

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

Wednesday, August 26, 1970

The SPEAKER (Hon. R. E. Hurst) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

**QUESTIONS****LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOTING**

Mr. HALL: In view of the rather dramatic opposition that has developed in local government to the Government's announced intention to change the franchise and, therefore, the method of election of councils, will the Minister of Local Government consider the opposition to this proposed move that has been voiced in no uncertain manner and will he submit the matter to Cabinet for reconsideration?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: My only knowledge of the matter to which the Leader refers has been obtained from a press report, and I am not guided by press reports.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: As I have received from various people interested in local government much correspondence strongly opposing the Government's declared policy on council elections, I was astonished at the Minister's statement that he had no knowledge of any opposition other than what he had read in the press. Will the Minister confirm that I have heard incorrectly outside and that he has not received any correspondence opposing this move? I ask that because, if by any chance he has not received any such correspondence, a few minutes on the telephone will remedy that omission immediately. Secondly, the Leader asked, in effect, whether the Government still had an open mind on this matter and would reconsider its stated policy. Will the Minister say whether the Government will reconsider that policy?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I understood the Leader to be referring to a campaign being waged, a report of which is in the press, and I said that I did not intend to comment on press reports. Of course, I, as well as all other members, have received correspondence, particularly from the Local Government Association, which is waging this campaign and which has stated publicly that it is communicating with all members of the Parliament. I have not been excluded from those communications, so the reply to the question whether I have received correspondence is that I have received correspondence from the Local Government Association, and one or two other councils have also communicated with me on this matter. I may

add that at a regional meeting of the Local Government Association at Murray Bridge last Friday, attended by the member for Murray, the member for Mallee, and two members of the Legislative Council, this matter was discussed fairly freely. However, I understood the Leader to ask whether, because of the press reports, I would resubmit the Government's policy to Cabinet. Dealing with the second part of his question, I have said before in the House (and I repeat it now) that the Government stated its policy before the last State election, when the present Premier as the then Leader of the Opposition delivered Labor's policy speech, included in which was the stated intention to provide adult franchise for local government elections. Included also was the provision for compulsory voting and for other measures associated with local government, not the least being for local government to enter the field of providing homes for the aged.

I believe that we received a mandate to do those things and, if we are now told, even though about 52 per cent of the people of South Australia endorsed our policy, that we should go to water (merely because a campaign is now being waged by people who would be affected by this policy), as apparently the member for Alexandra and the Leader of the Opposition desire us to do, I am afraid that they do not know our Party very well. If we did that, should we not adopt a similar attitude to extending the provisions relating to homes for the aged? If we received the endorsement for one policy, we received it for the lot.

**GOVERNMENT MANDATE**

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: In his reply, the Minister claimed that the Labor Party had received 52 per cent of the votes at the last State election. I well recall the statement from the front bench last week that, in fact, the Labor Party had received 54 per cent of the votes. The information I have is that the Labor Party—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member can explain his question, but, while asking a question, he is not to make a statement about information he has. He is entitled to ask a question but not entitled to make statements.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: To explain my question, I have information to the effect that the percentage of the votes received by the Labor Party was somewhat less than the percentage stated. Can the Minister give the source of his information about the percentage

of votes received by his Party and, in view of what has transpired regarding the Labor Party's policy on trading hours for butchers and bakers, can he say whether he considers that the Labor Party has an overwhelming mandate to implement every item included in its policy speech?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The honourable member seems to have taken one point that I made in passing to be the basis of the whole matter. If he checks *Hansard*, he will find I said that the Labor Party received about 52 per cent of the votes. I have no specific figures at present.

The Hon. G. R. Broomhill: We clearly won it, anyway!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: There is little doubt that the figure, when it is finally worked out, will be somewhere in this area. I point out, too, that only a fortnight ago the Attorney-General laid on the table of the House the statistical returns in respect of the election and, to the best of my knowledge, these have not yet been printed. Therefore, I cannot have the figures verified. The other point the honourable member made related to shop trading hours; this matter is completely within the province of the Minister of Labour and Industry, who is handling it in the best interests of the people of this State.

Mr. Goldsworthy: The question was—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: If the honourable member has any points of view regarding that matter, he had adequate opportunity to raise them when the House was debating the matter.

Mr. Goldsworthy: That wasn't the question.

The SPEAKER: Order!

#### PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

Mr. SIMMONS: The volume of traffic on Henley Beach Road is increasing steadily and, with the road-widening work now being done, is becoming a formidable barrier to pedestrians, particularly elderly citizens who live in the many elderly citizens homes on each side of Henley Beach Road in the Lockleys area. Accidents involving elderly persons have occurred and I have received many requests to try to have action taken to protect the safety of these people. Can the Minister of Roads and Transport say whether the Highways Department has any responsibility for main roads such as Henley Beach Road and whether the department meets any of the cost of installing traffic lights on these roads for pedestrians? If the department has no

such responsibility, will the Minister consider the view that the provision of safe, controlled pedestrian traffic crossings should be an integral part of the construction of main roads?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: As the honourable member was good enough to tell me that he desired information on this subject, I can now give him a complete reply. In order to answer this question I consider that the term "main road" requires qualifications, as those roads which are officially main roads are often not recognized as such by the layman. On July 1, 1938, certain roads which were then considered to be of importance to the State were (for lack of a better phrase) declared to be main roads. Many of these main roads would not now be recognized as such, as they no longer serve arterial or sub-arterial functions.

The Highways Act, although requiring the Commissioner to make further and better provision for the construction and maintenance of roads, does not specify that his resources should be directed towards main roads. In fact section 26 of the Act provides that he may (a) construct, reconstruct or repair any road or any work connected with any road; and (b) undertake for such terms as he thinks fit the maintenance and repair of any road and any work connected with any road. In the case of Henley Beach Road (Main Road No. 64) the Commissioner of Highways has exercised his powers under section 26 and is maintaining the road. It is not possible to indicate whether other "such roads" are accepted by him unless specific roads are named. The current policy on pedestrian-actuated traffic light crossings is that they are to be entirely financed by councils. (I think the argument used is that pedestrians are the responsibility of councils while cars are the responsibility of the Commissioner of Highways.) It should be noted that at some intersections where traffic lights are installed facilities are made for pedestrians to cross the roads concerned at such intersections. This arrangement therefore in effect serves the same purpose as a pedestrian crossing located away from an intersection. Where two roads that are maintained by a council intersect, the cost of traffic lights is borne by the council. Where two roads, of which one is or both are maintained by the Commissioner of Highways, intersect, the Commissioner of Highways normally contributes 66½ per cent of the cost of the traffic lights (which, as mentioned above, may include pedestrian facilities). The contribution made by the Commissioner of Highways has on occasions risen to 75 per

cent where the intersection is unusually complicated; for example, the South Road, Shepherds Hill Road and Ayliffe Road intersection. In the case of freeways where pedestrians do not have access to the road reserve, the Commissioner of Highways is providing pedestrian crossovers at full cost to his department; for example, the South-Eastern Freeway. Other pedestrian over-passes are currently being considered and the Commissioner of Highways has indicated that he would be prepared to bear 50 per cent of the cost; for example, at Reynella. Whether pedestrian crossings should be treated as an integral part of the construction of major roads is a question of policy; the word "major" would require definition if such a policy were to be adopted.

#### INSTITUTE COURSES

Mr. COUMBE: On July 30, nearly a month ago, I asked the Minister of Education a question about librarianship courses at the South Australian Institute of Technology, explaining at the time that I had had discussions on this matter with the institute, and the Minister replied that he was astounded at the statement I had made. I was equally astounded at the Minister's reply. I know that, preceding this, discussions had been held on this matter with Treasury officers in this State. Last week the member for Davenport touched on this matter when referring to occupational therapy. In a special item in the *News* of August 19, in which the Minister had had a foreword inserted, an advertisement of the South Australian Institute of Technology appeared, offering librarianship courses to commence in 1971. As I have waited a month for a reply to my original question, will the Minister of Education now do me the courtesy of giving that reply so that this matter can be cleared up? I seek that reply now, seeing that the institute is offering certain courses, although the Minister in his earlier reply said that this was not to be the case.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The advertisement, to which the honourable member has referred and which I think appeared in the *News*, had one mistake in it: the courses for librarianship and occupational therapy were not asterisked to show that they were subject to confirmation. The advertisement appeared correctly in the *Advertiser* but incorrectly in the *News*. That is still the position. I hope to make an announcement shortly on both of these matters. I should not have thought that the honourable member would want a reply to his question until I was able to give him a definite reply.

He will appreciate that we have to make financial and accommodation arrangements and that, in the case of librarianship, we must be able to provide funds to purchase library books because, as I said, none of these arrangements had been made when we came to office. In fact, the Director of the Institute of Technology has told me that the institute was put in a most difficult financial position. As it does not have the finance available from its own sources to start these courses, that finance will have to be provided by the Government. As this is a decision made during the triennium that has just commenced, we have no guarantee of Commonwealth support. We have to apply for that additional support from the Commonwealth to get these courses off the ground, and we are very much in the position of having to make the decision to start the course and of then asking the Commonwealth for assistance; whereas, had the Government of which the honourable member was a member not cut back the budget of the Institute of Technology, these courses could have been started with Commonwealth support from the word go in this triennium. I think it ill behoves the honourable member to be churlish in this matter, because the actions of the previous Government have created a difficult situation. During the next few days or early next week, I hope to be able to make a firm announcement about the Government's intention in relation to librarianship and occupational therapy. Until I am able to make the full announcement and give the necessary details in relation to the number of students that can be admitted and so on, the honourable member will just have to be patient.

#### CHRISTIES BEACH HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. HOPGOOD: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question about the Christies Beach High School?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The proposal to establish metalwork at the Christies Beach High School provides for the conversion of one of the two existing woodwork shops. The conversion will involve the removal of certain existing facilities used for woodwork, the provision of metalwork benches and the installation of the metalwork equipment. The work, for which the funds have been provided, is programmed to be undertaken late this calendar year.

#### DROUGHT RELIEF

Mr. NANKIVELL: During the 1967 drought period, the Minister of Works, who was then the Minister of Lands, introduced

in this House a Bill to assist farmers in necessitous circumstances that made no provision for any financial assistance in the actual purchase of grain as foodstuffs. As my district's boundary ran parallel with the Victorian border, many farmers in the Keith and Bordertown area at that time approached me asking why this State was not providing the same arrangement with regard to subsidies on grain foodstuffs as was being provided in Victoria. I have just looked at the Victorian drought relief legislation of 1968 in which provision was made for rebates of 25c a bushel on oats and barley, for the commission to buy wheat from the Australian Wheat Board, and for making available to farmers loans at 3 per cent interest (the same basis as that on which our loans were made) but with a proviso that if the loan was repaid within 12 months a 40c rebate would be allowed to the farmer on all wheat bought through that channel. In view of the situation that is now developing in certain areas, and as substantial quantities of wheat are being stored in those areas, will the Minister of Works ascertain whether consideration could be given to introducing legislation similar to that which already operates in Victoria?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I shall be pleased to refer this matter to my colleague for his consideration and to bring down a report as soon as possible.

### INSURANCE

Mr. LANGLEY: I recently asked whether the Government would inquire into the financial position of insurance companies operating in this State. One company has recently collapsed, leaving many people in difficult circumstances. I understand also that East Australia Insurance Company Limited has ceased operations. Can the Attorney-General say whether this is correct and whether further inquiries into this matter are pending?

The Hon. L. J. KING: I have had inquiries made regarding the financial stability of insurance companies operating in this State, and I have conferred with the Commonwealth Attorney-General on the matter. I understand that the Commonwealth Cabinet is at present considering introducing legislation in this area and I expect to contact the Commonwealth Attorney-General again about the matter. The East Australian Insurance Company Limited, to which the honourable member referred, was incorporated in Victoria on April 30, 1969, and was registered in South Australia as a

company on November 21, 1969. The company's activities in this State were concerned mainly with general insurance and, more particularly, with motor car insurance. I have been informed that on August 3 this year the Victorian Government appointed, under the provisions of that State's Companies Act, an inspector to examine and report on the affairs of the company. At that time I requested the South Australian Registrar of Companies to depute his senior inspector to examine the company's situation in South Australia. The senior inspector has told me that the company ceased operating in South Australia on August 17, and that he was informed by one of the company's employees that the company intended to cancel all South Australian-held insurance policies, totalling about 1,300 or 1,400. The senior inspector was further informed by the employee that a list of policy holders would be prepared to enable the company to refund premiums already paid, presumably in respect of the unexpired portion of the period of insurance.

I am bound to comment that from the information in my possession it seems at least doubtful whether the company will have the necessary funds to enable it to make refunds, and I certainly do not want to allow anything I say to encourage optimism on the part of South Australian policy holders that they are likely to receive a refund. The Registrar of Companies has arranged to obtain possession of the company's books and records held at its South Australian office. The immediate result of all this is that many South Australian policy holders will be left without effective insurance, and it is appropriate for me to warn members of the public who may have effected insurance with this company that they may at the moment be without effective insurance cover. It is true that they will receive the protection of section 118a of the Motor Vehicles Act, which means that they are covered in respect of third party claims. If they are relying on this company for indemnity in relation to other forms of insurance, I suggest they would be well advised to consider taking out insurance with another company. I think we have to face the position that it is unlikely that this company will be able to meet claims or to refund premiums. Investigations are continuing into the position generally and contact with the Commonwealth Minister is being maintained to see what can be done to prevent similar occurrences in the future.

### WHEAT QUOTAS

Mr. GUNN: Has the Minister of Works a reply from the Minister of Agriculture to my recent question about wheat quotas?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: My colleague states that the Wheat Delivery Quota Advisory Committee cannot give assurances regarding short-falls on quotas allotted for the 1970-71 season. The decision on this matter will come from the meeting of the Australian Wheat-growers Federation next year, when State quotas will be determined. It is pointed out that, if South Australia has a short-fall against quota for the 1970-71 season, it may well be that the Australian Wheatgrowers Federation will agree to allocate only a certain percentage of that short-fall in addition to the normal State quota. It is understood that this is the case in Western Australia and Queensland this year, where growers are receiving only a percentage of their 1969-70 season short-fall in addition to their normal allocation.

### PORT GILES

Mr. WELLS: Recently branches of the Waterside Workers Federation were formed at Port Giles, Edithburgh, and at Ardrossan, and the members of these branches will carry out the stevedoring operations on vessels at these ports. I have been told that you, Mr. Speaker, visited Port Giles during the week-end, when the first ship was worked there. Will you say whether your visit was in your official capacity and, if it was, will you tell the House the nature of your visit?

The SPEAKER: I did go to Port Giles last Saturday, following an invitation by the Yorketown council that had been conveyed to me on Friday afternoon by the District Clerk (Mr. Abbot). Mr. Abbot said that members of the council knew of the interest that I had displayed in Port Giles and that they desired me to see, if possible, the operations of the new jetty when about 9,000 tons of barley was being loaded on the *Jeanine*, which had arrived at Port Giles from Port Adelaide last Friday afternoon. I accepted the invitation and the hospitality of the Yorketown council. The Chairman of the Minlaton council was also present, and I was invited to be their guest at a luncheon. At that luncheon Mr. Farrow (Chairman of the Yorketown council) specifically asked me to convey to the Premier and other members of the Government appreciation for their assistance not only in respect of the farming area but in respect of the whole Yorke Peninsula com-

munity. I apologize to the Premier for not having conveyed this appreciation previously and, in view of the honourable member's question, I now ask the Premier to accept these official sentiments of the Yorketown council.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: That is very gracious, Mr. Speaker.

### TEA TREE GULLY SCHOOL

Mrs. BYRNE: On July 21, I asked the Minister of Education a question about what stage planning had reached for the replacement of the Tea Tree Gully Primary School, and the Minister gave an interim reply on July 28. Can the Minister now give the House further details of this project?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I am pleased to be able to inform the honourable member that Cabinet has approved the replacement of the Tea Tree Gully Primary School at an estimated cost of \$355,000. The school is to comprise three open-space teaching areas linked by covered ways which will give access to an administration building. The three open-space areas will be for lower, middle and upper grades of children. In addition, attached to each open-space area will be attractive outdoor teaching areas that will be semi-enclosed. It is planned to build the replacement school on recently acquired land adjacent to the existing site, and this will allow demolition of all existing buildings on the present land, which will then be developed to provide sporting facilities. It is hoped that the school will be ready for occupation by the end of 1972.

### SOCIAL WORKERS

Dr. TONKIN: Referring to the question that I asked the Minister of Social Welfare yesterday, I point out that one of the reasons why I believe solitary confinement is used in treating young offenders is that there is not sufficient staff to give the personal attention and support these young people need. Can the Minister therefore say how many qualified social workers, psychologists and psychiatrists are employed in the Social Welfare Department and what is the current work load of these officers? Will he say whether that work load is satisfactory and, if it is not, can he say when he expects the position will be improved and what steps are being taken to encourage young people to undertake social work as a career?

The Hon. L. J. KING: I will obtain the detailed information the honourable member seeks, although I should like to make one or two observations now. I can say at once that

I do not regard the present situation as being satisfactory; indeed, it has been said that the only satisfactory formula for the care of children in this position is that of one welfare worker for each child. I am bound to say that South Australia falls far short of that ideal, and I also regret to have to say I expect that it will continue to do so for a long time. True, there is an acute shortage, in my view, of social workers and other trained personnel in the Social Welfare Department, and I must say I agree with the honourable member that the necessity felt in institutions to impose the types of punishment to which he refers stems, at least to some extent, from the fact that we fall so far short of the ideal in relation to the proportion of trained workers to children in the institutions.

One of the great difficulties, leaving institutions aside, consists of attracting the right type of person for training as a social worker. It is important not only to attract people to this work but also to see that the persons who are brought into the work and trained for it will be effective in dealing with children. Indeed, I think that a person who is unsuited to this work through temperament or character is worse than useless in dealing with children. It is a grave problem and one serious aspect of it is the financial aspect. I have given some thought to this matter since assuming office, and certain plans have been made. In view of the honourable member's request for details as to the staff of the Social Welfare Department, I will obtain detailed information for him and bring back a reply.

#### MEMBERS' LOUD SPEAKERS

Mr. RODDA: During the two years and three months that I was Government Whip and later a Minister, I had the privilege of having a loud speaker in my room, but I now know what it is to be without that facility.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: You'll have to come into the House a bit more.

Mr. RODDA: Well, interjections are out of order.

The SPEAKER: Interjections are out of order, and I ask the Minister not to interject.

Mr. RODDA: Having loud speakers in members' rooms is a convenience to members because they can keep up with whatever debate is taking place and hear some of the distinguished speakers in this House while they themselves are working in their rooms. Will the Minister of Works consider having this small facility extended to include private members' rooms in the House?

The SPEAKER: Does the Minister of Works wish to reply to that question?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, if I am not trespassing on your domain. Seeing that you are responsible for facilities in this House (and you have heard the question), I think I could quite properly leave it to you to decide whether or not this facility was necessary, and no doubt you would approach me on the matter. However, dealing with the general subject, I think that, if I could place some qualification on the provision of loud speakers, I might say that a loud speaker should be installed in a member's room provided that he promised to do all his speaking in the room! The honourable member is correct when he says that this is an extremely effective piece of equipment. It certainly allows Ministers and others who are required to be out of the House at certain times to listen to what is being said while they are working in their offices. However, I think I will confer with you, Sir, to see whether or not we can do something about the matter.

#### WINE INDUSTRY

Mr. McANANEY: Has the Minister of Works obtained from the Minister of Agriculture a reply to my recent question about the possibility of having a survey made of the wine industry?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I have been informed by my colleague that the Agriculture Department is watching the vine planting situation very closely not only in South Australia but also in Victoria and New South Wales. In addition, the situation is regularly examined by the Grape Industry Advisory Committee, set up in 1966 in South Australia to advise the Minister and, through him, the industry on planting trends and production. This committee in its last report of October 23, 1969, said:

Taking an overall view of the situation, it appears that, as far as it has gone, vine planting in South Australia has not been overdone. However, the committee is aware of extensive planting plans for the future which are not yet measured in the statistics.

The Commonwealth Grape Industry Advisory Committee representing all sections of the industry is being formed at the instigation of the Agricultural Council, which is a meeting of all State Ministers, and will make similar reports on an Australia-wide basis. Over recent years, planting in the irrigated areas of South Australia increased considerably, but has slowed down because of restricted water licences for irrigation. However, non-irrigated

plantings are developing rapidly in South Australia as are irrigated plantings in Victoria and New South Wales. While surplus production is forecast, this will depend to a large extent on sales of wines, which have been developing steadily throughout Australia. No doubt the recent action of the Commonwealth Government will not help this situation, and the development foreseen by the Grape Industry Advisory Committee will be severely checked. The Australian Dried Fruits Association has written to all State Ministers expressing its view that the planting of dual-purpose grapes be limited. The Minister will raise the subject at the Agricultural Council, and it is expected other States will do likewise.

#### CROSS ROAD INTERSECTION

Mr. PAYNE: During the last week, work has been proceeding at the intersection of Cross and Goodwood Roads apparently concerned with the traffic lights and the position of traffic islands there. This intersection is very busy, the traffic flow being complicated by the proximity of the 10-pin bowling alley on one corner. Can the Minister of Roads and Transport say what is the purpose of the work presently being carried out?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I shall be delighted to get information for the honourable member and bring down a report.

#### IRRIGATION METERS

Mr. WARDLE: The Minister of Works will recall that in 1968 the issue of further irrigation licences for new acreages along the Murray River was frozen and, to my knowledge, no more licences have been granted since then. I understand that the department's policy at that stage was to meter all irrigation points along the river, commencing with the largest pumps. Can the Minister say how many of these pumps are now metered and what is the size of the meters?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: When this question was raised recently by the member for Chaffey, I supplied him with information, which is now in *Hansard*, not only concerning the number of meters but also dealing with their costs and sizes. A couple of days after that, I replied to a further question of the member for Chaffey about the siting, housing and so on of the meters to protect them from vandalism. That information was in respect of private irrigators on the Murray River. Although the exact details escape me, I am certain that the information sought by the honourable member is in *Hansard*, if he cares to look it up.

#### TRACTORS

Mr. EASTICK: Has the Minister of Roads and Transport a reply to my recent question about mudguards on tractors?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The Road Traffic Board is not currently considering any amendment to the Road Traffic Act and regulations affecting the fitting of mudguards to vehicles. At the present time, the board is not prepared to exempt farm tractors as a class from the need to fit mudguards to the front wheels, but is prepared to issue a permit exempting a specific vehicle, after considering the particular circumstances under which the vehicle is used. The board is prepared to give consideration to a specific request from the United Farmers and Graziers of South Australia Incorporated, provided that the request clearly sets out the class of vehicle to be exempted and the circumstances under which such an exemption is to be granted. Many farm tractors in use are not driven on public roads and therefore are not required to comply with the requirements of regulation 7.03 under the Road Traffic Act, 1961-1969.

#### RAILWAY CROSSING LIGHTING

Mr. MATHWIN: My question concerns street lighting, particularly at railway crossings, which are well lit for long periods of time, sometimes throughout the night. This is done for safety reasons, and the cost of such lighting is shared equally by the Highways Department and the local council. Will the Minister of Roads and Transport consider splitting this cost three ways so that it is shared equally by the Railways Department, the Highways Department and the local council?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I suppose this cost could be split four or five ways if that was really desired. However, I believe the existing arrangement is the most equitable one; it has stood the test of time, and I see no reason why we should add further to the financial difficulties of the Railways Department by imposing this additional burden on it.

#### GOODS SURCHARGE

Mr. McANANEY: Has the Premier a reply to my recent question regarding a surcharge on glass containers?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The Prices Commissioner reports that glass containers are not subject to price control but investigation has disclosed that the manufacturer has introduced a surcharge because some buyers were using the company as a warehouse by placing small orders, sometimes necessitating the breaking of standard packs. The surcharge is not

intended to prevent small customers from obtaining supplies at economic prices but is designed to encourage users to regulate their purchases and in this light is considered reasonable. The surcharge is to be applied to each item under \$75 value in South Australia, which is substantially lower than the limit of \$125 imposed in Eastern States. It does not apply to metal or plastic closures. In the instance cited by the honourable member the customer had assumed that caps, seals and the like were included in the surcharge. His purchases of containers are well in excess of the minimum, so he will not be affected by the new provisions.

### ROAD SCHEDULES

Mr. ALLEN: For the last two years members of Parliament have been supplied with a schedule of the roadworks carried out in this State. This has considerably benefited members, as they have been able to see what roadworks are being carried out in their districts. Members have been waiting for several weeks to receive these schedules. Having read *Hansard* I noticed that a question was asked about this matter in another place, in reply to which the Minister of Lands said:

The Government does not propose to continue the practice commenced by the previous Government of releasing the annual works programme schedules of the Highways Department to members of Parliament. The Government made available a copy of the works programme to each Cabinet Minister, to the Leaders of the respective Chambers, and to the Whips in each Chamber. This is the extent to which the Government intends to distribute these schedules.

The Opposition Whip in this House received a copy of the schedule and, thinking that all other members also had one, he read it and put it away. He has discovered that the schedule, which comprises 108 pages, is now available and, if every member is to be given a copy, about 2,000 sheets of photostat paper will have to be used. Will the Minister of Roads and Transport say why the Government is not providing members with a copy of this schedule, and will he reconsider this decision?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I am amazed to think that the Leader of the Opposition and the Opposition Whip did not tell members of their Party that they themselves had been supplied with a copy of the schedule, to which all members could refer. I am equally amazed that it has taken the honourable member so long to realize what is the situation. He had better look to his laurels, as one of his colleagues in another

place asked a similar question three weeks ago. Apparently his colleagues in another place are more alive to the situation than he is. The Government decided not to make these schedules available after reviewing what had been tried previously. The former Minister of Roads and Transport decided that he would incur additional expense in having the schedules printed and supplied to members of Parliament, and this was done for two years for the benefit not only of members but also of everyone else. At the end of that two-year period the position was reviewed. The facts were placed before me and, from my knowledge—

Mr. Venning: But—

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: If the honourable member for Rocky River would kindly keep quiet, I will try to answer the question. The facts were placed before me and, from my own knowledge, most copies of the schedule lay unopened in members' cupboards in Parliament House from the time they were received until they were finally put into the wastepaper basket. I therefore considered that supplying these schedules to members involved an unjustified waste of Government money. The Opposition has been provided with two copies of the schedule, and if that number is not sufficient I will, if the Opposition Whip cares to write to me, consider providing additional copies for general reference. However, no material has been placed before me to justify supplying a full copy of the schedule to all members. After all, this schedule covers the whole State, and I find it extremely difficult to believe that members representing West Coast districts would be interested in what was happening in the South-East, or that members representing districts in the South-East would be interested in what was happening in the Far North, and so on.

Mr. EVANS: I ask leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr. EVANS: I received a copy of the schedule some weeks ago. It was addressed to me as the Opposition Whip and the word "confidential" was stamped on the top of the document. For the past two years I have, as a back-bencher, received a copy of this schedule, and I took it for granted that every member would receive a copy this year the same as in the past two years. I did not consider it my duty to ask all other members whether they had received a copy: I thought it was normal courtesy for the Highways Department to supply members with a copy.



At no time did it enter my mind that only two copies of the schedule were to be supplied to the Opposition. I give that explanation to clarify the position. The Minister accused me of falling down on my job, but I thought that every member had received a copy.

Mr. FERGUSON: When I received the road schedules from the previous Minister of Roads and Transport they were not marked "confidential" and I therefore distributed copies of the schedule among the various councils in my district. I believe that members of these councils found this document very interesting because local councils are always interested in what other councils are doing and what grants they are receiving. If the Minister does not intend to distribute copies of the whole of the schedule to members, will he supply each member with the part of the schedule that would be of interest to councils in the member's district?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I was surprised to hear the member for Fisher say that his copy of the road schedule was marked "confidential". I do not know of any reason why this should be, but I will certainly ask the Highways Department whether they were marked in such a way and, if so, why. I will then bring down a reply for the member for Goyder. I do not think it would be practicable to supply individual pages but I suggest that, if members avail themselves of the opportunity to examine the schedule, it will not be difficult to obtain the information applying to their districts. I do not think it is reasonable to expect the Highways Department to concern itself with the electoral boundaries and relate these to council boundaries, because there is no parallel between the two. I have been asked whether a copy could be made available in the Parliamentary Library. I would need to check on this, but I should be surprised if a copy was not already there. However, if there is no copy there, one will certainly be placed there.

#### WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Mr. RODDA: I understand that the Bennett committee, which investigated the water resources of this State, has submitted a report. Will the Minister of Works have the report printed and make it available to the House?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I have received the final report from the Bennett committee. I do not intend to have it printed.

Mr. COUMBE: On July 15 I asked the Minister of Works a question about the Bennett committee, which was set up when

I was Minister of Works to investigate the whole of the water resources of South Australia. Personally, I can think of very few subjects which are of greater importance to the people who reside in such a dry State. In reply to the honourable member for Victoria, the Minister of Works refused to disclose to the House the contents of this report. As this matter is of such vital importance, and as I see little reason why it should be kept from the members of the House and the general public, I now invite the Minister to say why he refuses to disclose the contents of the report to the House.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I did not say that I would not disclose the contents: I simply said that I was not having the report printed.

Mr. Coumbe: I didn't understand you to say that.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The honourable member may check *Hansard*. I am not in the habit of saying that I said something that I did not say. I merely said that the final report was in my hands and that I did not intend to have it printed. On July 15 I told the honourable member that I had had discussions with the committee about the report and that, when I received it, I would consider whether to release it. I think I pointed out then that this inquiry committee might have been established by the Minister for the Minister's purposes and those of his department. It is not obligatory on a Minister to release every report for which he calls. I am satisfied that this report was sought for the Minister's own information or for the guidance of his department. Therefore, I do not intend to have it printed and distributed. I agree with the honourable member that the subject is extremely important to the State and, if he is interested in any particular aspect of the report, I see no reason why he should not peruse it. I am not trying to hide anything but, if the honourable member looks at the report, he may understand better why I do not intend to distribute copies.

#### ROAD CONSTRUCTION

Mr. VENNING: Has the Premier a reply to my recent question about the employment of rural constituents on roadworks?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The departmental gangs in the northern farming areas of the State are fairly well up to strength, and few vacancies exist at the present time. The vacancies which do exist, and which may occur from time to time, are mainly for skilled

machine operators, as the department does not employ a large number of unskilled workers. However, the District Engineer at Crystal Brook is aware of the situation described by the member for Rocky River, and will give sympathetic consideration to any applications for employment that may be received from farm workers. It is not possible to increase expenditure on road construction in the northern district without a corresponding reduction in expenditure elsewhere. Accordingly, any effort in this regard to increase employment in the northern district would be offset by retrenchments in another district. In any case, it is not desirable that the Highways Fund be used specifically to counter the effects of adverse seasonal conditions on rural communities. Some years ago, additional funds were made available through the Minister of Lands which enabled grants to be made available to councils in certain areas affected by drought conditions for road and other works where farmers could be employed. It is not known whether such a system will be introduced in the present circumstances, but it appears that additional funds would be required before any worthwhile assistance could be afforded to the employment of farm labour. The foregoing is a report from the Commissioner of Highways. The possibility of making available additional funds of the kind the Commissioner refers to will depend on the response we get from the Commonwealth to the specific requests we have made for assistance, including the provision of special funds for the employment of people in this way.

#### MEMBERS' DRESS

Mr. EVANS: Following the motion on members' dress that was carried last evening, I wonder whether the Joint House Committee will amend its regulations about dress to be worn in the dining-room. Will you, Mr. Speaker, take up the matter with the Joint House Committee to see whether the requirements regarding the dress of members in the dining-room could be made similar to those of last night's motion? Otherwise, it could be very embarrassing to a member to be told by a member of the dining-room staff that he could not enter the dining-room merely because he was not wearing a long-sleeved shirt and a tie.

The SPEAKER: I will refer this to the Joint House Committee, which is responsible for making rules for entry to the dining-room. I have already given this matter some thought but, when the Committee has made a decision, I will inform honourable members.

#### ANDAMOOKA WATER SUPPLY

Mr. GUNN: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question about the Andamooka water supply?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The possibility of taking water by pipe from Woomera has been considered by the Engineering and Water Supply Department. A pipeline 65 miles long would be required for the shortest route, and with the necessary pumping stations and tank storages the necessary capital outlay would be about \$1,000,000. An expenditure of this magnitude on such a project is beyond the resources of the department at this time and any scheme which is based on taking water from the Port Augusta to Woomera main must be with the approval of the Commonwealth Government, which is responsible for the operation of this main, including the pumping stations on it.

#### DESALINATION

Mr. LANGLEY: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my question regarding the supply by Water Desalination Plant Proprietary Limited, of Adelaide, of a desalination unit for Coober Pedy?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: When the honourable member asked the question, I thought he was trying to promote a product made by one of his constituents.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member would be out of order in doing that.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Naturally, Mr. Speaker, but I do not think you drew his attention to this at the time. The Engineering and Water Supply Department purchased a unit from Water Desalination Plant Proprietary Limited (Model FT250) in April of this year specifically for evaluating and testing the unit. Because of many problems with the first unit leading to a considerable number of breakdowns, it was impossible to obtain any effective appreciation of the machine's possibilities, and the company supplied a replacement unit in July. This unit, too, has suffered several minor breakdowns. However, it seems to be performing better than the first unit. It is now possible to commence reliability tests on the machines, and these will be commenced later this week provided no further breakdowns occur. Before considering purchasing more of these units for use at Coober Pedy or anywhere else in country districts, it is essential that at least three months' effective operation of these machines has been proven in the metropolitan area and, consequently,

the reliability tests, which we now propose to commence, are essential before any further decisions are made.

#### FERTILIZERS

Mr. McANANEY: At a Soil Association seminar at Mount Barker last Saturday, several persons claimed that they had been using dolomite and other mineral fertilizers, as distinct from chemical fertilizers, and some of these persons claimed to have had success with them. I have been informed of instances in which the Agricultural Adviser has known the properties on which this was being done and has also known what was taking place. Will the Minister of Works ask the Minister of Agriculture to have the Agriculture Department compile a survey of the knowledge that the department has obtained about the use by farmers of these various fertilizers?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will take up the matter with my colleague.

#### PARLIAMENTARY STAFF

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Premier and Treasurer): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: When I was Leader of the Opposition, investigations were conducted by the Public Service Board into requests from me relating to the appointment of a research officer to my staff, and much material was provided in support of such an appointment. The board conducted an investigation and made a submission to Cabinet, in which it pointed out that there was support for the proposal because staff on the public payroll of the Commonwealth, New South Wales, and Victorian Governments was such that the Leader of the Opposition in South Australia should have more staff than merely a Secretary and two typistes. The board suggested to Cabinet in 1968 that there were grounds for the proposal that the Secretary to the Leader should be supported by a research officer and requested a direction on policy relating to the appointment of a press secretary at Government expense. Cabinet decided that there should be no change in the number of officers on the staff of the Leader of the Opposition.

When I was Leader of the Opposition I found that additional staff was needed and throughout the time I was Leader I had not only the Public Service staff in my office (my Secretary and two typistes) but also two press

officers who were paid for from other than Government sources: they were needed for the publication of the views of the Opposition on matters of public importance. When I took office as Premier I invited the Leader of the Opposition and the board to examine the staffing at Parliament House, including that of the Leader of the Opposition, and the Leader submitted in July this year that he had, in addition to the public servants, a press secretary (male) and a research officer (female) whose salaries were paid from other than Government sources. He said he believed it was necessary for the Leader of the Opposition to have these two people available to prepare and release his views and statements to the news media. He submitted that these people should be chosen by him but engaged by the Government as weekly-paid employees to provide assistance in the way he had indicated.

The board has examined the matter and has recommended to the Government that a press secretary and a research officer (at scale 4 of the female base grade), to be paid for by the Government, should be appointed in the Leader's office. That matter has been submitted to Cabinet, which has approved these appointments, and therefore these two officers in the office of the Leader of the Opposition, who were previously paid from non-Government sources, will now be paid by the Government in accordance with the proposals of the Public Service Board.

Mr. HALL (Leader of the Opposition): I ask leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

Mr. HALL: I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and honourable members. I appreciate the Premier's decision to support the application that he invited me to make regarding my staffing requirements. May I say that the history of the office of the Leader of the Opposition has been one of growth of staff, as has been that of the Premier's Department in the conduct of the official affairs of State. When I was Leader of the Opposition previously, I had one typiste and a male Secretary, which made the load on the office of Leader at that time extremely heavy. The Premier has said that when he was Leader he had one additional staff member and that he had to pay his press officers from other than Government sources. At that time, the Government stringently controlled the engagement of staff and when he applied I, as Premier, had one press secretary, and the number quickly increased to two. Indeed, towards the end of the period of office of my Government a

third was appointed to serve Cabinet and all the Ministers individually. Since then the position has changed and I have again assumed the office of the Leader of the Opposition, and the Premier has seen fit to invite my recommendations. I have submitted them, and I appreciate his reply.

#### STATUTES AMENDMENT (PUBLIC SALARIES) BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

#### NURSING

Adjourned debate on the motion of Dr. Tonkin:

That, in the opinion of this House, a Select Committee should be appointed to inquire into all aspects of nursing in this State.

(Continued from August 19. Page 833.)

The Hon. L. J. KING (Attorney-General): Since assuming office, the Government has been concerned about what the Chief Secretary has described in the Ministerial statement to which the member for Bragg has referred as the unsatisfactory state in which the nursing profession finds itself in this State. Indeed, that subject occupied the attention of members on this side during the last Parliament and during the election campaign. The result of the Government's consideration of the matter is the decision indicated in the Ministerial statement to appoint two committees.

One of these will be a working party whose object it will be to work quickly and in a summary way to improve communications between the nursing and medical staffs at Government hospitals and the administration of those hospitals. The other will be a more general committee of inquiry to inquire into the whole matter of health services in South Australia, with the objective of thoroughly investigating their co-ordination and submitting to the Government a report that would provide a basis for a general improvement in the health services.

The motion is concerned with nursing services but the Government, having considered the matter, has decided that it is not practicable to consider nursing in isolation from other aspects of health services. Really, any reorganization of nursing roles cannot take place in isolation from other aspects such as medical, dental, and paramedical aspects of the health services. So, in order to have an effective inquiry into nursing services and the difficulties associated with nursing in this State, it is necessary to go beyond that and to inquire

into the whole area of health services with a view to ascertaining the deficiencies and recommending remedies. The member for Bragg, in moving this motion, and the member for Flinders, in seconding it, devoted virtually the whole of their speeches to examining the difficulties confronting the nursing profession and the difficulties being experienced by individual nurses in this State.

I do not intend to comment on the statements they made in that connection, because the Government is extremely conscious, as it has indicated through the Chief Secretary on more than one occasion and also through the Premier, of the difficulties confronting nurses as individuals and nursing considered as a profession. This relates not only to the nursing profession but also to others concerned with health services in this State. Therefore, it would be profitless and it would unnecessarily occupy the time of the House to try to deal in detail with what was virtually the subject matter of the whole of the speeches made by the member for Bragg and the member for Flinders.

I suggest that when those speeches are examined it will be seen that no real attempt has been made to make out a case for appointing a Select Committee, which is what the motion seeks, as distinct from the forms of inquiry that the Government intends to carry out. The only suggestion made by the member for Bragg (indeed, it was made faintly) was that nurses might be deterred by their tradition of discipline from making information available to or giving evidence before any inquiry on which senior representatives of the nursing profession had a place. The suggestion was made, at best, only faintly, because the member for Bragg immediately added that it was not his opinion that nurses would have anything to fear in that regard, but he considered that the impression was abroad that they might. I suppose this is always a problem with any inquiry that seeks to get at the truth of a situation: that people involved in the situation may fear adverse consequences if they give full and frank evidence or make a full and frank disclosure to the inquiry.

It is a problem that any inquiry has to face, and it has to face it whether it is the sort of inquiry intended by the Government or a Select Committee of this House, because inevitably some people in the community and in any profession will prefer to refrain from giving information for fear that they might become involved in something. I do not see

that the problem is any greater regarding the type of inquiry intended by the Government than it is regarding a Select Committee, and it is certainly something with which the inquiry proposed by the Government will have to contend and concerning which it will have to take appropriate steps to see that persons who have useful information are protected from any possibility of adverse consequences to themselves and are given the confidence and assurance that there is no possibility of any such adverse consequences.

The Government hopes that the initial inquiry by the working committee designed to improve communications will go a long way towards restoring confidence in this regard, if confidence has been lost, because its primary purpose will be to improve communications between medical and nursing staffs and hospitals' administration, and this will involve a consideration of ways in which individuals can communicate without any fear of adverse consequences to themselves. Therefore, it is my belief, as well as that of the Chief Secretary, that when the working committee has completed its work communications between the medical and nursing staffs and administration will be so improved that this concern, which the member for Bragg says is felt by some members of the nursing profession, will have been removed. It seems to me, therefore, that in this regard a Select Committee is in no better position than that of the sort of inquiry committee intended by the Government. However, a Select Committee has certain definite disadvantages.

For any inquiry into the nursing profession or into health services to be effective, I suggest that it must be conducted by people who have the professional experience and training to understand the information given them, to understand the context in which it is given, and to draw the correct conclusions from it. Highly as one may rate the acumen of honourable members of this House, they are not, with perhaps one single exception, professionally qualified to understand the problems of health services in the same way as would be a professionally qualified committee of inquiry. This question of the nursing profession and the difficulties it faces is part of a larger question, as I have already said, concerning the adequacy of the health services provided in the State, the way in which those health services are working and the improvements that can be made.

This is a wide inquiry that raises fundamental questions, and reference was made in the Chief Secretary's Ministerial statement to

the work of Doctor Starr regarding the co-ordination of health services in New South Wales, the report on that matter being a guide to the fundamental nature of the matters that will have to be investigated by the committee. I suggest that it is the sort of inquiry that could not be effectively conducted by a Select Committee of this House. As I have suggested, any inquiry into the nursing profession that is isolated from the associated and related fields to which I have referred would be quite ineffective. For these reasons, the Government, although it fully appreciates the difficulties facing the nursing profession and the necessity and urgency of investigating those problems and providing remedies, strongly considers that the course that it has taken is correct and that the appointment of a Select Committee of this House would contribute nothing to solving the problems. Therefore, I oppose the motion.

Mrs. STEELE (Davenport): I support the motion, and I believe that the member for Bragg is to be congratulated on moving it. I consider that many people in the community are suffering from a sense of disquiet regarding conditions in the nursing profession and that, commendable though the Government's actions are in setting up two kinds of committee (that is, one that will inquire into the administration and lines of communication within the profession, and the other one, which is an all-embracing committee, to inquire into medical services, it being expected to take probably 12 to 18 months to complete its inquiry—and this in itself is a good indication of the wide terms of reference the committee has), I do not believe that either of those two committees will get at the crux of the problems existing within the nursing profession.

The Attorney-General, speaking in this House on behalf of the Chief Secretary, has really recapitulated the actions the Government has taken. He was somewhat critical of the mover and seconder of this motion, suggesting that they did not actually offer any solutions of the problems or give any reasons why they thought a Select Committee would be a satisfactory way of getting at the root of the troubles. However, I do not believe that the Attorney-General has satisfied the House that the actions being taken by the Government will do this very thing. In my opinion, the speech he made today, expressing the Government's point of view, will do nothing to assuage the disquiet currently being felt by the public about what is happening within the nursing profession.

Regarding the fact that the public is concerned about the matter, everyone is aware of the number of public meetings arranged by the nurses and attended by large numbers. I am reminded of the old adage that where there is smoke there is fire. No-one can tell me that all is well within the nursing profession when those who practise this profession are taking the steps they are taking to inform the public of what is wrong within the profession.

In moving the motion, the member for Bragg highlighted some of the duties that junior nurses at some public hospitals are obliged to perform. The nurses believe they have not had the adequate preparation or experience to assume this responsibility. What is disturbing is that this practice is fairly general. Members of the public are entitled to have misgivings whether adequate care and nursing attention is being given to patients; if it is not, patients' health and full recovery within hospitals could be set back considerably. I have friends, women of my own age, who have re-entered the nursing profession, feeling a call of duty to go back into a profession that is vastly understaffing our hospitals at present. Having undertaken a refresher course, they have gone back into the hospitals. They have told me of their astonishment at the sophisticated techniques used in hospitals today and the amazing way in which nursing skills have advanced. They have said that the methods of treatment have changed vastly since they practised their profession as young women. They have told me that they have been appalled at the responsibility placed on young nurses who have been training only a short period. **No-one** can tell me that this is right. The fact that these girls have to assume this responsibility is brought about by the drift away from the profession of girls who have just qualified and are completely disillusioned by the state of nursing in some of our public hospitals. Also, the shortage has been caused by what is sometimes known as wastage through marriage.

As is the case in all professions, women who marry, have children, and bring them up, often feel a sense of duty to the community to come back into the profession in which they have trained as soon as they can after they have raised their children and can leave them somewhat to their own resources. Then, as mature and experienced women, after taking a refresher course, they return to the profession in which they trained. This happens in scores of professions. It happens in the case of women who have graduated as doctors or who have

been called to the bar. Women in the best years of their lives, having gained maturity in family life and having followed as much as they have been able to what has happened in their profession, come back, making a much greater and more valued contribution than they could possibly have made before undergoing these experiences.

Nursing is not a mechanical process. I am one who still believes that girls are called to nursing, regarding it as a vocation to minister to the sick. Often little girls grow up sustaining this belief in the profession that they have always wanted to follow and enter nursing for that very reason. They see this quite idealistically. They see it as an opportunity to help people who are in need and to give of their best in nursing and all that that entails. This means giving solace to anxious relations and assuaging the fears of patients, telling them that they will be well and will get all the treatment they need, and giving them loving care. This is not mechanical. Nursing is a profession in which girls feel deeply needed: it is their calling or vocation. We must not forget, either, that today increasing numbers of men enter nursing, although whether they do it for the same reasons that women do it I do not know. It could be that they are men who have been denied the opportunity of undertaking a medical course, nursing being the nearest they can get to it. True, many of our psychiatric hospitals have an increasing number of male nurses who perform a most valued service, having particular attributes for that branch of the service. The fact remains that a great deal of human emotion is involved in nursing; I believe a nurse is all the better for having such emotion.

I am aware of a number of difficulties that young nurses have come up against in hospitals, and I want to refer to one or two cases. I have made inquiries about this matter, not just because the member for Bragg has introduced this motion but because I am a member of the public in a responsible position and I feel it is my duty to make inquiries why all is not well in the nursing profession. The matters to which I refer may be trivial, but they are real disadvantages to the young nurses who labour within the wards of hospitals. A good deal of this is brought about because not enough girls are being attracted to the nursing profession. The reason why young girls are not being attracted to the profession today should be one of the terms of reference of any committee set up, so that we can get to the root of the

problem of shortage of staff in our public hospitals. The Director-General of Medical Services (Dr. Shea) has said that it will be 10 years before we will have the requisite number of nurses to carry on efficiently and effectively the work in our hospitals.

I am told that, because of the shortage of nurses in the wards, if a girl is attending a patient when the gong goes, before going to lunch or dinner, she must complete her duty, and it does not matter how long that takes. Then, she must be back on duty at the moment she is supposed to be back on duty, so that she may miss lunch or dinner altogether or have insufficient time to enjoy it properly. All members know that it is essential that girls, undertaking an arduous training course and working, have proper meals at proper times. If they are not back on duty they are reprimanded; I do not know whether anything else follows that. I have also been told that some of our hospital meals are not as good as they should be and that young nurses often do not stay in hospitals to take their meals: they either go home, if they live in the city, or they go somewhere else and eat. This aspect needs to be investigated.

There is far too much regimentation in hospitals and, however admirable the senior women in the nursing profession may be, they are of another generation, and I do not believe they always sense the moods or the attitudes of young women today. This aspect should also be investigated to see whether something can be done to remedy it. A bad aspect of the nursing profession is that nurses are not paid adequately. Indeed, the profession is vastly underpaid compared with other paramedical disciplines. Some time ago they received varying increases, but what happened? Immediately there was an increase in their boarding charges, as a result of which they were no better off. This is another matter that needs to be aired in public and not before a committee to which members of the public cannot submit evidence.

Members know that much of the success of a nurse's training course depends on the practical work done in the wards, on the lectures given by doctors, and on the tutoring given by tutor sisters. I have been informed of the disparity that exists between the salaries of ward sisters and those of tutor sisters, the former at times having to serve the needs of two wards. Despite this, the tutor sister receives a higher salary. One must consider, too, that the tutor sister is at least insulated from the tensions and physical work involved in the

ward and the drama that must sometimes ensue in wards where patients are being treated. It does not seem right that such a disparity should exist between the salaries paid to these two classes of nurse.

I have spoken to many nurses, and I can confirm the statements contained in the letter the member for Bragg read out recently when moving his motion. I know, for instance, that great dissatisfaction exists regarding the roster system. Young women engaged in the nursing profession find it almost impossible to plan their lives. Apart from working and studying within the hospital itself, they find it difficult to arrange any kind of social life. Everyone must have some kind of relief from his work, yet these women have no opportunity to make appointments with dentists or doctors, and to know with any certainty that they will be able to keep the appointments. Of course, everyone knows how difficult it is to get an appointment with a dentist. They therefore have a real grievance in this regard.

I have already referred to friends of mine who have re-entered the nursing profession. To do so they had to undertake a refresher course, which usually lasts for about three months. At the end of that time some of them have told me that they would not accept an appointment in a public hospital because of the conditions prevailing therein. This is indeed tragic because we need all the nurses we can get. These women who return to the profession often make the best nurses because they are mature and experienced. One must not forget either that some women may return to the profession because they need a job. Publicity has been given recently to women who have been deserted by their husbands and who have returned to the profession in which they have been trained. From what my friends have told me, I believe the public hospitals suffer in particular because these women will not return to them as a result of the conditions obtaining therein.

Other aspects have been touched on by members who have already spoken. The matters that the member for Bragg has said need investigating should not be investigated by committees comprising people intimately and daily involved with the nursing profession. I do not agree with the Attorney-General when he says that girls have no reason to fear victimization. I believe they have a genuine fear of this: they are afraid that action will be taken against them merely because they are ready and willing to say what they think.

The Hon. L. J. King: The member for Bragg said that: I merely drew attention to what he said.

Mrs. STEELE: I am sorry; the Minister apparently reiterated what the member for Bragg said. I agree that nurses are afraid to speak up in front of the people who will compose the committees to be set up by the Government to investigate this matter.

Dr. Tonkin: Many letters saying this are coming in now.

Mrs. STEELE: This happens not just in the nursing profession but in all walks of life. People who have opinions that ought to be aired are afraid to speak out because of the victimization that they are afraid will follow. The Minister said he believed a Select Committee could do no more than the committees that the Government intends to set up. For the reasons I have already given I do not agree with him. I do not think women in the nursing profession will come forward and say to Government-sponsored committees what they would say to a Select Committee of this Parliament.

Mr. Venning: That's very true.

Mrs. STEELE: Time and time again Select Committees have given a most valuable service to both the Parliament and members of the public alike by hearing evidence in an impartial atmosphere. It is proper that members of Parliament should hear the kind of evidence that could be placed before them if this kind of Select Committee were appointed. The Attorney-General said he believed the committee should comprise some professional people so that it understood the points being put to it by the people giving evidence. I remind him that I have sat on a number of Select Committees since I have been a member of this House, and one great virtue of Select Committees is that professional people can give evidence to them. I need only remind the House of the most recent Select Committee that considered a social reform matter. I refer to the Select Committee on the Criminal Law Consolidation Act Amendment Bill, which considered abortion law reform. I know the calibre of the many professional people who gave evidence to the committee. It is silly to say that members of Parliament inquiring into a specific project would not have some knowledge of the matter before them. It is their job as members of a Select Committee to familiarize themselves with background facts, so they are hearing evidence against a wealth of

information that they have gathered for themselves. I believe that a far greater service can be given to the public when matters are investigated by a Select Committee. As a result of this, members are presented with some sound bases on which they can recommend to Parliament reforms that need to be made and legislation that ought to be introduced to remedy the kind of defect established by the committee. This is the purport of the motion moved by the member for Bragg. I do not believe that the Attorney-General when replying to this motion has satisfied anyone that a Select Committee is unnecessary or undesirable or is not the best kind of committee to investigate this problem. I believe that a Select Committee appointed to inquire into all aspects of nursing in South Australia can do nothing but good, and I have great pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. RODDA (Victoria): I support the motion moved by the member for Bragg. I was pleased to hear the Attorney-General say that he endorsed the need for an inquiry into nursing but I was somewhat surprised to hear him so early in the piece pouring cold water on the advantages of a Select Committee. I suppose no-one can blame him for that, because he is in Government and, as we have heard from Governments before, it is politics to oppose Opposition motions. I think the time has come when members of Parliament have to look at motions that are aimed at the good of the community, and the member for Bragg has moved a motion that has come from a trained, professional mind. The honourable member does know what he is talking about.

In replying to the Attorney-General's comment that a Select Committee would not be sufficiently qualified to assess the evidence and to arrive at a reason for bringing down legislation that will solve the current problem in the nursing profession (and this problem is not confined to South Australia: it is a world-wide problem), the member for Davenport said that the report of the Select Committee on abortion was a document that we all appreciated, whatever our views on the subject. Containing the pros and cons based on all sorts of information, that document was used extensively in a very long and important debate in this House.

The Attorney-General has said the nursing profession should not be looked at in isolation and the Chief Secretary has said that any reorganization of the nursing profession should be associated with developments in the medical, paramedical and other ancillary fields.



The Attorney-General, representing the Chief Secretary, has said that people would not want to come forward to give evidence because of the fear of some consequence. The member for Bragg said:

I am not treating this subject as a political matter. I believe there is a need for an inquiry and the fact that all these things have been said by nurses proves they are worried: so worried that they have been forced to speak out. They are concerned that, if they are involved in an inquiry with senior nursing representatives on the committee, they may be victimized in some way.

That was the fear expressed by the honourable member for Bragg.

Dr. Tonkin: It is a very widespread concern.

Mr. RODDA: That is an expression from an expert in his field and a member of Parliament who is highly qualified to bring this matter before the House. Parliament has also been reminded that there are two committees already in existence relating to nursing conditions. The first committee comprises the Secretary of the Royal Australian Nursing Federation, a member of the resident medical staff, an officer of the Hospitals Department, and Mr. Voyzey of the Premier's Department. That committee is to receive and examine representations from medical and nursing staffs, including staff bodies and affiliated groups. It is intended that the prime function of the committee shall be to improve communications and methods within the administrative structure of Government hospitals. The committee does not in any way recognize the areas that are encompassed by private hospitals and district nurses and it says nothing about nursing education. The second committee to which the Minister and the member for Bragg referred is to be set up later this year as a committee of general inquiry into the health services of the State. These two committees have separate functions.

We, on this side, cannot find anywhere in the terms of reference of these two committees where this vexed question of the nursing profession will be examined in its entirety, as it has been referred to by the members for Bragg and Flinders. The nurses are an integral part of the nursing profession and, if the nurses are looked after, the state of the profession will be satisfactory. I think we are fortunate to have members of this House who come from various professions (the mover of this very motion is a doctor). Such members can bring their expertise to bear on this problem.

Mr. Venning: Hear, hear!

Mr. RODDA: The member for Rocky River brings to us his abilities as a representative of the farming community, and we should take notice of them. Further, the member for Heysen and the Minister of Education have given us the advantage of their great abilities in accounting. I point out to the Attorney-General, who is an expert in his field, which is lucrative, that we should take the advice of experts.

The member for Davenport has spoken about rostering of nurses, their living conditions, the method of training them, hospital staffing, and the work done in hospital wards. I agree that nurses, early in their training, take serious responsibility for which they are not trained, and this underlines the extreme shortage in the profession. We all know that if we are called on to do something for which we are not qualified we either make a hash of it or get extremely worried about it. Life is the most important thing that we have. The real shortage in the nursing profession is of single-certificated nurses, and there is good reason why a Select Committee should be appointed to inquire into the reason why these nurses are leaving the profession.

A recent survey showed that 51 per cent of the losses to the profession were caused by marriage and 21 per cent by pregnancy. These losses create real problems. A woman's natural function is to reproduce, and who are we to stop a nurse from getting married? Perhaps we should seriously consider the part that male nurses can play. The member for Rocky River is worrying about what farmers can do and, although I do not suggest that we should train farmers as male nurses, we should consider training male nurses. Of course, they would not have the qualities of love, affection and the other matters that the member for Davenport spoke about so tenderly.

I am not able to speak in those terms, but I consider that we could use trained male nurses. This could be a solution to our real problem. The nurse is an indispensable member of the community, and the Select Committee would be valuable. The motion has been moved, after mature consideration, by an expert in the field. It is not a frivolous motion. Nurses are mindful of the problem, and a statement by Sister Margaret Crawford, Matron of the Queen Victoria Hospital, is reported as follows:

She said that if it could be expected that a computing authority could produce solutions to problems, nurses must remember that the most sophisticated of computers cannot become

a problem solver until it has been adequately programmed. If we want answers to complex problems, ours is the responsibility to see that all the information is fed in, Miss Crawford said. Only nurses can supply the facts. This will be the long part of the procedure and we must supply them now. We will not be given another chance, she said. Miss Crawford said that it was necessary to put down concern, dissatisfaction, and the needs of nurses and their patients into words and onto paper. I urge all sections to meet and discuss the problems of nursing, taking care that all facts and possible solutions are discussed. It is up to all of us to contribute and to build up the information needed as quickly as possible because the sooner this is done the sooner the processing can be started, Miss Crawford said.

The Matron, a leading authority in the nursing profession, states that members of her profession want to submit their case, and where could their case be better stated than before a Select Committee? I support the motion.

Mr. EASTICK (Light): I congratulate the member for Bragg for bringing this matter before the House. The sincerity with which he moved the motion, which has been supported from this side, has not been matched by the Minister, who gave the impression that he was talking more with tongue in cheek than with sincerity. I cannot accept the Minister's statement that a professional examining committee is always necessary. I believe that in any specialist field, whether it be that followed by the Minister or that followed by the member for Bragg, or my profession, occasionally aspects of a subject can best be reviewed and considered by an independent group. I do not suggest that these people will arrive at technical or specific decisions on a subject, but they can make worthwhile contributions to any discussions or review of a situation.

The fact that only specialists sometimes constitute a committee of inquiry immediately creates the problem of the people involved working entirely within their own field. Often these people are oblivious of what is obvious to persons outside a particular field. The Minister's statement, as well as replies to questions, indicates that it will be some time before the Government's committees are appointed and before they report. I understand that Select Committees can submit interim reports that can be acted on immediately. Further, Select Committees are empowered to send for persons and records, and that would enable such an inquiry to get information from hospital boards, nurses, and other interested parties, indicating where help could be given immediately. As a member of a hospital board, I fully appreciate that one of the most important

functions of any hospital relates to providing sufficient finance to meet the salaries of nursing staff. Sometimes it is necessary to keep staff numbers to a minimum, having regard to the funds available to pay that staff.

Whereas the matron or a supervisor may consider it a tremendous advantage to increase staff to provide a ratio of one for six or one for seven so that sickness, compassionate leave and other factors are catered for, the hospital board is often required to maintain staff at a minimum level. In these circumstances, there is an added burden when an emergency arises. Smaller hospitals, particularly, often find it difficult to obtain the additional sum required to pay a tutor's fees or to be able to maintain on its staff a tutor sister to train student nurses. I take off my hat to members of the medical profession practising in the smaller country hospitals who give unstintingly of their limited time and who make it possible for nurses to receive additional information and advice.

Discussions that I have had with matrons or supervisors indicate that many resignations of nurses occur in the early stages of their training often because they are physically unable to cope not only with lectures and work but also with having to attend lectures when off duty or, worse still, when on leave. Although it may not be difficult for many trainee nurses in the metropolitan or near-metropolitan area to attend lectures while on leave or otherwise off duty (these people may simply have to catch a bus in order to attend a lecture), many trainees in country areas work a considerable distance from their homes. I know that this applies also to some trainees in city hospitals. Having to attend lectures during time off is one of the reasons why resignations are so frequent.

I suggest that there are simple ways of considering these problems and of making advantageous changes through appointing a Select Committee. One hospital with an annual intake of 30 trainee nurses loses one-fifth of those trainees, as drop outs, within their first year, mainly because they are physically unable to cope. Although the committees referred to by the Minister may well make further suggestions, interim action is required. Some nurses have to undertake examinations on a day when they are working; they work for a period, go into the examination room, and then subsequently have to go back on duty.

The only consideration of which I am aware is that, if a student nurse is to perform night duty on the day on which she

must present herself for an examination, she is relieved of the responsibility to perform night duty and is put on to day duty, and this is a help.

The Commonwealth Government is now examining certain homes that provide domiciliary care for the aged. Although I do not suggest that the facilities provided at all of these homes are 100 per cent, I think that the personnel connected with them give a 100 per cent service to the aged people under their care, yet the homes they conduct are constantly being examined and inspected by Commonwealth health officers. These officers have directed that some homes be closed and that others effect alterations, which the people conducting those homes are not financially capable of undertaking. These officers are suggesting that infirmaries be provided and that there should be more modern homes of the type that provide domiciliary care for the aged. It naturally follows that the implementation of these suggestions will increase the need for nursing sisters, nurses generally and ancillary staff, and this will further aggravate the conditions existing within the nursing profession.

The member for Davenport referred to people who returned to nursing once they had fulfilled their family commitments at home. Never was the saying "Once a nurse, always a nurse" truer than when the tragic accident occurred recently on the Wasleys road about two miles north of Gawler, involving a double-decker bus and a railcar. On that occasion, many former sisters and people with nursing experience made themselves available at the local hospital immediately they heard of the tragedy. I acknowledge the worth to the community of acts of this nature which members of the nursing profession undertake when a calamity or a catastrophe arises.

I have pleasure in supporting the motion, for it will provide an opportunity for action to be taken immediately rather than for action to be taken in the long term, as the Government has proposed. Although I do not ignore the Government's offer, I suggest that a worthwhile interim step will be taken if this motion is carried.

Mr. JENNINGS secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### ROAD SAFETY

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr. Millhouse:

(For wording of motion, see page 661.)

(Continued from August 19. Page 837.)

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO (Minister of Roads and Transport): I regret that sickness has caught up with the member for Mitcham and that he is not here for the continuation of this debate. However, I hope that he will have the opportunity and will take the time to read my comments in *Hansard*. I hope he will see the wisdom of the line I desire to follow and take appropriate action. In moving his motion, the honourable member said that it had three parts, and he proceeded to deal with them in a certain order, as did the member for Alexandra, who seconded the motion, and I intend to follow a somewhat similar order so that the continuity of expression may be maintained.

Both the mover and seconder referred to the appalling road toll, and I do not think anyone needs to debate that matter: it is self-evident and causes all of us much concern. Only Monday, another headline stated that eight people had been killed on South Australian roads, bringing the State's road toll for the year to 227. Probably most members have seen today's *News*, on the second page of which is a report on another death that has occurred on the roads. Although the number of deaths this year is slightly less than the number of days, no-one would suggest for a moment that there was not an appalling road toll. This cannot be excused on the basis that we have been unfortunate this year in that several accidents have involved multiple deaths, perhaps the most significant of which was the Wasleys smash, previously referred to in another debate. However, none of this takes away from the indisputable fact that the road toll is appalling and that action is certainly needed. Having accepted this, I do not intend to waste time by commenting on the statistics to which the mover and seconder referred; I do not intend to dispute those statistics, which merely serve to prove the fully accepted point that there is an extremely bad situation in relation to road safety.

However, at this point of complete agreement with the mover and seconder, I must now take issue with them on the remainder of what they said. The motion suggests that a Minister of Road Safety should be appointed. Let us not fool ourselves: the appointment of such a Minister to administer and co-ordinate the various activities involved will, unfortunately, not save one life. Although the mover said that this motion was divorced from politics (and God forbid that politics should come into it), the plain fact is that the mover

was quoting from the Liberal Party policy speech at the last election.

Mr. McAnaney: It's worth repeating.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: In that case, I will read from the policy speech delivered by Mr. Steele Hall, M.P., at the Adelaide Town Hall on Monday, May 4. Under the heading "Road Safety", it states:

The Government—  
that is, the present Opposition—  
views the question of road safety as one of its greatest challenges. A Minister of Road Safety will be appointed.

The Hon. L. J. King: Evidently that didn't have much appeal for the electors.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Apparently. The point I want to make is that we should not put in the political field the question of the saving of lives.

Mr. Evans: Oh!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: If the honourable member wants to scoff at the question of road safety he is entitled to do so, but the point I am making is that we should discuss the question of road safety on a humane and not on a political basis.

Mr. Evans: That's the point I made.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: If the honourable member is making a point like that by scoffing, I do not think that it is surprising that people do not understand him. The other indisputable fact is that this matter has been brought forward by the member for Mitcham for political expediency in an effort to take a political point, because this is part of the policy on which he and his colleagues went to the people.

*Members interjecting:*

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The members for Davenport, Torrens and Alexandra can claim that this is a miserable attitude, but it is in their policy speech.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: What's wrong with that?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The whole point of this exercise, moved by the member for Mitcham and seconded by the member for Alexandra, was to take a political point. If they will bear with me for a few minutes, I will provide them with the opportunity to make a humane issue of this, taking it out of the political field. If this is what members opposite want (and I hope they do), I am sure they will support the point of view I will put forward.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: Why do you say it was a political point?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Do not let us pursue this point, for there is just no advantage to the Opposition or the Government in pursuing it. The facts are as I have stated them, and honourable members can make up their minds on them.

Mrs. Steele: Are you sure of your facts?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: If the member for Davenport wishes to sit there and interject, she can do so for as long as she likes.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order and, if they can be doubly out of order, they are so when made by a member not sitting in his or her place.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I bow to your ruling, Sir, and I will attempt to ignore interjections. The second point I want to make is in relation to the part of the motion that suggests that a Minister of Road Safety should be appointed, such Minister having primary responsibility for co-ordinating all efforts to increase road safety. The member for Mitcham said that a Minister of Road Safety would co-ordinate the activities of the Railways Department, the Highways Department, the Tramways Trust, the Metropolitan Taxi-Cab Board and the Transport Control Board. Who has control of those organizations at present? The plain fact is that they are under the control of the Minister of Roads and Transport. The member for Mitcham is therefore saying that the Minister of Roads and Transport is not co-ordinating the activities of these departments in the interests of road safety. Naturally, I take issue with him on that point, and I repeat again that the appointment of an additional Minister and changing the title of the present Minister will not save even a single life. We must try to be constructive on this matter.

Two or three matters need to be clarified and expanded. First, there is no doubt that road safety must be considered not by Ministers but by experts. At present we have in South Australia (as the member for Mitcham would or should know, and as all other members should know) an organization that is recognized not just by this Government but by all Governments; I refer to the Road Safety Council, the function of which is to investigate how road accidents can be prevented by driver education. The council comprises Mr. B. H. Boykett (a former General Manager of the Royal Automobile Association) as its chairman; Mr. R. T. Carmichael representing the South Australian Railways, a very important area in relation to road safety; Mr. B. J.

Kearney of the Education Department, who provides an important and necessary link so that road safety education can be imparted to our schoolchildren; Messrs. McKenna and Guerin from the Local Government Association; Mr. J. F. Pavia from the Fire and Accident Underwriters Association; Mr. R. E. Theel, the Assistant General Manager of the R.A.A.; Superintendent J. A. Vogelesang of the Police Department; and, recently, Mrs. Peter Verco, representing the National Council of Women. All these people are concerned with road safety, and practically all of the bodies that the mover has suggested ought to be co-ordinated are represented on the council. The honourable member for Mitcham cannot tell me that he did not know that. If he realizes this, why is he raising this matter? Is there any other reason for doing so other than political expediency? If there is, I should like to hear it.

I think the Road Safety Council is, within its financial limitations, doing a tremendous job in the interests of educating the people of this State in the need for road safety. I will go to the length and breadth of this State singing my praises of the work it is doing. Members of the Opposition should consider this point and join with me and others in expressing appreciation for the work that the council is doing; they should support moves the Government will be making to expand tremendously the activities of the council.

It was strange that the member for Mitcham did not refer to another point. In May, 1969, the former Minister (I presume with the concurrence of the Government of which both the mover and seconder of the motion were Cabinet Ministers) set up a committee of inquiry into road safety in South Australia. This committee consisted of some expert technical people. Its chairman was Mr. P. G. Pak Poy, who is well known for his traffic engineering ability. Its members were Professor A. T. Welford, who is involved in psychology; Mr. S. J. Jacobs, Q.C., in law; Professor J. S. Robertson, in medicine; Professor R. B. Potts, in mathematics; Mr. R. L. Youds, in vehicle manufacture; Mr. R. E. Theel, who represented road user organizations; and Mr. B. J. Kalbfell, who represented insurance companies. Surely, before they start going off on a tangent, Opposition members would be interested to know what this committee of experts has to say, particularly when one realizes that the committee's terms of reference are "to advise the Government on all measures which, in the

opinion of the committee, can and should be taken in order to improve standards of road safety and reduce the number and severity of road accidents".

Is it to be assumed that the mover and the seconder of the motion were partly responsible for the decision to set up a committee to examine and recommend action to be taken in a most important field? Is it their view that they should set up a committee such as this, forget all about it, and then go off on another tangent, because that is, in effect, what the Opposition has done? I am pleased that the committee has now almost completed its work and I hope that its report will soon be available.

The question of railways was also raised. Plans for the current financial year are for a record sum of \$103,626 to be spent on providing protection at level crossings. If any member is interested, I should be pleased to provide him with a list of those level crossings that are being upgraded by the provision of boom gates instead of flashing lights, by the provision of flashing lights instead of the old wig-wag signals, or by the provision of flashing lights where there is no protection at all. This is a vast improvement on what has been done in the past. Indeed, in 1968-69 only \$16,117 was spent, whereas this year over \$103,626 is to be spent. Which Government is therefore concerned with road safety at level crossings? I do not think one would need to be an Einstein to work that out.

If members care to examine the book that has been compiled by the Road Traffic Board, in which the casualty accidents for the whole year are recorded and analysed, they will find that inattentive driving was the greatest single contributing factor to road accidents, followed closely by failure to give way to the right and following too closely behind another vehicle. Those three reasons accounted for about 60 per cent to 70 per cent of all the casualty accidents that occurred in South Australia. What can be done to solve this problem? It must be tackled in a practical manner; only then can we expect to achieve results. The mere appointment of a person or the changing of a Ministerial title by adding "Minister of Road Safety," when the Minister already controls road safety, will not save one life, whereas action by a Minister will save lives.

A few weeks ago I had a serious discussion with the Chairman of the National Safety Council about the appalling road toll in South Australia and, as a result of that discussion,

the Road Safety Council has considered presenting a programme of upgrading its existing activities to provide for greater activity in the field of road user education. Statistics compiled by the Road Traffic Board show definite patterns. For instance, certain groups of drivers are more accident prone than other groups. In their first year of driving, 1,270 males and 338 females are involved in accidents, but in the group covering those who have been driving for between six years and 10 years, there is a dramatic jump to 2,667 males and 506 females, so there are definite areas in which drivers are more accident prone.

Contrary to general belief, it is not the new holders of driving licences that are most accident prone. In fact, it seems that those who have just got licences are far more cautious than those who have had a licence for longer periods. These figures also show danger signs in various groups. The Road Safety Council has analysed the position and given me, as Minister, a proposition to provide a big improvement by way of a driver improvement programme. Although the details have not been finally considered, I assure the House that the Government intends to proceed with the recommendations, and we are extremely grateful to the council for having provided a pilot scheme for us to consider.

However, we can do nothing without money, and this scheme involves money. We will consider the matter from several aspects. Regarding the provision of additional finance for road safety, an approach ought to be made to those who are causing many dangers on the road, and I am referring to the motor manufacturers. Most members would have read the report in this morning's *Advertiser* that General Motors-Holden's is displaying the Torana GTR-X, which is 45in. high and, according to the press report, its main features is that it has an instrument panel that includes warning lights for front and rear lamp failure and vacuum gauge. This vehicle is claimed to have a top speed of 120 miles an hour, so while the Government is spending money on road safety, motor car manufacturers are creating problems. I do not intend to proceed further along these lines, because I think I have made the position plain. Unfortunately, the motion has the political overtones that should not be associated with such a matter. I consider that road safety is far too important.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: You have not sustained that statement.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The member for Alexandra says that I have not sustained that.

The SPEAKER: The Minister should not reply to interjections. The member for Alexandra is out of order.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are political overtones in the motion because of the association between the policy speech of the Liberal Party and this move and, further, because there is already a Minister in charge of road safety, the only technical point being that road safety is not included in the name of his portfolio. The portfolio is the all-embracing one of Minister of Roads and Transport. It could be argued equally as well that we ought to have a Minister of Motor Vehicle Registrations, or a Minister of Highways, or a Minister of Tramways. The portfolio names are all-embracing. The Road Safety Council, whose work I cannot praise enough, is controlled by the Minister of Roads and Transport.

I intend to move an amendment that will remove completely any suggestion of political overtones and, regardless of whether Opposition members accept my claim that there are political overtones in the motion, I know that they will accept that my amendment has no political overtones and should be supported because road safety should not become a political football. I move:

To strike out all words after "House" and insert "the South Australian Road Safety Council is deserving of the highest commendation for the work it is doing in educating the people, particularly the young people, in the need to observe and practice road safety at all times; the council through its membership, and the Minister of Roads and Transport and Minister of Local Government by the exercising of his Ministerial authority, adequately co-ordinate the functions of the various sections concerned with road safety, the only restriction on the Road Safety Council's activities being dictated by its financial limitations; and, believing that the appalling road toll can best be reduced by increasing road user education, this House express its support of the proposal of the Government to expand the activities of the South Australian Road Safety Council."

The motion, as amended, will then read as follows:

That in the opinion of this House the South Australian Road Safety Council is deserving of the highest commendation for the work, it is doing in educating the people, particularly the young people, in the need to observe and practice road safety at all times; the council through its membership, and the Minister of Roads and Transport and Minister of Local Government by the exercising of his Ministerial authority, adequately co-ordinate the functions of the various sections concerned with road safety, the only restriction on the Road Safety

Council's activities being dictated by its financial limitations; and, believing that the appalling road toll can best be reduced by increasing road user education, this House express its support of the proposal of the Government to expand the activities of the South Australian Road Safety Council.

I commend the amendment and assure the House that the Government is now working towards the expanded programme to which I have referred and I hope that soon we will be able to make a complete statement about the activities so that we may set up further education areas. We may have further lectures and films, and additional personnel will be needed to achieve this objective. I hope soon to be able to say that the Government has solved the problems associated with giving effect to the plan, which was recommended not by the Government but by the Road Safety Council and adopted by the Government.

Mr. SLATER seconded the amendment.

Mr. BECKER (Hanson): I support the motion and oppose the amendment, which I believe is aimed to destroy the good intention of the motion. I regret that the Minister of Roads and Transport has said that this is a political football. If it is a political football, then I think that, having made the speech that he has made this afternoon, he has kicked the ball out of bounds. This motion is not one of no confidence in the Minister; it is moved by a private member, and I believe that the Minister is making politics of the issue and is only justifying his position. Since this motion was moved two weeks ago, another 13 people have died on the roads in South Australia, the total road deaths in this State for 1970 now being 230, which is only eight short of a rate of one death a day.

In 1969, 174 road deaths occurred between January 1 and August 31, so that there is an increase of 56 within a similar period this year. How long are we going to allow this slaughter on the roads of our citizens? What is the answer to this road carnage? The mover of the motion made it clear in his opening remarks that the purpose was to establish a co-ordinating body under a Minister of Road Safety, and I reiterate that this is not a reflection on the Minister of Roads and Transport. Undertaking some research into this matter, I wrote to the Royal Automobile Association of South Australia (Incorporated), an organization of which I am a member and which was responsible for my learning to drive a motor vehicle.

As the Minister said, the Road Safety Council is doing much good work in the field of

driver education, and I support this work. Indeed, before I decided to obtain a driver's licence, I thought I would have an officer of the R.A.A. teach me to drive. It is all very well to know the theory and to be taught how to use the rules of the road to one's advantage. However, often when a car has a blow-out or gets into a skid, the driver does not know what to do, and I think this applies to the majority of motorists in South Australia. In other words, it is practical experience of driving a motor vehicle that counts. Unfortunately, if a driver makes an error it can be a fatal error. The Acting General Manager of the R.A.A. (Mr. Theel) was kind enough to reply to the letter that I wrote to the association and to explain the association's point of view, as follows:

The policy of the association as most recently stated in a submission to the South Australian Government Committee of Inquiry into Road Safety last year is as follows:

That a properly equipped, staffed and financed organization be set up in South Australia, preferably under the direction of a responsible Minister, to undertake basic research into the causes and prevention of road accidents and to continually examine all aspects of safe road usage.

(Note: It is considered that this might be achieved by expanding the function of the Road Traffic Board and co-ordinating the activities of the Road Safety Council of South Australia within this expanded function. In this regard it is to be noted that the Road Traffic Act now defines the functions of the board *inter alia*—

- (a) Make recommendations to the Minister on . . . measures to be taken to prevent road accidents . . . to eliminate causes of danger and traffic congestion on roads;
- (b) To conduct research and collect statistics relating to road accidents and other traffic problems; and
- (c) To publish information for the instruction of road users on road safety . . .).

There has been no specific association decision regarding the creation of a separate portfolio, as this is considered to be within the function of Parliament and Government, bearing in mind the necessary co-ordination that would be required with other road and traffic authorities who now operate under the direction of the Minister of Roads and Transport. In general comment however, it might be mentioned that, beyond co-ordinating pure road safety activities, it would appear that the road safety role of the other authorities mentioned is of primary importance and they should therefore be in close liaison with the principal road safety activity. Finally, I quote from the conclusion of the submission made by the R.A.A. to which I have referred, as follows:

The R.A.A. believes that the road accident prevention problem is not being tackled

scientifically and continuously. It sees the most positive steps following the formation of a permanent qualified body charged with the function of accident analysis from statistical investigation and "on the spot" evaluation, and endowed with the authority to make recommendations to the Government on a day to day basis to meet changing road conditions and traffic needs. This work could be assisted by the recommendations of a representative advisory committee. The many facets of the road safety problem would then become a matter of continuing assessment to determine the efficacy of changes in traffic law and traffic control in promoting improved road safety.

As a Minister of Road Safety was appointed only recently in Tasmania, it is too early to assess the value of that appointment, but within 12 to 18 months I am sure that we will see the benefits resulting from it. However, we cannot wait that long before making a similar appointment here, for life is too precious and we in this Parliament owe to future generations better facilities for road safety protection and driver education. I believe that we should set up under the Minister of Road Safety a committee of experts to investigate the many facets of driver education and of safety measures to be provided. The other States have already started experimenting with reflectorized number plates, which could provide some solution to the problem of night driving. We should undertake extensive studies into the causes of road accidents to find out whether the roads are wide enough and whether they suit conditions; also, we should examine the situation at rail crossings which appear to represent one of the biggest problems facing motorists in this State.

The problem is that modern motor cars are generally becoming bigger and more powerful. Granted there are mini cars, but I believe that manufacturers emphasize the production of bigger and more powerful cars; they have done this to attract sales and to show that their industry is progressive. Perhaps cars should be tailor made, being designed for the comfort of drivers and to enable them to see the road clearly. Being 6ft. 3in., the greatest problem I have is to be comfortably seated behind the steering wheel and to see around me clearly. Perhaps the industry could consider providing tailor-made cars, with emphasis on clear vision on the road and comfortable seating behind the steering wheel. I often wonder whether drivers of modern vehicles just aim their car down the road, whether they guide it, steer it or drive it, merely playing the rules of the game, relying on luck

and having no-one in their way as they proceed down the carriageway. No matter what we personally believe, driving a motor vehicle today is an art, with no room for error.

Recently I was disappointed in a reply of the Minister of Roads and Transport to a question I asked whether the Government was willing to adopt my suggestion that motorists should be able to contribute to a central fund to help the Government promote road safety by being able, on paying a fee, to choose, within the range of numbers allocated in this State, the number plates they wanted for their car. This scheme operates in New South Wales, where a motorist pays for this choice \$25, which goes into the central fund; over \$200,000 to promote road safety has been raised in that State. If motorists are interested in doing this, surely the Government should instruct the Motor Vehicles Department to commence such a scheme. However, the Minister brushed this off as just another gimmick. I believe that any gimmick that can be used to promote road safety and save lives is a benefit to the State. Finally, I believe that as members of Parliament we must consider the value of life in the State; we must act quickly to prevent continuing carnage on our roads and so that future generations will be protected. Therefore, I believe we should appoint a Minister of Road Safety.

Mr. SLATER secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### PUBLIC WORKS STANDING COMMITTEE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

#### OMBUDSMAN

Adjourned debate on the motion of Mr. Evans:

(For wording of motion, see page 513.)

(Continued from August 19. Page 847.)

Mr. McANANEY (Heysen): Now that the Government has acknowledged the wisdom of the motion, little needs to be said about the need for an ombudsman. I have supported all motions on this subject that have been brought before the House over the years. With the greater scope and activities of Government departments, there is more and more interference in the lives of people. Sometimes this is necessary and sometimes it comes about through the love of the power to push people around that exists in departments. An example



of this can be seen in what is happening at present in the water shed areas of the various reservoirs in the Adelaide Hills.

We all agree that pollution must be stopped and that conservation must take place in the Hills. However, the department is interfering with activities in this area, involving grave financial loss to many people. The department is saying what it will do, but it does not have the power at present to do some of the things it says it will do. The other day I asked a loaded question about the legality of something the department was doing, but the department did not accept my challenge: it admitted that what it was doing was beyond its scope or power. At present, residents of the Hills are being told by representatives of the Public Health Department, the Engineering and Water Supply Department, and local government that they must not do certain things. Surely someone must be appointed to look into such people's rights and decide what is just and fair according to the law. For this reason, I support the appointment of an ombudsman.

It is necessary for us to have an arbitrator between an individual and the Government. The Government intends to introduce legislation for consumer protection (and our Party has been interested in this, although not to the same degree). Laws affecting dealings between sellers and purchasers of articles will be dealt with. In justice, we must have someone with the legal right and the ability to investigate matters likely to arise and with access to the file dealing with any decision made. Also, an increasing number of Governments is appointing ombudsmen, and I know of no country that has made such an appointment deciding to sack its ombudsman or restrict his power in any way. Sometimes, without producing evidence or argument, we oppose people who try to upset the *status quo*, but where it can be adduced that a system is necessary we must take notice of this evidence. I congratulate those who have played a part in a long and intensive effort to create this position in South Australia, and I am confident that an ombudsman will protect the rights of individuals against unjust actions of a Government.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Alexandra): Apparently, from the number of speakers who favour this motion, it will pass, but I am not enthusiastic about it. This question has been raised several times previously and, although I have not spoken each time, I have opposed such an appointment. I wonder why Parlia-

ment finds it necessary to denigrate its authority in such a way: it seems that Parliamentarians possess an instinct like the lemmings, who arrange the erosion of their existence. I do not see appointing an ombudsman threatens the life of Parliament (I would not exaggerate to that extent), but in a small way we are electing to an office to take over our traditional duties someone who has not been appointed by the people.

Members should be reminded that every citizen of this State is represented by 16 members of Parliament: 10 senators, a member of the House of Representatives, four members of the Legislative Council, and one member of the House of Assembly. Often a citizen is actively encouraged to interview these members, and not only does he talk to one but he may interview all of them, sometimes without telling others what he is doing. That position will not be altered by establishing the office of ombudsman. I wonder at the paucity of arguments in this debate, because it seems that the debate has gone backward instead of forward. A few years ago when this matter was ventilated in Parliament many members argued in favour of appointing an ombudsman, but in this debate there seems to be little to be said in its favour. The member for Heyson spoke about the banning of subdivisions in certain catchment areas in the Adelaide Hills.

Mr. McAnaney: I never mentioned it.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I understood there were some references to the Adelaide Hills and to officers of the Engineering and Water Supply Department.

Mr. McAnaney: I didn't mention subdivisions.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member must address the Chair and should disregard interjections.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I am glad of your help, Mr. Speaker. The member for Heyson spoke about the attitude of officers of the Engineering and Water Supply Department who are working under a strict Government policy. However, the ombudsman will have nothing to do with policy. If he were put in charge of policy the position of Parliament would become ridiculous and, to a lesser extent, so would the position of the Government. Perhaps as a last resort the Government would have a fair chance of sacking the ombudsman, but this action would be embarrassing.

Mr. Burdon: Do you think he might sack the Government?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: A day might come when an ombudsman would exercise what amounts to Executive authority without the responsibility. To do his job properly he will have to have access to Government documents. However, this right is extended (and correctly, too) only by the Government at the wish of the Government. I know that only one ombudsman will be appointed, and I hope that we will not reach the stage where an ombudsman rules the world or that there is an ombudsman's union. Perhaps one ombudsman would be too busy to demand to see Government files, although he would have this power if he wished to exercise it. Anyone who has been in Government knows that Government files do not show every side of the picture, nor need they. Many aspects of negotiation are done by telephone or verbal contact, the details of which, without any intent to avoid the issue, are not recorded on the files.

If a person wished to assemble the complete story of an incident or transaction in which the Government had been involved by studying the file and not by interviewing people he would obtain an incomplete picture. Some members are in certain ways historians or claim some ability to write history, and this would be a fair claim for them to make. They would be the first to agree that to try to assemble a history from a file of documents was likely to result in a distorted picture. To obtain a complete picture of what has happened, an ombudsman will have to do what I know he will not be allowed to do: to have the right to call before him to give evidence everyone concerned, including Cabinet Ministers. If he could do that, he might have a chance of obtaining the complete picture of a particular incident or complaint. However, he will not be allowed to do this. I would support the Ministers if they refused to allow him to go as far as that. I have gathered from his remarks that the Attorney-General favours the appointment of an ombudsman, and I wonder whether he would favour the ombudsman having power to question him and his colleagues.

Mr. Lawn: Would you accept appointment as ombudsman?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I am not sure whether or not I am being invited to do so.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Alexandra should not take notice of interjections or implications.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I am sorry, Sir. I know it was a mistake, but I felt so flattered that I could not resist taking the matter further. However, I do not intend to apply for the job. If an ombudsman is appointed, I, like everyone else, would be willing to put a case before him if I thought he could help me. However, I do not think he will have enough spare time to conduct many inquiries. I have examined some of the conditions under which an ombudsman would be appointed, and I have read a paper written by Mrs. Caiden, on this subject. She says that eight criteria should apply: first, the ombudsman should be an impartial and independent official of Parliament. I do not know anyone who would disagree to that. Secondly, she says, he should have a small staff. The word "small" was not underlined, but it will be necessary to do so or before long he will have an assistant, who later will probably be looking for an assistant. Thirdly, says Mrs. Caiden, he will conduct his investigations by correspondence and not by the calling of verbal evidence. This matter is at least open to debate. The last thing I would want to see is a new court opened up, whereby people would have to appear before him. However, to be logical, that is the sort of power he should have to enable him properly to exercise his duties. If he is to act only by correspondence, probably most people in the community who would be worried with problems concerning the Government and who would get into much difficulty with red tape are those people who, if not illiterate, are incapable of expressing themselves clearly on paper.

The Hon. L. J. King: They can see their local member.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The Attorney-General has sneaked in one comment to which I am not allowed to reply.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Attorney-General must not interject.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I was leading up to a point that I would have preferred to discuss later: at what stage do members of Parliament or the ombudsman take up a case? Should one do it before the other, or should it be done simultaneously? Should the ombudsman take the case to the member of Parliament, or *vice versa*, and does the member of Parliament take up the case in the House while the ombudsman is pursuing his inquiry?

The Hon. L. J. King: I would be out of order if I answered that.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: All these matters ought to be answered before the House plunges into this wonderful new scheme. Members ought to know a few details such as this. It is apparently desired that investigations be conducted by correspondence. However, many people cannot express themselves clearly in correspondence, and this applies not only to the poorly educated in the community: even the best educated people have this difficulty at times. I admit that I occasionally express myself poorly in correspondence. Indeed, everyone in the community has at times experienced difficulty in expressing an argument in writing. The ombudsman will have to interview people who have lodged complaints. He will then be faced with a new problem: who else should he interview, and should he deal with everyone else by correspondence? He will not have a chance to interview the Minister, and I am sure he will not be given power to call the Minister before him. Of course, the Minister might be carrying vital information in his head. It will not necessarily be a balanced inquiry.

The fourth suggestion is that all formal administrative means must have been exhausted before the ombudsman should take up any matter. That sounds fairly reasonable, but by then the matter is usually referred to the member of Parliament. Sometimes members are told about a problem only a couple of days or even less before someone forecloses. Had the matter been referred to them a little earlier, they might have had a better chance to deal with it. The ombudsman will not deal with the sort of problem to which I have referred. If he does, he will not even start to deal with other problems. He will have plenty of work to do, and he will have to cull from his programme the enormous number of applications submitted by hopeful people who have some grievance that they think he will be able to deal with. He will have to point out that these matters have nothing to do with him, and he will have to apply some sort of test: he might have to ask the person who comes to him whether he has tried to settle the matter by all other formal means.

The ombudsman will also have the power, according to Mrs. Caiden, to demand Government documents and to question witnesses under oath. Whether that is implied in the motion, I do not know. This has not been stated, but I imagine from what I have said that the Government documents will certainly be available to him. I can imagine that in certain circumstances exceptions will have to

be made. I do not know how the Government will solve that problem. Without unduly labouring the point, I can imagine that extremely confidential negotiations, which later are not so confidential, take place between the Government and private interests. People who have to deal with those documents understand the nature of the negotiations and the need for secrecy. Clearly, an ombudsman would not be suited to investigating matters that involved the use of Government documents like that. I think the Government would like to withhold some such documents from him.

The next point is that the ombudsman should be concerned with administration, not with policy matters. That is clear, but he will have to be a wise and well balanced man. I am sure that he will be, but no-one except such a man, without any inbuilt prejudices, would be able to decide always what was policy and what was administration. The next point interests me, because it was made by Mrs. Caiden, not by the member who moved the motion. It is that the ombudsman's only sanction will be publicity of his report and he will have no power to alter a final decision.

I think the supporters of the policy of having an ombudsman should answer these questions and say just what the ombudsman's powers will be, instead of our having to examine practices elsewhere and build up a picture of the ombudsman's duties. We should be told whether he will have power to alter any decisions that have been made. The next thing is that proceedings should be quite informal. No-one would quarrel with informality to put people at ease and to assist the ombudsman in his work, so that he does not have to go through formality in all his inquiries. Perhaps it is relevant to point out that in the courts formality is observed for a purpose connected with justice and, when formality is dispensed with, one should be careful not to dispense with justice at the same time.

My comments have been mainly by way of critical questions. I do not suppose any part of the world is more closely governed than is South Australia. Our population is about 1,000,000 and each citizen has 16 members of Parliament to approach, because he may approach his House of Assembly member, one of the four Legislative Council members for his district, one of the 10 senators, or his House of Representatives member. Further, this Parliament can be reached within one hour by more than 60 per cent of the population, and sessions of Parliament are fairly

widespread. True, Parliament is not always in session, but a citizen would not have difficulty in finding a member of Parliament and a member of Parliament would not have difficulty in getting an opportunity to raise a matter in the House.

I made the rough estimate that our Parliament sat for an average of five hours a day on 83 sitting days a year, giving a sitting time of 415 hours in the year. This was an average sitting time of about 10 hours for each member when the House comprised 39 members. Those figures relate only to the House of Assembly. We also have the Legislative Council and the Commonwealth Parliament sitting, and members can be contacted without great difficulty. To some extent in this country members of Parliament are at fault in that they damage the quality of their Parliamentary work. They tend to become social welfare organizations. Every member of this House is anxious to communicate with any constituent who has a problem.

Of course, we hear suggestions that members try to dodge issues and keep out of the way, but we, as members of Parliament, should not subscribe to that fallacious view, because we look for people who have a difficulty and try to help them. That statement applies to members of both Parties and it is the genuine attitude of all members. Possibly, over the years the amount of what I call social work that members have been doing has increased greatly, certainly in the last 10 years or so, and this has detrimentally affected the work of members.

Of course, the advantage is that the member is in closer touch with the community and gets to know the problems much more intimately than if he heard about fewer problems, and he is better educated in community problems. In effect, he is kept in line. This whets his ability to sympathize with human problems, and that is good. On the other hand, he may reach the stage when he has so much work to do that he has not time to cope with his reading or his study of Bills. Studying legislation is important, but so also is reading. I ask members to imagine a situation in which a constituent goes to the house of a member of Parliament and, on asking whether the member is at home, is told, "Yes, come in. He will be glad to see you. He is reading a book."

Mr. Jennings: If we all said that, we'd be pretty awful liars.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: Few members of Parliament have time to read books

at home, and our genuine interest in social problems has added to our work. I do not want that work reduced. I should like to see the efficiency of members improved. At times it becomes clear that members require assistance with this problem, and assistance should be given. However, that is a side issue. My point is that members of this community get tremendous service from their members of Parliament and we should not decry the service that we give. Perhaps we are too ready to allow people to have fun at our expense and to allow the fun to get serious. Perhaps we should point out just what services people receive, as we are sometimes tackled about this matter. To my mind, an ombudsman will not influence the course of these proceedings at all: I think that he will be completely set aside in order to deal with a special kind of investigation after, as I have said, all the administrative avenues have been exhausted.

He will have to cull the many applications received and then deal with them; and possibly, if his work builds up, he will have to start looking for additional staff. While I am beginning to think that the appointment of an ombudsman is inevitable, I am wondering what will be the upshot of this move. Although I do not intend to move an amendment, if I were to move one it would be to the effect that this matter again be considered in three years' time.

The Hon. L. J. King: Why three years?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I am discussing a hypothetical amendment, which I do not intend to move, but I do not think that further deep consideration of this matter would do us or anyone else any harm at all.

Dr. TONKIN secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

Adjourned debate on the motion of the Hon. D. N. Brookman:

That in the opinion of this House the Government should consider increasing forthwith the payment to all independent schools, on behalf of each primary school child, from \$10 to at least \$20 per annum,

which Mr. Hopgood had moved to amend by striking out all the words after "That" and inserting "this House supports the decision of the Government to allocate an additional \$250,000 to independent primary schools in 1971 on a needs basis".

(Continued from August 19. Page 849.)

Mr. EASTICK (Light): Last week, at the request of the Government, I sought leave

to continue my remarks on this motion, and my acceding to the Government's request on this matter permitted the Government to complete certain of the matters with which it wished to deal. However, a little later that day, when I requested a similar courtesy of the Government so that I could consider a certain matter on behalf of the constituents I represent, that courtesy was denied me. Last week, in another debate the Minister of Education referred to a comment I had made earlier in the day during the debate on this motion. He suggested that the information that I had given in relation to the percentage of taxpayers receiving over \$5,000 a year was not strictly correct. My comment was as follows:

The figures quoted in a quarterly review of Australian education to which I will refer presently would indicate that in 1968 only 8.9 per cent of the population received an income of more than \$5,000.

The information available in the second supplement to the 47th report to Parliament of the Commissioner of Taxation clearly indicates that the figure I used was almost correct, the relevant figure being 8.89 per cent. This percentage related to the taxation year 1966-67 and to the assessment year of 1967-68. The figures, therefore, given by Father J. E. Bourke in the publication to which I referred were correct at the relevant point of time. I find that no supplement is yet available to the 48th report to Parliament by the Commissioner of Taxation, so that the figures used by the Minister referring to the 11.7 per cent are not, in fact, available to us. The Minister said that he had used the figures available from the first report but not the statistical information provided by the Commissioner of Taxation.

Mr. Jennings: I suppose your point is that the ombudsman would have those figures.

Mr. EASTICK: It would be wrong for me to answer such an interjection.

The SPEAKER: It is wrong for the member for Ross Smith to interject.

Mr. EASTICK: My remarks relate to the motion, which I have previously indicated I will support. The Minister previously interjected, refuting the statement that there was an increase in the number of students in Catholic schools, and I said that I was quoting on an Australia-wide basis, not on a South Australian basis. The interjection was that the figure was static, whereas if we look at table 11 of the *Quarterly Review* of the Australian Council for Educational Research we find that in the period 1963 to 1968 there was a 7.32 per cent decrease

in South Australia at the primary level, but an increase of 13.41 per cent at the secondary level. These figures can be related to the various aspects of the argument advanced earlier, and I wish to say no more about them.

However, I wish to refer particularly to the amendment suggesting that \$250,000 be allocated. The Minister indicated that between \$20 and \$24 a head could be made available to those determined to be in need. If the allocation is to be restricted, more will be received by those where a need exists, but I have not yet been able to find a statement to this effect in the original statement made by the Minister to the press. Is this to be a recurring sum? There is no suggestion that it will be an increasing sum. I ask the Minister what would happen in the next year or in subsequent years if, a need having been established, a school received this payment in the first year.

What happens if a need is established in other areas and if the school which receives a sum in the first year is subsequently denied an allocation? We desire to know much more about the Minister's proposal. As the Minister has said that this scheme will not come into effect until 1971, the parents or the schools concerned will be denied assistance this year. However, the motion requests immediate action, and would therefore immediately relieve the difficult situation of those concerned. I support the motion, but I cannot support the amendment.

Mr. BURDON (Mount Gambier): I support the amendment. What appears to be in the minds of Opposition members is contrary to the view taken by the Government. I congratulate the Government and the responsible Minister on making available to independent primary schools the sum of \$250,000 on a needs basis. This move was initiated by the Labor Party in this State in 1967.

Mr. Gunn: State aid?

Mr. BURDON: If you come in, you will get it.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member must address the Chair.

Mr. BURDON: Representatives of independent schools have made it plain they welcome the grant the Government has made. My view on State aid has been the same over the years. I believe the Government has a responsibility to educate the children of the State and that the parents of those children have the right to select the type of education they wish for their children. I do not see why we should deny people this right. It has been said that certain independent schools may be better off

financially than are other independent schools. The comparison I make is between some schools in the metropolitan area and some of the parish schools. The Anglican, Roman Catholic and Lutheran parish schools share the problem, in relation to providing adequate education for children, of rising costs involved in paying teachers. Although the Catholic community has brothers and sisters who have dedicated their lives to teaching these children, there is a need to employ lay teachers. The State has a responsibility in this matter, but the primary responsibility rests with the Commonwealth Government. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

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

#### EVIDENCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. L. J. KING (Attorney-General) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Evidence Act, 1929-1969. Read a first time.

The Hon. L. J. KING: I move:

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

It amends the Evidence Act by the insertion of a new Part dealing with computer output. Computers now assume a rapidly increasing role in the conduct of commerce and industry. They have, in particular, proved to be extremely useful and effective in the storage and retrieval of information. Their increasing use for this purpose makes it desirable that some evidentiary value should be given to computer output in courts of law. The purpose of the present Bill is to render computer output admissible in a court of law as evidence of any statement of fact contained in or constituted by the output. The Bill has been prepared by the Parliamentary Draftsman in consultation with Professor J. A. Ovenstone, the Head of the Department of Computing Science in the University of Adelaide, and with the Law Reform Committee.

As the law stands at present, a fact contained in a document can be proved only by producing the original document, and evidence by a person who executed the document has to be called to prove that it has been duly executed. Under modern commercial conditions much accurate information is stored in computers, with the result that the original document is frequently destroyed. In addition, because of the complexity of modern business practices it is impossible to call a witness who could depose to the execution of the document even if it existed. The result is that much accurate information, which

should be available to the courts, is not available because of the rules of evidence, which were drawn up with no regard for modern developments.

The provisions of the Bill are as follows. Clauses 1 and 2 are formal, and clause 3 inserts new Part VIA, comprising new sections 59a to 59c, in the principal Act. New section 59a inserts several definitions necessary for the purposes of the new provisions. New section 59b is the operative provision of the new Part. It provides, in effect, that, subject to the court's being satisfied of the matters set out in the section, computer evidence shall be admissible in any civil proceedings. New subsection (2) provides that the court must be satisfied that the computer is correctly programmed and regularly used to produce output of the same kind as that tendered in evidence; that the data from which the output is produced by the computer is systematically prepared on the basis of information that would normally be acceptable in a court of law as evidence of the statements or representations contained in or constituted by the output; that in the case of the output tendered in evidence there is no reasonable cause to suspect any departure from the system or any error in the preparation of the data; that the computer has not, during a period extending from the time of the introduction of the data to that of the production of the output, been subject to any malfunction that might reasonably be expected to affect the accuracy of the output; that during that period there have been no alterations to the mechanism or processes of the computer that might be expected adversely to affect the accuracy of the output; that records have been kept by a responsible person in charge of the computer of alterations to the mechanism and processes of the computer during that period; and, finally, that there is no reasonable cause to believe that the accuracy or validity of the output has been adversely affected by the use of any improper process or procedure or by inadequate safeguards in the use of the computer.

New subsection (3) deals with the case where two or more computers have been used in combination or succession in the recording of data and the production of output. The safeguards set out in subsection (2) are applied as far as necessary to both computers. New subsection (4) provides for a qualified expert to give a certificate as to any of the matters set out in subsections (2) or (3). This certificate may obviate the need for a court to hear detailed evidence on these matters, except

where some question as to the proper operation of a computer system is actually in dispute.

However, under new subsection (6) the court has a discretion in any case to require that oral evidence be given of matters of which it is required to be satisfied under the new Part, or to require that the person by whom the certificate was given attend for examination or cross-examination on the matters contained in the certificate. New section 59c enables the Governor to make regulations for the purposes of the new Part.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### MOTOR VEHICLES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 25. Page 977.)

Mr. EVANS (Fisher): I refer in part to a debate in another place and also to the second reading explanation of the Minister of Roads and Transport in which he stated that possibly the interpretation of the law had been affected to some extent by a passage from St. Matthew's gospel. I support the Bill, because I believe that, generally, it is a good Bill as it gives the opportunity for a wife or husband to sue the other or to sue their insurers when an accident occurs. The interpretation has been that, where a person has been insured by a company in another State but has an accident in this State, as the husband and wife are both of one flesh and the same person proceedings cannot be instituted where judgment could be given in favour of the person injured. I understand that if a person is insured in this State and has an accident in another State he will now be covered, because the second reading explanation states:

... or if the defendant was at the time of the injury insured by a policy of insurance issued under our Act.

I should like the Minister to say whether this condition applies throughout the Commonwealth. The amendment moved in another place by the Government representative, and accepted, was good in that it defined "injury" to include mental or nervous shock. Until that amendment was made, the word "bodily" could have been interpreted to exclude mental injury. A member of another place took the Government to task for not taking the opportunity, when the principal Act was being amended, to include the many amendments that were provided in the Bill that came to this House from another place last year and ultimately was put up in Annie's room

because it contained a provision to bring in a points demerit scheme. That Bill contained other amendments important to safety and our road traffic laws, and it would have been appropriate for the Government to include these amendments now.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Such as?

Mr. EVANS: They are in *Hansard* and the Minister may read them. The Minister and his Government had the opportunity to introduce them in this Bill, but it chose to make only one alteration.

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

#### EUDUNDA AND MORGAN RAILWAY (DISCONTINUANCE) BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO (Minister of Roads and Transport): I move:

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

It authorizes the Railways Commissioner to take up or otherwise dispose of the railway line between Eudunda and Morgan and is introduced in consequence of the decision to close the line. The line to be taken up is delineated on the Parliamentary plan referred to in clause 2. A copy of the plan is available for perusal by honourable members. The line to be taken up runs from the Robertstown junction on the Morgan side of Eudunda to Morgan itself. In substance, the Bill follows similar measures that have been from time to time introduced into this House.

Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 provides appropriate definitions for the purposes of the measure, including a reference to the 1876 Act, which originally authorized the construction of the railway. Clause 3 enables the Commissioner to take up portion of the railway authorized by the 1876 Act and to alter its terminus to the point of commencement of the Robertstown branch line. Clause 4 incorporates this Act with the South Australian Railways Commissioner's Act, to which it is complementary.

Mr. ALLEN (Frome): I support the Bill. Members will recall that this line was closed during the term of office of the last Government and, because of the redistribution of boundaries that has taken place since then, I now represent the area that the line traverses. As I was not directly interested in the line when it was closed, I did not take an active part in the discussions. However, since then, I have gone through the area often and have realized that the people were extremely disappointed at the closure of the line, although they accepted

that it was running at a great loss and that closure was possibly the only alternative. They hoped to get a subsidy, or some similar arrangement, for their firewood industry.

Much consideration was given to the matter before this line was closed, about 12 months having expired from the first discussions until the final decision was made. I have read the reports submitted by the Public Works Committee and the Transport Control Board. The latter has submitted interesting figures covering the last 10 years of operation of the line. For instance, 504 tons of oils and motor spirits was transported on the line in 1956-57, whereas only 63 tons of those commodities was railed in 1967-68. In 1956-57, livestock railed totalled 226 tons, whereas in 1967-68 the total was only 29 tons. In 1956-57, total earnings from the line were \$15,908, but in 1967-68 the total was only \$9,799.

The outwards freight figures are more interesting. In 1956-57 wheat consignments totalled 1,327 tons, whereas no wheat was railed on this line in 1966-67 or in 1967-68.

The outwards livestock cartage dropped from 987 tons in 1956-57 to 42 tons in 1967-68. Cartage outward of firewood, which was the main industry along the line when the line was closed, totalled 12,178 tons in 1956-57, but the figure dropped to 4,006 tons in 1967-68. Total earnings from outwards freight in 1956-57 was \$46,264 and in the last year of operation, 1967-68, the earnings were \$10,518. It is stated that a saving of about \$48,000 a year should result from the closure of this line and, in addition, \$611,000 would have had to be spent in the next eight years to keep the line operating. I think that those figures speak for themselves. The people engaged in the firewood industry realized that the closure of the line would add to the cost of firewood, and I understand that, in order to help them, the price of firewood was decontrolled. As a result, the price of firewood increased. However, as natural gas was soon to be supplied in Adelaide, an intensive campaign was undertaken by the oil companies, which had realized that oil heaters would not be in as much demand, to sell as many oil heaters as possible, and this had the effect of depressing the firewood industry even more.

It would be an advantage to people in the district if the weighbridge at Morgan which is owned by the Railways Department could be taken over either by the Morgan District Council or by someone in Morgan connected with the firewood industry. In addition, the

department owns some land that would be ideal for extending the existing caravan park in Morgan and, if an arrangement could be made with the local council regarding this land, it would help considerably. Over the years, I have received inquiries about disposing of rails in sections; it is claimed that, whereas generally the whole of a line is sold to the one tenderer, many people would possibly be interested in purchasing, say, a few miles of line and not the whole of it, but I do not know whether or not this would be practicable.

The Minister of Roads and Transport, when in Opposition, took the then Government to task for closing railway lines, and I recall his doing this during several debates. However, 16 days after he became Minister of Roads and Transport, the following article, referring to a meeting that took place at Tailem Bend and headed "Some Lines Must Go", appeared in the *Advertiser* on Tuesday, June 16:

Railway lines should not be kept open just for the sake of keeping them open, the Minister of Roads and Transport (Mr. Virgo) told the convention yesterday. Mr. Virgo called for some manoeuvrability for the Cabinet in dealing "with this vexatious question of closing railway lines. Whether we like it or not, there are lines in South Australia that just cannot be retained and should not be retained," he said. Mr. Virgo was speaking on a motion from the Tailem Bend sub-branch opposing the former Liberal Government's policy of closing railway lines, and urging a programme of upgrading lines to attract custom.

I support the Bill.

Mr. McANANEY (Heysen): I support the Bill. I realize that, an order having been made to close a railway line, a Bill of this kind must be considered before the Minister can dispose of any of the materials. I understand that some of the rails from this line will be suitable for use on other lines; indeed, the Railways Commissioner has previously indicated that he is keen to have certain railway lines closed so that the rails can be used elsewhere. This would not be possible regarding the Milang railway line, because railcars often had difficulty in traversing the bumps on that line. I think that a feasibility study should be made of certain northern lines. This Government is not accepting the Commonwealth Government's experts' report regarding the line to Adelaide, and it is delaying the gauge standardization programme concerning a line from the North to Adelaide. A railway line is not always an asset to an area; indeed, only the local Strathalbyn mill would be adversely affected by the closing of the line in that area.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Who runs that?



Mr. McANANEY: It is owned by the Strathalbyn Milling Company.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Not by Senator Laucke?

Mr. McANANEY: I am not replying to the honourable member, because I know that you, Mr. Speaker, are strict in interpreting Standing Orders, and that you would not allow me to reply. The evidence received by the Public Works Committee indicated that only the milling company would be affected by the closure of the Strathalbyn line.

Mr. Jennings: You're on the wrong line.

Mr. McANANEY: I am referring to the general principle of the necessity to close a line.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member must link his remarks to the Eudunda-Morgan railway line.

Mr. McANANEY: In the case of this line also, only one group was to be affected by its closure, and I am merely making a comparison. By closing this line, we will save many thousands of dollars, whereas, if the railway line were kept open, it would merely serve one small group. It is better for the State as a whole if, when such a group is adversely affected by the closure of a line, a subsidy can be provided.

Mr. Jennings: I think you're talking about the Plimsoll line.

The SPEAKER: The member for Ross Smith is out of order.

Mr. McANANEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this case, the carting of wood is affected, whereas the carting of wheat and flour would have been affected by the closure of the Strathalbyn line. As a hardship would be imposed on the firewood industry if the railway line were closed, the Public Works Committee did its best—

The SPEAKER: We are not dealing with the Strathalbyn line.

Mr. McANANEY: No, Sir; I am referring to the carting of firewood. I am definitely referring to the Morgan line at present and to the carting of wood from the Eudunda area. The Public Works Committee was more or less willing to have the line closed, as long as some other provision could be made for carting the wood. However, such a proviso was *ultra vires* the committee's power: the committee either had to say that the railway line should stay open or that it should be closed. The point I am making is that it should be Government policy that the Transport Control Board should have an obligation, before recommending the closure of a

line, to nominate an alternative method of transport for goods or passengers involved. A similar problem to that which involved the transport of wood at Morgan involved the transport of grain and flour at Strathalbyn.

The SPEAKER: Order! Strathalbyn is not dealt with in the Bill.

Mr. McANANEY: I am emphasizing that the Transport Control Board should have to find an alternative means of transport before recommending that a line be closed. I am glad to see that the Minister of Roads and Transport has come around to the position where, if it is shown that a railway line is providing no service to the public, he believes that line should be closed. We congratulate the Minister on the fact that, since he has been a Minister, he has grown in stature and is more mature in his outlook on life. He will see that some of these lines that are not patronized are closed.

Mr. CLARK (Elizabeth): I was not sure whether the member for Heysen was supporting or opposing this Bill as he concluded his remarks. I support it, although I must say that I do so without much enthusiasm but with certain reluctance. I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that I will not be speaking about the Strathalbyn to Victor Harbour line, for I believe that this matter will be the subject of other legislation later this session.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Not likely!

Mr. CLARK: I was rather unhappy to see the Eudunda-Morgan line closed. My thoughts go back to the old days when Morgan was an important centre of our transport system, and when river steamers were working at full blast, taking provisions to the hinterland. From Morgan, through Eudunda, goods were brought to the metropolitan area. However, those days are past.

Now, because conditions have completely changed, this line is being closed and, although with reluctance, I must agree that closure should take place. Only an extremely favourable freight rate for wood merchants in Mount Mary and Bower who have supplied firewood to the metropolitan area has kept the line open for so long.

Unfortunately, the Railways Department can no longer make available such low freight rates, and so the industry will be in an unfortunate position. The matter was referred to the Public Works Committee, which found, on completely reliable evidence, that on this line the Railways Department was losing \$48,000

a year. We were also told that capital expenditure of \$611,000 would be needed to upgrade the line. The committee considered the matter carefully, visited the towns concerned and took evidence in them. I pay a tribute to Mr. Boord, the Chairman of the District Council of Morgan, who was most helpful to members of the committee and put his case to us clearly. The committee did not like dealing a possible death blow to the firewood industry, but it was obvious to us that to keep the railway open was uneconomic, and so the committee's recommendations stated:

The committee adopts the recommendation of the Transport Control Board that the Eudunda to Morgan railway line be closed but subject to the provision by the South Australian Railways of an alternative means of freighting firewood from the existing communities between Eudunda and Morgan at standard firewood rates because of the opinions set out in paragraph 3 of this report.

Although we made that recommendation with the best of intentions, before long the Crown Solicitor advised that the Public Works Committee did not have the right to make a report that had contingencies attached to it. We found that we had to say either "Yes" or "No", but the Transport Control Board (doubtless, after giving full recognition to the Public Works Committee's recommendation) stated in its recommendation:

- (a) That the Eudunda to Morgan railway line be closed.
- (b) That all assistance possible be given to aid the retention of the firewood industry in the Morgan and Mount Mary areas.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: By a co-ordinated service.

Mr. CLARK: I am pleased to hear the Minister say that, and I hope he tells us more about it. This matter has caused me some concern, because as far as I know all that has been done is that a ramp has been provided at Eudunda to assist in the loading of firewood. For some time, I, as Chairman, and members of the Public Works Committee have been concerned about the closing of railway lines. At the moment, the closing of a line is referred to the Public Works Committee, which decides whether or not the line should be closed, and this must be done within 28 days. However, the Transport Control Board, when it is considering the matter before its reference to the committee, has months and possibly years to do so.

I submit that 28 days is not long enough for the matter to be considered by the Public Works Committee, particularly when the House is sitting and particularly when a detailed

investigation is required of the area served by the line in question. As Chairman of the Public Works Committee, I wrote to the previous Minister of Roads and Transport suggesting that the 28-day period be extended to 60 days. The Minister agreed to this, and legislation was to be introduced to give effect to this extension. However, for some reason, which is unknown to me (in fact, it was rumoured to me that the relevant docket had been lost), this legislation was never introduced.

I ask the present Minister of Roads and Transport, in the interests of the efficient working of the Public Works Committee and particularly in the interests of people who are anxious to place evidence before the committee in favour of retaining a railway line, to consider extending to 60 days the period within which the Public Works Committee can take evidence and decide on the closing of a line. I believe that this is most important and that it should be done as soon as possible. I previously stated accidentally that the Victor Harbour line might subsequently be considered by Parliament, and the Minister interjected and said that this was not likely.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Its closure was rejected by the Public Works Committee.

Mr. CLARK: Yes. However, if the Minister will forgive me for saying so, I fear that unless something is done to encourage people to use this line more frequently (something along the lines of the special trip to go soon to the Victor Harbour area at a cheap rate), it will not be long before the closure of the Victor Harbour line is recommended also.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Removal of portion of the railway."

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO (Minister of Roads and Transport): We know that when the Public Works Committee is considering a reference dealing with the closure of a railway line there can be no ifs, buts or provisos; it must be a straight-out "Yes" or "No". Under this clause, it is a straight-out "Yes"; the line is to be removed. However, this decision was made on the premise that provision would be made for a co-ordinated rail-road service (travelling by rail to Eudunda and by road to Morgan) in respect of the carting of firewood. I was amazed that neither the member for Frome nor other members on his side referred to the fact that the original agreement made with the character concerned regarding this

service has now been repudiated. This has, unfortunately, happened in all too many cases when a transport service has been handed over to private enterprise, which considers profits and not the provision of a service. The arrangement made in this case has completely broken down, and I hope that this will be one of the last Bills introduced into this Chamber dealing with provisions to close a railway line that exists as a service to the community.

Clause passed.

Clause 4 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

## PUBLIC FINANCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 6. Page 571.)

Mr. HALL (Leader of the Opposition): I suppose the key sentence in the Treasurer's second reading explanation is that "the recommendations on which the Bill has been based were made by the Under Treasurer after detailed consultations with the Auditor-General". We have a great respect for both those officers, and I think we can all agree to the reasons for the Bill as outlined by the Treasurer. It is several days since I have referred to any notes on this measure, but I notice that I have a question that I may ask in Committee. We have been dealing frequently with this figure of \$27,000,000 since the Loan Estimates were introduced. This is the interest-free grant that we will get this year from the Commonwealth Government towards our Loan programme. Therefore, this will eventually relieve the State of the burden that would have been its lot had this new grant not been available in this form. Therefore, this Bill, which makes this workable under the State's statutory arrangements, is welcome. We will agree to it as a matter of convenience, as we wish to expedite this matter so that there is no inconvenience.

The Treasurer has said that there are three main reasons for introducing the Bill. One reason that is interesting is that, because of the growth of business in the State, the provision for excess expenditure is inadequate, and this expenditure will no longer be governed by a direct figure included in the Act; at present it is limited to \$1,200,000 of which no more than \$400,000 can be for new lines. I believe this is a good move that the Treasurer is suggesting on the advice of his officers. The percentage fixed will provide flexibility and will ensure that we do not have to deal with

this matter again in the foreseeable future. The excess will be governed by the size of the Budget. This is an advantage, as we should not amend Acts any more than is necessary. The percentage, which is fixed at 1 per cent of the amount provided in the annual Appropriation Act, is a sensible arrangement that I fully support. We all approve of this grant from the Commonwealth for capital purposes, instead of loans. We also approve, as a matter of convenience, the provisions relating to the excess expenditure.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—"Interpretation."

Mr. HALL (Leader of the Opposition): It could well be that the words "or otherwise" in the definition of borrowed moneys are included for the sake of convenience. However, I understood that all borrowings had to be within the framework of the Financial Agreement. Can the Treasurer comment on this?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Premier and Treasurer): Moneys that come to us under grant are not moneys provided under the Financial Agreement. The Financial Agreement, which was incorporated in the Commonwealth Constitution by the 1927 referendum, refers only to the actual borrowed money. As this is coming to us as a grant, it is not money that arises from borrowings under the Financial Agreement.

Mr. Hall: But we receive grants for divers other purposes.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: They do not come under the Financial Agreement; they come under sections of the Constitution. All the grants that we get, for instance, from the Commonwealth Grants Commission come under section 96 of the Constitution and not under the Financial Agreement.

Clause passed.

Clauses 3 to 8 passed.

Clause 9—"The Loan Fund Account."

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I move:

After "amended" to insert "(a) by inserting after the word 'expended' in paragraph (b) of subsection (2) the passage 'from the Loan Fund account or'; and "(b)"; and to strike out "paragraph" and insert "paragraphs".

This amendment is consequential upon the insertion by this clause of paragraph (c) in subsection (2) of section 38. Paragraph (c) authorizes the inclusion in the Loan Fund account of moneys derived from grants for capital purposes and, as any recovery of expenditure from such grants should properly

be repaid to the Loan Fund account for further expenditure upon capital purposes, it is desirable to provide specifically, as this amendment does, that this should be done.

Amendment carried.

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

- (ca) any money received by the Treasurer from the sale of lands belonging to the Crown, notwithstanding that the lands sold may not have been acquired out of moneys provided from the Loan Fund account or from borrowed moneys, where the Treasurer is satisfied that the money so received should be available to be appropriated for expenditure upon land acquisition from the Loan Fund account.

It has been the practice since this State has had self-government to pay into revenue the proceeds of sale of lands belonging to the Crown except for those lands actually acquired out of borrowed moneys.

In fact, for a long period in this State's history the proceeds of sales of Crown lands was a large part of the revenue of the State. Until recently, it was the practice to acquire lands for public parks, reserves and open areas from vote from revenue. However, the recent practice has been to make the latter expenditures from the Loan Fund account, and the sums involved have so increased as ordinarily to exceed the recoveries from the sale of Crown lands credited to revenue. It would seem proper that in the future the proceeds of the sale of Crown lands should ordinarily be paid to Loan Fund account and not to revenue. This amendment provides for the statutory authority, if the Treasurer thinks it proper to do so, to pay moneys into the Loan Fund account rather than to revenue.

Mr. HALL: I assume that the imbalance to which the Treasurer refers is the result of revenue from land sales now not equalling the cost of land purchases. This means that land sale revenue is actually falling. We have practically come to the end of the new land for development that we have had for sale, although many millions of acres of land is still held under perpetual lease. I take it that it is not the Government's policy to sell that land (I do not agree with the policy, but that does not come within this debate). I take it that there is not much to look forward to in the way of Government sales in this direction. This seems to be a way of increasing the value of the Loan Account at the expense of the Budget. Can the Treasurer say how much is involved?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: We are no longer deriving much revenue from sales of land. From time to time land no longer required for Crown purposes is sold. However, this is no longer a revenue transaction; it is really a capital transaction. In the circumstances, it seems more appropriate, since we are buying land for national parks out of the Loan Fund, that the moneys received from the sale of what is basically State capital in land should go back into the Loan Fund so that it can be used to purchase land for national reserves and pleasure resorts. It seems better to do this than to transfer the sum to the general revenue to be used for other purposes. While it cannot be specifically earmarked, the purpose for which the money is to be used is obvious.

Mr. HALL: I am not criticizing the Treasurer on this move, but an accounting principle is involved. It is not just a formality, as are some other transactions, and I think the Treasurer should state the approximate figure involved.

Mr. EASTICK: This refers to the acquisition of land and not to its development. If the fund were built up so much that it was not practicable to spend the money on acquiring land, would such money be used to develop land as national parks?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: We are not confining ourselves merely to acquisition, but we intend to spend money on development.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 10 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

#### REFERENDUM (METROPOLITAN AREA SHOP TRADING HOURS) BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council with the following amendment:

Page 2, line 14 (clause 3)—Leave out "As soon as convenient" and insert "Not less than one month".

Consideration in Committee.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL (Minister of Labour and Industry): I move:

That the Legislative Council's amendment be disagreed to.

The effect of the amendment is to alter the date of the referendum, which we suggested should be as soon as convenient and which the Council suggests should be not less than one month from now. As we do not want people to have to vote on two separate occasions in a short space of time, we want the referendum to be held on the same day as the by-election for the Legislative Council

seat of Midland is held. If the Council's amendment were accepted, people would be required to vote at the Midland by-election on September 12 and, within a couple of weeks, some of the people who had voted at that by-election would have to vote at the referendum.

Mr. Clark: That could be on football grand final day.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: Yes, or certainly on the day of a football semi-final. Another particularly important factor is the cost involved. A large saving will result from holding the referendum and the by-election on the same day. These matters were thoroughly canvassed in the debate on this matter; I ask members to disagree to the amendment.

Mr. HALL (Leader of the Opposition) I understand the Minister's feelings on the matter, and I sympathize with him because certainly one of the Government's intentions in wanting to have the referendum on the same day as the by-election was to gain a political advantage. If the amendment is carried, that advantage will disappear. However, this amendment is a real test of the Government's sincerity in relation to this referendum. From the Government's reaction to the amendment, we will see how much it really wants to have a referendum on the issue involved as against how much it wants to effect a compulsory vote in about half the Midland District.

We should not ask only one question on one aspect, but should ask questions on all other matters relating to the alteration of trading hours. Despite the amendments that were moved in this place and despite what was said in another place, no other amendments have been moved, for which I am sorry. An important aspect of the Bill is the date on which the referendum is to be held and the lopsided effect that it is intended to have. It is not as if compulsory voting for the referendum is being attempted throughout the Midland District: this is being done in only a part of Midland. The Minister knows this, so why is he afraid to ask the public the full range of questions that many of them have said they would like to answer?

It could well be that the Legislative Council is following its precept of not wrecking Government legislation; it probably knows that it would be unjustly blamed if the Bill were defeated. It has therefore taken a middle course to test the Minister's sincerity. We will see, after all the interjections he has made

in this House over the last few years and the speech he made in winding up the second reading debate, the great chance that the Minister is going to give the people around the metropolitan area. We will see whether the people in the outer areas will lose their freedom of trading hours. The Minister realizes the enormous campaign that the Adelaide shopping interests will mount against this referendum, and he realizes that there is union opposition to a "Yes" vote. I am sure that he expects the referendum to fail. This is indeed an important amendment which will test the Minister's sincerity and which will put the Legislative Council election in Midland on an equal footing of voluntary voting throughout that district.

The Government could have done two things: it could have made voting throughout Midland compulsory by making this a State-wide referendum or it could have made voting on the referendum voluntary. However, it should not cut through Midland in the unfair way it has tried to do. I wholeheartedly support the Legislative Council's amendment. I only wish that there were more of them dealing with other parts of the Bill.

Mr. COUNBE: The Committee is being asked to consider one amendment only, regarding when the referendum is to be held. If the Government is sincere in introducing this legislation—

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Which it is!

Mr. COUNBE: I am pleased to hear that. What objection, then, does the Government have to altering the date? The Minister said that much money would be saved if the referendum were held on the same day as the Midland by-election, but according to him the estimated cost of the referendum would be about \$75,000 if held on an ordinary day compared with a cost of about \$10,000 if held on the same day as the by-election. I am sure that during the life of the present Government much larger sums than \$10,000 have been thrown away on far less important matters.

The Hon. G. R. Broomhill: How many times did you waste \$10,000 when you were a Minister?

Mr. COUNBE: The Opposition is not opposing the proposal of compulsory voting or of the expanded metropolitan area, but it supports the amendment for the referendum to be held on a day different from that proposed by the Government. However, if the Government is sincere it should not object to the alteration of the date. The people most concerned with this referendum, that is, the citizens of the

State and shopkeepers will not be affected if the referendum is held on another date. As this is a reasonable amendment, I support it.

The Committee divided on the motion:

Ayes (24)—Messrs. Broomhill (teller), Brown, and Burdon, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Clark, Corcoran, Crimes, Curren, Dunstan, Groth, Harrison, Hopgood, Hudson, Jennings, Keneally, King, Langley, McKee, McRae, Payne, Simmons, Slater, Virgo, and Wells.

Noes (19)—Messrs. Allen, Becker, Brookman, Carnie, Coumbe, Eastick, Evans, Ferguson, Goldsworthy, Gunn, Hall (teller), Mathwin, McAnaney, Nankivell, and Rodda, Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Tonkin, Venning, and Wardle.

Majority of 5 for the Ayes.

Amendment thus disagreed to.

The following reason for disagreement was adopted:

Because the amendment would cause unnecessary inconvenience to electors and additional Government expense.

*Later:*

The Legislative Council intimated that it insisted on its amendment to which the House of Assembly had disagreed.

In Committee.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL moved:

That disagreement to the Legislative Council's amendment be insisted on.

Mr. HALL: I am sorry that the Government is insisting on disagreeing. It has what it wants: we accept the strength of the Government and will not argue. However, surely the Government will not risk what it has now by disagreeing to this amendment.

Motion carried.

A message was sent to the Legislative Council requesting a conference, at which the Assembly would be represented by Messrs. Broomhill, Dunstan, Eastick, Hall, and Simmons.

*Later:*

A message was received from the Legislative Council agreeing to the conference to be held in the Legislative Council conference room at 3.30 p.m. on Thursday, August 27.

## SUPREME COURT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (VALUATION)

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 6. Page 573.)

Mr. NANKIVELL (Mallee): Having discussed and examined the Bill, I have no principal objection to the amendments being made: they seem to be sensible. The only point I wish to raise with the Attorney-General

is that, when this area of justice was set up, the objective was to appoint to the Land Valuation Court a judge who would become a specialist in this field. I think the House agreed that there was a need to have a judge with special knowledge, because of the nature and possible magnitude of some of the litigation that might take place as a result of land acquisition for various Government and other purposes.

Although I accept, for various reasons, that it is true that this judge can be relieved of this jurisdiction for such reasons as ill health or because he may need a change if he is suffering from a surfeit of cases dealing specifically with land valuation, nevertheless I consider that it would be unwise to have such a specialist judge used on the roster of Supreme Court judges and to have this jurisdiction treated in a similar way to any other jurisdiction.

Whilst I think that we on this side accept that there is good reason for making it possible for the judge in question to be relieved of his responsibility in this field in some circumstances, I think it would be unwise, in view of the fact that we have appointed a judge for a special purpose, to allow this area of justice to become rostered as a normal area for Supreme Court judges to work in. The other amendment, which refers to the master of the court, perhaps corrects an oversight in the original legislation. If a master makes a decision to which there is an objection, the matter should be capable of being referred to a judge of the court. I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—"Establishment of Land and Valuation Court."

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I ask the Attorney-General what is intended regarding the use of other judges in this court. The member for Mallee has not received a reply to his short statement, and I wonder whether it is intended to substitute judges for the usual judge at frequent intervals and for short periods only. How will this enabling legislation operate?

The Hon. L. J. KING (Attorney-General): Initially, the intention is that the jurisdiction will be conferred only on a limited number of Supreme Court judges. I shall have to confer with the Chief Justice before saying anything definite about the number of judges on whom the jurisdiction would be conferred.

Mr. Nankivell: The Bill refers to any other judge.

The Hon. L. J. KING: Power is there to confer the jurisdiction on any other judge. I have conferred with the present judge but have not yet conferred with the Chief Justice about his intention. The present intention is that at least one other judge and probably two other judges will have the jurisdiction. This type of work will be done almost exclusively by Mr. Justice Wells, and the other judges will be used only when Mr. Justice Wells, for some reason, finds it inconvenient to do the work. For example, he may have part-heard cases, or he may be engaged on court circuit work.

It is contemplated that, with the passage of time, the valuation work will be shared amongst a limited number of judges, probably three, but the exact working of the system will depend on the exigencies of the work of the court from time to time and on the views of the Chief Justice about the work that the other judges ought to do. I think that all I can say at present is that there is no intention to depart from the general policy of the 1969 amendment, namely, that the work will be performed by specific judges so as to preserve some consistency in valuations and also so that certain judges will have special experience in this jurisdiction. Really, the intention behind the amendment is that, instead of one judge being engaged on the work, two judges or, if the work justifies it, three judges will be engaged on this work, but the precise working out will depend largely on the Chief Justice, who must organize his court.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I think that explanation is satisfactory. The work of a land and valuation court requires much skill and considerable experience, and I suppose one of the important things is to have a consistent approach. Indeed, the fact that one judge has been initially appointed to do the work illustrates the view of the Government and the Opposition at the time.

As the Attorney-General has explained that it is still intended to limit matters dealt with in this court to a few judges, so that they will have an opportunity to establish a consistent approach and also, no doubt, to gain the experience that I presume is necessary, I think this measure is an improvement. I can see that previously the use of possibly only one judge might have meant that he would eventually become fed up with a surfeit of highly technical valuation matters, and also litigants might have considered that after a time it

would be a good thing to have a fresh mind dealing with these matters. Therefore, there is everything to be said for a certain amount of variation so long as it does not involve using the services frequently of new judges without any experience in this jurisdiction. I think the Attorney-General's explanation is a good one.

Clause passed.

Clause 3 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

#### HOUSING IMPROVEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 5. Page 524.)

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens): I support this Bill in principle, although I may have something further to say in Committee. Since I have been in this House, the principal Act has been debated on many occasions, and most of us who have been here for a few years will recall the rather fiery clashes that used to occur between the Premier, as the member for Norwood, and the former Premier of this State, Sir Thomas Playford. The first part of the Bill has my support, its provisions having been introduced as a result of the housing conditions existing during the Second World War. Those members, who have districts close to Adelaide which contain what one might call fairly old and dilapidated houses, have seen how the principal Act works in respect of their districts.

The first part of the Bill sets out to rectify a practice that has grown up relating to a notice served on a landlord to fix (in fact, reduce) the rent that he can charge a tenant. In the cases in question, the tenant has got over this by putting a few sticks in a room and charging any rent he wishes. I do not agree with that practice, and I support that part of the Bill dealing with it. From inquiries that I have made and from my experience in local government matters, I know that councils have co-operated fully with the housing improvement section of the Housing Trust in implementing these provisions.

The relevant authorities implement the provisions of section 23 of the Housing Improvement Act rather than the provisions under either the Health Act or the Building Act. Having dealt with the first part of the Bill, I refer here to clause 5(d), which sets out the categories of various people covered under this measure, and I have no cavil at this provision. Also, I support the provision contained in new

subsection (3a) specifying that no costs will be applied. However, new subsection (6) provides:

A person who, otherwise than in pursuance of the order of a court of competent jurisdiction, evicts or ejects a tenant from a house in respect of which a notice fixing the maximum rental is in force under this Part shall be guilty of an offence against this Act.

As I understand this, it means that a landlord, who because of the condition of his house (it may be run down or dilapidated) has a notice served on him stating that he is to have certain improvements effected to that house or that certain things must be undertaken, shall not evict a tenant unless he obtains a court order. Why should a landlord have to obtain a court order in these circumstances, particularly when the rent has been reduced, in order to evict a tenant? The previous provision deals with special classes of people, namely, members of a family and members of an employer's work force, who can occupy the houses in question. I should like the Premier, as Minister in charge of housing, to explain why this provision has been inserted. If a landlord who is required to have certain work done on a house does not obtain a court order in order to evict a tenant, he may be guilty of an offence. As this provision seems rather sweeping, I should like information about it. I agree to the rest of the provisions in the Bill. Does new subsection (6) mean that a landlord who has received a notice fixing the maximum rental cannot eject his tenant unless a court order is served?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Premier and Treasurer): The answer is quite simple. The eviction or ejection of a tenant from a house without the order of a court of competent jurisdiction is an offence under the Criminal Law Consolidation Act anyway: it is the offence of forcible entry, which has been a crime since the time of Elizabeth I. Many landlords do not realize this, particularly landlords who have tenants living in substandard premises. I have had to call policemen in matters of this type, and they are not really up to the mark on the crime of forcible entry; it is not dealt with at the Police Training Academy.

Mr. Coumbe: Is forcible eviction in the same category?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Yes; a person cannot go in a house and put someone out by force unless he has an order of the court. In the case of substandard houses, it is much easier to proceed under this Act summarily than to take proceedings under the Criminal

Law Consolidation Act by way of information. This Bill provides a simpler way of dealing with the matter.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 4 passed.

Clause 5—"Orders for possession."

Mr. COUMBE: A landlord normally leases his premises for a fixed period and can give notice to terminate a tenancy when he wishes. Can the Premier say whether new subsection (6) of section 61 in any way affects the rights of a landlord in the circumstances I have set out?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Premier and Treasurer): No, it does not affect the right of a landlord to give a notice to quit, which is the ordinary way in which one would proceed. However, the rest of the Act inhibits the right of a landlord to give notice to quit, because the notice to quit must be on one of the grounds set forth. As long as it is on one of those grounds, the landlord can give notice to quit. If a tenant leaves in response to a notice to quit, that is all right; if he does not, the landlord must, as in all other cases, get a court order enforcing his right to possession.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I take it from the Premier's remarks that ejection or eviction cannot take place legally in any circumstances without a court order. Will he explain why new subsection (6) is needed if eviction without a court order is prohibited in any circumstances?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: It is to allow proceedings to be taken summarily pursuant to this Act if an offence of this kind occurs rather than by information under the Criminal Law Consolidation Act, which is a much more lengthy and expensive procedure. This is a simple way of dealing with something that has tended to become prevalent, particularly with some migrant landlords, who seem to think that, if there is something they do not like about a tenant, they can take his traps and put him in the street. In my district, I have just about had to fight on the footpath with a landlord. Then I have had to move back the tenant into the property by force and say to the landlord, "You sue me for trespass or do what you like." It is much simpler in these proceedings to make use of a summary offence in this way rather than proceed by information for what is in fact a felony under the Criminal Law Consolidation Act.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (6 to 8) and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.



KINGSWOOD RECREATION GROUND  
(VESTING) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 6. Page 574.)

Mr. CUMBE (Torrens): I have much pleasure in supporting this Bill, because it is one that I would have had the privilege of introducing had I been sitting where the Minister of Education is sitting now, and I congratulate him on introducing it. Although this is a simple matter, it is one that many public-spirited citizens have been trying to resolve for several years without success. The Corporation of the City of Mitcham has now agreed to take over the ground and conduct it as a recreation reserve, and everyone seems to be happy about it. My one regret is that the member for Mitcham, being unwell, is not

here tonight to support the Bill. I know he, as representative of the district, has struggled for some years to get finality on this matter. On his behalf I say to all concerned how pleased we are that the matter is now successfully concluded.

Bill read a second time and referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Hon. Hugh Hudson, Messrs. Langley, Millhouse, and Payne, and Mrs. Steele; the committee to have power to send for persons, papers and records, and to adjourn from place to place; the committee to report on September 22.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9.47 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, August 27, at 2 p.m.