), who later withdrew his remark. I trust that members opposite accept the withdrawal and vote as their constituents wish them to vote.

Mr. HUDSON: We should decide this issue without having regard to who introduced the measure, although the Government did not see fit to allow a similar provision to this in the Opposition's Bill. Certain important practical considerations in support of the reduction of the minimum drinking age to 18 have not been mentioned so far in the debate. The managers of licensed football clubs throughout the State know the ages of the players and must refuse to serve alcoholic liquor to anyone under the age of 21 years. The Glenelg Football Club is typical of such clubs and the members of that club who are aged between 18 years and 21 years have to go to a hotel across the road if they want to drink. The present law and the way in which it is administered are causing people to drink not in a more pleasant and more controlled environment, but in a more uncontrolled environment.

Mr. Riches: Do any 16-year-olds play football?

Mr. HUDSON: Yes, 16-year-olds and 17-year-olds play in the junior teams and in football clubs they, like many children who go to licensed clubs, can be served only with soft drink. The people running the club could not have the defence that they did not know the age of the person concerned. Consequently, the clubs have to police the law absolutely strictly, and no person under 18 years would be able to obtain alcoholic liquor. If this legislation were passed, people between 18 years and 21 years, who are drinking in uncontrolled environments, would be brought back into the clubs where the environment is more controlled and more pleasant.

Mr. Giles: You could use the same argument for 16-year-olds in 12 months' time.

Mr. HUDSON: I will discuss that point later. It is a common thing for one member

of a younger age group who can effectively do so to obtain liquor; the group go off in a car to a quiet suburban street (it happens close to my home and I have had many complaints about it, and the police have acted in order to prevent it) and drink on the quiet. These people are drinking in uncontrolled conditions, and as soon as they stop drinking they start driving, and are a menace to everyone. This happens under the present law and nothing that the member for Gumeracha has said could cope with that kind of problem. The legalization of 18-year-olds to drink will lead to its civilization as well. I have known young teenagers, who are entitled to half fare on the railways but who are tall for their age, having been refused when they tried to purchase a ticket at this price. They have to produce their birth certificate before being able to obtain a ticket.

It seems that, if this change is made, the offence of providing liquor to someone under 18 years of age should be made one of strict responsibility, and the defence by which a barman or barmaid can say that the person seemed to be 18 years or above should be removed. Proprietors of hotels should adopt the practice of refusing to serve anyone suspected of being under the age of 18 years, so that these people should carry with them a birth certificate if they wish to drink. This is in answer to the member for Gumeracha. The position is similar to that concerning a blood alcohol content of .08: with that amount of alcohol in his blood, a person is in trouble; and also in trouble would be the person who served liquor to a person under the age of 18 years. If this were the law, I believe every hotel would refuse to serve everyone about whose age it was slightly suspicious, and the responsibility would then be thrown back on to the person concerned to provide proof, just as my young friends, when they go to buy a half-fare ticket, have to provide proof of their age because they are so tall that no ticket seller believes them.

Personally, I believe this would be a satisfactory solution to the problem. I do not really see that we need to risk a situation that has worried some honourable members, that is, that many younger people particularly young girls of 16 or 17 years will be able to drink because they can make themselves look as though they are 18 or 19 years and because it will always be reasonable for any hotelkeeper or barman to say, "As far as I was concerned, I asked them were they 18; they said 'Yes', and they certainly looked to be 18."

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: I think, if you look on the file, you will see that the member for Stirling intends to cover this point.

Mr. HUDSON: I realize that, and I intend to indicate at this stage that I am seriously considering supporting the view taken by the member for Stirling in this matter. But I believe the viewpoint he is putting forward follows only the passing of this clause in its present form. I certainly will not support an amendment in relation to the current defences for serving people under age if the age goes only to 20 years, or if it stays at 21 years. I believe members on both sides should consider some of the practical matters I have raised and seriously consider also what is going on in the community today, no matter what their views are, because it is going on in an illegal and completely uncontrolled manner. More harm is being done in the present circumstances than would be done if this change were introduced.

Mr. JENNINGS: I support the clause. I shall be brief, indeed, as brief as was the lying member for Light, but I hope more responsibly brief. Having supported the Age of Majority (Reduction) Bill, I think it would be inconsistent of me to oppose this Bill. In New South Wales and Victoria, as the Leader has said, 18-year-olds have been entitled to drink for as long as most people can remember. Travelling to New South Wales and Victoria fairly regularly, I cannot see that any 18-year-old has been very adversely affected by being allowed to drink in those States. The more I become aware of and think about this problem, the more it occurs to me that legislation cannot effect any addiction to alcohol at all. I believe addiction to alcohol can start at any stage of life, apart altogether from the fact that a person cannot become addicted to alcohol if he does not drink (and I think that is obvious). I know people who have retired from work after being teetotallers all their lives and then become addicted to alcohol.

As far as I can see, where the age of drinking is lower than it is here there have not been any deleterious consequences at all. Indeed, it appears to me that in some countries where liquor laws as we know them do not exist, there is very little addiction to alcohol. In Greece, for example, where one can buy liquor almost anywhere at any time of the day or night and there is no such thing as licensed premises as we know them, there is

practically no addiction to alcohol. Also, as far as I have been able to find out, it is very rare to see drunkenness. In many other countries liquor laws, as we know them, virtually do not exist at all.

I must agree with one point made by those members opposed to drinking by 18-year-olds, and that is that there has not been any great demand from 18-year-olds for drinking rights. I have not been approached by 18-year-olds to support this legislation. However, I think that, despite student protests and things of that nature, 18-year-olds in the main are fairly inarticulate.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: They are certainly not an organized group.

Mr. JENNINGS: That is so. I would take more notice of this argument if we got together a group of 18-year-olds at a meeting and told them we thought they were so immature that they were not entitled to drink at that age. I think we would then hear from them that they were in favour of drinking at that age. I assure the Committee that I will support the clause as it stands.

Mr. EDWARDS: If honourable members read *Hansard* they will see that last Thursday I said I would support the first part of the Bill but would definitely oppose the second half.

Mr. Hughes: You cannot cut a Bill in halves like that.

Mr. EDWARDS: If the honourable member reads *Hansard* he will see why the Bill was split.

Mr. Hughes: You are trying to read into it something that is not there.

Mr. EDWARDS: I am not trying to do anything of the sort. I definitely said I would support the first part of the Bill but not the second, and when I said that I knew that the Bill was going to be split.

Mr. Hughes: But the Bill was not before us.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Wallaroo can speak again afterwards. The member for Eyre.

Mr. EDWARDS: Much has been said about giving drinking rights to 18-year-olds. I definitely oppose that, although I will support the amendment reducing the age to 20 years. One person said to me over the weekend that cabarets were held everywhere nowadays and that young people could go there and get drink. However, I think it is obvious that cabarets are sponsored by older people, who are putting temptation in the way of the younger ones. From the point of view of policing it, it will not matter whether the age is 18 years or 20 years: there will be the same trouble. I am thankful that my sons and daughters have resisted this temptation, and I am proud of them for that. I want to preserve the present age for other people's sons and daughters so that they, too, will not be tempted because, if we do not put temptation in their way, most of them will not yield to it. Some members opposite think I do not know what I am talking about, but I have spoken to many people about this throughout this continent and as far north as New Guinea. I shall vote according to my conscience and what I think is right on behalf of the people I represent in Eyre. They do not want the right to drink at 18 years. Therefore, I support the amendment.

Mr. LAWN: I agree with the member for Eyre. He did say last week, "I support the first part of the Bill but I oppose the second part", but that does not apply to the member for Gumeracha; he cannot get out of it that easily. He said, "I oppose the Bill most strongly." Members can see that at page 2509 of *Hansard*. The member for Gumeracha has a conscience like a good girl: he can always come to terms with her! What I am saying is true. I challenge the honourable member on that, just as I have admitted that what the member for Eyre said this evening is correct. I want to help the member for Eyre. If members opposite supported the Bill, they could not oppose half of it. The member for Eyre, like the member for Gumeracha, voted for the Bill last week. After they had voted for it, the Bill was split into two parts.

We are having an interesting discussion this evening. The member for Glenelg spoke for some time about what other members should do and what he would do; he indicated his attitude to the defence clauses. He referred to the barmen's defence for the sale of liquor and to other honourable members' attitudes to the Age of Majority (Reduction) Bill. The member for Glenelg indicated that, because of what we did on that Bill, we should act similarly on this Bill. However, I point out to him, and to other members with the same thoughts, that every year I take over 1,000 schoolchildren through this Chamber. Often, if they are high school or technical high school children, I have invited them to come back in the evening and sit in the gallery to listen to the evening show. Certain members know that my offer has been accepted more than once. On one evening I walked into the

Chamber and received a smile from a lovely group of girls in the gallery (I was then referred to as "Ronald Colman" in this place). Each time I looked at the gallery during the evening I received a smile. As I was intrigued about this I went through the gateway, whereupon some of the girls said, "Good evening, Mr. Lawn." Before I could ask them who they were, they said that they had been in the Chamber with their school that morning. No-one could possibly have recognized the school-children I saw in the morning as the young girls sitting in the gallery that evening. No barman would have known that these girls were only 16 years old and not 18 or 19 years old. I relate this to my attitude to the Age of Majority (Reduction) Bill in this way: had that Bill been passed barmen could have asked young people to produce their enrolment card, and I believe that is a valid defence of how I can now vote against reducing the age to 18 years for drinking only.

It was said earlier that the member for Light had probably defeated the Bill. The member for Gumeracha appealed to members on this side not to let the member for Light's attitude influence their minds on this question. At least we have the admission of the member for Gumeracha that members on this side have minds and can make them up, as we do of our own accord. Last week 10 members on this side voted one way and eight another. However, of the 18 or 19 members opposite, I doubt whether half have a mind of their own. Certainly about half of them are unable to make up their own minds and have to have them made up for them. I still oppose the clause and the amendment.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE (Attorney-General): Obviously the votes on this amendment and this clause will be test votes on the question whether the age in South Australia for drinking on licensed and permitted premises should remain at 21 years or be reduced to 18 years or 20 years. I hope that members will not cloud the issue by referring to the fact that the Bill as originally introduced has now been split into two. To me it seems obvious that the present votes are the ones that count and that whatever has gone on in the past during the second reading stage does not matter at all. A'though I have not intervened in the debate until now, I want to say something on the matter because I have been criticized for bringing in the Bill and not giving adequate reasons for doing so. First, I point out that the trend (and it is a world-wide trend today) is to reduce the age from 21 years to 18 years at which persons may do certain things at law. The overwhelming opinion of those in favour of a reduction in the age of majority is that it should be reduced to 18 years. Reference has been made this evening to the Opposition Bill that was supported by every member on the other side. I and the Government opposed the Bill, on the grounds that it was not the best way to achieve the objective, that the matter should be taken piece by piece. That measure contained a specific provision to reduce the minimum drinking age to 18 years.

Mr. Clark: And other things.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: Yes. Now, when there is an opportunity to change the law in one specific sector, some members opposite are having second thoughts. Apparently, they believe in reducing the age of majority from 21 years to 18 years in every way except in regard to drinking.

Mr. Clark: That could be said about you, in reverse.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: No, it could not. I have made my position clear, and this position was adopted by all other Australian Attorneys at the meeting of the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General a few weeks ago, when it was decided that this matter should be considered carefully, item by item. That is precisely what the Government has done. The main point I make clear is that the overwhelming opinion of those who favour a reduction in the age of majority is that it should be reduced from 21 to 18 years, not to 20 years. I say without doubt that in the next few years the age of majority will be reduced in this and other communities in the democratic world. We as members of this Parliament, can act like King Canute if we like and throw the Bill out but, if we do, we will suffer the same fate as King Canute suffered: the tide will overwhelm us in due course. The reduction of the age of majority is an inevitable development in this field and in all others. Whether the time is right for making this change is a matter of judgment. I personally consider that this is the right time to make the change from 21 years to 18 years.

The member for Glenelg (Mr. Hudson) spoke effectively this evening about what is happening at present in this matter, and when I explained the Bill I had said that I considered a change to be in conformity with the general view and practices in the community at present. We have been told that no-one has asked for this change. Well, it may be that few of us

have had direct approaches on this, but I well remember that about two years ago, when we were debating the introduction of 10 o'clock closing, I received hundreds of letters and petitions against that measure. I do not think, on the other hand, that I had one letter asking me to support the measure. Indeed, I asked through my local paper, in which I write week after week, that people get in touch with me and show me their support, but no-one contacted me. However, neither I nor any other member doubted that the people of this State were overwhelmingly in favour of 10 o'clock closing. The fact is that those who oppose a measure will protest about it, but those who favour a measure seldom show publicly that they are in favour or take any deliberate or positive action to do so.

I believe that that disposes of the argument that no-one has asked for it, and I believe this is generally wanted in the community. We have been told that the present law is not effectively policed, and there may be something to be said for this. I believe that the reason why it is not effectively policed is that it is one of the laws which now no longer conforms to the general view of the public, and that makes it extremely difficult for our police to take effective action. I believe that we would not have this difficulty if the age were reduced to 18 years, because the law would then conform to the outlook of the community and it would be my determination (and I believe I speak for the Government; the Premier said this a little while ago) that if the change were made the police would rigorously enforce the new law.

Most of the opponents of this measure have adopted what one could term (and I say this with no disrespect to them) a paternalistic approach, as they believe that people between the ages of 18 years and 21 years are not mature, not grown-up, do not know what is good for them, and must be protected. As did the Leader, I respect those who hold those views but I cannot agree with them. I think they are entirely mistaken. No section of the community has, in the last few years, advanced more in its influence on the actions of the community and within the community than this age group. It now has more money, more leisure to enjoy what it has, and is better equipped to enjoy what it has, than ever it was before. It has been said that these people are not mature. The member for Light has said that the member for Onkaparinga, who moved the amendment, knows well the people in this age group. So he may, but I believe I have some acquaintance with people in this age group. I see many of them in the Army: I do not believe that they are irresponsible nor that this privilege should be withheld from them merely because it would be abused.

The member for Millicent made a point about this. If one joins the Navy at 17 years of age, or the Army or Air Force at 18 years, one is immediately entitled to drink in the canteen. This is so both in the permanent forces and in the Citizen Military Forces and, although this privilege is sometimes abused it is abused by people of all ages and certainly not by those under the age of 21 years any more than it is abused by those over that age. My experience is that this is not something that should be denied to people in that age group: it is not denied to them under the Licensing Act now. Section 153 of the Act makes it an offence if liquor is supplied on licensed or permitted premises. If the drinking is done off licensed premises there is no offence. We do not make it illegal for people at any age to drink liquor: it is only on licensed premises.

As has been said, it is a widespread social custom now, whether we like it or not, for people in this age group to drink and we cannot stop it even if we would. This is what is happening now. The amendment reduces the age from 21 years to 20 years. In my view (and we must make up our own minds) this is merely a sop to reform. To reduce the age by 12 months is hardly worth doing and is hardly better than nothing. If there is to be a reduction we should reduce the age from 21 years to 18 years, because this is what is generally wanted in the community. I refer to only one other argument, namely, the argument raised by one honourable member that this would increase the danger on the roads. This is one which, on the face of it, has some force, but I do not believe, in fact, that it has any force when we remember that in New South Wales and in Victoria the age for drinking has been 18 years for many years (I think since 1906 in Victoria, and for about 40 or more years in New South Wales). When we look at what statistics are available in those States, it is impossible to draw any conclusion at all that the toll on the roads is increased by this provision. I therefore hope that no member will put his faith, when arguing against this provision, in statistics, because I do not believe the statistics bear him or her out. In fact, at the moment, as I have said, in New South Wales and Victoria the age is 18 years, and apparently no harm is

done; in Tasmania the age is 20 years, and in Western Australia and Queensland it is 21 years. However, I believe that the time has come to make the age in this State 18 years. I therefore oppose the amendment, and I hope it is not carried. I hope, though, that the clause will be carried and that this Parliament will show its faith in the inhabitants of this State in that age group between 18 years and 21 years by allowing them to do what I believe they should be able to do and what I believe will not be abused.

Mr. CLARK: I find myself this evening in the rare position that I will be voting on this clause in the same way as the Attorney-General votes. It is rather unusual that, instead of having just the two points of view, as we so often have, in this particular debate we have had four or five different points of view, and I believe that members, in support of their various viewpoints, have ably made plain their feelings on the matter. My first thoughts on this clause were, as I think my friend from Semaphore said, that the Government saw fit not to allow 18-year-old voting, which I believe is as much justified as is 18-year-old drinking. I thought that if the young people of South Australia were not given the right to vote at 18 years (and I believe they should be), why give them the right to drink at 18 years? However, on thinking it over, I have come to the conclusion that if the right to drink at 18 is given these people, it will, I earnestly hope, at least be a step towards the goal of 18-year-olds voting. I believe that the excuses given by Government members against 18-year-olds voting were specious. Members who have put a different point of view should remember that if this legislation is passed no young person is to be compelled to drink at 18 years. I believe that 18-year-olds drinking will be policed and that it will not be done surreptitiously in all sorts of peculiar places that lead to trouble. I support the clause.

Mr. VIRGO: I support the clause and, like the member for Gawler, I find myself in a somewhat peculiar position: it seems that the Attorney-General and I will be on the same side of the Chamber when a vote is taken. Perhaps sympathy ought to be extended to the Attorney-General, because this may be the kiss of death, for I have not been on the winning side since I entered Parliament. I thought it was somewhat ironic that the Attorney-General was appealing to members on this side to get him and the Premier out of the mess their own Party was in. How much support have they got from their own Party? The Attorney-General well knows that unless the Opposition votes solidly for this clause it will be defeated. I think it would have been a little more appropriate had he made such an appeal when we were discussing the Age of Majority (Reduction) Bill, instead of uttering the drivel that he did.

One can get very emotional about this matter if one chooses, although I do not think it is something to get emotional about. I think it is a question of trying to look objectively at the position. Whilst not accepting the view that merely because a law is not adhered to it should be altered, I think the fact that a law is not being adhered to perhaps lends weight to the old adage that a law that cannot be properly policed is a bad law.

I think those members who oppose even the amendment have all agreed that youths of 18 years to 20 years of age are currently consuming liquor. The Attorney knows that there is nothing to prevent them from doing that, but he also knows, as do other members who have spoken, that youths of that age are purchasing liquor, and this is contrary to the law. Of course, this does not constitute a reason for altering the law, but it gives room for consideration of the current position to see whether it is the best. I have come to the view that the time is certainly ripe, if not overdue, for the legal age to be reduced to 18 years, and for that reason I support the clause.

I hope I will not be put in the position of having to decide whether or not I have to support the amendment because, like the Attorney-General, I think the amendment is nothing but a week excuse. The member for Gumeracha (Mr. Giles) threw out a wild challenge about the views of people who support it, but I am afraid this wild challenge was like many more of his wild remarks, and that it scarcely bears investigation. I was very much surprised to hear that the member for Gumeracha apparently had not had any views forwarded to him in support of this provision.

Mr. Giles: Have you any proof to show us that you have had views forwarded to you?

Mr. VIRGO: Yes, and I am prepared to show them to the honourable member, together with a big heap of letters opposing fluoride. I can give the Committee the views of three clerical gentlemen who came to see me. I asked those gentlemen, "Do I properly interpret the views that you have expressed

to me to be that you are not opposed to the reduction of the legal age of drinking to 18 years provided that it is properly policed?", and their answer was, "Yes. Our fear is that the 15-year-olds, 16-year-olds and 17-year-olds will be drinking, if the age is altered, in the same way as the 18-year-olds, 19-year-olds and 20-year-olds are drinking now." That is a real fear that I share with them but I accept the Attorney-General's assurance that the age of persons in licensed premises will be properly policed if this clause is passed. I have complete confidence in the 18-year-old, 19-year-old and 20-year-old group. I believe they will accept responsibility when it is thrust upon them and there will not be the abuse that some people fear if the minimum age for drinking is reduced to 18; nor will there be any more abuse here than there is in the two Eastern States and in Great Britain. Also, I look forward to the day when the age of majority for all things is 18 years. I regard this measure as merely one more step forward to that ultimate objective.

Mr. BURDON: Although I agree with the Attorney-General about reducing the minimum drinking age from 21 years to 18 years, I would have preferred to hear him speaking in the way he did about 18-year-olds generally. I am a progressive Socialist, and this progressive legislation appeals to me. No matter what the debate is, the member for Light generally talks of Socialists or Socialism. Generally, the Attorney-General has opposed Socialism, but he may be joining the ranks! Like other members, I regret that the member for Light speaks as he does. We on this side take exception to it, and the member for Stuart this evening was justified in the stand he took. In the courts 18-year-olds are regarded as adults. When they join the Army they are regarded as adults.

Mr. McKee: They can join the Army at 17.

Mr. BURDON: Yes, and they enjoy all the privileges of an adult, including the right to vote. We are moving towards this. My only regret is that the Attorney-General saw fit to reject our Age of Majority (Reduction) Bill last week. A publican approached me about the onus of proof in relation to youths drinking, and I agreed with him that the onus should not be solely on the hotel proprietor or barman. I hope the Attorney-General will agree that the onus should be on the individual and that barmen, barmaids and hotelkeepers should be given some protection in this regard. One has only to go to cabarets (and I go to many) to see young people aged 15 years, 16 years, 17 years and 18 years drinking. They can obtain liquor and they do obtain it. I believe that many of the contentions put forward a couple of years ago when provision was made for 10 o'clock closing have been proved to be incorrect. Probably the only person in the community today who does not approve of 10 o'clock closing is the hotelkeeper because, in many cases, he is involved in great expense for little return. However, the overwhelming majority supports this change as I think it will come to support 18-year-olds drinking. I believe people of 18 years have a sense of responsibility and can shoulder the added responsibility of being permitted to drink.

I know of a recent case where a carload of youths drove into a drive-in bottle department to buy bottles of beer and were refused by the hotelkeeper, who thought they were aged only 16 years, but only 10 minutes later they returned to the hotel with bottles of beer. I do not know whether they had got them from another drive-in bottle department or whether they had asked somebody else to get them for them. I have not had representations made to me either for or against reducing the drinking age. However, when I have sought the views of people in the area, those views have tended to be in favour of the reduction. Youths from my district can easily go over the border into Victoria where they are permitted, at 18 years, to drink in hotels. They can get a "skinful" and break their necks on the way back to Mount Gambier. They can obtain liquor in South Australia if they really want to, but they go to Victoria because of the novelty of being able to drink in a hotel. I believe that, if beer is as easily obtainable as are soft drinks, about 80 per cent of the temptation to drink beer will be removed. I oppose the amendment.

Mr. EVANS: I disagree with what has been said by many members who have opposed my amendment. I said in the second reading debate that I opposed only the second part of the Bill. I was not a hypocrite: the Attorney-General had assured me that the Bill would be split, and that was done. The first clauses were passed without a division, and we are now dealing with the contentious reduction of the minimum drinking age. The member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) has objected to a statement that some members were making this a Party issue, and I have apologized to that member for any reference I may have made to this earlier in the debate. Also, when the

member for Millicent (Mr. Corcoran) corrected me, I made clear that I was referring only to those members who had opposed my amendment.

I agree with the Attorney-General that young people between the ages of 18 years and 21 years today have more influence in society than such people had 30 years ago. People, whether as individuals, Parliamentarians, church leaders, university lecturers or schoolteachers, are afraid that young people are too outspoken, and are afraid to suppress them at times for their own good. I do not consider the young people today to be any more irresponsible than young people were 30 years ago. The Berkeley study showed that the human brain reached the peak of its maturity at the age of 25 years. A report in the *Advertiser* on Monday last refers to trouble in Victoria with persons under the age of 18 years drinking, and the same trouble could arise here, with 10 o'clock closing, if we had a minimum drinking age of 18 years. The report, from Melbourne under the dateline of November 17, states:

Victoria's under-age drinkers—those under 18—will find it hard to break the law this year in Melbourne's summer playground, the Mornington Peninsula. Plainclothes barmen will be employed by hotels on the peninsula to mingle with customers and check on young drinkers. About 15 hotels along the coast will have their own men on the job. Mr. Frank Dennis, Chairman of Dennis Hotels Proprietary Limited and spokesman for the publicans involved, says they are determined to avoid breaches of the under-age drinking law.

Mr. Langley: They don't have to go if they don't want to.

Mr. EVANS: I know that they are not compelled to drink, but they do. Young people below the age of 16 years are drinking in our hotels now and I do not consider that the Premier and the Attorney-General honestly believe that a minimum age of 18 years can be policed. If it can be, I invite them to make the minimum drinking age in hotels 20 years and prove that they can police such a provision. If they can, I may be prepared to accept 18 years. More than policing has to be considered: we have not attempted to police liquor laws in this State, whether 30 years ago, 20 years ago, or yesterday. We have been told that, as many people are breaking the law, we should alter it to suit society. Should we do the same about our speed limits, because most people drive at more than 35 miles an hour within the city? The Attorney-General said that one could not align the accident rate in Victoria with drinking or other aspects of the liquor laws. At present, a person in South Australia can obtain a driver's licence at 16 years of age; he can enter a hotel, or would be able to if the permitted age was 18 years, as no-one can tell the difference between a 16-year-old and an 18-year-old. These people will drive cars at 16, and will drive them whilst under the influence of alcohol. I quote an article that appeared in this morning's *Advertiser* under the heading "Blitz on drinking drivers". I am not reflecting on younger drivers only when I quote the article, which reads:

Victorian police were ordered today to clamp down immediately on drinking drivers to curb the mounting road toll. After a top police conference the Chief Commissioner (Mr. R. H. Arnold) said the campaign would include:

> Special attention to the sobriety of drivers leaving hotels and other licensed places.
>
> Action against sly-grog nightclubs and other places selling liquor illegally.
>
> More frequent patrols of hotels by uniformed police.
>
> Drivers with blood alcohol exceeding .05 per cent to be charged with driving under the influence where the charge was justified.
>
> Victoria's biggest road blitz in the first weekend next month.

Mr. Arnold called the conference following 17 road deaths since Friday night. The deaths took the year's road toll to 830. Mr. Arnold said he believed that up to 70 per cent of accidents were being caused, or contributed to, by alcohol.

It seems that they still have sly grog in Victoria even with 10 p.m. closing, and we have it here. We are going to allow the younger age group in this State the opportunity to become intoxicated, and this will affect the accident toll here. I did not move this amendment as a weak excuse: I moved it sincerely and genuinely, because I believed the age of majority should be 20 years in practically all cases. I believe that a couple should not marry at the age of 18 without parental consent. I moved this amendment because I sincerely believed in it: I have worked hard for it, and if I cannot achieve it I will support those who favour 21 years, because I do not believe that the younger age group is any more responsible than that age group was 20 years ago.

I believe there is not a demand from the younger people for this particular alteration in the licensing laws. The Attorney-General said that a development had to occur: I say, "Let it occur." We should not lower the age by three years in one move. Let us bring it

back to 20 years and then, if we think it is not harmful to society as a whole, we can agree to lowering the age still further. Let us not jump over the cliff in one swift move and perhaps introduce something which other States and, indeed, some members here may claim is all right but which will not generally benefit society as a whole. The following letter, under the heading, "Wine," appears in today's *News*:

Robert Carrier advocates children as young as six being introduced to wine. He claims children should grow up with alcohol and learn to appreciate it simply as a beverage. His approach is out of step with modern research. France used to be quoted as the country where children were none the worse for having been introduced to alcohol at an early age.

The World Health Organization, however, reports that France has 4,500,000 alcoholics. The French Government has been campaigning to break this custom of children drinking. They have acknowledged alcoholism as their No. 1 health problem and have conceded this state of affairs is due largely to the very thing Robert Carrier is advocating.

With a total population of about 50,000,000 people, France has 4,500,000 alcoholics: one person in 12 is an alcoholic in a country where children are allowed to develop a taste for alcoholic beverages. I strongly oppose the clause as it stands and ask members to support the amendment if they truly believe we are responsible people who hold that the younger people should at least mature a little before being allowed to drink.

Mr. CASEY: I am rather disappointed that this Bill did not come in as a separate Bill altogether. I think the way in which the measure was introduced was beneficial neither to honourable members nor to the public. We must now decide whether we will give 18-year-olds in South Australia an opportunity to consume liquor in hotels. This is a most important measure for the people of South Australia. I have heard numerous arguments put up this evening by members on both sides as to whether or not we should support it. I have given the measure much consideration, and I can speak with some experience on the drinking habits of people of this State, including the younger people. As I was brought up in a hotel, I have possibly had more experience of this matter than has any other member of this Chamber. I completely disagree with the statement that it is detrimental to young people to enter a hotel bar at a certain age. I think it is absolutely disgusting to suggest that.

Mr. Evans: I did not say that.

Mr. CASEY: I did not say the honourable member did. Some members have spoken in the strain that allowing people to go into a hotel bar to consume liquor is something to be avoided. When I was brought up in a hotel I classed it as my home, and I would not be unhappy if I had to go back and live in a hotel today. I suggest that the environment in most hotels these days compares favourably with many of the homes in the community. I hope that I do not hear any more nonsense about the so-called bad environment in hotel bars and lounges, for it is complete and utter rot to talk in that vein. Young people can sit down at a table in a hotel lounge today and be waited on, and this is no different from going into a cafeteria and ordering a meal. They can do this in absolutely perfect surroundings. I do not agree with the points put forward by some members that to go into a hotel bar is something to be avoided. I criticize very strongly members who adopt that attitude.

Mr. Giles: The results will be different, though.

Mr. CASEY: The honourable member apparently feels very strongly on this matter, and he is entitled to his opinion. Probably he has been brought up in an entirely different environment from me. I can only speak of my own experience of hotels. I remind the honourable member that apart from being brought up in a hotel I also had five years in the armed services during the war, during which time I mixed with many people of all creeds and even races.

Mr. Ryan: You have even mixed with Liberals!

Mr. CASEY: Yes, I have done that, too. I would go so far as to say that I probably have a better overall picture of many of our younger people than has the honourable member for Gumeracha. We have never policed the law. It is a pity the police (and I am not criticizing the Police Force generally here) do not always exercise their prerogative as policemen of going into hotels and questioning young people about their age more than they have done in the past. I agree it has been done on many occasions in different places.

The Hon. Robin Millhouse: But an assurance has been given that that will be stepped up in the future.

Mr. CASEY: I compliment the Attorney-General on that, because it is a step in the right direction. When serving behind the bar as a lad, many times I queried the age of a customer who came into the hotel. However,

be that as it may, this is the crux of the problem today. If we are to impose a minimum age of 18, 20 or 21 years, we have to be fair dinkum about it and police it fully. To a certain extent, the onus is on the barman; he has to clear himself and ask a customer, "How old are you?" In the United States a person has to produce a credit card or passbook; if he cannot, he cannot get served—it is as simple as that. It is a pity we cannot have some similar means of identification for all Australians, not merely South Australians, readily available. Several years ago, before some honourable members opposite entered this Chamber, I took upon myself the responsibility of introducing a Bill asking this House to allow totalizator agency betting to become legal in South Australia. Members could have heard a pin drop when I moved a Notice of Motion indicating that I would introduce such a Bill in this Chamber. I was called everything.

The Hon. J. W. H. Coumbe: Everything?

Mr. CASEY: Almost. For example, I was called "the high priest of gambling" by the former member for Gumeracha.

Mr. Corcoran: And "Casino Tom".

Mr. CASEY: Yes, and "the honourable member for Rome" on another occasion. I went to considerable trouble and personal expense in visiting other States to find out exactly how similar legislation was working there. The whole point involved in that matter was whether we should give the people of South Australia something they had not had before. The present clause also proposes something that this State has not had before. However, if we examine the situation in this State, we find that most people between the ages of 18 years and 21 years drink now anyway. Drinking today, is more of a social custom, a custom that has grown since the war. As the Attorney-General said, people have more leisure time and money at their disposal and are able to enjoy these things. I say sincerely that, unfortunately, many squander much of their leisure time in drinking. I do not drink to excess, having a drink only when I feel like it. I have encouraged the members of my family to drink if they want to but I have advised them against it and, to their credit, they do not indulge. Being brought up in a hotel, I saw so much drinking that I did not acquire a taste for it, as other people do, although that does not apply to all hotelkeepers or to all hotelkeepers' sons. As everyone has a free will, everyone can make up his mind whether or not to drink. I have heard it said that, because a person starts drinking before he is 21 years old, he is likely to become an alcoholic between the ages of 20 years and 30 years or when he is over 30 years. That is so much nonsense. I have served drinks (not over the counter but outside the hotel) to many people who were under the age of 21 years and they did not become alcoholics between the ages of 20 years and 30 years or when they were over 30 years.

People who join the Army, Navy or Air Force at 17 are at liberty to take full advantage of the canteen facilities available: they do not have to do so, but can please themselves. I believe that young boys who have just gone into the services are more or less influenced by some of the older members and, if these boys step out of line and drink excessively, they are smartly pulled into gear. I think the Attorney-General and the member for Millicent will agree with me, as they have had experience in this regard. I can remember when 10 o'clock closing was debated in this Chamber. One of the main reasons for that was to avoid such stupid positions as those in which people could drink in the South Australian Hotel at Cockburn until 6 o'clock and then drink at the Border Gate Hotel in New South Wales until 10 o'clock. We are all Australian citizens and we must realize that young people can drink in hotels in New South Wales and Victoria at the age of 18 years. Many young people from Queensland enjoy drinking in pleasant surroundings at Tweed Heads or Murwillumbah, in New South Wales. There is no difference between young people consuming liquor at parties or other functions and consuming it socially in a hotel.

Mr. Evans: Do you say that, therefore, we should not fix a minimum age?

Mr. CASEY: It is up to the lawmakers to draw the line somewhere, but the age of 21 years cannot be substantiated, because it was fixed before the Crusades, when a person was considered a grown man if he could carry a suit of armour. In the last 20 years most young people of 18 years have advanced considerably mentally. Educational facilities are better and young people are more conversant with what is going on than we were at their age. Today, young people are capable of making up their minds about what they want to do, and I cannot support the claims made by the member for Onkaparinga to reduce the age to 20 years. It is usually accepted that most females of 18 years of age are mentally and socially equivalent to men

of 21 years of age, and if we are to allow a male of a certain age to serve behind a bar there should be no discrimination of age in allowing females to do the same thing. I have received many expressions of opinion both in favour of and against reducing the permitted drinking age, but we must face the realities of this modern era and accept the fact that young people today will not abuse what we give them. I believe that 18-year-olds should be permitted to consume liquor in hotels. I believe the Bill will eventually open the way for 18-year-olds to take part in other important activities in the community. Indeed, bearing in mind our present educational standards, I believe that 18-year-olds should have a vote.

Mr. RICHES: This is not a clear-cut issue. I suppose we form our opinions in the light of our experience and from the way we view life generally. My experience leads me to believe that what the Leader, the member for Glenelg and the Attorney-General have said is going on is, in fact, going on and that young people under 21 years are drinking; that it is a popular custom for young people to be given liquor at social functions; and that at the social level it is generally accepted that people as young as 18 years drink. The member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Burdon) and the member for Frome (Mr. Casey) have referred to the situation in which young people living in border towns are entitled to drink at 18 years whereas people living in towns just over the border cannot drink until they are 21 years old.

I do not agree with the member for Glenelg or other members when they say that most young people under 21 years of age drink, because that is not my experience, and I do not believe it to be true. I am concerned with what people have said to me on this matter about the difficulty of policing any particular age. True, the law in this State sets the age at 21 years, but this is not policed and it is not generally observed. Indeed, if the newspaper reports are correct, it seems that the 18-year provision applying in Victoria is not generally observed and is not policed, with the result that hotelkeepers are setting up their own police force. I think that state of affairs is undesirable.

Mr. Virgo: That is not just for the 18-year-olds, though.

Mr. RICHES: No, for people under 18.

Mr. Virgo: There is more than that in it.

Mr. RICHES: That could be so, but that is in it, and it leads me to the conclusion that there is no guarantee that the provision for drinking by 18-year-olds could be policed any more successfully than is the present provision. If I could accept that there would be this guarantee, I would be able to go much farther along the road with those who acknowledge that our young people have matured over the years and that they are able to accept responsibility at an earlier age than people of their age could 20 or 30 years ago. If we could be sure that 18 years would be the limit, I would have to further consider my vote on this question.

I respect other members' views, and I am not asking anybody to accept my views. However, I consider that it is incumbent on me to explain my position. I do not believe it would be good to open the way at the social level or any other level (I believe it is at the social level that most of the younger people are drinking today) to 15-year-olds and 16-year-olds, so no vote of mine will ever be cast in the direction that would open the door for them. I believe that our society derives its strength from the home, and that anything that weakens the influence of the home is not good for society. I believe also that anything that undermines the work of those working amongst youths and youth organizations in attempting to provide young people with enjoyment and proper employment for their leisure hours is not good. I am not convinced that this measure will not undermine that work.

We must take into account both situations that have been presented to us, and on balance my vote is going to be cast in favour of retaining the age at its present level. I know members can say to me that that is inconsistent with the vote I cast last week on the Age of Majority (Reduction) Bill. However, that vote was cast at the second reading stage, and had that Bill gone into Committee I would have expressed the same opinion on that measure as I am expressing now. There is a big difference between the other issues in that Bill and this present issue, for that Bill relates to voting, contracts and everything else, and in that instance 18 is the approval age that would be policed. If we could have the same assurance that 18 would be the age here it would remove much of the objection of the people who have approached me. I will not support either the amendment or the clause as it stands.

Mr. VENNING: I oppose the granting of drinking rights to 18-year-olds. I am concerned tonight to find that a very short-term policy is being undertaken by many of our politicians. I say that because eventually

that policy will do to this country what it has done to many other countries throughout the world. We read of the downfall of the Roman Empire. We also heard tonight from the Leader of the Opposition about what is now happening in the United Kingdom. I do not think the present situation in the United Kingdom is anything to be held up as support for this argument. Therefore, I say that this present move will not benefit our young people, but rather that it is a very short-term policy of popularity-seeking amongst our leaders. So I commend the member for Stuart on the attitude he has taken in this matter for the benefit of our young people. For many years he has worked for young people's organizations. It is a matter of concern that many of our young people are infringing the law. They are not necessarily the majority: in fact, they are a minority, but to alter the legislation merely to cater for a minority that is breaking the law is a short-sighted policy. I cannot recall anybody in my electoral district coming to me and saying it was advisable to reduce the minimum age for drinking on licensed premises to 18 years. If people had come to me with such thoughts, I would have given the matter serious consideration along those lines, but that has not happened. For this reason I, too, am against altering the *status quo*. I oppose the reduction of the age.

Mr. HUGHES: I was staggered to hear the Premier say that, if the drinking age was reduced from 21 years to 18 years, it would have to be policed properly. If a direction had been given to the police, there would be no need for us to be discussing this measure now. I fail to see how this legislation could be policed better if the minimum age was 18 years instead of 21 years. It was one of the weakest points made in support of the Bill.

Many members have admitted that some 18-year-olds and younger are drinking in hotels when the present age limit is 21 years. If 18-year-olds are given this privilege, I venture to suggest it will automatically follow that 16-year-olds will break the law and drink in hotels, just as 18-year-olds are today. So I do not think the Premier had any valid argument when he admitted that the police were not doing their job today. I thought he was letting the Police Force down badly by admitting that, if 18-year-olds were permitted to drink in hotels, this measure would have to be policed properly. That was an assertion that the police were not doing their job. If the Premier is prepared to admit that the police are not doing their job, he should not consult the Attorney-General but should contact the Chief Secretary and, as the leader of the State, see that the Commissioner of Police has his officers police the law properly. Therefore, the Premier had no argument to support a reduction in the drinking age. Although the Premier was prepared to support such a reduction, only last week he was not prepared to support a reduction in the age for voting both for this place and another place. This evening he said that young people today were more mature than young people were 40 years ago. If that is so, why did the Premier not support the Age of Majority (Reduction) Bill when it was before the House?

Mr. Virgo: Are you saying he is hypocritical?

Mr. HUGHES: No, but I will say he is inconsistent. The Attorney-General said he believed the time had arrived to reduce the minimum drinking age to 18 years. Only last Wednesday he, too, had a wonderful opportunity to demonstrate his good faith by supporting a general reduction in the age of majority. However, although he said he had much to do with young people in the Army and in other ways, he was not prepared to support that Bill. The member for Onkaparinga said, "I was assured by the Attorney-General that the Bill would be split." The Attorney-General could not give that assurance. This Parliament is not a one-man band: it comprises 39 responsible members. If the Attorney gave that assurance, he was leading the member for Onkaparinga up a tree, and that member was foolish to accept the assurance. One Government back-bench member said:

> I oppose the Bill most strongly. I have not heard any argument that substantiates the need to reduce the minimum age from 21 years to 18 years. I consider the standard of South Australian youth to be as high as the standard anywhere else in the world, and we must maintain this standard. The reduction of the age is a step in the wrong direction. I oppose the legislation that lowers the age at which people are permitted to drink.

The member who had said that had the audacity to vote against what is being advocated this evening. He somersaulted when the vote on the second reading was taken.

The Hon. R. S. HALL (Premier): The stupid imputations of the member who has just resumed his seat hardly require replying to, but I think he goes a little far by saying that members on this side have not supported the reduction of the voting age to 18 years. The manner in which he put his statement implied that we were opposed to that reduction.

If the honourable member reads the remarks of some members on this side, he will see that he should qualify that statement. The Australian Premiers, meeting together at the Premiers' Conference, decided to take a course of action, none expressing opposition and some going home to their States saying that they supported it. The honourable member has not the right to make the imputations that he has made tonight. If he dealt with the Bill rather than with personal matters concerning other members, he would do better for his cause. He has said that he is acting on behalf of his constituents, but where did he stand on the transport issue a few years ago? Did he take a stand on behalf of his electors?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Premier cannot debate transport on this Bill.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: I accept your admonition, Mr. Chairman, which is quite correct. I do not accept the rubbish that the honourable member has spoken, and if he dealt with the Bill he would do more for his cause and his electors.

Mr. LAWN: Although the Premier attempted to take to task the member for Wallaroo, he failed miserably. The Premier suggested that the member for Wallaroo should not criticize the Government for the way its members voted last Wednesday on the Age of Majority (Reduction) Bill. Government members voted against that Bill, although the Premier said that it had been agreed at a Premiers' Conference to reduce the voting age from 21 years to 18 years.

The Hon. R. S. Hall: Don't stretch the situation.

Mr. LAWN: I understood the Premier to say that the Premiers unanimously agreed to reduce the age from 21 years to 18 years.

The Hon. R. S. Hall: I said nothing of the sort.

Mr. LAWN: Then the Premier had better read *Hansard* tomorrow.

The Hon. R. S. Hall: I said the Premiers agreed on a course of action, but I did not say what that was.

Mr. LAWN: The Premier said that the Premiers had agreed to it: I said that Government members voted against the Bill last week. What is the course of action? The Premier is now making imputations. What are we to assume from all this? The people I represent tell me at least once a week that the Premier doesn't know whether he is coming or going. Apparently, a course of action was decided at the Premiers' Conference but the Premier does not know what was decided, unless it was to reduce the age from 21 years to 18 years.

The Hon. R. S. Hall: The minutes of the meeting are in *Hansard.*

Mr. GILES: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I request that we return to the clause with which we are dealing, and get away from the Premiers' Conference.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Adelaide is replying to something said by the Premier.

Mr. LAWN: The Attorney-General said that the Government opposed the Leader's Age of Majority (Reduction) Bill because it was not the right time, but it suits the Government to introduce a Bill with the same effect as the Leader's Bill, in order to get the credit for it. The Premier should not criticize an Opposition member who spoke the truth.

Mr. HURST: Although the Attorney-General said that our attitude was not the best way to deal with this matter, I consider that the manner in which the Attorney-General is handling it is not the best method. The member for Adelaide has explained how simple it would have been to police the law if the Attorney-General had supported the Leader's Bill last week. As people were enrolled, they could produce an enrolment card, and this would not cause the frustration that barmen and publicans generally would otherwise experience. We have heard about the press reports in which it has been stated that special men in Victoria are employed to police this aspect, and that is all typical of this measure.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! We are dealing not with the Bill as a whole but with a particular clause.

Mr. HURST: This clause will put an impost on people who drink because, after all, the special employment to which I have referred will have to be paid for. Had the Attorney-General adopted a sound and sensible approach, this provision would have been more effectively policed. Contrary to the allegations that have been made during this debate that the law is not being policed, I believe, from reports made to me, that the police do their best to ensure that the law is administered effectively. Only recently, a 29-year-old friend of mine came into the House and said that every time he went into a hotel he was asked

whether he was 21, so that even at that age it is difficult at times to determine whether or not a person is, in fact, over 21. Had he been reasonable, the Attorney-General would have supported our measure, and these problems would have been overcome. I do not think the time is opportune to vote in favour of this provision.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment of the member for Onkaparinga is to strike out "eighteen" with a view to inserting "twenty". The question is that the word "eighteen" proposed to be struck out stand part of the clause.

The Committee divided on the question:

Ayes (18)—Messrs. Brookman, Broomhill, Burdon, Casey, Clark, Corcoran, Coumbe, Dunstan, Hall, Hudson, Jennings, Langley, Loveday, McKee, Millhouse (teller), Ryan, Stott, and Virgo.

Noes (19)—Messrs, Allen and Arnold, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Edwards, Evans (teller), Ferguson, Freebairn, Giles, Hughes, Hurst, Lawn, McAnaney, Nankivell, Pearson, Riches, and Rodda, Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Venning and Wardle.

Majority of 1 for the Noes.

Question thus passed in the negative.

The CHAIRMAN: The question now before the Chair is that "twenty" proposed to be inserted be so inserted.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I do not want to give a silent vote on this matter. I very much regret what has just occurred, but as that is the decision of the Committee the question now is: do we have the *status quo,* or do we make a limping, hesitant move towards the twentieth century?

Mr. Corcoran: A very weak one.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I think possibly a halting totter is better than nothing at all.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: When I spoke on the last matter I said I thought that this was hardly worth doing at all but that it was better than nothing. I think it is a little better than a limping totter into the twentieth century. It is only one-third of what I personally think we should be doing, but in my view it is certainly worth doing.

Mr. Hudson: It is a sop to reform.

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: Yes, but at least it is some reform, and perhaps later on we will be able to go a little further.

Mr. HUGHES: If I understand it aright, the position now is that we have to decide between 20 years and 21 years. I have already intimated that on the third reading I shall be voting for the *status quo.*

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I said earlier this evening I would support the member for Onkaparinga in his move to insert "twenty" but in any event, whichever way the voting went, I would still vote against the clause. As the age of 18 has been decided against, the age of 21 remains. I still propose to follow the same course. I give notice to the Committee that, when the clause is amended, I shall move to delete the whole clause.

Mr. McKEE: I, too, do not want to cast a silent vote. I am very disappointed at the decision just taken by the Committee. I feel the minimum age should be either 18 years or 21 years.

Mr. Lawn: You cannot reflect on the decision of the Committee.

Mr. McKEE: A reduction of one year is a "sop", as the Attorney-General has said. I am not prepared to accept anything other than 18 years or 21 years. Most young people would be disappointed because they expected the age to be reduced to 18 years. Therefore, I favour leaving the age as it is now.

The Committee divided on the question "That 'twenty' be inserted":

Ayes (27)—Messrs. Allen, Arnold, Brookman, Broomhill, and Burdon, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Corcoran, Coumbe, Dunstan, Edwards, Evans (teller), Ferguson, Freebairn, Giles, Hall, Hudson, Jennings, Loveday, McAnaney, Millhouse, Nankivell, and Pearson, Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Stott, Venning, Virgo, and Wardle.

Noes (9)—Messrs. Casey, Clark, Hughes (teller), Hurst, Langley, Lawn, Riches, Rodda, and Ryan.

Majority of 18 for the Ayes.

Amendment thus carried.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: As I have already said, I oppose this clause. I point out to those members who have suggested that, as the clause has been amended, it is not really worth anything that they now have an opportunity to retain the *status quo* and to eliminate the clause altogether from the Bill.

Mr. HUGHES: I support what the Treasurer has said. I also intend to vote against the clause, and I will follow my opposition through to the third reading.

Mr. FERGUSON: It has been said that, when social matters are being debated, one does not want to cast a silent vote, and I will not be silent from now on. I support the Treasurer. I do not think there has been any real agitation to reduce the minimum drinking age from 21 years to 18 years. It has been said that persons between the age of 18 years and 21 years are drinking illegally now. However, other laws are being broken, but will we amend those laws to give the lawbreakers licence to continue their actions? The member for Mount Gambier (Mr. Burdon) wrecked his argument by saying that 18-year-olds were drinking in hotels in Victoria quite legally and broke their necks on the return journey to South Australia.

If the age is reduced to 18 years in South Australia, will young people drink in hotels and then break their necks while driving home? A reduction of the age from 21 years would not do any good either socially or economically. The Leader of the Opposition has suggested that those who think the minimum drinking age should remain at 21 years are not in line with up-to-date thinking. If that is so, the thinking of many South Australians is not up to date. I do not agree with the statement by the member for Frome (Mr. Casey) that everyone can decide whether to drink, because young people have been influenced by others. The member for Wallaroo (Mr. Hughes) said that the present law could be policed if the authorities wished, but I think that any attempt that has been made has failed. We should not reduce the age simply because young people are drinking illegally at present.

The Committee divided on the clause as amended:

Ayes (24)—Messrs. Allen, Arnold, Brookman, Broomhill, and Burdon, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Corcoran, Coumbe, Dunstan, Evans, Freebairn, Giles, Hall, Hudson, Jennings, Loveday, McAnaney, Millhouse (teller), and Nankivell, Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Stott, Venning, Virgo, and Wardle.

Noes (12)—Messrs. Casey, Clark, Edwards, Ferguson, Hughes, Hurst, Langley, Lawn, Pearson (teller), Riches, Rodda, and Ryan.

Majority of 12 for the Ayes.

Clause as amended thus passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10.52 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, November 20, at 2 p.m.