

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, August 21, 1969.

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

### PETITIONS: ABORTION LEGISLATION

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE presented a petition signed by 42 persons stating that the signatories, being 20 years of age or older, were deeply convinced that from the time of its implantation into the woman's womb (that is, six to eight days after conception) the fertilized ovum was a potential human being, and, therefore, worthy of the greatest respect; and that the termination of pregnancy for reasons other than the preservation of the life or physical and/or mental welfare of the pregnant woman was morally unjustifiable; that, where social reasons appeared to exist for termination of pregnancy, then the social condition rather than the practice of abortion should be treated; and that experience in countries where abortions were permitted on social or economic grounds indicated that such practice created many new problems. The signatories also realized that abortions were performed in public hospitals in this State, in circumstances which necessitated it on account of the life or physical and/or mental health of the pregnant woman. The petitioners prayed that, if the House of Assembly amended the law, such amendment should definitely not extend beyond a codification that might permit the current practice.

The Hon. R. S. HALL presented a similar petition signed by 16 persons.

Mr. HUDSON presented a petition signed by 1,133 persons stating that the signatories, being 16 years of age or older, were deeply convinced that the human baby began its life no later than the time of implantation of the fertilized ovum in its mother's womb (that is, six to eight days after conception), that any direct intervention to take away its life was a violation of its right to live, and that honourable members, having the responsibility to govern this State, should protect the rights of innocent individuals, particularly the helpless. The petition also stated that the unborn child was the most innocent and most in need of the protection of our laws whenever its life was in danger. The signatories realized that abortions were performed in public hospitals in this State, in circumstances claimed to necessitate it on account of the life of the pregnant woman. The petitioners prayed

that the House of Assembly would not amend the law to extend the grounds on which a woman might seek an abortion but that, if honourable members considered that the law should be amended, such amendment should not extend beyond a codification which might permit current practice.

Mr. BROOMHILL presented a similar petition signed by 361 persons.

Mr. HUDSON presented a petition signed by 207 persons, being 18 years of age or older, stating that, because it was impossible to be certain that the fertilized ovum was not a human being at least from the time of implantation in its mother's womb six to eight days after conception, they were deeply convinced that it was worthy of the greatest respect from that time. The signatories stated that they realized that abortions were performed in public hospitals in this State to preserve the woman from serious danger to life or physical or mental health; that, where social reasons appeared to exist for termination of pregnancy, the social condition should be treated rather than terminating the pregnancy; and that, furthermore, the experience in countries where abortion was permitted on social or economic grounds indicated that such practice created many new problems without solving existing problems. The petitioners prayed that the House of Assembly would suspend action on the Bill pending a detailed study of the British experience following the introduction of its abortion legislation, and that if the law was amended such amendment should definitely not extend beyond a codification that might permit the current practice.

Petitions received.

### PETITION: COLEBROOK HOME

Mr. EVANS presented a petition signed by 218 residents of South Australia asking Parliament to take action to prevent the closing of Colebrook Home, situated at Eden Hills, and to renew the lease and to grant a licence for the continuation of its work. The petitioners prayed that the House of Assembly would make possible the continuation of Colebrook Home as an Aboriginal children's home under the supervision of the present management, namely, the United Aborigines Mission Incorporated.

Petition received and read.

## QUESTIONS

### GAWLER HOUSES

Mr. CLARK: I noticed in the appendices to the Treasurer's explanation of the Loan Estimates (and I was pleased to notice this,

for I have desired it for a long time) that, in the year 1969-70, 25 Housing Trust houses were to be built at Gawler. Can the Minister of Housing find out on which site at Gawler these houses will be erected?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will do that.

#### STONEFIELD SCHOOL

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: Recently the Stonefield Rural School was closed, as the attendance had decreased to six or seven. The children who previously attended that school are now conveyed by bus to Eudunda to attend the school there, and I understand that the pick-up point is at the Stonefield Rural School. As the parents of the children concerned were worried about weather conditions at times, they suggested to me in a letter I received a day or two ago that the Minister of Education might be prepared to make the old school building or a part of it available as a shelter for students while they were waiting for the bus to pick them up. Can the Minister say what are the department's intentions regarding the future use of the old Stonefield Rural School and whether she will accede to the request to use the old school building or part of it as a shelter?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: The honourable member will know that the school was closed only a few weeks ago. No recommendation has yet been made to me about the use to which the old school building could be put. However, I consider that there is some merit in the honourable member's suggestion that the school building be used as a shelter for children at the terminus of the bus service to the Eudunda Area School. I will certainly consider the matter to find out whether shelter can be provided.

#### GOODWOOD PLAYGROUND

Mr. LANGLEY: Recently the Minister of Roads and Transport said that the rail rapid transit section of the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study plan had been modified. My question refers to the granting of a subsidy to the Unley City Council to erect a building in the playground area near the Goodwood railway station. I point out that there is a swimming pool in that area. Can the Minister of Immigration and Tourism say whether his department will now grant the subsidy to the council so that the improvements can be carried out?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I will examine the matter and get a reply next week.

#### WHEAT

Mr. ALLEN: Members may recall that during the last harvest much wheat was stored in temporary horizontal silos and treated with malathion before being received for storage. I understand that most of this temporary storage is empty, and many farmers want to know the condition of wheat as it comes out of this type of storage. As many farmers expect to have to store large quantities of wheat on their farms during the coming harvest, will the Minister of Lands ask the Minister of Agriculture for information from South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited about the condition of wheat stored as I have mentioned?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I will ask my colleague for a reply.

#### T.A.B. AGENCIES

Mr. McKEE: After a recent robbery at a Totalizator Agency Board agency at Unley, the General Manager of T.A.B. (Mr. Hatton) said that paying out winnings at the end of a racing day could prevent future hold-ups at T.A.B. agencies. I understand that, because of the number of race meetings being held within a short period now, T.A.B. agencies hold large amounts of money pending payment of winnings to investors. Can the Treasurer, in the temporary absence of the Premier, say whether the Government will extend or amend the legislation to provide for the payment of winnings on the day on which the races are held?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: So far as I know, the General Manager has made no official request to the Government on this matter, but I will check the accuracy of that statement. I should think that, if the T.A.B. authorities were seriously concerned about the matter, they would communicate with either the Premier or me. I will inquire and inform the honourable member.

#### FERRIES

Mr. ARNOLD: Has the Attorney-General a reply from the Minister of Roads and Transport to the question I asked on August 13 about ferry costs?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: The cost of installing and running a ferry varies according to the conditions at the site. However, for an average ferry crossing, the following costs would be typical: capital cost of ferry, \$60,000; construction cost of approach ramps, \$70,000; annual operating costs of ferry, \$11,000; annual maintenance cost, \$10,000.

Mr. ARNOLD: In view of the initial and operating cost of ferries it would be logical that the dual crossing at Berri would be high on the forward planning of the Highways Department for replacement with a bridge. Will the Attorney-General ask the Minister of Roads and Transport whether, if this is so, he will indicate to the Berri council the proposed site so that council development of Berri will tie in with the new bridge?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I shall ask him to do so.

#### PARK TERRACE CROSSING

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: I ask a question of the Treasurer, in the temporary absence of the Premier, because the matter comes within the jurisdiction of the Chief Secretary. Twice when the House has risen in time for me to travel home in the late afternoon I have noticed that the policeman normally stationed at the Park Terrace crossing (Bowden) has been absent. This crossing is situated on the route from the North Adelaide railway station via Park Terrace to the island on the Port Road where a traffic constable is on duty. I do not know whether this has happened for the two afternoons only or whether the removal of the policeman is permanent, but the restoring of this police officer at the Park Terrace crossing during peak periods should be considered. When this officer is absent the traffic builds up between the Park Terrace crossing and the North Adelaide crossing, causing serious congestion on that road. As a policeman should be on duty at this point in order to achieve the maximum safety, will the Treasurer discuss this matter with the Chief Secretary?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will do that.

#### INSTITUTE COURSES

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked on July 29 concerning courses at the South Australian Institute of Technology?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: After asking the Director of the institute for details of the institute's intentions on this matter, I have been informed that it is not contemplated by the Institute of Technology that the certificate course in institutional management will be transferred to The Levels site. It will remain at its present location on North Terrace.

#### SCHOOL CROSSING LIGHTS

Mr. BROOMHILL: A constituent of mine has asked me for information concerning school crossing lights. Several times, when travelling

into the city late in the morning, I have seen the traffic lights at some schools operating as late as 9.30 a.m., which would be some time after the children had taken their places in the classroom. My constituent was apprehended for passing through these traffic lights at a faster speed than that permitted by law, although this incident occurred at least 10 minutes after school had commenced. He was aware of the school starting time and, as a result, ignored the lights. Although I am not defending his action, I am interested to know what the current practice is for switching these traffic lights on and off. Will the Attorney-General ask the Minister of Roads and Transport whether this is done automatically (as I understand it is done in many instances), whether school officials control the lights, or what authority determines when the lights shall be switched on and off?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I will try to get this information.

#### RIDGEHAVEN SCHOOL

Mrs. BYRNE: The Minister of Education will be aware that the building of the Ridgehaven Primary School is nearing completion and that it is stated in the Public Works Committee's report that a canteen will be incorporated in the school building. A constituent of mine is interested in applying for the position of canteen manageress, and I understand that the procedure is to contact the Headmaster, after he has been appointed. Will the Minister say whether this is the correct procedure?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: Although I understand that application should be made to the Headmaster concerned, I will make sure of the procedure to be adopted and let the honourable member know.

#### SNUGGERY CROSSING

Mr. CORCORAN: The Attorney-General may recall that, some time ago, I asked him a question about the safety of a crossing at Snuggery, near Millicent. He subsequently brought down a report from the Minister of Roads and Transport indicating that my point had been well taken, although no accident had occurred recently, and that the matter had been referred to an inter-departmental committee for further consideration. Will the Attorney-General ask his colleague what progress the committee has made on the provision of suitable warning lights at the crossing and on the illumination of the crossing itself?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I am afraid that I do not remember the question and the reply, but I will inquire.

### GLENELG SCHOOL

Mr. HUDSON: Last Thursday, I asked the Minister of Education a question about possible damage to windows at the Glenelg Primary School. In reply, the Minister said:

The matter raised by the honourable member has already been discussed by officers of the Education and Public Buildings Departments. I understand that sun screens, which are to be erected over the windows of the new school at Glenelg, have been designed in such a way that they also afford protection from footballs that may be kicked into the schoolground from the oval. The erection of these screens should solve the problem. Last Saturday afternoon, Fred Phillis kicked his ninety-fourth goal of the football season with such incredible speed and accuracy that it dented one of the sun screens which during the week had been installed to protect the school windows. As Mr. Phillis is only 20 years of age, as he therefore has many seasons of football left in him, and as he can be expected in the future, particularly when playing against weaker teams such as Sturt and North Adelaide, to kick many more goals with incredible speed and accuracy that may again dent the screens, will the Minister take up this matter again with the Glenelg Football Club and the Glenelg council with a view to possibly sharing the cost of the erection—

Mr. Virgo: Why not do away with the Glenelg Oval: it's only a cow paddock!

Mr. HUDSON: The member for Edwardstown is a South Adelaide supporter.

Mr. Virgo: And proud of it!

Mr. HUDSON: Not after last Saturday, surely?

The SPEAKER: Order! This is not a football arena.

Mr. HUDSON: Will the Minister take up this matter again with the Glenelg Football Club and the Glenelg council with a view to possibly sharing the cost of the erection of a higher fence at the southern end of the oval? This would avoid possible damage to the Public Buildings Department's fine installation and would help greatly on Saturday afternoons as well as avoid delays when the Glenelg forwards kick the ball right out into the schoolyard.

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: As a Norwood football supporter I cannot hope to emulate the honourable member's eloquence on behalf of the home team. Nor have I any personal knowledge of this matter; having never been to the Glenelg Oval to watch the local team play football, I have had no chance

to observe for myself the efficacy or otherwise of the protection afforded by the sun-screens against kicking by a person of the calibre of Mr. Fred Phillis. I previously told the honourable member that officers of the Education Department and Public Buildings Department had jointly considered this matter to try to solve the problem that arises when goals are kicked and school windows broken. Knowing the care with which they examine matters, I am sure those officers would come up with a satisfactory answer. However, I will see whether we cannot do something perhaps to stop the exuberance of the goal kicker concerned.

### SWIMMING POOL

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Can the Minister of Works indicate the Government's present policy regarding the arrangements for controlling and administering the swimming pool to be erected in the north park lands? The Government had originally agreed to provide \$130,000 toward the cost of this project and, during my tenure as Premier, I increased the subsidy to \$200,000. There seem to be objections concerning the control of the swimming pool and, as disputes exist, I ask whether the intention originally expressed when the subsidy was granted will be adhered to. Clarification of the position concerning the administrative control of the pool when it is completed is clearly necessary at present, as there seem to be differences concerning the Adelaide City Council, the Prospect and Walkerville councils and the swimming association.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: The Leader knows of my interest in this project. Indeed, not only am I interested in the swimming aspect: this is a major addition to the splendid District of Torrens. Having some knowledge of the matters to which the Leader has alluded, I know of the interest in this matter of the Prospect and Walkerville councils, whose effort in this regard is magnificent considering the size of those councils. However, so that I may ascertain the exact position, I will get a considered reply on the matter as early next week as I can.

### HILLS FREEWAY

Mr. EVANS: Has the Attorney-General, representing the Minister of Roads and Transport, a reply to the question I recently asked about the supposedly collapsible poles being used on what is known as the Hills Freeway?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: The tubular steel sectional street lighting standards used for the South-Eastern Freeway are constructed of relatively light gauge steel and therefore present much less impact resistance than in the case of a solid pole. These standards are only bolted down, the sections are a sliding fit, and electrical connections are designed to pull apart safely. These features also give less impact resistance and greater safety for the motorist.

The circumstances of the accident referred to by the honourable member have been investigated and, judging from the extent of the damage to both the car and the pole, it has been estimated independently by the police and Highways Department officers that the speed at impact was between 15 and 20 miles an hour. Despite the fact that damage to the car has been estimated at \$200, the force of the collision was not sufficient to push the radiator back into the fan. Damage to the pole was confined to the bottom section, and the cost of repair could be about \$100.

#### WEEDS

Mr. GILES: Has the Minister of Lands obtained from the Minister of Agriculture a reply to the question I recently asked about any biological control experimental work being carried out in connection with African daisy and other noxious weeds?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The Director of Agriculture reports that no research work is currently being carried out on biological control or any other aspects of African daisy control. Representations have, however, been made to the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization's Division of Entomology requesting that African daisy be included in a proposed research programme for biological control of Australian weeds of South African origin but, because of lack of funds, this programme has not been initiated.

Mr. GILES: In national reserves in the Adelaide Hills the prevalence of African daisy causes a problem. Yesterday the Treasurer told me privately that it had been found on the West Coast that one of the best ways to control this weed was to slash it. Will the Treasurer, in the temporary absence of the Premier, ask the Chief Secretary to consider the suggestion that small gangs of trusty prisoners, under a warden, slash the daisy, where it is impossible to use implements with slashers attached, in an effort to control its spread?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will refer the suggestion to the Chief Secretary. I am not an authority on the eradication of African daisy, but many soldier settlers in my district who had been adversely affected by the spread of the weed for many years and who had tried various methods of dealing with the problem (such as by spraying, cultivation at various times, and over-sowing with crops), found that the most effective method seemed to be to slash the plant just before flowering time. African daisy is no longer a problem on those settlement blocks. It has almost completely disappeared and good pastures are now thriving in areas where the weed was once so dense that nothing else would grow. I do not know whether this success was achieved because of the over-sowing or because the ageing of the land made it an unacceptable host for the weed as fertility improved. I think it would be desirable for the Chief Secretary to ask the Minister of Agriculture for a report, perhaps from some scientific authority, before he went ahead with what the honourable member suggests, if he intended to go ahead. I will refer the matter to the Chief Secretary.

#### TROUBRIDGE RATES

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The Treasurer, not only in his Ministerial capacity but also in his capacity as member for Flinders, is well aware that a subsidy is paid to Adelaide Steamship Company Limited in relation to the working of the *Troubridge* from Adelaide to Kangaroo Island and Port Lincoln. At present, the company seems to have cut its rates, in regard to carting wool from the Port Lincoln terminal to the Port Adelaide wool stores, from \$2.50 a bale to \$1.75 a bale; and likewise, from \$2.75 and \$2.80 a bale to \$2.35 a bale for wool carted from Wanilla and Cummins to the wool stores (in fact, it is \$2.35 a bale in respect of wool carted from all farms on Eyre Peninsula to the wool stores). This is in fairly stark contrast to the rates the company charges shippers operating from Kangaroo Island.

A report has been made recently that a grazier living at "The Shackle" on Kangaroo Island, 63 miles from Kingscote, has to pay to the company \$3.50 a bale to have his wool carted on the *Troubridge* from the farm to the Port Adelaide wool stores, and fairly high rates in relation to live cartage of sucker lambs to the Gepps Cross abattoir. Of course, the cartage from Port Lincoln to Adelaide is in

competition with the road freighters. Because the road freighters cannot travel across water, naturally enough there is not similar competition with the *Troubridge*. The only way in which a vehicle can be taken from Kangaroo Island to Adelaide these days is on the *Troubridge* itself.

At present the Government is paying \$200,000 subsidy to Adelaide Steamship Company Limited to enable it to run freight services from Port Lincoln and Kangaroo Island to Adelaide. Can the Treasurer say whether this cutting of prices only in respect of Port Lincoln will be investigated? If the Government is paying and maintaining a subsidy to keep the *Troubridge* on the run at the moment, would it not be proper to see that the benefits are distributed to all areas and that Adelaide Steamship Company Limited does not reduce its rates only in those areas where it is facing competition from road freights, because the effect, if it does this, is that Kangaroo Island farmers are hard hit and Port Lincoln farmers are better treated, while the Port Lincoln freighters are faced with having to compete, not themselves receiving a subsidy to run the service to Adelaide, with Adelaide Steamship Company Limited?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The Leader may not know that some time ago the Government set up a committee to study the whole matter, the principal objective being to see what alternative could be provided to the operations of the vessel *Troubridge* at the end of the company's present subsidy agreement period. I also saw in press reports and in a letter recently received by the Premier from the Eyre Peninsula Transport Association reference to figures similar to those the Leader has quoted. As the Leader knows, the situation that confronted the Government before the time when the subsidy was considered was that it was properly established that the company was contemplating taking a vessel off the run completely. Indeed, it had received alternative offers for the ship. Therefore, if a service was to be maintained it was essential for the Government to ensure that it was maintained, and that was the purpose of the subsidy.

At that time, the accounts of the company were exhaustively examined by Treasury officers, the operations of the vessel being considered in isolation from any other activity of the company. It was established beyond doubt that the losses on the vessel itself, in isolation from other activities of the company, far exceeded the subsidy later agreed. There-

fore it follows that any action taken by the company to reduce its charges in any form whatever on the *Troubridge* itself or in respect to its ancillary activities, and any additional losses incurred by a reduction, must be carried by the company. So the subsidy does not provide a reserve for the company out of which it can operate at below economic rates without its carrying the additional loss. The figures quoted by the Leader as representing a comparison between rates from Kangaroo Island to Adelaide and rates from Port Lincoln and other places on Eyre Peninsula to Adelaide have not yet, I understand, been investigated by the committee. I was aware of them only last week when they appeared in the Eyre Peninsula press in a report of the meeting of the transportation association recently held there.

I point out that the Government has no control over the operations of the company. The only stipulation laid down when the subsidy was agreed was that the company should maintain the service both to Port Lincoln and to Kingscote for a period of three years, and this agreement could be cancelled during that period by either party giving, I think, three months' notice in advance. I believe that was the only stipulation that could properly be made. However, undoubtedly the committee investigating the matter will look into the matters now raised and inform the Government whether, in its opinion, any action such as the Leader has suggested should be taken. As the matter has not yet been investigated, I can take it no further than I have taken it now.

#### BARLEY

Mr. VENNING: Has the Minister of Lands obtained from the Minister of Agriculture a reply to my question of August 12 about when clipper barley was expected to become the principal malting barley for South Australia?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The Director of Agriculture, who is also Chairman of the Australian Barley Board, states that it is expected that a large proportion of the barley produced from sowings made in the 1968 season will be saved for seed, for sowings in 1970. If this is so, there will be enough clipper seed in 1970 to enable a complete replacement of prior on Yorke Peninsula and a 50 per cent replacement of prior in other areas of the State. The demand by farmers for seed of the new variety has been very high because of its superior yield and resistance to wind damage. If this demand continues, it

can be expected that clipper will be the State's main malting barley by 1970-71, and certainly by 1971-72.

#### AIRPORT SITE

Mr. BROOMHILL: A recent newspaper report, under the heading "New Site for Airport Favoured", states:

Delegates to the Liberal and Country League annual conference held in Adelaide last week resolved that an additional terminal airport should be constructed outside the city limits. The meeting viewed with concern the proposed alterations and extensions to runways at the Adelaide Airport.

As residents in my district would agree with the sentiments expressed in that resolution, can the Treasurer say whether the State Government has raised the matter with the Commonwealth Government seeking to have this decision implemented?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Of course, this matter is clearly within the control and jurisdiction of the Civil Aviation Department, which is a Commonwealth authority. As far as I know, all the inquiries in regard to the matter have been directed to the Commonwealth Minister for Air. I have had discussions on it on several occasions at meetings in the district of the member for Glenelg and, if my memory is correct, this matter was raised by people from that area at the meeting to which the honourable member refers. As far as I am aware, no request has come to the State Government to intervene in this matter. However, I will check on that to see whether representations have been made. The honourable member now raises it himself but, as far as I am aware, no consultations have taken place so far between the State Government and the Commonwealth on the matter.

If the Commonwealth had desired the State to take action or assist in any way, surely it would already have communicated with us but, to the best of my knowledge, no such communications have been received. However, I will refer the matter to the Premier for his consideration and get a further reply for the honourable member.

#### MICE

Mr. HURST: Since the novel suggestion made in this House by the member for Eyre (Mr. Edwards) about the appointment of a mousetologist to control the mouse plague on Eyre Peninsula, I have had many inquiries from persons desiring to know what qualifications would be necessary for the filling of such a position. I believe the suggestion has

the support of the wheat farmers in the area represented by the member for Eyre. I have a letter indicating the support the honourable member has for his scheme: it contains an alternative suggestion. The letter, from Nunjikompta, states:

Dear Reg,

We, as wheatgrowers in the Ceduna area, agree with Mr. Edwards, M.P., on the need for mousetologists to control the mouse plague which threatens to reach disastrous proportions in the coming warm months. We do, however, wish to express disappointment with his failure to answer our letter suggesting an interim measure which we believe would be most effective. The proposal we put to the honourable member was that wombats be captured and trained as mouse exterminators. They would have to be trained to work in teams of three.

First, they would have to muster all of the mice in one paddock and concentrate them near a suitable strainer post. Secondly, one would keep the mob together. Thirdly, the second member of the team would drive each mouse up to a suitable position in front of the strainer post. The fourth phase would be executed by the third member, which would run head-on into the post with the mouse being exterminated in the resultant collision. There is no danger of damage to the wombats—

Hence, the member for Enfield (Mr. Jennings) would not take exception because of his association with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

The SPEAKER: Does the honourable member ask for leave to continue reading the letter?

Mr. HURST: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Leave granted.

Mr. HURST: The letter continues:

—as it is well known that they are very thick in the skull and what brains they do possess are so solid in composition that very little can get in or out. We realize that the trainer for the animals should have an understanding of the thought processes and mentality of the wombat. But we can readily nominate a suitable person for this. We sincerely believe that he would be better employed and serve us much more effectively than in his present capacity.

Does the member for Eyre intend to proceed with his request to the Government for the appointment of a mousetologist? If so, will he outline the duties required of such a person so that we can inform our constituents who are interested in applying for that position; or, alternatively, will he concentrate on the training of wombats as mouse exterminators?

Mr. EDWARDS: I think members have considerably underestimated the wombat. I consider that the wombat generally has much more sense than whoever compiled that letter.

The honourable member, as a city member, is to be praised for his warm interest in matters affecting the country voter. The duties of the mousetologist will be to deal with a menace that at this time is worrying the people who are the backbone of this country, the salt of the earth, the farmers. I am disgusted that some members opposite could not care less about the farmers and the vital part they play in the economy of our State. For this reason, the honourable member's interest comes as a ray of sunshine in contrast to the dark dealings farmed out to the man on the land by the previous Labor Government. This pest, the mouse, must be stopped at all costs. The brown field mouse is a rodent and a pest. To give it its biological name, it is *mus musculus*. It has become very noticeable—

The SPEAKER: I cannot hear what the member for Eyre says are the qualifications of a mousetologist.

Mr. EDWARDS: I am coming to that.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: The honourable member is defining "mouse" at the moment.

Mr. EDWARDS: It has become very noticeable on our wheat farms and, if not checked, it could play havoc with our wheat industry. For this reason, it was good to see the honourable member bring to the Minister's notice a letter from a firm in Germany growling about the quality of wheat from South Australia. The German firm said it contained a considerable quantity of undesirable substances, for which our current mouse plague was blamed. Contrary to what people think, mice never eat what is before them: they just nibble everything that comes their way. There is a learned saying among farmers—

The SPEAKER: Order! I think the honourable member should have the same privilege that the House has already accorded the honourable member who asked the question—leave to continue.

Leave granted.

Mr. EDWARDS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a learned saying among farmers: "Introodus ee soff-a-gus mus musculus roo rarti homo sapiens extractus". For the benefit of members opposite who are not familiar with the classics, it means, "What goes down their ruddy necks comes out the farmers' pockets".

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, can we have this reply continued in English?

The SPEAKER: Order! I have already asked the leave of the House for the honourable member to continue in that way. I took it that the House agreed. The honourable member is at liberty to continue, but I think the Leader of the Opposition has made the important point that we should all be able to understand the answer to the question.

Mr. EDWARDS: There is real need for expert attention to control the mouse problem, and I am grateful to the member for Semaphore for supporting me in this urgent measure.

#### DERAILMENTS

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: Has the Treasurer a reply to my recent question about the number of derailments on the South Australian Railways during 1965, 1966 and 1967 and whether any independent inquiries were held?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The Railways Commissioner states:

Table 1 of the preliminary report of the independent committee gave the following statistics regarding derailments: 1963-64, 72; 1964-65, 56; 1965-66, 54; 1966-67, 61; 1967-68, 54.

The Government did not undertake any independent inquiry into derailments during 1965, 1966 or 1967.

#### CLEARWAYS

Mr. LANGLEY: This week's *Community Courier*, which circulates in the Unley area, contains a report that the Highways Department is considering establishing clearways on Unley Road and South Road and that the clearway on Anzac Highway has been successful. As many important business premises and shops are on Unley Road, in particular, and on South Road, will the Attorney-General ask the Minister of Roads and Transport to consider telling the shopkeepers and business people in the Unley area what sections of these roads are to be made clearways?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: One of the problems about a clearway is that it prevents people from parking and, therefore, from getting to adjoining properties and, in the case of Unley Road and South Road, to business premises. It is not much good just having sections of those roads as clearways: I think that, if there is to be any effect, the whole of each road would have to be proclaimed. However, I will certainly refer the question to the Minister and let the honourable member have a considered reply as soon as possible.



## RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

Mr. VIRGO: Has the Treasurer, in the temporary absence of the Premier, a reply to my recent question about the wages of railway staff?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: A random sample of employees in grades concerned with track maintenance tasks has been examined. The examination discloses that earnings for the year 1968-69 varied between \$2,214 and \$3,163, the average earnings being \$2,638.

Mr. VIRGO: I am aware that the Railways Commissioner is bound by the decisions of tribunals, but I think the Treasurer is aware that the Government can (and the last Labor Government did) make an additional payment to railway employees as an industry allowance. The question I asked the Premier last week related to making a special payment because of the type of work these employees were engaged in. Such a payment would in no way be at variance with a decision of any tribunal. Whilst I do not question the accuracy of the information provided by the Railways Commissioner about wages, it shows that the average wage is \$50.73 a week. As a packer receives \$40.50 a week for the first year, \$41 for the second year, and \$42 for the third and subsequent years, the figures the Treasurer has given are inflated by overtime work and are not a true reflection of what is payable to an employee in this field. Can the Treasurer say whether the Government will consider providing some additional payment in an endeavour to encourage more people to seek and, having obtained it, to remain in employment on the maintenance of railway tracks?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will refer the question to the Minister concerned.

## PORT ADELAIDE POLICE STATION

Mr. RYAN: Earlier this week I, as member for the district, had occasion to go to the police divisional headquarters at the Port Adelaide police station. The building is probably one of the oldest at Port Adelaide and the conditions under which the police have to work are disgraceful, as the Minister of Works knows. Some years ago the Public Works Committee recommended that a new divisional headquarters be provided, but this project was not proceeded with. Another proposal, for a Government office block situated in the heart of Port Adelaide, was made but this was not recommended by the Public Works Committee. Although statements have been made

about a Government office block to be established at Port Adelaide, the project has not been proceeded with. Can the Minister say what stage has been reached and when it is likely to be submitted to the Public Works Committee for consideration?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUNBE: The honourable member's statement that a Public Works Committee recommendation for the establishment of a courthouse and police headquarters at Port Adelaide was not proceeded with by Government is correct. The Public Buildings Department and I have recently examined the whole project to find out whether we can rationalize and also provide better accommodation not only for police and court officers but also for officers of other departments (including the Marine and Harbors Department) who badly need better accommodation at Port Adelaide. This has been revived by me and is currently being examined. When I have more details available, I will inform the honourable member of the Government's intention.

## THEBARTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mr. LAWN: I understand that the Education Department intends to replace several primary school buildings. Can the Minister of Education say what the Government's intention is regarding the Thebarton Primary School which, I understand, for some years has been on the list to be replaced?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: I will obtain this information.

## PENSIONERS' SPECTACLES

Mr. McKEE: Has the Treasurer, in the temporary absence of the Premier, a reply to my recent question about facilities in Government-subsidized hospitals for providing spectacles to pensioners?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I cannot see the reply in the Premier's file.

## SILOS

Mr. FREEBAIRN: In my electoral district South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited has wheat installations at Eudunda, Hamley Bridge, Kapunda, Robertstown, Saddleworth and Tarlee. Will the Minister of Lands ask the Minister of Agriculture what the total capacity of each of these silos is and how much it is expected they will still hold at the commencement of the coming harvest?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I will obtain this information.

### PARINGA PARK SCHOOL

Mr. HUDSON: On August 5 the Minister of Education informed me as follows:

The Education Department has been considering plans for the replacement of the accommodation now in use by the Paringa Park Primary School by a new building on the site referred to by the honourable member. When the new building is erected, the present primary school will be taken over by the infants department.

The Minister may remember that in 1964, I think, a fire occurred at this school and three or four classrooms were burnt down. These classrooms were replaced immediately by rooms designed for infants school use but, until the new primary school is built and the infants school takes over this accommodation, primary schoolchildren are using these rooms. No mention of this school is made on the Loan Estimates in the list of school building projects in Appendix I under the heading "Major Works for which Planning and Design is Proposed during 1969-70". Can the Minister say whether her department will reconsider the possibility of carrying out major planning and designing work on this school during the current financial year, with a view to referring the rebuilding of the school to the Public Works Committee at the earliest possible moment?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: I will ascertain the present position for the honourable member.

### WELLAND PREMISES

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: Many years ago the Woodville council permitted a company to build a meat-processing plant in Welland Avenue, Welland. Until the plant became too small for it the company carried on its activities effectively for many years without offending anyone. The premises then remained unused for several years. Recently the Woodville council received an application to use this plant for processing kangaroo meat. The council claimed that, since it had earlier made the premises available for processing meat, it could not refuse this application. I spoke to an officer of the Public Health Department, who agreed on this point, but I cannot convince the residents near the plant that this is so. Will the Treasurer, in the temporary absence of the Premier, take up this matter with the Minister of Health to ascertain the true position? I am sure the department knows all about it, and I want to clarify the matter for the residents.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I assume that the council believes it has no grounds on which it can object to the premises being used for this purpose. I assume, too, that the council has referred the matter to the Public Health Department, which has dealt with it. I take it that the honourable member is now asking me whether the department agrees to this use of the plant?

The Hon. C. D. HUTCHENS: Yes.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will refer the matter to my colleague for a report.

### EARLY CLOSING ACT

Mrs. BYRNE: Paragraph 23 of the Governor's Speech states:

The law restricting the times of trading in retail shops has not been altered for many years. My Government is making a complete review of the situation with a view to inviting Parliament to enact laws appropriate to current conditions.

Previously, when I was contacted by my constituents concerning the possibility of altering the Early Closing Act, I was informed that submissions could be made to the Minister or to his department. As I have now received a further submission from a chemist who is interested in the position, will the Minister of Labour and Industry say whether it is too late for this submission to be made?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I will receive the submission if the honourable member sends it on. She was correct when she said that the item in the Governor's Speech expressed the Government's concern about the operation of the Early Closing Act, because this Act has not been varied in any substantial way for many years. Many anomalies exist in the Act, and the Government thought that it should be completely overhauled. In response to my invitation to organizations, individuals, and various bodies, I have received numerous representations, and all have been considered. I will make a recommendation to the Government so that legislation can be introduced this session. However, if the honourable member has a special submission I shall be pleased to consider it if she can get it to me before the weekend.

### SEACLIFF PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mr. HUDSON: The oval at Seacliff Primary School has been causing difficulty for some time. In the summer of 1967-68 the school committee, somewhat inadvisedly, stopped watering the oval as an economy measure and, because of this and because of the great wear and tear, the oval surface deteriorated

and the grass died. The committee had planned to replant grass on the oval but, because of the use made of the oval and the scarcity of grounds at the school, any new grass planted would not stand up to the wear and tear that it would get. Near the school, the Brighton council has been filling in a gully, which has been used as a tip for rubbish from local residents. When it is filled, an area will be available that could be used as an additional playing area not only for the school but also for the general community. Will the Minister of Education consider the question of the adequacy of the schoolgrounds at this school, and whether, after consultation with her officers, some arrangement could be made with the Brighton council whereby children at this school could use, at least for part of the time, the playing area that seems likely to be developed (although I am not sure of this) after the gully is filled?

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: Perhaps the honourable member could recommend to the chairman of the school committee that he write to me about this matter. It is easier if it is done this way, because it can then be referred for consideration, and I shall be pleased to do this. If the honourable member does it on that level it will set the wheels in motion to have something done.

Mr. Hudson: The grounds aren't adequate at the school.

The Hon. JOYCE STEELE: I suggest that that information be included in the letter.

#### YACKA BRIDGE

Mr. VENNING: As a new bridge is being built over the river at Yacka, will the Attorney-General ask the Minister of Roads and Transport when it will be completed and whether there will be any official opening ceremony?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I will ask my colleague.

#### GLASS

Mr. VIRGO: I address my question to the Minister of Labour and Industry, although he may prefer to hand it over to or consult with the Minister of Housing. It relates to buildings, but it deals with safety, so I am directing it to the Minister of Labour and Industry. I have been approached recently by a person who is concerned in the manufacture of glass and who does much glass door construction, and I was alarmed when he told me that there was no regulation governing the weight of glass

used. He claimed that if a person wished to put the lightest glass obtainable in a glass door, there was nothing to prevent him from doing so. This is a serious position because of the danger associated with a person walking through a glass door. Will the Minister ascertain whether what I have been told is correct and, if it is, will he consider introducing some form of regulation to prescribe a minimum weight of glass for any given area?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I understand that this matter is currently under review, although I am speaking from memory. I will take up this matter and inform the honourable member early next week.

#### INFORMATION BAY

Mr. EVANS: My question concerns the lack of toilet facilities at the information bay about half a mile south-east of the toll gate on the South-Eastern Freeway. Recently, the Postmaster-General's Department placed a telephone booth at the bay, and many tourists who stop to use the telephone to contact their friends or to make inquiries for accommodation use the area behind the hoardings for normal toilet purposes. This is an unhygienic practice, and I think that we should assist tourists by establishing toilets in that area. Will the Minister of Immigration and Tourism have this matter investigated?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: There may be some merit in this suggestion, but I think the honourable member would be advised to take up this matter with the local district council, because the Tourist Bureau is not the organization primarily responsible for putting public lavatories in various areas of the State, although it is anxious to see that proper facilities are provided and it gives material assistance in many respects.

#### ANIMAL DESTRUCTION

Mrs. BYRNE: The Attorney-General will be aware that, when necessary, it is usual for a dog to be destroyed by an employee of a local council, and I am led to believe that dogs are destroyed by different methods throughout the State. Will the Attorney ask the Minister of Local Government what methods are used to destroy animals, as I want to be satisfied (and I am sure all honourable members feel the same way) that this unenviable task is carried out in a humane manner?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I can but try.

## SOUTH-WESTERN DISTRICTS HOSPITAL

Mr. HUDSON: For some considerable time now planning work of one sort or another has been going on in relation to the south-western districts hospital. Honourable members will realize that there is a great need for such a hospital to serve the southern and south-western suburbs of Adelaide, and also for it to be a teaching hospital for the establishment of a second medical school at Flinders University.

Various rumours have been circulating for the last 18 months or so as a result of the investigations of the Australian Universities Commission. Although at one stage the possibility of extending the medical school at Adelaide and of refusing approval for the establishment of a second medical school at Flinders was being canvassed, I believe that that is no longer the case and that there is a chance now that the commission will approve the establishment of a second medical school at Flinders University in conjunction with the south-western districts hospital. Of course, this means that we will receive some Commonwealth Government financial support for the construction of the hospital, which is obviously desirable.

The Treasurer will know something of the history of this matter: how land was originally purchased on Oaklands Road; how, when the Labor Government came into office, the decision was made to transfer the site of the hospital to the vicinity of Flinders University, and Laffer's land was purchased for that purpose; how the Mines Department reported adversely on the fault line running through that land; and how an exchange of land between Flinders University and the Hospitals Department was proposed.

This hospital and the establishment of a second medical school is an urgent necessity, because even if work is proceeded with immediately we are not likely to get any new medical graduates for nine years or so. Can the Treasurer say or find out for me whether approval will be given by the Australian Universities Commission for the establishment of the south-western districts hospital as the teaching hospital for a second medical school at Flinders University?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: As the honourable member said, much discussion has taken place regarding this matter over a long period, I think dating back to when I was the Minister of Works. I am aware in general terms, and in some detail as well, of the dis-

cussions that have taken place and of the moves that have been made. However, I will not venture to give the honourable member an authoritative reply at this stage. I know that the establishment of a medical school and a hospital to be ready for the medical students to use as a training facility when they reach that stage in their studies is and always has been planned to occur. I know also that other suggestions have been made, but I do not propose at this stage to canvass them.

The honourable member will be aware also that the contribution the Universities Commission makes to such a hospital, even though it be a teaching institution, is very small and does not materially assist with the capital cost of the hospital as a whole. However, I will have the matter investigated by the Chief Secretary so that the honourable member can be completely informed.

## DUTHY STREET

Mr. LANGLEY: Residents and motorists using Duthy Street have been alarmed for some time by the high accident rate along Duthy Street from Maud Street, Parkside (in my district) to Cross Road, Malvern, which is in the Attorney-General's district. Since trams have ceased running there, the road is in perfect condition and the traffic thereon has increased, especially at peak periods. The accident rate culminated in a little girl being killed and her mother seriously injured while walking along this street. People have shown their alarm by signing a petition to have "stop" signs or "give way" signs installed at every intersection along this street, and that petition will be sent to the appropriate authorities.

It has been suggested that star-shaped traffic islands might be installed; of course, this would make the Municipal Tramways Trust buses change their courses by having to go around the block. Business people in the area are complaining that these signs, if installed, will affect parking in the street. I mention one intersection in particular on which it has been mooted that one of these star-shaped traffic islands would be installed: the corner of Frederick and Duthy Streets, Unley. Will the Attorney-General ask his colleague the Minister of Roads and Transport whether these traffic islands, if installed, would curtail parking in the streets near the signs and, in turn, greatly affect the livelihood of the people in the area?

The Hon. ROBIN MILLHOUSE: I agree with the honourable member that Duthy Street is a nasty one for traffic. It is one along which I never feel comfortable when driving. I will

talk to the Minister of Roads and Transport about the specific matters the honourable member has raised, and I will obtain a reply for him as soon as possible.

#### MATISSA CAR

Mr. VIRGO: On August 6 I asked the Premier whether he could tell the House of the Government's decision regarding an offer made by the Victorian Government to provide a Matissa car on loan to the South Australian Railways for use on track inspections. Unfortunately, on that occasion I did not receive the courtesy I would have expected because both the Minister of Lands and the member for Albert (Mr. Nankivell) called "Question", as a result of which I was unable fully to explain my question. However, I hope the Railways Department has been able to decipher my question despite this discourtesy. Has the Treasurer a reply?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Regardless of whether the honourable member was able to get his question across, I have a long report on the matter. Therefore, at least the substance of his question was clear.

Mr. Virgo: Very good!

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I do not know whether the honourable member would like me to read the whole of the report, the early part of which sets out the specifications and abilities of the Matissa car for this work. I think perhaps it is not strictly relevant to the question he is asking now. I propose, therefore, to read only the comments of the Railways Commissioner on the matter and, if the honourable member desires to have the comments on the effectiveness of the car itself, I can also supply that information to him. However, I think it would be well known to him in any case.

The SPEAKER: Would the Minister like it inserted in *Hansard*?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: That might be the easiest way, Sir. I will read the summarized report of the Commissioner, and I will ask leave to have the rest inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it. The Commissioner reports as follows:

The Chief Engineer is familiar with the Matissa car referred to by the committee (the derailment committee). It is not a new development. It is also common knowledge in the industry that superior equipment is planned. Accordingly it is not proposed to purchase a unit for use on South Australian Railways broad gauge tracks, but, pending the availability of more suitable equipment, it is

proposed to seek the co-operation of the Victorian Railways and to use that system's Matissa car from time to time on the section from Murray Bridge to Mount Gambier.

The Minister then comments further, as follows:

The Government is at present considering the best course to follow and a decision on whether a Matissa car should be purchased, or not, has not yet been reached.

Having read that, I ask leave to have the rest of the report inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

The SPEAKER: I should like an assurance from the Treasurer that the report he wishes to have incorporated in *Hansard* is of a statistical nature. The Standing Order requires that only information of a statistical nature, by leave of the House, can be incorporated in *Hansard*.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: It is not a table of figures, Mr. Speaker: it is an explanation of the capabilities of the vehicle under discussion.

The SPEAKER: I quote from Standing Order 138, as follows:

Where a member, in speaking to a question, refers to a statistical or factual table relevant to the question, such table may, at the request of the member and by leave of the House, be inserted in the official report of the Parliamentary debates without being read.

Can the Treasurer assure me that what he seeks to do complies with the Standing Order?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: No, Sir, I cannot assure you of that.

The SPEAKER: Perhaps if the Treasurer will give an assurance that he will let the honourable member have the full reply in writing, that will meet the position.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I assure the honourable member that the full reply is available for him if he desires it.

Mr. HUDSON: You will probably recall, Mr. Speaker, that I raised this self-same matter last year in relation to a question that was asked by the member for Barossa of the Minister of Works. That occurred after an occasion on which you, Mr. Speaker, ruled that the Premier could not insert the detailed judgment in Trethowan's case in *Hansard* without reading it, when we were debating the Constitution Act Amendment Bill dealing with the Legislative Council franchise. As a result of the point raised on that occasion, it came out that there is a distinction between the insertion of material by leave of the House, when speaking to a question or a motion before the House,

and the insertion of material when the Minister concerned answers a question. The Standing Order to which you refer, I believe, deals with the position that applies when a member is taking part in a debate, but I suggest that Standing Order 127 is relevant in relation to replies given by Ministers to questions. Standing Order 127 provides:

Answers to questions in the form of tables of statistics or other factual information, by leave of the House, may be inserted in the official report of the Parliamentary debates without such tables being read.

The point I would take there is that, in reply to a question, "other factual information" can be inserted in *Hansard* without being read. I remind you, Sir, that, in fact, you ruled against me on December 3, 1968, and substantiated that particular point on that occasion.

The SPEAKER: I would do exactly the same this afternoon. Let me read Standing Order 127, as follows:

Answers to questions in the form of tables of statistics or other factual information—the honourable member has to bear in mind that there is no comma between "statistics" and "or other factual information"; he, being a lecturer in economics, would know much better than I the effect of inserting commas and that sort of thing—

by leave of the House, may be inserted in the official report of the Parliamentary debates without such tables being read.

Standing Order 138 provides:

Where a member, in speaking to a question, refers to a statistical or factual table relevant to the question, such table may, at the request of the member and by leave of the House, be inserted in the official report of the Parliamentary debates without being read.

The purpose of these Standing Orders, of course, is that, by leave of the House, only statistical information and that sort of material can be inserted in *Hansard*, and this prevents the inserting of any other sort of material. In other words, if there were not the necessary provisions in Standing Orders, anything could be inserted in *Hansard*, and we might all be here until 6 o'clock dealing with questions. I think that is the purpose of the Standing Orders, and I think the previous ruling still stands.

#### EGGS

Mr. FREEBAIRN: People connected with the poultry-farming industry will be pleased about the recent announcement that the South Australian Egg Board's grading charge has been reduced from 6c a dozen to

4.5c a dozen, for this will result in a substantial saving to poultry farmers. However, my attention has been drawn to the fact that the charge levied by the Victorian egg marketing authority in regard to its floors at Bendigo is only 3.59c a dozen. I should like to know how the South Australian board can sustain a grading charge of 4.5c a dozen when the Victorian authority, in respect of its Bendigo floors, allows 3.59c a dozen for providing the same service. Will the Minister of Lands obtain a report on this matter from the Minister of Agriculture?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: Yes.

#### PINE PLANTINGS

Mrs. BYRNE: When speaking to the Address in Reply debate, I quoted, at page 658 of *Hansard*, from correspondence I had received, as follows:

Regarding the interest being shown in getting tourists to come to this State may I suggest that the Government give some consideration to developing the only remaining unpleasant area around Adelaide—between Two Wells and Port Wakefield. If the soil in this area is suitable, it might be developed as vineyards or pine tree plantations, which would attract tourists in years to come.

Although I do not wish to refer here to vineyards, I refer to the planting of pine trees. Will the Minister of Lands ask the Minister of Forests to examine this suggestion to see whether it has merit?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: Yes.

#### BRIGHTON INFANTS SCHOOL

Mr. HUDSON: At present the Brighton Infants School uses the two-storey solid brick building that was previously used by the primary school, the latter school now being located in the new building. Although the old building is still adequate for the purpose and still sound structurally, as far as I know, there are certain difficulties regarding its use for infants teaching. In some parts of the building the lighting is not good and badly needs improving and, in addition, the floor coverings are not such as to minimize the noise that can occur when infants classes are in progress.

Mr. Virgo: They are lucky to have floor coverings.

Mr. HUDSON: There are none; I should have said that the nature of the floor is not such as to minimize the noise. This, of course, makes the building much more difficult to use for infants school purposes. Will the

Minister of Works ask his officers to investigate thoroughly this matter with a view to bringing the infants school building up to the appropriate standard for the purposes of infants teaching?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I will examine the matter for the honourable member.

#### SUPERANNUATION

Mr. VIRGO: My attention has been drawn to a situation that I find rather difficult to believe is correct. For this reason, I should appreciate it if the Treasurer would investigate it, first, to see whether it is correct and, secondly, if it is correct, to see whether it can be satisfactorily resolved. I am informed that, on joining a Government department, an apprentice is not permitted to participate as a contributor to the South Australian Superannuation Fund until he has completed his apprenticeship. On the other hand, a person joining any department as a junior clerk or in a similar classification is immediately entitled to contribute to the fund. As I said in my opening remarks, I find it hard to believe that this could possibly be the case. However, as this matter has been raised with me, will the Treasurer look into it to find out whether the position is as I have stated and, if it is, will he take appropriate steps to have the position rectified so that persons commencing apprenticeships are put on an equal basis with those in other callings?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I recall that this matter was raised when I was discussing with the Chairman of the Superannuation Fund Board the introduction this session of proposed amendments to the Act. However, before I take the matter any further, I should like to refresh my memory of it.

#### DEPARTMENTAL LIAISON

Mr. BROOMHILL: Although my question is asked of the Minister of Works, I am sure that the Minister of Education will be interested in it. I have received a letter from the committee of a primary school pointing out the difficulties being experienced with site work at the school. The letter states, *inter alia*:

We are also being frustrated in our efforts to obtain satisfaction on many matters as illustrated below. The following is a table of letters which we have written to the Director of Education on many subjects and have not obtained a reply. The usual acknowledgement is that "I acknowledge receipt of your letter of . . . requesting . . . and advise that the matter has (or will be) referred to the Director, Public Buildings Department for attention".

Details of a series of letters sent, the acknowledgement, and the subject matter then follow. The letter continues:

Perhaps we are dealing with the wrong department but it appears to us that, through common courtesy, we should refer all requests to the Director of Education and should be able to receive a suitable reply, and action, within a reasonable time. Any assistance or advice which will rectify this present stalemate would be very much appreciated.

I believe the complaint contained in that letter is general, because most schools with which I have dealings generally make a similar complaint about the failure of the Education Department and the Public Buildings Department to keep in close and regular contact with the schools and to give them early details. Will the Minister of Works consider this complaint and take action to achieve a better liaison between schools and these two departments?

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: Action has been taken recently to ensure that there is an excellent liaison between these two departments. I am aware that complaints have been made in the past, but much work has been undertaken with the close co-operation of officers of both departments and the two Ministers concerned, especially about maintenance work on schools. The Public Buildings Department is concerned with this work, because as more schools are built each year the amount of maintenance required increases. So much work has been involved that I recently took steps to see that the Works Division of the Public Buildings Department was greatly expanded and that its work was decentralized. This was done with good co-operation from the Education Department. A further step was the actual decentralization of authority to various headmasters to have school work done on their own authority. If the honourable member gives me the name of the school to which he has referred, I will take up this matter. I emphasize that, whatever the position was in the past, there is now close co-operation and a very happy relationship between the two departments, and much liaison is going on. This is particularly so in relation to the planning for new buildings, which is now worked on a five-year basis, and this is why we are getting such close co-operation between the two departments.

Mr. HURST: I am aware of the measures taken to expedite liaison between the two departments, but I know of a specific case at the Seaton Boys Technical High School where two headmasters reported on the corrosion of

the shelter between the main building and the offices. The school committee, too, reported on this matter about 18 months ago. The committee's report was acknowledged and a departmental officer was supposed to inspect the corrosion but, to my knowledge, it has not been inspected since the complaint was lodged. Will the Minister arrange for a departmental officer to inspect this damage, because the building is deteriorating badly? It is a new building, and if the corrosion is not attended to in a reasonable time, major repairs may be necessary.

The Hon. J. W. H. COUMBE: I will look into this matter if the honourable member gives me the details, but I am surprised that he has let this matter go for 18 months without following it up. The Public Buildings Department maintains close liaison not only with the Education Department but also with all other client departments. As the honourable member realizes, the Public Buildings Department designs buildings and contracts for all departments that require buildings to be erected. It is particularly in relation to the Education Department that this liaison has been smartened up and brought to a high pitch over the last 12 months. I cite as an example the liaison that occurs between the Hospitals Department and the Public Buildings Department: the latter department has much maintenance work to do for that department as well as for other departments. If the honourable member gives me the details, I will have this matter followed up. The correct approach is for schools to work through the Education Department, and this procedure must be followed.

Mr. JENNINGS: The Minister will recall that I made a suggestion about this matter some time ago. If this programme has started, can the Minister say how it is working? Also, does he agree that the answer he gave today is slightly different from the answer that he gave me?

*At 4 o'clock, the bells having been rung:*

The SPEAKER: Call on the business of the day.

#### SUPPLY BILL (No. 2)

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended the House of Assembly to make provision by Bill for defraying the salaries and other expenses of the several departments

and public services of the Government of South Australia during the year ending June 30, 1970.

In Committee of Supply.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON (Treasurer) moved:

That towards defraying the expenses of the establishments and public services of the State for the year ending June 30, 1970, a further sum of \$40,000,000 be granted: provided that no payments for any establishments or services shall be made out of the said sum in excess of the rates voted for similar establishments or services on the Estimates for the financial year ended June 30, 1969, except increases of salaries or wages fixed or prescribed by any return made under any Act relating to the Public Service, or by any regulation, or by any award, order, or determination of any court or other body empowered to fix or prescribe wages or salaries.

Motion carried.

Resolution adopted by the House. Bill founded in Committee of Ways and Means, introduced by the Hon. G. G. Pearson, and read a first time.

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

*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

For some years it has been customary for Parliament to approve two Supply Bills so that the current financial commitments of the Government may be met during the period between July 1 and the assent to the Appropriation Bill following the Budget debate. The Supply Act approved by Parliament in June last provides authority to the extent of \$40,000,000. As the requirement to meet ordinary day-to-day expenditures from Revenue Account is currently running at about \$19,000,000 to \$20,000,000 a month, it may be seen that the present provision will not last very long beyond the end of this month. It is desirable, therefore, for Parliament to consider a second Supply Bill now to give authority that may be expected to suffice until the Appropriation Bill becomes effective, probably late in October.

Last year the second Supply Bill was for \$30,000,000, but on looking at the recent and expected run of monthly expenditures I consider it desirable that the amount be increased this year to \$40,000,000. Together with the \$40,000,000 of the first Supply Act, it will give a total of \$80,000,000, and this would make it unlikely that a third Supply Bill would be necessary before the end of the Budget debate. Clause 2 provides for the



issue and application of \$40,000,000. Clause 3 provides for the payment of any increase in salaries and wages that may be awarded by a wage-fixing body. The wording of the clauses follows that of previous Supply Bills.

This Supply Bill is similar in all respects to other Supply Bills except that on this occasion I have requested the House to give authority for an additional \$10,000,000 to bring the sum in this Bill to \$40,000,000 instead of \$30,000,000, as was the previous custom.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Leader of the Opposition): I support the Bill. As the Treasurer has said, the only difference between this Bill and previous Supply Bills is the sum of \$40,000,000 instead of \$30,000,000. When Treasurer of this State, my own view was that this would have been a proper provision, for otherwise supply in the State could conceivably have got a little tight if there had been some delay in the passing of the Appropriation Bills after the Budget. With the increase in the size of the services of the State and the increasing expenditure, I think this is an appropriate amount to be passed by Parliament. It does not detract from the authority of Parliament in its proper surveillance of the expenditures of the State.

Despite the suggestions of the Under Treasurer, I did not introduce a Bill myself for a sum of \$40,000,000 at the appropriate time in 1967, but the arguments of the Under Treasurer at that time weighed heavily with me and I thought it would be a proper thing to do, although I did not do it. When the Treasurer does it on this occasion, it is a proper thing to do, and I am happy to be in accord with him on this matter.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON (Treasurer): I thank the Leader of the Opposition and the House for their co-operation in this matter. I think the Leader may take some comfort from the fact that his remarks, when he was Treasurer, to the Under Treasurer have obviously borne some fruit. I think, too, it is acknowledged that, as the Leader points out, with the increasing services of the State and the increasing expenditures whereby our Revenue figures are rising possibly by some \$25,000,000 or more each year, it is inevitable that the weekly and monthly rate of payment increases, and I believe this move to increase the sum of money in this Bill by \$10,000,000 over and above what has been

customary is justified in those circumstances. That is the only reason why I have brought the Bill before the House in this form. I think we are in accord on this matter, as the Leader has said, and I thank him for his co-operation.

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

#### PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORTS

The SPEAKER laid on the table the following reports by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence:

Engineering and Water Supply Department  
Ferrous Foundry, Ottawa,  
Grange Primary School.

Ordered that reports be printed.

#### LOAN ESTIMATES

In Committee.

(Continued from August 20. Page 1125.)

Railways, \$7,700,000.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Leader of the Opposition): The Treasurer's statement on the expenditure of \$7,700,000 for railway accommodation makes it clear that there is no provision in these Loan Estimates for the standardization of the gauge between Adelaide and Port Pirie; nor is there adequate provision for standardization of other railway lines that will be affected by any standard gauge proposal between here and Port Pirie. This is a matter of grave importance to this State.

While I believe that industrialists who are considering establishing in South Australia place, at times, too great an emphasis on the financial benefits to be gained by them from being on the standard gauge, without looking at the real costs involved, and, apparently, without being aware of the bogie exchange system at Port Pirie, nevertheless it will be vital for South Australia to have Adelaide connected to the standard gauge system. Whilst the bogie exchange system at Port Pirie can do much, it is vital that we be connected to the standard gauge: if we are not, there is a real danger. Despite whatever we can submit about contrasting costs of distribution from industries in South Australia to either Sydney or to Perth on the railway system, we will suffer if we are not on the standard gauge.

Further, it is quite clear that the provision of a simple standard gauge system between here and Port Pirie, if not allied with alterations to the rail gauge system in the Northern

Division, will create grave difficulties for industries in South Australia, particularly at Wallaroo. Of course, it is not only a question of Wallaroo being involved: the distribution of fertilizer from the two works in Wallaroo to the farming community is also vitally involved. If a simple standard gauge is provided between here and Port Pirie, without allied improvements and alterations to the gauge out of Wallaroo, South Australia will have more breaks of gauge than previously existed.

It is vital for the distribution of fertilizer that Wallaroo be connected to the standard gauge if we are to have a standard gauge line from Adelaide to Port Pirie or from Adelaide to the standard gauge line between Port Pirie and Broken Hill. A few strange political statements have been made on this subject. All sorts of things have been said by the present Commonwealth member for Grey (Mr. Jessop) about delay by the South Australian Government, of whatever complexion, regarding the conversion to the standard gauge system. In fact, the delay has been largely caused by the Commonwealth Government. Submissions were made to that Government before the end of 1967 for the phasing in of standard gauge links between Adelaide and the standard gauge system already agreed upon, and submissions were made about the ways in which the lines that would be additionally involved, particularly those into and out of Wallaroo, should be adapted. That material was in the hands of the Commonwealth Government for a long time before we could get any sort of reply at all.

The Commonwealth Minister for Shipping and Transport, who is now the Minister for External Affairs, clearly refused to have anything to do with forward planning of further standardization works in South Australia. He said that there was plenty of time available for this: there was no need for hurry about it. We made our submission to the Commonwealth Government for the standardization of this gauge but we could get no adequate reaction from that Government, yet the member for Grey tramped around his northern constituency, saying, "This delay is all the fault of the South Australian Government." However, we were unable to get replies from the Commonwealth Government on the scheme.

Mr. Venning: What programme did you put forward to the Commonwealth Government?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: We put forward a phased scheme, the one referred to by the Premier in his reply to the honourable

member. That scheme was prepared by the South Australian Railways Commissioner's officers for the phasing in, over five years, of the standard gauge system and for the adaptation of a number of lines in the Northern Division, as well as the standard gauge link from Adelaide to the standard gauge system. If that had been agreed to, it would have allowed us to be connected to the standard gauge line in the minimum time and, at the same time, we would have provided that all those parts of the Northern Division that needed to be adapted to the standard gauge line could have been dealt with, and there would have been no disruption to industry at Wallaroo and no disruption of the distribution of fertilizer.

However, the Commonwealth Government was not prepared to go ahead with this. That Government announced that it had arranged to up-date the line and said that it was appointing consultants. On April 15 the Commonwealth Government said that it was examining the possibility of a standard gauge line to Alice Springs and was also arranging for feasibility studies of the proposal to connect Adelaide to the standard gauge system. It said in April that agreement had been reached in November, 1968, about consultants. Of course, agreement has not been reached on consultants yet. The consultants have not been appointed. We have had submissions from several consultants but not one has yet been accepted.

We have not even reached the stage that we should have been at two years ago because of the Commonwealth Government's not accepting clear proposals. It could have provided us with this necessary connection in the optimum time. The member for Rocky River has asked questions of the Premier, as I have, about what stage has been reached in getting the necessary planning work done on this line. We are still discussing the planning of the line, nearly two years after the Commonwealth Government had had clear submissions from the South Australian Government that were entirely feasible. This is entirely in line with what has been done consistently by the Commonwealth Government on this subject.

Mr. McKee: Adelaide is left isolated.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The Commonwealth Government has left us isolated. It has refused to give to South Australia the necessary work to see that we were connected to the standard gauge line in the minimum possible time.

Mr. Broomhill: The Premier tried to defend the Commonwealth.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I do not know why.

Mr. Venning: That's not true.

Mr. Broomhill: Well, he doesn't try to defend the Commonwealth?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: If he is defending the Commonwealth, I do not think he is doing his job by the State and, if he is not defending the Commonwealth, that is fair enough because the Commonwealth does not deserve defending. We have had from the Commonwealth Government continued delay and a putting off of South Australia's interests by not seeing to it that we are connected to the standard gauge line. This necessary planning work should have been going on during the period of construction of the standard gauge line to Broken Hill so that, as soon as the work on that line was completed, the gang could have been switched to the line to Adelaide and other lines in the Northern Division that are involved.

That cannot happen now. We do not even know now what proposals the Commonwealth will consider, yet the Parliamentary representative of the northern area of the State tramps around saying, "It is all the fault of the South Australian Government that something has not been done in this area".

Mr. Virgo: He is only electioneering.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Yes. We have a right to insist on the standardization of the line from Adelaide to Port Pirie. The standardization agreement is a long-standing one. The proposals for connecting Adelaide with the standard gauge line were part of the original proposals; they certainly had not been planned in detail, but South Australia made its submissions in time to ensure that they would be included, and at a time when the Commonwealth Government faced no difficulty in connection with finding the finance. The standardization of the line from Adelaide to Port Pirie and the lines in the Northern Division should have commenced at the time the standard gauge line to Broken Hill was completed but in this case, as in so many others, the Commonwealth Government has ignored the needs of this State.

South Australia has become a Cinderella State in respect of consideration by the Commonwealth Government. Prior to the last State elections we heard with some interest from the Prime Minister that, if the Liberal and Country League was elected to the Treasury benches, South Australia would get a much better deal because it would be all in the family and it would be so much easier to negotiate with the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. Virgo: A good family!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: We have not had a better deal from the Commonwealth Government—rather, we have had a worse one. What benefit can any member opposite point to that we have received from the Commonwealth Government since the present State Government has been in office? We can point to plenty of things that the Commonwealth Government has not done for us! First, we certainly have not had much of a deal from the Commonwealth in connection with the Chowilla dam. Secondly, the Premier has said, quite correctly, that we got a rotten deal at the Premiers' Conference. Thirdly, we got an even worse deal at the roads conference—indeed, South Australia got the worst deal of any State at that conference.

In connection with our railways system, South Australia is being ignored; the Commonwealth Government is continually postponing the project to connect Adelaide with the standard gauge line. It is fobbing us off by continually delaying a decision on the presentation of plans. Where is the benefit that South Australians are supposed to be getting from the Commonwealth Government? There is none! We are being ignored at present. The Prime Minister made another promise when he came here shortly before the announcement of the recent Commonwealth Budget. He smiled sweetly on television and said, "There will be some good things in the Budget for South Australia." I point out that he said that there would be good things not for the whole of Australia but for South Australia especially.

Mr. Virgo: The headline said "Goodies for South Australia".

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Yes; everyone looked eagerly for these good things, but what single thing was there in the Commonwealth Budget that provided a special benefit for South Australia?

Mr. McKee: Absolutely nothing.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: It is quite clear that the present Government knows very well that it will not obtain provision from the Commonwealth Government during this financial year for any significant standard gauge works between Adelaide and Port Pirie or in the Northern Division.

Mr. Jennings: But we are in the family!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Well, I can only say that present indications are that the Prime Minister has done to South Australia what might in other circumstances be considered as putting us in the family way.

The Hon. R. S. HALL (Premier): I believe that the Leader is having a practice run.

He has already announced to the newspapers that he will go round South Australia's country districts and start putting on his electioneering act. He has said that he will criticize the Government in connection with a number of issues. The Leader's performance this afternoon was not a bad practice, but he will do even better and sound more convincing when he is facing a crowd. It is a pity, of course, that he does not have facts to use; it is a pity he ignores the benefits that this Government has secured for South Australia from the Commonwealth Government. It would be better if he dealt with facts to a greater extent when he goes through the country districts. It just happens that, during the Labor Government's term of office, South Australia's reputation in other States sank to an all-time low, and it was the Leader's actions as a Minister and, subsequently, as Premier that caused this low reputation. It is now refreshing to find that people are coming from other States and saying how pleased they are that we have moved out of the deteriorating position that occurred between 1965 and 1968.

Mr. Broomhill: Why don't you reply to the Leader's comment about the deal we are getting from the Commonwealth?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The honourable member wants to know what the Commonwealth Government has done for South Australia. Let us consider just three items that the Leader cares to ignore. Did he get \$6,000,000 for the Keith main? Of course not! Why did we have the ability this year to balance our Budget? It was because the Commonwealth Government gave an additional \$2,000,000 as a special grant for South Australia alone, and no-one can deny it. If such a grant had been made to all States on a per capita basis it would have involved tremendous expenditure, but South Australia was singled out. Why?

Mr. McKee: For political purposes.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: A short while ago the honourable member's Leader said that it did not happen, but we know it did happen. I point out that the Commonwealth's good offices enabled South Australia to receive tremendous advantages from a negotiated settlement in connection with the Dartmouth dam—but the Leader would deny this to the people of South Australia. He is on record as saying this. The Labor Government submitted a proposal to the Commonwealth Government, and we resubmitted it when we

came to office. I hope members opposite will listen to what I have to say, particularly the member for Wallaroo (Mr. Hughes), because a railway line in his electoral district is involved in this project.

On May 23, 1968, Cabinet reviewed a report from the South Australian Railways Commissioner dated May 20. That report referred to the fact that, on March 18, 1964, the then Premier, Sir Thomas Playford, wrote to Sir Robert Menzies seeking Commonwealth approval for the construction of a standard gauge railway between Adelaide and Crystal Brook. (The selection of Crystal Brook as the junction station was suggested by Sir Thomas Playford, and not by the Railways Commissioner.)

In reply, on August 8, 1964, Sir Robert Menzies stated that a detailed examination of all relevant aspects, including the route of the line and its implications for other lines north of Adelaide, should be made by the Commonwealth and South Australian Railways Commissioners in consultation. The South Australian Commissioner then undertook an intensive study of traffic flows, route mileages, effect on freight and livestock transfer, and of mixed gauge working.

Six alternatives were studied by both the South Australian Railways and the Commonwealth Railways. These ranged from the conversion in isolation of the line between Adelaide and Port Pirie with an alternative junction point at Crystal Brook to a comprehensive plan covering conversion of part of the broad and narrow gauge lines north of Adelaide. Subsequently a seventh proposal was jointly examined, namely, the construction of an independent standard gauge railway from Adelaide to either Port Pirie or Crystal Brook. The Commonwealth Railways Commissioner was advised on September 9, 1965, of the outcome of these studies and was supplied with preliminary estimates for track and rollingstock on January 27, 1966. The Commonwealth Commissioner prepared a draft report, which was perused and commented upon by the South Australian Commissioner on April 15, 1966. This draft report supported the South Australian proposals. However, it is not known whether this report was ever submitted to the Commonwealth Government. Further contact by South Australia was made as follows:

On September 8, 1966, the South Australian Railways Commissioner sent further information to the Commonwealth Railways Commissioner but, as no further communication

was received by August 3, 1967, the then Premier wrote to the Prime Minister asking progress. On October 31, 1967, the South Australian Railways Commissioner sent further comments on rolling stock to the Commonwealth Railways Commissioner. In May, 1968, Cabinet endorsed the South Australian Railways Commissioner's proposal. Following representations made by me on June 19, 1968, the Prime Minister, under date October 22, 1968, proposed that independent expert consultants be appointed to undertake a feasibility study of the problem and that, subject to the State's being agreeable, Commonwealth officers would prepare draft terms of reference, which would be considered by all parties to reach agreement on these terms. I informed Mr. Gorton on November 1, 1968, that the State accepted the proposal and would await the draft terms of reference.

On March 5, 1969, the Minister for Shipping and Transport supplied us with the draft terms of reference and a short list of consultants (some South Australian firms and some other firms). The State considered the terms of reference without delay and on April 3, 1969, the Minister of Roads and Transport suggested to Mr. Sinclair that certain minor alterations be made to those terms. The list of consultants met with our approval. The Minister of Roads and Transport interviewed Mr. Sinclair in Sydney on April 24, 1969, and further discussed the matter, in an endeavour to reach an expeditious agreement with the Commonwealth: mutual agreement was reached. As late as yesterday I read to members the latest report on the matter.

Mr. Hudson: You will be doing that in another five years.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Consultants have been approached and asked to tender, and have been given a month to tender and submit their proposals.

Mr. Hudson: It has taken all this time: it is scandalous.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: The previous Government accomplished nothing, except to send proposals, but when this Government makes a move and there is a real break-through in the impasse that existed, so that the present situation—

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: What break-through?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: To the consultants—

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: You are kidding.

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Did not the Leader want this to happen? If he does not, let him say so. Apparently, the Leader thinks that no progress has been made. That certainly happened under his Government.

Mr. Hudson: What progress has there been?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: Now we have it: according to its usual form the Opposition now protests. From the moment we took office the Opposition has been a Party of knockers, and here it goes again. Progress is to be knocked, regardless of the interests of the people of this State. We are making real progress today toward accomplishing the standardization of gauges on important railway lines.

Mr. Hudson: Do you think this will be another Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study?

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: Do you think you have made progress?

The Hon. R. S. HALL: We have made more progress than was made by the previous Government led by the present Leader of the Opposition, who is jealous of this Government and jealous of the progress that South Australia has made. If the Leader does not like it let him tell the people on this theatrical tour on which he is going during the weekend. Let him tell people what he did when he was in Government and what he got when he was the Premier. Throughout the long three years—and I remind members that it was a long three years, which seemed like eternity—the previous Government received next to nothing from the Commonwealth. Apparently, that situation is making the Opposition bitter about the success of the present Government.

*Members interjecting:*

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. VIRGO: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. Can the Committee continue now that the Premier has left the Chamber and there is no Minister on the front bench?

The CHAIRMAN: A Minister has arrived. The honourable Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Now that we have had the comic act the comic departs the scene as quickly as possible. We have had some shouting from the Premier, who is like the fabled lady in a Shakespearean play who protested a little bit too much.

Mr. McAnaney: You are protesting about nothing.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I am not protesting at all. I am interested in all the progress we have had, according to the Premier, on the standard gauge line to the north.

According to the Premier it is progress for us to get from the stage where proposals have been examined in detail by the officers of the Commonwealth and the State railway systems and to reach a stage where the Commonwealth Government has decided that it will invite submissions from consultants not yet selected, and that this is the means of getting progress in the construction of a standard gauge line.

Mr. Hudson: It has taken five years to get this far.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: When the present Government took office there were specific recommendations before the Commonwealth Government prepared by the State Government's officers and agreed to by officers of the Commonwealth Government, but we have gone no further than that: we have even gone backwards. What the Government has achieved in the progress that the Premier talks about is that these proposals agreed to by both sets of officers have now been rejected by the Commonwealth Government, and we are now not as far advanced as we were when the present Government took office: and the Premier says that that is progress! He has been taking a few lessons from Merlin, and believes in going backwards. As a makeshift, we have heard a peroration from the Premier about the magnificent things achieved by this Government and the assistance from the Commonwealth Government, and he has emphasized a \$2,000,000 special grant to South Australia.

However, the South Australian Government, under Labor, got special grants too, and I remind members of one in particular, because the Premier seems to have forgotten it. Under the South Australian Labor Government we received a grant for the natural gas pipeline that has never been matched by the Commonwealth Government to the present Government, and was not matched by the Commonwealth Government to any other Government seeking pipeline assistance. When Sir Henry Bolte asked for a small subvention in 1967 he was knocked back: we supported him to get it, but the Commonwealth Government would not give it to him. It gave it to us, and we received a marvellous deal from the Commonwealth Government, but no-one could suggest that the present Government has had a good deal from it. What seems strange to me is that, having had such a rotten deal, the Premier at one time said that we had had a terrible time from the Commonwealth Government and that it had done disgraceful things to us, but that, when I agreed

with him, he said that I was electioneering or that I was a knocker. When, in this Chamber, I back the Premier on behalf of the State, all he can say is not, "Good on you; let us be crow-eaters together and stick up for the rights of South Australia," but that it is my fault that he has not done well, and that I am electioneering, or somehow or other knocking him by agreeing with him.

Mr. Clark: I don't think he likes you.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I think that is correct.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: You have a fair choice; you can take your pick.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: So can the people of South Australia. I think the people are able to see the evident inconsistency and that, at the first opportunity they have to make their choice, there is not much doubt about the choice they will make.

Mr. VIRGO: I only wish the gallery had been filled today so that people could have heard the Premier accuse the Leader of the Opposition of having a practice run. The Premier then attempted to out-do the Leader, but he ought to have learnt by now that, with his feeble ability, that is an impossible task. Perhaps the most disgusting thing of all is that the Premier accused members on this side of not listening to him when, in fact, there were only four members on his own side, and when, after he had spoken and immediately walked out of the Chamber, only one Minister was left on the front bench. Let us not fool around with a national matter; it is not a matter on which the Premier should play-act. He does not have to come here to try to fool us into thinking that the State Government is getting a fair go from the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. Freebairn: Are you giving the Communists the No. 2 preference at the next election?

Mr. VIRGO: If the member for Light would only shut up he might learn something. If he learnt a little and sought advice from people, he would know that the Labor Party has never given a preference to a Communist.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The interjection made by the member for Light was out of order: there is no line on the Loan Estimates dealing with preferences.

Mr. VIRGO: As it was out of order, Mr. Chairman, I assume that you will instruct *Hansard* to strike his interjection from the record. I regret that the member for Light has to go off at a tangent and smear people

when, in fact, we are dealing with something of grave importance to the future of South Australia. If the member for Light looks at a map of Australia, he will realize how isolated Adelaide is in connection with the standard gauge line. The people whom the member for Light champions are the farmers and the industrialists of South Australia. Yet the statistics will show us that about 87 per cent of the commodities produced by secondary industries in this State must go to the Eastern States for sale. How do we get our commodities to these markets? This should not be a matter about which the Premier tries to make political capital, for the future well-being of the State is completely at stake here. We are completely isolated, now that the standard gauge line is built, and we are faced with the prospect of an increased cost as a result of transhipping products.

Members ought to realize exactly what transhipping means concerning the price of our commodities. How the deuce are we going to compete with other States when, because of ineptitude, we have not progressed sufficiently in relation to the standard gauge line? Because of its isolation Adelaide can become nothing more than a little village in comparison with other cities. Let us not be fooled when we are told that this Hall Government has had a real break-through in respect of standardization. The plain fact is that the Commonwealth Government has treated South Australia with contempt, and for the last 18 months we have not had anyone prepared to stand up to the Commonwealth.

We have not had our case stated properly, and we have not received a fair go from the Commonwealth Government. If members opposite only realized this, I suggest they would get somewhere, but unfortunately they want to play politics too much. On the other hand, Sir Henry Bolte and Mr. Askin are not concerned about the fact that Gorton is of the same political colour. They are playing the role of Premier of their respective States and are demanding their pound of flesh and getting it, because they are making their demands with a heavy hand.

Mr. McAnaney: Can you tell us what Bolte has got?

Mr. Corcoran: There's one thing he hasn't got, and that's you, Bill!

Mr. VIRGO: I only wish Sir Henry Bolte could get one thing more: that is the member for Stirling as his Treasurer, and then Victoria would really crash. Bolte and Askin

have gone to the Commonwealth Government and demanded that the rights of their respective States be recognized.

Mr. McAnaney: What have they got?

Mr. VIRGO: If the member for Stirling desires one example (and there are many) I cite the road grants. In this regard, we got the worst treatment of all time, but New South Wales and Victoria received far better treatment, because Bolte, for one, was prepared to hammer the table, and the honourable member knows it. I suggest that he does what the Minister of Works has just told him to do, and that is: shut up!

*Members interjecting:*

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. VIRGO: A fortnight ago Government members participated in an inspection of the Islington Railway Workshops and were somewhat intrigued when, with pride, officers conducting the tour showed a very complicated piece of equipment and explained that it was a crossover of switches that incorporated the three gauges. It was a unique sort of thing, and it was marvellous to see how any of the three gauges could be arranged by this equipment. I give full marks to those who designed and built it. What a farce it is to have three gauges in one location, yet we talk about progress. The Premier said we had had more progress in South Australia recently than we have ever had. I hope he can find some to show me.

Mr. Hurst: They are going backwards.

Mr. VIRGO: True.

Mr. Venning: We were going backwards when you were in office.

Mr. VIRGO: That is the old story Government members peddle around the countryside by means of their vicious, smear-type pamphlets that state how the State goes downhill and stagnates under a Labor Government. Then there was the new line that, if elected, an L.C.L. Government would get South Australia moving again. How is that Government moving in regard to railways? Line after line is being closed.

Mr. McAnaney: That's good.

Mr. VIRGO: I am pleased to hear the member for Stirling at last acknowledge the fact that he is opposed to the Railways Department.

Mr. Venning: If the people are not using the railways, what are you going to do about it?

Mr. McAnaney: Will you force the people to use the railways?

Mr. VIRGO: I venture to suggest that, if members opposite only had a more careful look at this matter, and not the short-sighted look they take now, they would realize that not one of them who boasts of being the owner of a prosperous farm could do so had it not been for the pioneering work carried out by the Railways Department. Private enterprise would not carry the produce, and members know that it will not carry it today. Could the member for Rocky River get super-phosphate to his property by road?

Mr. Venning: Of course we do, and you would, too.

Mr. VIRGO: The Railways Department has been the pioneer in this State. The State needs railways, but unfortunately the member for Stirling and some of his colleagues are doing all they can to make the railways ineffective and eventually, apparently, they will close them down.

Mr. McAnaney: Bunkum!

Mr. VIRGO: The honourable member can say that, but a few moments ago he agreed they should be closed down. It is obvious, from the insincere approach of the Government to the Commonwealth Government in relation to standardization, that it does not desire the railways system to be up to date, yet that system has an important part to play. I refer members' attention to the Railways Commissioner's report of last year which states:

Reference was made in the report for the year 1966-67 to the socially necessary services which the department is called upon to operate and which tend to obscure other viable operations. It was then suggested that it would appear to be not unreasonable if the costs of these community services were directly underwritten by it.

I believe that the Commissioner who has been consistently saying this for a long time, and who I hope will include this in his report to come out shortly, should be listened to. However, I fear that the present Minister of Roads and Transport will probably not take the trouble to read these words, let alone act on them, because I suggest the Government is insincere in its approach to the South Australian Railways and the continuation of this service as a viable and effective transport system in this State. I believe this is further amplified when we look at the paltry sum the Treasurer has made available for the rehabilitation of railway track.

Mr. Corcoran: You'd think that report would have had a greater effect than it has.

Mr. VIRGO: I would have thought that. I have read a good deal of the report and I think that, by way of explanation of questions, I have been able to acquaint members of the Committee with much of it. The report also states (and members opposite should know this) that certain sections of the track are significantly bad from the point of view of lurching acceleration and must be regarded as potentially dangerous. There are no "ifs" or "buts" about that statement, yet we find the Treasurer making a miserable allocation of \$600,000, although the Premier had previously said that \$8,500,000 was needed. I believe the present Government's approach is completely and utterly insincere and that it is stage acting. It has made a political football out of the question of this service, which has assets worth \$160,000,000. Bit by bit the department is being inhibited and frustrated and its service curtailed by present and previous Liberal Ministers of Roads and Transport.

I refer now to the District of Angas because a few weeks ago, on the *Today Tonight* television programme of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Minister of Roads and Transport had certain things to say. He was being questioned about the Transport Control Board. Although there were questions about the ability of the three members of that board, I do not think it is appropriate or desirable for me to pursue that in this debate. He was asked:

In most cases it is a matter of weighing the advantage of the service to the district against the cost to the State of maintaining it. How has this affected the various districts?

The Minister of Roads and Transport (Hon. C. M. Hill) replied:

Well, the effect on the communities involved has not been serious where changes have taken place already. For example, in the Barossa Valley a bus service now operates in lieu of the previous rail passenger service. From the reports I have, the people are completely satisfied with the more convenient and cheaper transport that has been provided.

We all know that is poppycock, that the bus service serving the Barossa Valley in lieu of the railways is subsidized by this Government. The Minister and the Premier can deny it if they like. When it was decided to discontinue that railway service, why did the Railways Department itself not provide a road service?

Mrs. Byrne: It wasn't allowed to.

Mr. VIRGO: That is correct: it was not allowed to. I go on a little further to where



the questioner put this point to the Chairman of the Transport Control Board:

Another of the allegations made includes one that the board does not give the railways the opportunity of running a profitable road service after the rail service has been discontinued. The railways make an annual loss of some \$10,000,000 in South Australia and many sections of the community say that, if the railways were able to run profitable passenger services instead of being tied down to being an uneconomic public utility, it would be well on the way to closing the profit gap. Can the railways apply to run such a service?

The Chairman replied:

We call for applications for licences to run, as has recently been done from Port Hughes to Wallaroo, and the Moonta and Kadina areas to Adelaide.

My colleague the member for Wallaroo knows all about this.

Mr. Hughes: I certainly do.

Mr. VIRGO: The notes continue:

We call for applications for people to run the service and in that case the Commissioner did apply.

Then the following question was asked:

And did the Commissioner get the service? The Chairman of the board replied "No". Then the questioner asked:

Does the Commissioner ever get such a service?

The reply was as follows:

I can't answer that question; it would be going too far back into history.

The plain fact of the matter is that the railway service is bit by bit being ground into the dust by a Government with a policy of "couldn't care less" about this part of public transport. It is a tragedy for all South Australians, be they farmers, industrialists, workers or professional people, that, because the railways system is being neglected to the extent that it is, it is rapidly becoming a useless sort of organization through lack of interest by this Government and a lack of initiative in demanding standardization connections. I believe that the South Australian Railways system will, if it has to suffer this Government for many more years, cease to exist, and that will be to the economic detriment of the State.

Mr. McANANEY: As usual, the member for Edwardstown was completely around the bend in his extremist views. He throws mud here and there and hopes a little bit will stick. Nobody condemns the Railways Department for the tremendous job it has done for South Australia over the years, just as the Clydesdale horse did its job for South Australia in the early pioneering days. The railway still has an important part to play in the life of

South Australia. The Commonwealth Railways Commissioner, when he was here, said that for any distance over 100 miles the railways would be able to compete if they were efficient and run properly but that for under 100 miles they could not compete; they had no hope of competing because there was double handling of goods, and the expense would be too great. For instance, it is 80 miles by rail to Victor Harbour but only 50 miles by road, so the people in that area came to a decision and said, "We will not have our superphosphate and other goods carried by railways", so they would not use the railway line. Who will keep it open? But, with the interstate and long hauls, with traffic increasing year by year, ultimately the line to Melbourne, in not too many years' time, will have to be duplicated. Of course, we want standardization on the more important railway lines.

Only last year, the Railways Department put new sleepers on the Milang line, which is used only once a week and so was doomed to be closed. It should have been closed 10 years ago but they were spending money on it with no hope of financial return. Members opposite have been knocking Government members because we do not spend enough money on education; now they are knocking us for not spending money on railways. We are losing \$15,000,000 this year on railways; we are losing interest on capital repayments. It is all right to have this socialistic attitude if one is providing a competitive service for the people. If it is competitive economically, well and good—one carries on, but one cannot carry on running certain lines that are uneconomic.

Mr. Virgo: Which lines pay?

Mr. McANANEY: I am thinking of the figures involved. The revenue from the Victor Harbour line is well over \$100,000, but the Railways Department will lose \$200,000 on it, and no State or department can afford to do that.

Mr. Freebairn: The total losses on our railways amount to \$12,440,000.

Mr. McANANEY: We must have some balance in this and press for standardization of the main lines. Also, the important branch lines on which there is a distinct possibility that future traffic will increase should be considered for standardization. Goods can be carried long distances at competitive prices, so the longer railway lines should be standardized but, where lines are already making losses and it is intended that they be standardized, at a great cost and with increasing interest charges but with no increase in traffic, it is impossible.

The Opposition is merely playing politics when it adopts this attitude.

There are also the suburban lines, in respect of which the Opposition says, "Do not build freeways; the people will use the suburban railway lines." But how much does it cost the Government for every passenger carried on suburban lines? According to the Transport Royal Commission's report, it loses 25c a passenger.

Mr. Corcoran: Is that 25c a passenger based on actual running costs?

Mr. McANANEY: No. They are figures supplied by the Commission of the total amount lost on the suburban railways. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition wants to make statements that are not factual, but this is in the report. If he can count above 10 (which I doubt), he will soon work out the actual costs.

Mr. Corcoran: How does this loss of 25c come about?

Mr. McANANEY: The report gives the loss on the suburban railways and the number of passengers carried. One does not need a computer to arrive at 25c a passenger. The Municipal Tramways Trust has had capital written off and has had allocations each year, but it is nearly running at a profit, so possibly it would be better to have buses instead of railways. The railway lines that can provide a service must be upgraded. The passenger train that runs on the line parallel to Deviation Road to Mile End could travel at 50 miles an hour at that point, but it travels at about only 20 miles an hour. The department will attract passengers if it speeds up services and makes them more attractive to users.

We on this side believe that the main lines should be standardized and that we should get together as a team to put pressure on the Commonwealth Government to get action. The State Government has communicated with the Commonwealth Government frequently and I think we are making progress, as the State is. Many railway lines will play a tremendous part in the future of South Australia and we should try to have them standardized. However, it is a big mistake to invest capital in lines that will never carry enough goods to make them economic.

Mr. HUDSON: The member for Stirling tells us about simple business men, but there is one thing worse than a simple business man and that is a simple accountant. He plucked out of the air the figure of 25c a passenger as being the loss on suburban railway lines. He could not say whether provision for depreciation or interest was included in the figure.

Mr. McAnaney: Yes, they would be.

Mr. HUDSON: I ask the simple accountant how the department allocates joint costs. One of the most difficult problems in working out the costs of railway operation is to determine, in the case of suburban line costs, what amounts should be allocated in respect of maintenance and usage of a suburban line by trains going to other States.

Mr. McAnaney: You appointed the Commission, and now you question the figures.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Nankivell): Order! The member for Stirling is out of order.

Mr. HUDSON: I question the figure that the member for Stirling persists in drawing incorrect conclusions from. The member for Rocky River (Mr. Venning) knows that because of the change of gauge involved in the general area north of Adelaide, particularly in his district, the railways cannot function efficiently. In the mid-northern area and the area of northern Yorke Peninsula, without rail standardization we will be in an even more hopeless muddle. The member for Stirling has said that the loss on the railways this year will be as much as \$15,000,000.

It is clear that the intractable financial position of the railways is the most serious drawback to the development of the State, including the provision of adequate education and hospitals. Apparently the Government's only solution is to close unprofitable railway lines. The member for Stirling says that closing the Victor Harbour line will save \$100,000 a year. How many lines must be closed to reduce the loss on the railways from \$13,000,000 or \$14,000,000, which it is likely to be this year, to \$12,000,000? The only long-range policy with hope of success involves capital development work on rail standardization and modernization of the railways.

If the Railways Department had to administer a capital development programme similar to that of the Electricity Trust, we soon would have a complete revamping and invigoration of the railways. The trust has been able to carry development of more than \$30,000,000 a year under the previous Government, and capital development this year will be slightly less than \$25,000,000. A large part of that programme was financed from the internal resources of the trust. The Railways Department, however, has a capital development programme of \$7,700,000 this year, and it was only about \$5,250,000 last year, all of which had to be financed out of Loan funds. All this provision competes with Loan money for

schools, teachers colleges, water supply developments, sewerage developments, and deep sea ports. All these things detract from our ability to spend more money on the capital development of the railways.

Just imagine the consequences of the railways managing to break even and thereby saving the State \$12,000,000 a year! It would make a very substantial difference to our ability to spend money on further capital development. If we were able to develop the railways more rapidly at the capital level, we would be able to ensure more profitable operations in the future. One of the great tragedies in connection with the post-war history of the railways is that the dieselization programme had to be spread over so many years. If that programme could have been completed more rapidly the railways would have been in a position to compete more vigorously and effectively with road transport.

We are forever nibbling at the railway problem in our Loan Estimates provision, but we are not really contributing towards a solution of the difficult problems that the railways face. After all, it is only a week since every member opposite voted for public transport proposals under the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study plan for the metropolitan area that will cost almost \$100,000,000. So far as one can judge, this year's Loan Estimates for public transport in the metropolitan area provide some money for suburban railcars and probably some of the locomotives are for the suburban runs. The expenditure on capital development of suburban rail transport involved in these Loan Estimates is probably little more than \$1,000,000.

At the kind of rate we are providing money for public transport development exemplified in these Loan Estimates, it would take 100 years to complete the public transport proposals involved in the M.A.T.S. plan. Yet not one Government member has said one word about how these proposals will be financed. The issue has been side-stepped completely. A plan has been adopted for which no finance whatever is available. Whom are we kidding? As the member for Edwardstown (Mr. Virgo) has said, these Loan Estimates make a special provision of \$600,000 for the betterment of main lines. The report of the derailment committee shows that \$8,500,000 needs to be spent to bring our track to a reasonable condition. This is not betterment—it is merely restoration of the track. At this rate of expenditure it will take 14 years to restore the track to a reasonable level,

and more may have to be spent after that. No simple solution is available to the problem of the losses currently experienced by the Railways Department.

Mr. McAnaney: Would you keep every line open?

Mr. HUDSON: I said that there would be no solution involved in respect of the size of the current loss through the closure of railway lines. At present, no money is available to finance the public transport proposals involved in the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study plan, even though every Government member voted for the plan last week. Not one cent is provided in the Estimates, nor can it be provided. I deplore the attitude of the member for Stirling and others like him in the way they approach rail passenger traffic in metropolitan Adelaide. This is a serious matter: without a great expansion in the number of passengers carried on suburban trains we will inevitably suffer motor traffic congestion, smog conditions, and pollution, which have been experienced by so many American cities.

If we cannot promote public passenger transport on metropolitan railways, I see no long-term solution to our traffic problems. If additional people can be induced to travel on suburban railway services and if this involves an additional loss of \$1,000,000 a year, that loss is worth it if, as a result, \$12,500,000 is saved in the capital development of freeways, because for every \$12,500,000 capital development that we spend on freeways we are, either directly or indirectly, involving ourselves in interest and debt service payments that effectively amount to \$2,000,000. Even if we do not have to meet those costs directly, they are still the imputed costs of freeway development.

If we can economize regarding the extent to which we have to pay money out for freeways (and I am not saying that freeways can be eliminated altogether in this way) by inducing more people to travel by rail, then it is worth doing. There is a real distinction to be made between bus travel and rail travel in the metropolitan area, for every person travelling on the railway is travelling on a separate right of way. It does not matter how congested the roads become: the trains in the metropolitan area can still get through in the same time; indeed, if we have a rail rapid transit system they can get through in less time. But with every increase in congestion that takes place on our roads in the metropolitan area the buses will take longer.

If I had my way, and if we could afford to run the risk for a year or two, I would want to develop our metropolitan railways in such a way as to increase the frequency of trains, reduce fares, and apply a standard fare, so that tokens could be purchased and so that the labour involved in the actual issuing, inspection and collecting of tickets would be reduced. I believe that, if there were a sufficiently significant increase in the use of capacity through adopting this kind of procedure, we would make, in the end, a smaller loss and not a larger loss. After all, the critical thing concerning railway losses is that the capacity is under-utilized. The history of railway operations in metropolitan areas since the Second World War has been one of declining patronage, albeit not as rapid a decline as that regarding buses and a decline not in respect of peak-hour passengers but particularly in respect of the hours after 7 p.m. The peak-hour passengers carried on the railways in this State are all passengers who do not have to use our roads network, and it is the capacity taken on our roads at the peak hours that governs the capital expenditure we have to undertake on freeways.

Mr. Rodda: You're talking about regimentation now.

Mr. HUDSON: I am not talking about regimentation at all.

Mr. Rodda: Of course you are. You're telling people where to ride.

Mr. McAnaney: You tried it.

Mr. HUDSON: That is not so. The member for Stirling can make a speech at another time if he wants to, but for the time being I ask him not to make unintelligent interjections and not to suggest that I am saying things that I am not saying. I am pointing out that if one wants to induce people to use another form of transport the inducement must be financial. The practice we followed over the years of forever putting up railway fares has not helped solve our

problems, because what we tended to do as a result of putting up railway fares was switch more and more people on to our roads and reduce the extent to which the capacity of the railways was used. Therefore, we offset any contribution that higher railway fares would make to revenue. Also, we have increased traffic demand on our roads.

That demand as it grows over the next 20 years will require, according to members opposite, capital expenditure of \$400,000,000, and that is not chicken feed. If the members for Victoria and Stirling are incapable of digesting that figure, I point out that it represents in 20 years double the normal expenditure on schools made in this State. Every year \$20,000,000 is spent on freeway and arterial road development in order to provide for the expected growth in peak-hour use of our roads. That expenditure does not contribute anything to productivity but is only expenditure to stop productivity being adversely affected through traffic congestion getting worse and worse. In relation to the whole community, it is effectively money down the drain. It is money we have to spend, as we have to spend money on public health measures, in order to prevent matters getting worse.

If the member for Stirling simply cannot see the logic of developing a railway system that will lessen the extent to which peak-hour demand on our roads grows, then I give up trying to explain anything at all to him. I have raised this problem again because it appals me that we seem to be no nearer solving it. We are nowhere near providing the finance required to carry out the necessary developments. Not one Government member is making any constructive suggestion at all on these matters.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

#### ADJOURNMENT

At 5.45 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, August 26, at 2 p.m.