

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, March 10, 1971

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

QUESTIONS

LAND VALUATIONS

Mr. HALL: Will the Treasurer say what date applies in regard to fixing the value of improvements, as defined in the Land Tax Act, 1970, in connection with the new quinquennial assessment based on unimproved land values? Land tax in this State is very much a matter of public discussion at present, particularly in country areas, as there have been extreme increases in the tax that country landowners will pay. For the Treasurer's guidance and to refresh his memory, I quote the definition of "improvements" in the Act, as follows:

"improvements" means houses and buildings, fixtures and other building improvements of any kind whatsoever, fences, bridges, roads, tanks, wells, dams, fruit trees, bushes, shrubs and other plants planted or sown, whether for trade or other purposes, draining of land, ringbarking, clearing of timber or scrub and any other actual improvements;

Obviously, the value is fixed, as earlier defined, on the "capital amount that an unencumbered estate of fee simple in the land might reasonably be expected to realize upon sale assuming that any improvements thereon (except, in the case of land not used for primary production, any site improvements), the benefit of which is unexhausted at the time of valuation, had not been made". It becomes pertinent, therefore, to consider what is the value of improvements, and the date of fixing that value is of extreme importance. To give the Treasurer one illustration, I point out that, in relation to land that was cleared of heavy scrub 100 years ago, the full value of that clearing is still evident in agricultural production. I should like to know the date at which the value of that clearing has been fixed. Will the Treasurer therefore say what date applies in regard to taking the value of improvements, in order to determine the unimproved value?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The duty of the Valuer-General is to disregard the improvements. If the Leader is asking me to give the date on which the quinquennial assessment is made concerning valuations, it is June 30, 1970, in respect of the current quinquennial assessment. What happened in

relation to the quinquennial assessment was that, before we took office, a reassessment taking into account movements in prices over the five years to that time had been fairly effectively made. When we took office, I directed that a reassessment be made to see that full account was taken of the falls in prices of land in all rural production areas of the State. That reassessment was made, and it resulted in significant reductions in the assessments in many areas. The falls in land prices in rural areas were by no means uniform: they varied widely from area to area. Wherever it had been shown that there had been reductions in the market value of land, this was taken into account. We did not stop there. Despite the fact that the Act requires that the date at which the assessment shall be taken shall be June 30, 1970, subsequent falls in the prices of land were taken into account before assessments were sent out. It is remarkable that, in relation to more than 350,000 assessments that have so far been posted out, from the rural area of South Australia fewer than 1,000 objections have been made to valuation on assessment, and everyone of those will be properly dealt with.

Mr. Gunn: But they just received them.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: In most cases that is not so.

Mr. Gunn: In many cases it is.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Wherever objections are made to assessments they will be properly and sympathetically dealt with. The Valuer-General has tried to reach an effective valuation of the unimproved value of the land in accordance with the terms of the Act. Despite the fact that, under the Act, he is somewhat restricted in relation to his valuation, he has been directed (and he has acceded to this direction) to use falls in value since June 30 in arriving at the assessments that have been posted out.

Mr. VENNING: Will the Treasurer examine valuations now being sent out to rural landholders with a view to ascertaining whether they bear an accurate relationship to land values as at July 1?

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Leader of the Opposition has asked a question which I think embraces the subject matter of the question asked by the honourable member. However, I will hear the honourable member's explanation.

Mr. VENNING: Several meetings of primary producers throughout the State have been held since these assessments were sent out,

and these people are concerned that there may be an increase in the valuations. One must remember that land valuations on July 1, 1970, which was the value for the new quinquennial assessment, would have been considerably lower than they were on July 1, 1965, when the previous quinquennial assessment period began. In view of this situation, and as much trouble is being caused to the rural community, will the Treasurer examine this matter?

The SPEAKER: I think this question was embraced in the Leader's overall question. Does the Treasurer wish to reply?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Yes, Sir. An examination of the property sales in all areas of South Australia does not bear out the honourable member's contention that, at July 1, 1970, land values were lower than they were at July 1, 1965. Indeed, there were significant increases in values in almost every area. The Government provided that there should be a reassessment to take into account any recent falls in land values, and it has allowed the Valuer-General to take into account falls in values since July 1, 1970, despite the fact that that is the date on which the assessment is to be made. The Government is therefore doing its utmost to take into account any falls in land values. I point out, however, that the values taken from land sales in rural areas of the State show that in practically every area there have been significant increases in land values between July 1, 1965, and July 1, 1970, and that can be shown in detail. The Valuer-General examined not only sales and land values in South Australia but also those in the western districts of Victoria, and he not only took into account the individual sales in certain areas but also communicated with local councils and stock agents before the valuations were made. It is significant that the number of objections received in relation to rural land assessments is extremely small. I said that less than 1,000 had been received but, in fact, the figure is about 600 out of the 351,000 assessments sent out.

Mr. VENNING: Will the Treasurer say whether it is technically correct that the last quinquennial assessment was made on values at July 1, 1970? The Treasurer said that during this five-year period land values had hit their peak. It has been confirmed that they reached their peak in 1968-69 but, with the introduction of wheat quotas and falling wool prices, land values dropped considerably. Is the average for this period considered when unimproved values are being worked out, or is the value at July 1, 1970 considered?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: It is the value at July 1, 1970. Although in an examination of sales to arrive at a correct assessment of the value, land sales during the quinquennial period are considered, the Government had a reassessment made immediately upon taking office at the end of May last. As a result of this, recent land sales in all rural areas of the State were considered closely and reductions in proposed assessments made. Even though that was already done, we have allowed the Valuer-General to consider some falling land prices since July 1, so what has happened constantly is that recent sales are considered, not the earlier sales made in certain areas when rural sales and land sales may have hit a high. Even though recent sales are considered, the values in most areas of the State are still significantly above those of July 1, 1965.

MILK

Mr. RYAN: Has the Minister of Works obtained from the Minister of Agriculture a reply to my recent question about a new innovation in relation to milk that will keep without refrigeration?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: My colleague states that the "ultra high temperature" treatment of milk is a process whereby milk is heated to a temperature within the 270-300°F. range for a period of about one to two seconds. There are several variations of the process and all are designed to achieve total destruction of micro-organisms by the momentary heating of milk or cream to temperatures about 110-140°F. higher than temperatures normally used for milk pasteurization. In 1966-67 an extensive survey was made of market prospects for this milk within this State and Australia, and for export. In 1967, the Metropolitan Milk Supply Act was amended to provide for the treatment by U.H.T. processes of milk and cream sold within the metropolitan area. However, after exhaustive examination the company that made the survey decided not to proceed with the marketing of U.H.T. treated milk for a variety of reasons, amongst which were the higher cost to the consumer (some 6c to 8c more than pasteurized milk), some unresolved technical problems, and a change in flavour that could have affected public acceptance of the product. From the information the Minister of Agriculture has given, the honourable member will see that existing legislation permits treatment plants licensed by the board to operate U.H.T. plants. However, if the milk were sold within the metropolitan

area, it would have to originate from dairies licensed by the board and in accordance with prices that would be fixed by the board.

STATE'S FINANCES

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Will the Treasurer say whether the Government has yet completed its examination of areas of public expenditure with a view to making specific reductions in Government activities? I raised this matter with the honourable gentleman on February 23, during Question Time, after he made his Ministerial statement on financial measures. In his reply to me the Treasurer said:

At this stage I will not say that \$20,000 will be cut off here and \$40,000 cut off there. We are examining every area of public expenditure.

I was injudicious enough to interject as follows:

That means absolutely nothing.

The Treasurer then went on to say:

If the honourable member thinks that—

and I obviously did, having said it—

I assure him that I will take some measures that he will take notice of.

My question is directed to ascertaining whether the Government intends to take any measures of which I will take notice.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I should have thought that the honourable member's dress in this House today was an obvious indication that he had already taken notice of measures taken by this Government, which has announced that it does not intend to proceed with expenditure on Parliament House, even though the air-conditioning has on several occasions broken down. In addition, the total expenditure, both from Revenue and Loan, has been examined in considerable detail and, indeed, it has been possible for the Government to defer some payments that would otherwise have been made. This occurs in some cases naturally and without any further action by the Government, and in some cases simply by directing that a longer period be taken to carry out work involved. In consequence, I expect that at the end of this financial year the total of the accounts of the State will be broadly in balance.

Mr. Millhouse: You are talking now of Loan expenditure, are you?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: There have been reductions in both Revenue and Loan expenditure, and I expect that at the end of this financial year the total of the State's accounts will be broadly in balance.

Mr. Millhouse: Can you give us any details?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I shall be able to report to the House in due course on the area of lesser spending, but I will do so from results rather than from forecasts.

Mr. Millhouse: So we are going to hear nothing.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The honourable member has already heard far more from this Government than the information that his Government was ever willing to present to this House about its prospective expenditure.

Mr. CUMBE: When will the Treasurer be able to reply to the question I asked about 10 days ago about the financial statement made in this House, particularly regarding the extent of the 6 per cent arbitration court award increase and the amount of over-award payments? I have not received a reply and the Treasurer has not told me that he has it.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I will ask the Under Treasurer to expedite the reply. I have it listed in my file, but it is not with me at present.

SCHOOL EXPENDITURE

Mr. CLARK: Will the Minister of Education say whether, in view of his expressed policy of encouraging autonomy and initiative within schools, the report in today's *News* that in a memorandum to heads of schools he has ordered a severe clamping down on school expenses is correct?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I thank the honourable member for his question. My attention has been drawn to the report in the *News* of a memorandum that I have sent to headmasters of Education Department schools. The report commences by stating:

A severe clampdown on school expenses was ordered today by the Education Minister, Mr. Hudson.

It is certainly not true that the memorandum to which the report refers orders the schools to do anything and, for the information of the member for Elizabeth, who obviously wants to be assured on this point, and also for the information of the member for Mitcham and other members, I will read the memorandum. It states:

The revenue funds voted to the Education Department for conducting Education Department services in the 1970-71 financial year were \$74,696,731. This vote involved a record increase in the funds voted for any one year. These increased funds were the most the Government could make available, having regard to other essential commitments, and were expected to be sufficient for efficient conduct of the schools, together with some improvement in staffing and conditions in the schools.

Through circumstances beyond the Government's control, these funds are insufficient to carry out all that was envisaged. Indeed salary increases will mean that the appropriation will be exceeded by a substantial amount. Nevertheless, it is firm Government policy that there will be no cessation in the drive to improve staffing and conditions in the schools. This policy of continuing the recruitment of teachers means that reasonable savings must be made in other Government expenditure, hence the necessity to make savings in less vital areas of expenditure in the schools. The money saved thereby will be used for staffing and other essential education services. Even small savings in each school accumulate into a significant amount over the whole State.

I know that the Director-General and I will have your full co-operation in making these savings. I suggest some items where savings may be made without undue reduction of efficiency: only essential materials and equipment should be requisitioned; the use of fuel, gas, electricity and water should be watched carefully; metropolitan schools should make maximum use of the courier service to save postage; and the telephone should be used only for official business and S.T.D. should not be used at all. I shall be grateful if you will circulate this memorandum to your staff and discuss the matter with them, as they probably will have worthwhile suggestions to make. May I assure you that our purpose in instituting an economy campaign of this nature is to ensure that the maximum amount of limited funds is available to employ teachers and to maintain effectively other ancillary and essential services and equipment.

The Hon. J. D. Corcoran: That doesn't sound like the report in the newspaper, does it?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: No. The remainder of the report in the *News* is broadly correct but this memorandum requests the co-operation of headmasters and staffs in securing sensible economies in the operation of schools. I know that in our business activities, for example, and in our homes we are often careless in using fuel, electricity, and even the telephone, and in present circumstances it is perfectly reasonable and proper that schools, as well as other Government departments, should be asked to assist the Government by ensuring that expenditure in these areas is kept to the absolute minimum.

STUDENT HOSTELS

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: Will the Minister of Social Welfare say what action he is taking following the reference in the Auditor-General's Report to the high cost of some of the student hostels under the Minister's control? The Auditor-General states that the cost of running one hostel for older school-children last year averaged \$59 a child a week,

and he has commented on the high cost of this and other institutions.

The Hon. L. J. KING: The cost of maintaining and operating institutions is a constant source of worry, rising prices having increased costs significantly. Efforts are being made to reduce this burden on the vote of the Social Welfare Department and the policy of the department, which I have encouraged, is to minimize as far as possible the number of children who are maintained in institutions. Wherever possible, the department tries to ensure that children remain in their own homes with the support of social welfare attention, and the fostering of children is being stimulated and encouraged in every possible way.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: Wouldn't that raise the actual cost instead of reduce it?

The Hon. L. J. KING: That depends on the use to which the institutions can be put. Efforts are being made to use parts of two institutions for other purposes. Under the proposed juvenile delinquent legislation to be introduced soon we will have assessment centres that will have to be housed, and investigations are being made to see whether we can use existing institutions for that purpose. There are other ways the Director is examining to see whether the existing institutions can be used in ways besides the mere housing and maintenance of the children that are in them. While children are in institutions they must be properly maintained and, if anything, the ratio of staff to inmates in these institutions is far too low. It would be a completely retrograde step to try to economize by reducing staff, so the problem admits of no easy solution.

It is easy to say that the cost is unduly high but there is no direct way of reducing costs, without depriving the children residing in the institutions of the care and attention to which they are entitled. The only way in which the problem can be tackled is to try to reduce the number of children in institutions and thereby the number of institutions, and also to use the institutions for purposes other than the mere housing of children. The matter is receiving the attention of the department and I assure the honourable member that we just do not believe that we must continue to be saddled with institutions of a conventional type where children are maintained, often in circumstances not conducive to their welfare and at high cost to the community.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Mr. HOPGOOD: Has the Attorney-General a reply from the Minister of Health to my recent question on health benefits?

The Hon. L. J. KING: My colleague reports:

In the case of treatment given by a matron in a country hospital there would be no account rendered by the doctor, the only account being a hospital account for casualty or outpatient treatment. If, as is the case with most country hospitals in South Australia, the hospital is recognized as a public hospital under Part IV of the Hospitals Act, 1934-1967, the payment of the Commonwealth benefit in respect of a professional service, where the medical expenses in respect of that service are paid or payable to an authority conducting such public hospital, is specifically barred by section 19 of the National Health Act, 1953-1970. Numerous approaches have been made to the Commonwealth by all States at various times for payment of Commonwealth benefits for outpatient or casualty treatment in such circumstances but the Commonwealth has so far rejected all of these requests.

NAILSWORTH TECHNICAL SCHOOL

Mr. COUMBE: Will the Minister of Education ascertain what progress has been made in respect of the proposed assembly hall at the Nailsworth Boys Technical High School and, at the same time, obtain details of the forward planning concerning the proposed co-educational system to be established at that school?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I shall be pleased to do that for the honourable member.

RIDGEHAVEN HIGH SCHOOL

Mrs. BYRNE: Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked on March 2 about what stage the Education Department had reached in planning the Ridgehaven High School and about other relevant matters?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Tea Tree Gully, instead of Ridgehaven, has been selected as the most suitable site for a new secondary school to relieve Modbury High School, and the Public Buildings Department has been asked to prepare plans for this school, to be ready for occupation as soon as possible. However, by the time the project runs the whole gamut of design, reference to the Public Works Standing Committee, working drawings, tendering and construction, it is evident that the school will not be available before 1974. I may say for the information of the honourable member and other members that all future secondary schools will be general purpose high schools, and that there will not be a distinction, as in the past, between high schools and technical high schools.

SOCIAL WORKERS

Dr. TONKIN: Has the Minister of Social Welfare a reply to my previous question about social workers?

The Hon. L. J. KING: The reply is as follows:

(1) Four students who have begun full-time social work studies at Flinders University and the South Australian Institute of Technology under the sponsorship of the Department of Social Welfare and Aboriginal Affairs this year. Six other students will continue full-time studies this year. A further 20 people commenced the one-year departmental training course for social work staff in January, 1971. Those who successfully complete the course will be appointed to the department's staff at the beginning of 1972.

(2) The number of social work staff employed in the Department of Social Welfare and Aboriginal Affairs has increased to a total of 122 (from a total of 107 last year).

(3) The department has not yet been able to obtain the full-time services of a psychiatrist.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

Mr. EVANS: Will the Attorney-General ascertain why applications for a commission of the peace by people in certain professions, particularly land agents, land brokers and land salesmen, are automatically refused? I do not believe that this situation has been brought about only during the present Government's term of office: it has existed for some time and, indeed, I believe that the previous Attorney-General (the member for Mitcham) was not in favour of granting this commission to the people concerned. It has been put to me that if a person is a justice of the peace before he becomes a land agent, land broker or land salesman, he may retain the commission, whereas, if a person applies for the commission after entering any one of those professions, in all recent cases the commission has been refused. I believe that this presupposes automatically that people in the professions concerned—

The SPEAKER: The honourable member is starting to comment on the question.

Mr. EVANS: —are unprofessional and, by way of explanation, I point out that it has been put to me that people, including accountants and, in some cases, lawyers, are granted this commission and have an opportunity to sign documents associated with their business and profession. Will the Attorney-General have this matter investigated and report back to the House?

The Hon. L. J. KING: This has been a long-standing practice and it is based, I think, not on an assumption that persons in the business referred to by the honourable member are, to use his word, "unprofessional" but simply on the fact that to confer the commission of the peace on people in that business may well confer on them a competitive business advantage. Indeed, the reason for which they would want the commission would normally be to witness documents with which they have been concerned as agents in the transaction. It has been thought that there are reasons of policy why in those circumstances an independent person should witness the documents as a justice of the peace. I have not seen any reason to depart from the view taken by my predecessors in this regard. Although I am willing to consider the matter further, as at present advised I think there are sound reasons for the practice that has obtained in the past, and I doubt that I can be persuaded that it ought to be altered.

KEITH MAIN

Mr. RODDA: Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked last week about rural extensions from the Tailem Bend to Keith main?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The approximate total length of branch mains in the whole Tailem Bend to Keith scheme is 490 miles. To the end of February 1971, about 201 miles had been laid. Of this, 115 miles has been laid in the 1970-71 financial year. This progress is about 20 miles ahead of the target set for the year. Generally, most of the branch mains to the north of the Meningie-Coonalpyn road have now been laid. One main and portion of another has been deferred to suit the convenience of Coorong Water Supply Proprietary Limited, a portion of another is delayed awaiting details of a possible road deviation, and gangs are engaged laying the remaining two branch mains north of Coonalpyn. Investigations and interviews with landholders along all the branch main from the north down to the area immediately west of Tintinara have been completed and interviews along the mains proposed in the hundred of McNamara and south-west of Tintinara will be completed during the week commencing March 8, 1971.

This will leave the areas west, south and south-west of Keith, as well as the proposed main into the hundred of Pendleton, still to be investigated and covered by interviews with

the landholders. It is expected that this work will take until the middle of April, 1971, to complete. When these interviews are complete, an appraisal of the whole of the area south of Tintinara will be made to determine the final positions of branch mains in this area. I assure the honourable member that nothing has been done to slow down the work on these branch mains. It is still the planned intention to complete the 490 miles of the branch mains in four years from commencement, that is, by about June, 1973, and on this programme progress at present is slightly ahead of schedule.

CUMMINS HOSPITAL

Mr. CARNIE: Has the Attorney-General obtained from the Chief Secretary a reply to the question I asked on February 23 about the Cummins Hospital?

The Hon. L. J. KING: The Chief Secretary reports that funds to subsidize the rebuilding of the Cummins Hospital have been provided in the current financial year, and the balance will be sought on the Estimates for 1971-72.

STUDENT CONCESSION FARES

Mr. MATHWIN: Will the Minister of Roads and Transport consider extending concessional fares to full-time students travelling on Municipal Tramways Trust buses? As many parents, particularly those with several children, find it increasingly difficult to meet travelling expenses for their children who may have to travel long distances on buses and trains, I am sure that any help given would be appreciated.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I am not sure what reduction the honourable member is referring to. Concession fares are already available.

Mr. Mathwin: Adult students.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Concession fares are already available to students up to, I think, the age of 19 years.

Mr. Millhouse: The question refers to those over 19 years of age.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I am having much difficulty in trying to interpret what the honourable member is asking about. If he is asking whether we will consider concession fares for full-time students over the age of 19 years, I can say that this matter has already been considered thoroughly. At this time, we cannot extend concessions beyond those applying at present. However, the matter has not

been pigeon-holed: it is still being considered. If it is possible to do something in future, action will be taken.

PATAWALONGA BRIDGES

Mr. BECKER: Has the Minister of Roads and Transport a reply to my questions of March 2 and 3 about bridges over the Patawalonga Basin?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: It is not possible to defer works on the Patawalonga Basin, including the King Street bridge, until after the construction of the proposed deviation of Military Road. Highways Department proposals for Military Road have been submitted to the Civil Aviation Department as there is possible involvement with Adelaide Airport runway extensions. No reply has yet been received from the Civil Aviation Department on the runway extensions. In any case, the time required for design and land acquisition would not permit a Military Road bridge being commenced until 1973. The whole programme for works on the Patawalonga Basin is co-ordinated and important in line with the impending completion of the Sturt Creek works. Every effort must therefore be made to commence King Street bridge early in 1972.

The honourable member referred to an announcement in the press on March 3, 1971, by the Civil Aviation Department concerning the possible extension of the north-east south-west runway at Adelaide Airport by 2,000ft. I have not received any official advice of these plans, and until I do so I am not in a position to gauge the effect of the runway extension on the Highways Department's proposals to extend Brighton Road from Anzac Highway through the Glenelg North residential area to Tapley Hill Road.

OAKBANK AREA SCHOOL

Mr. McANANEY: Can the Minister of Education say what stage has been reached in planning the replacement of wooden buildings at the Oakbank Area School? As a member of the Public Works Committee, I have seen many school buildings replaced. However, the Oakbank school has one of the largest conglomerations of the old type of wooden buildings that I have seen.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I will certainly look into the matter for the honourable member. However, I am sure that he, with other members, will appreciate that the extent to which we can replace unsatisfactory school accommodation, which it is admitted is extensive throughout the State, will

depend ultimately on the response we get from the Commonwealth Government to the survey. Possibly now that there has been a change in Prime Minister we might get a more responsive and responsible attitude towards the survey.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: Why don't you shut up!

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The member for Alexandra does not care to face facts, and the facts are that, even with the record expenditure on school buildings this year—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Goldsworthy: You didn't face facts in your policy speech.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: —and a further increase—

The SPEAKER: Order! One question has been asked, and that is all that is permitted under Standing Orders. Honourable members may not ask other questions while a question is being answered. The honourable Minister is not permitted to reply to any question other than the first question asked.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. You have just asked members not to interject, as you have done on many occasions *ad nauseam* this session.

The SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: The point of order is that it is all very well to ask us and other members not to interject: I wonder whether you would be kind enough to ask the Minister—

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. You resume your seat. The honourable Minister of Education.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Despite a record increase this year in expenditure on school buildings and an annual expenditure that will reach \$17,000,000, the amount of replacement work that it is possible to do is still small. The national survey showed clearly that, if South Australia were to achieve a reasonable degree of replacement and upgrading of school buildings over the next five years, it would be necessary to spend about \$200,000,000 in South Australia—\$40,000,000 a year. The expenditure during years of Liberal rule in South Australia was about \$10,000,000 a year, whereas we have now managed to get the annual rate of expenditure up to \$17,000,000. However, with the best will in the world, knowing the restrictions on Loan moneys available to the State, I find it difficult to see how, over the years 1971 to 1975, expenditure on school building can be much more than \$100,000,000 from State

sources alone. That means that there will still be a considerable gap. The member for Alexandra—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Minister having replied to the question, must not reply to interjections.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I have further points to make.

The SPEAKER: The honourable Minister can explain, but he must not debate the matter.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The basic point I want to make is that about 10 months ago the previous Minister of Education (the member for Torrens), with other State Ministers of Education, presented to the Commonwealth Government the results of a national survey that had been ordered, with Commonwealth co-operation, in 1969. The Commonwealth Government participated in the survey, knowing the basis on which needs were being assessed. That was 10 months ago, but the latest indication we have is that it is unlikely that additional assistance will be made available for school buildings. I have requested members opposite to help convince their Commonwealth colleagues of the need for Commonwealth aid for school buildings. What have they done?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Goldsworthy: You needed a bit of assistance in your policy speech.

The SPEAKER: If the honourable member continues to interject while I am on my feet I will name him. I do not intend continually to have to call honourable members to order. They have been here long enough to understand the Standing Orders, and I intend to implement those Standing Orders. The honourable Minister having finished his reply, he must resume his seat.

SWEENEY REPORT

Dr. EASTICK: Can the Minister of Education say whether the recommendations in what is commonly called the Sweeney report on salaries of lecturers and senior lecturers in colleges of advanced education have been accepted by the Government entirely, or whether the recommendations are being accepted on a unilateral departmental basis?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Regarding the Institute of Technology, the recommendations in the Sweeney report, which had been delayed by the previous Government, were accepted and implemented by this Government. College of advanced education salary rates are now being paid to staff at the Institute of

Technology; the Roseworthy Agricultural College is under the control of the Minister of Agriculture; members of the staff of the School of Arts currently have a salary claim before the Teachers Salaries Board; and the Government has applied to the Commonwealth Government to have our teachers colleges recognized as colleges of advanced education. If that recognition is forthcoming, and the cost of teacher training in this State is subsidized by the Commonwealth Government on the same basis as it would be if that teacher training were part of, say, the Institute of Technology, I am confident that the salaries recommended by Mr. Justice Sweeney would apply to teachers colleges as well.

Dr. Eastick: You mean it is being done unilaterally.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Different salary arrangements apply to each institution. However, I must take and work with the position handed down to me, and there is no way on earth under current arrangements whereby action across the board could have been taken in all these cases.

LYELL McEWIN HOSPITAL

Mr. McRAE: Has the Attorney-General received from the Chief Secretary a reply to the question I asked on February 23 regarding taking over the Lyell McEwin Hospital as a Government subsidized hospital?

The Hon. L. J. KING: The Chief Secretary states that there is likely to be no immediate change in the status of the Lyell McEwin Hospital, but in the long term, with further extensions and development, it could become a Government hospital with additional teaching and specialist responsibilities.

Mr. McRAE: Will the Attorney-General ask the Chief Secretary whether it is Government policy that the Lyell McEwin Hospital will become a Government-subsidized hospital, bearing in mind that, in the last line of the reply given by his colleague, the word "could" is used?

The Hon. L. J. KING: I will take up the matter with the Chief Secretary.

PRIMARY PRODUCERS

Mr. NANKIVELL: My question, which I direct to the Premier, relates to the implementation of the Primary Producers' Debts Act and the possibility of its being invoked at this stage. We have on our Statute Book the Primary Producers' Debts Act, 1935-1939, and we also have funds available for use under that Act. I understand, too, that there are similar

Acts in other States, notably Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, all of which are operational. I ask this question because already many inquiries are being made of the department and because there is already an indication of mortgagee sales taking place. We have power under the Act to impose stay orders, and to have a composition of creditors, and I suggest that, if we are to wait much longer for the complementary Act to be passed by the Commonwealth Government, many people may unfortunately go to the wall. I therefore ask the Premier, and, indeed, the Deputy Premier, representing the Minister of Lands (as I know he also is involved), to consider this matter so that we can get on with the business in hand before the Commonwealth Act is implemented.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The Government is expecting the draft agreement on rural reconstruction from the Commonwealth Government at the end of this week. If the agreement is accepted, it will enable this Government to introduce legislation, as forecast, during this part of the session. However, I will take up the honourable member's suggestion with the department concerned and let him have a reply next week.

GLADSTONE HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. VENNING: Has the Minister of Education a reply to my recent question on the new Gladstone High School?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: General agreement has now been reached between the Education and Public Buildings Departments regarding the redesign of the new Gladstone High School. Every endeavour is being made to ensure that the final sketch plans are prepared as expeditiously as possible.

COOBER PEDY WATER SUPPLY

Mr. GUNN: Will the Minister of Works say what steps his department has taken to improve the desalination plant at Coober Pedy?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The Engineer-in-Chief told me only this morning that the production of water from the reverse osmosis plant at Coober Pedy is now 15,000gall. a day. The third bank of modules, which will again increase the quantity of water available, is almost ready for installation. This is a satisfactory situation, as the salinity of the water is being reduced from about 30,000 parts per million to a little below 1,000 p.p.m.

BURRA HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. ALLEN: Will the Minister of Education expedite the carrying out of repairs to the bitumen tennis courts at the Burra High School? When, in November, 1969, the then Minister of Education (Mrs. Steele) visited the school, her attention was drawn to damage that had been done to the tennis courts by contractors when erecting new backstops around the court. A front-end loader had been driven over the courts and had ruined them. Negotiations were then commenced with the department. However, I saw to my amazement last weekend, when driving past the school, that these repairs had not been effected. As it is now 16 months since the department's attention was drawn to this matter, will the Minister take up the matter and try to have the repairs carried out.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Yes.

OH! CALCUTTA!

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Will the Attorney-General say whether he has received any written communications, other than letters and petitions, protesting against *Oh! Calcutta!* and, if he has, how many? My question is supplementary to the one I asked on notice and replied to by the Minister yesterday relating only to letters and petitions. I have received about 100 of the slips that appeared, I think, in the *Advertiser* over the name of the Moral Action Committee.

Mr. Jennings: Are you sure they were all on the one slip?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Pardon?

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member must address the Chair. Interjections are out of order.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I was being provoked, Mr. Speaker. I wondered whether the Attorney had received any of these and, if he had, whether they were included in the figures he gave in the reply or whether, because strictly they were neither letters nor petitions, they were omitted from the figures he gave me.

The Hon. L. J. KING: I have received certain coupons extracted from the newspaper, some, apparently, seeking a prohibition against the performance of *Oh! Calcutta!*, and others seeking that it be allowed to continue. Apparently, two types of coupon have been included in the newspaper, for the purpose of soliciting signatures. I do not think, from memory, that any of those were in hand when the figures were prepared in reply to the honourable member's question. However, as he has raised that matter specifically, I shall check

with my office to find out whether these were included. I have received a considerable batch of correspondence from people in the community who are putting forward all sorts of points of view about this performance: some are seeking its prohibition, some are seeking that it should be allowed to continue in any circumstances, and some are seeking all sorts of odd variations between these two courses of action. If the honourable member wants me to supply him with details of all the communications I have received, I shall do so, but I could not possibly undertake to supply him with an analysis of the various points of view expressed, because they are so varied that they simply defy analysis.

TEA TREE GULLY WATER SUPPLY

Mrs. BYRNE: Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked on March 4 about the provision of a water supply for residents of Tea Tree Gully in streets east of Haines Road?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: During the past four years several requests have been received by the Engineering and Water Supply Department for an improved water supply to the area. East of Haines Road, Tea Tree Gully, apart from the blocks that abut Haines Road this area is all at an elevation higher than R.L. 920, which is the present upper supply limit in this section of the metropolitan area. This limit has been defined for a number of years and is the basis for the design of the department's reticulation in this area. As the majority of blocks are located at an elevation higher than R.L. 920, the department has been unable to extend water mains into the area. Indirect services from water mains in Haines Road have been granted to those blocks up to R.L. 950 when these have been requested. About 12 blocks are supplied in this way. The remaining 53 blocks are located at an elevation between R.L. 950 and R.L. 1030. Five houses have been erected in this section of the subdivision. Four have rainwater tanks only and one has an indirect service with a private pump. To supply this area directly the department would have to establish a new higher pressure zone for which a new storage tank and pumping plant as well as normal mains would be required. As the area is above the department's normal limit of supply and as any scheme would benefit relatively few people, it would not be economic and cannot be recommended at this time. The present financial situation also makes it doubly necessary for the department to ensure that the

expenditure of all Loan funds is channelled to those schemes which are most urgent and economically justified and which will benefit the greatest number of people.

COMMERCIAL VEHICLE SPEEDS

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: Can the Minister of Roads and Transport say what the Government intends to do regarding legislation governing the speed of commercial vehicles? It seems to be generally agreed that these speed limits are too low. I cannot recall the various references I have seen to them, but I have certainly had representations from transport drivers that the speeds are too low. In fact, I think that the speed limit for the heaviest class of vehicles is 20 miles an hour, which is really ridiculous: allowing for a few hold-ups in traffic and that sort of thing, that speed would not be faster than a horse and trolley could travel in some areas. I think the Government has suggested that it will do something about the matter. I ask the Minister whether he intends to introduce legislation on this subject.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: At present, the Government does not intend to introduce any legislation to alter speed limits for commercial vehicles. The Government has received submissions that the speed limits should be increased. However, we must remember that, concurrent with any proposed increase in speed limits, there would be an added requirement about braking. In view of the road toll, I do not consider that we ought to be seriously considering increasing the speed limits for these vehicles. In fact, all too often we get examples (and one could not call them living examples: in fact, they are to the contrary) of speeds of commercial vehicles contributing to deaths on the roads. I do not mean they are the major contributing factor, but they do contribute. The short answer to the question is that the Government does not intend at present to alter the *status quo*.

ADELAIDE ABATTOIRS

Mr. VENNING: Has the Minister of Works a reply from the Minister of Agriculture to my question about the Adelaide abattoir?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: My colleague states that the General Manager of the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs Board reports that the board's works were delisted for the processing of meat for the American market because certain practices relating to hygiene were not acceptable to the United States Department of Agriculture authorities, as was

also some of the board's plant and equipment. The board is taking the necessary action to remedy the position and is hopeful of applying for an inspection of the works with a view to relisting for the export of meat to the United States of America by the end of this month, or soon after. Meanwhile, the board is processing stock for other export markets to the extent of 400 to 500 cattle and 10,000 sheep a week.

BEACH EROSION

Mr. BECKER: Will the Minister for Conservation urgently confer with the Glenelg corporation with a view to assisting it to combat foreshore erosion during the coming winter season? I have been informed by a constituent who has lived for 21 years at North Esplanade, Glenelg, that his neighbours are concerned that the beach at Glenelg North could suffer considerable damage during the coming winter. Large rocks and boulders were placed along the foreshore 5½ years ago, and they were 2ft. above the road level. Today the rocks have almost disappeared, leaving the foreshore exposed to considerable damage. Concern is felt that, if this year there are winter storms as severe as those of last year, part of North Esplanade could be washed away.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: The report I was able to give the Opposition yesterday from Mr. Culver of the Adelaide University pointed out that there were several areas along the coast (I do not know whether Glenelg North was included) where the situation required immediate attention. The problems pointed out by Mr. Culver have been directed to the Foreshore and Beaches Committee, which I understand is meeting today. No doubt the problems to which the honourable member refers have already been directed to that committee by the Glenelg council, and I expect that these will be considered when a recommendation is made to the Government.

GALWAY AVENUE JUNCTION

Mr. COUMBE: Will the Minister of Roads and Transport consider improving the traffic situation on North-East Road at its junction with Galway Avenue, Collinswood? Galway Avenue is being reconstructed, and a large building is being erected on the corner by the Commonwealth Department of Works for the Australian Broadcasting Commission, and this is contributing to the problem. Traffic, including the M.T.T. buses which are held up for some time, coming from Galway Avenue to

proceed towards Adelaide has much difficulty in entering North-East Road. Many accidents and near misses have occurred at this corner. Will the Minister, the Highways Department and the Road Traffic Board consult with the Walkerville and Prospect councils to see whether this junction could be improved?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Yes, I undertake to discuss this with the Highways Department and let the honourable member know what is the position. If any further action is necessary, we can promote it.

PORT LINCOLN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mr. CARNIE: Will the Minister of Education see whether rain water tanks could be installed at the Port Lincoln Primary School? I have been approached by one of the parent bodies of the school and asked to see whether this could be done, because some parents object to their children drinking fluoridated water (Port Lincoln water contains natural fluoride). Complaints have also been received about the water because of the objectionable taste.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I shall be happy to look into the matter for the honourable member. Certainly, so far as the alleged objectionable taste of the water coming from the local reticulation system is concerned, I shall have to consult the Minister of Works, and I have no doubt that he will say in his usual charming manner that the taste has nothing to do with fluoride. I have no doubt that the Minister will not agree to provide tanks just for those who do not want fluoridated water. However, I will have the objectionable taste investigated.

NOARLUNGA BY-PASS

Mr. EVANS: Has the Minister of Roads and Transport seen a report in a suburban newspaper about the acquisition of land for the by-pass at Noarlunga?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: As I indicated yesterday to the honourable member, when my attention was drawn to this article I had it forwarded to the Highways Department. As he raised the matter yesterday, I contacted the department and asked it to treat this matter as urgent, as I considered that a reply should be given forthwith. From inquiries made, I am satisfied that the report in the Messenger newspaper article is presented in a manner designed to exaggerate minor aspects of negotiations without regard to the full facts, seeking, it would seem, to provide a degree of sensationalism by highlighting aspects out of context. Members may be interested to know of the three

cases referred to in the article. In the first case the owner was approached in December, 1969: I stress the date because of its significance, which honourable members opposite will obviously appreciate. In October, 1970, the departmental opinion was that the price should be \$420. In January, 1970, the owners said that they wanted \$481. The Highways Department agreed that the price was full but not unreasonable. The transfer documents have been forwarded by the Crown Solicitor to the person concerned, who has not returned the documents. Until he does so no payment, obviously, can be made. In the second case the person was informed in December, 1969, of the requirements and told that there were two alternatives. There was a series of negotiations on an unacceptable price, and the normal machinery has now been put into operation with the service of a notice of intention on this person. In the third case the matter dates back to October, 1969, when the person was approached and informed of the position. Because no finality had been reached in April, 1970, the owner agreed to accept a payment of 10c from the Highways Department, which payment gave legal right of entry for the work to proceed pending the determination of the matter by negotiation or, failing that, through the Land Valuation Court. I reiterate that the whole of this matter has been blown up out of context. The Highways Department officers whose actions have been criticized are completely blameless in this matter and in all cases have acted with propriety.

MILTABURRA AREA SCHOOL

Mr. GUNN: Can the Minister of Education say what stage planning has reached regarding the proposed Miltaburra Area School?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The Miltaburra Area School is still in the early stages of planning. I have not had a report on the matter for a few weeks, but I will inquire for the honourable member and bring down a report as early as possible.

BREATHALYSERS

Dr. TONKIN: Has the Attorney-General obtained from the Chief Secretary a reply to the question I asked on February 24 about breathalysers?

The Hon. L. J. KING: The Chief Secretary states that approval has been gazetted in the terms of section 47h of the Road Traffic Act for the eight breathalysers used by the

Police Department in metropolitan and country areas at present. It is not intended to purchase further breathalysers before July, 1971.

SHIPPING CANCELLATIONS

Dr. EASTICK: Is the Minister of Marine aware of any deficiency in the services at Port Adelaide available in respect of oversea ships, and can he say why there is a continual cancellation of shipping services involving conventional ships? The Minister will be aware of the difficulty that has arisen regarding the export of rural produce from South Australia. This matter was discussed by interested parties in his office early last week, and he subsequently indicated that there was a current loss in wharfage charges of at least \$15,000. A few moments ago I was informed that the scheduled visit to Port Adelaide in April by the ship *Rio De Janeiro Maru* has been cancelled, notwithstanding that 4,000 tons of conventional loading was available to this ship. As this matter is vital to the future of this State, I ask the Minister whether there is a possibility of exporting wool by the same sort of ship in order to boost the size of the loading available?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I am not aware of the cancellation of the visit to Port Adelaide by the ship referred to; as the honourable member pointed out, he has only just become aware of it. I will examine this matter, although I assume the honourable member understands the difficulty, which has been fairly well canvassed and explained, and that he knows of the problems involved in this matter.

ABORIGINAL TRAINING

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Will the Minister of Education say whether the Aboriginal training scheme, of which he gave me details on December 1, began this year? I asked the Minister a question on notice about this matter on December 1. That question, which was in two parts, was as follows:

1. What plans does the Government have for the training of Aboriginal teaching aides for employment in Aboriginal schools?

2. When will the plans be put into effect?

The Minister in reply said that there were two schemes, the second of which was then being considered, and it involved a course of general education to be given for Aborigines in Adelaide. The Minister ended his reply, as he will recall, by saying:

It is not known definitely what financial support will be available, but it is hoped that it can commence in 1971.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: This proposal which has been worked out in conjunction with officers of the Aboriginal Affairs and Social Welfare Department, involves the use of the facilities at the Challa Gardens Primary School. When I replied to the question last year, we had been led to believe that finance for the scheme would be available from the Commonwealth Government, involving the payment of fees for those who undertook the course and the payment of allowances for the Aborigines involved in the scheme. The details of the matter were finally determined shortly after Christmas, and in January the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Social Welfare wrote to his Commonwealth colleague requesting approval for the scheme. We are still waiting for a reply.

Mr. Millhouse: Have you followed it up?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I will certainly ask—

Mr. Millhouse: You could at least have followed it up.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: We understand certain other matters have been occupying the attention of Ministers in Canberra.

Mr. Millhouse: This is a political answer now.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The honourable member does not seem to be able to accept that, even when we are informed that a submission put to the Commonwealth is likely to receive the most favourable consideration and are encouraged to go ahead with the planning of the scheme, we have to wait an inordinate length of time to get a reply.

Mr. Millhouse: You're being very provocative.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The member for Mitcham is only interested in interjecting; he is not interested in a reply, and I see no point in continuing.

PINNAROO AREA SCHOOL

Mr. NANKIVELL: Has the Minister of Education recently received a report on the condition of the original stone building at the Pinnaroo Area School, and does he know whether it is intended that any repairs shall be carried out or whether a replacement programme is being considered?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The only matter currently on the design list concerning

the Pinnaroo Area School relates to the change-room. I have certainly not had any report.

Mr. Nankivell: Will you get one?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Yes, I shall be happy to obtain a report for the honourable member and to let him have the considered information as early as possible. I am always willing to co-operate with polite members of the Opposition.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE CONSTABLE

Mr. RODDA: With the onset of winter, will the Minister of Works—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections across the Chamber by members on the front benches must cease immediately. The honourable member for Victoria has the call, and I expect members on both sides to show him the courtesy of letting him ask his question.

Mr. RODDA: I refer to a matter close to the heart of the Minister of Works: the provision of a shelter for the policeman on duty outside Parliament House. As the winter months are approaching, when this officer must perform his duties in cold conditions, and as the Minister spoke last year about the need for a shelter for this officer, can he say whether such a shelter will be provided soon?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I am delighted to reply to the question, as it gives me an opportunity to say a few things about redevelopment plans for Parliament House. The Premier has already said that the examination of the relevant plans submitted to the Public Works Committee will continue until it is completed. Obviously, it does not necessarily follow that the Government must spend anything when the committee's report is received. However, it is desirable that the plans be studied and dealt with by the committee and its investigation completed so that, when the financial situation eases and it is proper for the Government to proceed to allocate money to renovate Parliament House, work can proceed without undue delay. If the honourable member examines the plans, he will see that an office for the policeman who performs duty outside the House will be fitted in without interfering with the appearance of the building. However, that work will not proceed until we are prepared to spend money on Parliament House; nor will any other major repairs proceed. Members are already aware of the condition of the existing air-conditioning scheme that serves this Chamber. Because of the irresponsible criticism of the

Government by the Leader of the Opposition when an announcement was made about renovations, when the Leader said that we were wasting money—

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I ask you to restrain the Minister from making provocative statements that are irrelevant to the question asked.

The SPEAKER: The Minister was asked a question about the accommodation in Parliament House.

Mr. Millhouse: It wasn't about accommodation: it was about the policeman outside.

The SPEAKER: It is part and parcel of the accommodation. Will the honourable Minister proceed?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will not proceed with what I was saying; I think the member for Alexandra is a little testy. However, I point out that, economically, we cannot spend any money on replacing essential services, such as the air-conditioning plant, the electrical wiring (this so badly needs to be replaced that it is dangerous), and the plumbing in Parliament House until work on the renovation commences; one type of work fits into the other. Therefore, it appears that it will be some considerable time before we can expect any relief from the current conditions in the House; certainly, it will be some time before we can provide what I think are proper and necessary facilities for the policeman on duty outside the House.

ROAD CONSOLIDATION

Mr. VENNING: Has the Minister of Roads and Transport a reply to my recent question about road consolidation?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Suitable signs will be erected in future where the Highways Department is using water of high salt content. This will be done to warn the public of the danger of corrosion to vehicles. The signs are being designed and will be manufactured as soon as possible. In his question, the honourable member referred to areas where salt water was being used, and I told him that if he gave me the locations I should be pleased to take up the matter with the department. As he has not yet told me where those locations are, I shall be pleased if he will do so.

KIMBA MAIN

Mr. GUNN: Can the Minister of Works say whether he has received any communication from the Commonwealth Government with regard to assistance being provided in connection with the Kimba main, as it is now three or four months since Commonwealth representatives took evidence at Kimba?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I have not heard anything.

NATIONAL SERVICE PAY

Mr. MILLHOUSE: On October 20, 1970, I asked the Premier a question about the pay of public servants who undertook National Service. At the end of his reply, the Premier undertook to get a full report for me. As I have not yet had that report, I ask the Premier whether he can now give it to me and, if he cannot (as I suspect), whether he will follow up the matter and give me a report as soon as possible.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I do not seem to have anything about the matter in my bag at present, but I will inquire. There has been no change in policy adopted by the Government in relation to this matter.

Mr. Millhouse: You said you'd get a report; you didn't have to say that.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Of course I did not have to say that. I have told the honourable member that I will follow up the matter and look at all the documents of which he became aware when he was a Minister. The short answer, if he wants something effective and is not here simply to make a debating point, as usual, is that the policy followed by the previous Government is now followed by this Government.

COOMANDOOK SIGN

Mr. NANKIVELL: My question relates to the condition of a "curve" sign on the Dukes Highway north of Coomandook. For a long time, I battled to get a new sign at the Moorlands turn-off, and I am grateful that this has been provided. The sign previously at Moorlands could now be advantageously placed at a corner on the Dukes Highway about four miles north of Coomandook between Coomandook and Moorlands. If that sign is not available, can the Minister of Roads and Transport say whether another similar sign can be provided to indicate to the travelling public that this curve is difficult to negotiate at speed, thus alerting people as they approach it?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I will give the honourable member's question the same expeditious attention as I gave to his question in relation to the other corner to which he has referred.

ROAD SAFETY

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Has the Minister of Roads and Transport yet received from the Road Safety Council a report on road safety, to which he referred in his reply to me on December 1? I had some few days earlier asked the Minister whether he would consider using not horror advertising (although that perhaps sums up the purport of what I said) but advertising that would shock people into being more conscious of road safety. In his reply the Minister said he believed my suggestion had merit, provided it was handled with care and with sympathetic and human understanding. He went on to say that in no circumstances would he be a party to the showing of horror road accident publicity material. He concluded by saying:

I have asked the Road Safety Council to investigate the matter and provide me with a report in due course.

As that was over three months ago, I ask the Minister whether he has received the report and, if he has, whether he will reveal its contents to the House.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I will inquire and bring down a report for the honourable member.

PARA HILLS WATER

Mr. McRAE: Will the Minister of Works consider having his department carry out some spot checks on the quality of the water supply at Para Hills? The Minister will recall that last week I referred to certain practices concerning the sale of commercial filters, which he is at present having investigated. Unfortunately, there is a growing feeling in the Para Hills district that the water, which is undoubtedly unpalatable and discoloured, is also dangerous to health. I realize that the Minister has given assurances on that point but, although until today I had received only a small number of letters dealing with this matter, today I received a report from many Para Hills residents indicating that they had been advised by a schoolteacher and a doctor in the area to boil water. Although I regard this as probably being an alarmist type of report, it is, nevertheless, a serious allegation that ought to be dealt with. I indicate, for the Minister's benefit, that the person who contacted me on

behalf of the group of people concerned (Mrs. Niehuns, of 8 Shirley Drive, Para Hills) would be happy to have her home used as the sampling point, if that were suitable to the department. Notwithstanding all that the Minister has said before, would he be kind enough to have his department examine this matter urgently?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I appreciate the honourable member's drawing my attention to this matter, and I will have someone sent to Para Hills as soon as possible. I confirm again what I have said previously: that, from a health point of view, this water is perfectly safe. However, in order to reassure the people in the district that this is so, I will certainly have tests carried out and the results released. The department has in the last few days received many telephone calls and letters about the colour of the water and the fact that it is unpalatable. As I have explained to the House previously, this trouble is being caused because the water at present coming down the Murray River from the Darling River or the Menindee Lakes contains colloidal clay, a fine suspended matter. Last Friday, I flew over the Murray River, and it was most noticeable from the air that the water was almost white. Indeed, one could see this coloured water beginning to enter Lake Alexandrina, and the difference in the colour of the water entering the lake was quite different from that already there. With the heavy rains that have fallen in the southern parts of Queensland and in the northern parts of South Australia, it is possible that this white water will continue to come down river for longer than was initially expected. Although I sympathize with the people who are being subjected to this water at present, I am afraid that nothing can be done other than to assure them that it is perfectly safe from a health point of view.

VICTOR HARBOUR SEWERAGE

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: Can the Minister of Works give me any information about the time of commencement of work on the Victor Harbour sewerage scheme and about the disposal of effluent from the scheme? In October last the Public Works Committee recommended the scheme, at an estimated cost of over \$1,500,000. The committee pointed out that it had received evidence about the importance of Victor Harbour as a tourist centre, and one of the matters of interest to the golf club in the town is the disposal of effluent. That is about the only organization at Victor Harbour that could properly use

the effluent and the golf club is an important part of the tourist attraction of the town.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will get a detailed report for the honourable member. The Government has given approval for the department to proceed with the sewerage of Victor Harbour and the work will take place when work at Millicent is completed, which I understand will be at about the end of March. At that time a run-down of work at Murray Bridge will develop into a full-scale effort at Victor Harbour, and I think preliminary work at Victor Harbour will commence soon. It certainly would be desirable to use treated effluent to irrigate the golf course, but I think that matter depends largely on the suitability of the treated effluent from a salinity point of view and from the point of view whether this irrigation can be carried out. As I think it would be most desirable if this could be done, I will obtain a report for the honourable member.

SCHOOLTEACHER PROMOTION

Mr. HALL: Can the Minister of Education say why condition No. 2 is included as one of the criteria for assessment of schoolteachers who may be selected for promotion to deputy headmaster and headmaster, Grade IV? That condition states:

Participates actively in professional associations.

I have a statement headed:

Criteria for assessment for promotion to D.H.M. and H.M., IV.

The headings on the statement are personal influence, professional outlook, teaching ability, and organizing and administrative ability. Several excellent criteria are set out under the section dealing with professional outlook, five items being listed in the column dealing with standard requirements and three items in the column dealing with advanced requirements. The second item in the part dealing with advanced requirements is the one to which I refer. I have received an inquiry from an interested person as to why this is included, as it is not related to the teaching ability of the person concerned.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I have not seen the document to which the Leader refers, but I should have thought that even he would be aware of the importance of professional associations so far as headmasters, deputy headmasters, and other persons involved in the senior leadership of schools were concerned. After all, education is a changing system. The extent to which new ideas are being discussed

within this State as well as in other States and countries is increasing all the time and, therefore, I should have thought that the need for our educators to be concerned with professional matters through professional associations would be important.

Mr. Hall: What associations would you have in mind?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Well, for example, there are science teachers associations, English teachers associations, commerce teachers associations, organizations like the Australian College of Education, and so on. The number of such organizations is becoming significant. I now realize that the Leader is really thinking that this is another form of compulsory unionism and that the persons concerned must be members of the South Australian Institute of Teachers, or some such organization. However, I do not understand the reason for the Leader's question.

Mr. Hall: It's not my fault that you can't understand.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: And it is certainly not my fault that the Leader does not understand.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: Just reply to the question.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I am replying to the question, and the member for Alexandra is out of order once again.

The SPEAKER: All interjections are out of order.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I should have thought that the question at issue here was simply the involvement of the person concerned in professional and educational associations. However, as I have not seen the document to which the Leader refers, if he shows it to me I shall be pleased to discuss it with the Director-General and find out whether any other interpretation of the Leader's question will satisfy his desire for information.

EMPIRE TIMES

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Has the Attorney-General yet made a decision about a prosecution in connection with the Flinders University paper *Empire Times*? Last Thursday I reminded the Attorney-General that some months ago I asked him whether he was considering taking proceedings as a result of the publication of a few issues of the *Empire Times*. Having told me that only the day before he had spoken to the Chief Secretary to push him along to get a report from the Commissioner of Police, he said:

I expect it will come to my notice (I hope in the next few days), and upon receiving it I

shall have an opportunity of deciding whether a prosecution should be laid.

I have reminded him, and he has acknowledged the fact, that the six months' period for prosecutions is drawing to a close.

The Hon. L. J. KING: I have had the report and I have made a decision, but it is not appropriate at this stage to inform the House.

SUCCESSION DUTY VALUATIONS

Mr. VENNING: Can the Treasurer say whether it is planned that the Valuation Department shall value real estate for succession duty purposes?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: It is not the policy of the Valuation Department to do so. Those who are submitting succession duties statements are normally required to submit a valuation and, if the Commissioner accepts that valuation nothing further is involved. The Commissioner may seek a further valuation if he is not satisfied with the valuation supplied to him with the succession duties statement.

PUBLIC SERVICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council with amendments.

FRUIT FLY (COMPENSATION) BILL

His Excellency the Governor, by message, recommended to the House of Assembly the appropriation of such amounts of money as might be required for the purposes mentioned in the Bill.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Works) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to provide for compensation for loss arising from measures to eradicate fruit fly. Read a first time.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It is in similar form to the Bills passed in previous years, its object being to enable the payment of compensation for losses arising from the campaign for eradication of fruit fly. A proclamation relating to the fruit fly outbreak in the eastern suburbs was made in January of this year under the Vine, Fruit and Vegetable Protection Act and, as members know, the practice has been for compensation to be given for losses arising by reason of any act of officers of the Agriculture Department within a proclaimed area. Clause 2 accordingly provides for such compensation and

compensation for loss arising from the prohibition of removal of fruit from land in a proclaimed area. Clause 3 fixes the time limit for lodging claims at August 31. This date, fixed as a closing date for claims in relation to the outbreak in 1968 proved satisfactory. It is estimated that approximately 500 claims will be made and that total compensation will amount to about \$5,000. There will be no commercial claims.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Alexandra): I support this Bill, which is in the same form as similar Bills that have been introduced previously. It would be only too easy to take for granted the freedom of South Australian orchards from fruit fly. The first fruit fly outbreak in the late 1940's was controlled and each subsequent outbreak has been controlled and complete eradication achieved or there has most certainly been control to the extent that the outbreak has not caused commercial losses. The costs to the Government have been high over the years but previous Governments have recognized that a disservice to the State would result if there were any laxity in the application of fruit fly eradication measures. The orchardists of this State are well aware of the dangers, but it is worth emphasizing when an outbreak occurs that we should not take eradication for granted. I approve of what the Government is doing and I approve very much of what the Agriculture Department has done.

Recently I asked the Minister whether there would be a special dispensation for a person who saw in this control a threat to his civil liberties, I think completely wrongly. I think the person acted irresponsibly and I was assured by the Minister that that person would not get special treatment. The people of this State, although anxious to see that civil liberties are preserved, are not so blind as to confuse an issue such as this with one that we could possibly call civil liberties. It is an important matter when someone who ought to know better takes a stand such as the one to which I have referred, and I applaud the fact that no favouritism was shown in this matter. The Bill receives the support of the Opposition.

Mr. CURREN (Chaffey): Representing the District of Chaffey, one of the largest fruit producing areas of the State, I believe that this measure to prevent the fruit fly from becoming established in South Australia is a very worthy one and I commend the Governments of the past for the action they have taken to see that any outbreak in the metropolitan area has been confined to as small an area as possible. I

am also happy that householders who suffer damage as a result of the eradication programme are to be fully compensated, which has been the practice in the past.

Mr. McANANEY (Heysen): I support the remarks of the member for Chaffey. Representing a district that produces much fruit, I believe that this is a very wise course to take. I only wish that in the district I represent the same strong attitude was being taken by the Government on the eradication of weeds.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is nothing about weeds in this Bill. The honourable member must confine his remarks to the Bill.

Mr. McANANEY: He is getting more childish every day. I support the Bill.

Mr. NANKIVELL (Mallee): I, too, support the Bill, and I endorse the remarks of the member for Chaffey. The Murray River area is one of the major fruitgrowing areas in South Australia, and the control in that area of the incidence of any disease or pest, such as fruit fly, is extremely important. The honourable member and I, as well as other members, know that the industries concerned are beset with many problems as it is, and, in view of the added cost of trying to control fruit fly once it becomes established in a commercial area, it is terribly important that action be taken to contain any outbreaks of fruit fly in South Australia. I commend previous Governments on the action taken in the past to control these outbreaks, and I particularly commend the Agriculture Department on streamlining its techniques and on the efficiency with which it is able to control outbreaks. On this occasion I also commend the present Government. I think it is proper to provide compensation for those people whose properties are affected by fruit fly, if for no other reason than to make them happy about the methods being used to eradicate the pest.

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

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (FRANCHISE)

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from March 4. Page 3804.)

Mr. BURDON (Mount Gambier): We have listened in this debate mainly to Opposition members who have criticized this Bill throughout and who have shown complete hostility to the Government's decision to allow a local council or corporation the option of deciding, through its electors, whether it should have voluntary or compulsory voting. Before the

last State election, the Labor Party put before the people of South Australia a comprehensive programme, including amendments to the Local Government Act, and compulsory voting was foreshadowed at that stage. However, the member for Light has said during this debate that the Government has no mandate for introducing this measure, but it is apparent to most people that, having been elected to Government, the Labor Party is entitled to introduce this measure. Opposition members have asked why the Government is introducing amendments to the Local Government Act at this stage. In about 1966, the former Labor Minister of Local Government (Hon. Stan Bevan) was responsible for setting up the Local Government Act Revision Committee. I have been privileged to serve on a district council and a municipality, and I believe that my experience, although limited, entitles me to speak with some knowledge of local government affairs.

Those in this Chamber who have participated in local government affairs will acknowledge the extreme pressures exerted on councils by certain sections of the community. Most members know what lobbying involves; indeed, I think every member here witnessed the extreme pressures exerted on certain members of the Opposition only a few months ago. I believe members are aware of the matter to which I am alluding. Such lobbying could well concern a council. Last October, the President of the South Australian Local Government Association (Mr. Lillecrapp), who I think was a councillor at that time, sent a letter over his signature to all councils in South Australia. It was suggested that this letter should be delivered to all ratepayers. In the rewriting of the letter and addressing it to ratepayers, certain paragraphs were altered in such a way that the ratepayer could get the impression that the letter came from the mayor of the council. Councils represent ratepayers. People who pay taxes, as well as people who do not pay taxes, are entitled to vote at Commonwealth and State elections, as decisions of those Governments affect all persons in the community. I believe that decisions taken by councils affect everyone in a community.

Mr. McAnaney: Do they affect persons who do not pay?

Mr. BURDON: The honourable member is saying that, because a person has property or wealth, he should have a say in how a community is run, but that other people should not have the right to express an opinion on

what takes place in their community. Councils provide facilities for everyone in a community. Whether those facilities are playgrounds, parking areas, roads or footpaths, they are used by all members of the community. South Australian councils would receive from the State and Commonwealth Governments about \$10,000,000 a year, that money coming from ordinary taxpayers, who may not necessarily be ratepayers.

Mr. McAnaney: What is that money earmarked for?

Mr. BURDON: I do not know about that: it is money and it provides amenities for people in the community. Wives of husbands who are ratepayers are denied a vote, yet the income of those people pays for footpaths and so on. The point is that few people who live in a community are not involved in some way in contributing towards the provision of these amenities. In addition, many women who work in various organizations that serve a community do not have the right to vote at council elections. It appears to me that Opposition members believe that only people with property and wealth should be able to vote at council elections.

Back in 1856, when a bicameral system of Government was instituted in South Australia, a system was worked out with regard to the voting for one Chamber in this State. People holding property of a certain value may have a voluntary vote for that Chamber. I do not need to go into the reasons behind the introduction of that system of voting over 100 years ago. Over the years, Ministers of Local Government have been asked by councils to introduce a new Local Government Act. About four or five years ago, a Local Government Act Revision Committee was appointed, and investigations have been carried out throughout South Australia. This Bill contains 163 clauses. If members examine those provisions, they will find that all except one were recommended by the committee.

Mr. Carnie: Adult franchise?

Mr. BURDON: The present proposal in the Bill is almost identical to the recommendation of the committee. Opposition members say that they do not like this Bill, yet 162 of its clauses were recommended by the Local Government Act Revision Committee. Merely because it contains a clause dealing with voluntary and compulsory voting at local government elections, members opposite condemn the whole Bill. Having obtained a majority of votes from the South Australian

electors at the last election, this Government has received a mandate to proceed with its proposals.

Dr. Eastick: No.

Mr. BURDON: The member for Light says "No". However, what I have said is right. When a Government is elected, it is up to that Government to introduce the legislation which it put to the people before the election and on which it was given a mandate.

Dr. Eastick: Like shopping hours!

Mr. BURDON: It does not matter what it is; the Government can introduce whatever legislation it likes, and, as this legislation accords with its policy, the Government has introduced this Bill. When speaking in this debate last week, the Leader of the Opposition said:

No council can afford to have voluntary voting and risk the direction of council affairs by non-ratepayers.

That statement does not need explaining. Members opposite will possibly try to convince the Government that the legislation should be withdrawn. However, nothing has yet been put before the House that would tend to alter the Government's decision in this regard. Members opposite say that they do not want to introduce Party politics into local government matters. However, the Labor Party does not endorse candidates for local government. Indeed, that is contrary to its policy. I remind members that one must be a financial member of the Liberal and Country League before one can be eligible for nomination to the Adelaide City Council.

Mr. Mathwin: Anyone can nominate.

Mr. BURDON: Of course they can. In an article in last Wednesday's *News*, the following appears:

Adelaide City Council members may personally sponsor future candidates and replace the Liberal and Country League endorsement system for council election. At present, Adelaide City Council members and their wives figure prominently in the Adelaide municipal district committee of the L.C.L., which gives candidates backing for council election and re-election. An informal meeting to be called by the Lord Mayor, Mr. Porter, may inaugurate the new system of council members themselves endorsing candidates for nomination.

What sort of an organization is it when its members endorse their own colleagues as council representatives? It would appear that some members opposite were not happy when I read that article, which probably has appeared in the press all over South Australia. I received a letter from the clerk of a district

council, and I am reminded of the old adage regarding the three things a farmer does not want: wind, frost and insurance agents. However, there is one thing that the people of South Australia wanted and got—a Labor Government. Some councils say that they do not want increased costs, but has any Opposition member proved that costs will increase as a result of the passing of this Bill? How much work and overtime is at present involved in district councils and corporations preparing local electoral rolls? It is said that the Returning Officer for the State will take over the role of the local returning officer or district clerk.

Mr. Mathwin: But councils will have to pay for that service.

Mr. BURDON: Does this not happen throughout the length and breadth of the country with Commonwealth elections, when authority is delegated to other officers? As the member for Glenelg well knows, exactly the same thing will happen in this case. Having said that he was chairman of a council for nine years, the member for Heysen should be conversant with all the regulations and by-laws under the Local Government Act. However, it seems from what he said recently that he was not conversant with the Act. Ratepayers throughout South Australia have wanted a new Local Government Act for many years, and the Labor Government has put such a revision in motion.

Mr. Gunn: Just what is involved?

Mr. BURDON: The member for Eyre would not know what was involved in the framing of a new Local Government Act. The Bill is being presented to all councils throughout the State over an extended period of time for their consideration before it is introduced. It will probably be two or three years before a Bill is presented to Parliament.

Mr. Gunn: And there will be a new Government in office in this State then!

Mr. BURDON: I am afraid the honourable member will not be in this House when there is another L.C.L. Government in office in South Australia. The Premier clearly explained the reasons for the introduction of the Bill in his policy speech delivered prior to the last election. I do not think the Opposition has appreciated what I have said about some matters. I have not dealt with the letters from the Local Government Association, and the Minister has already dealt with comments made by the Mayor of my own municipality. The Government has included in the Bill most of what I may term the 162½ recom-

mendations of the Local Government Act Revision Committee, and I support it.

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens): I have listened carefully to the Minister's second reading explanation and to the many speeches by members on both sides on this important subject, which affects many people in South Australia. The speech just made by the member for Mount Gambier was one of the lesser efforts that I have heard him make, and the member for Whyalla said that he did not know his council's views on the Bill. I have checked to find out what they are.

Mr. Brown: What are they?

Mr. COUMBE: The council at Whyalla was reconstituted by the previous Government, and that action was approved by every member of this House and by the present member for that district. Many members of this House have served in local government as Mayor, Chairman, alderman or councillor, and some have served in more than one of those capacities: for a short time the Minister was a councillor on one of our metropolitan councils. Therefore, when any local government matter is before the House, members from both sides are usually able to speak from practical experience. We have also had experience in paying rates, which is an important aspect.

The Local Government Act Revision Committee praises the role of councils and comments on the valuable individual and honorary work that hundreds of men and women throughout the State are doing. The committee also mentions a quotation that I have used, namely, that local government is the form of government that is closest to the people in our three-tier system of government. I recall that the late Mr. O'Halloran, whom we all honoured and revered, moved in this House for the establishment of a form of greater Adelaide council by amalgamating the many metropolitan councils into one colossus, as has been done in other parts of the world. This caused much public resentment, and the move was defeated in this House.

Mr. Jennings: Because you had the numbers.

Mr. COUMBE: Yes, as the honourable member's Government has the numbers now. That move caused much resentment amongst persons living in the metropolitan area. Each year Parliament approves further amendments to the principal Act, because there is no alternative to that at present. The principal Act is the most cluttered up and amended measure on our Statute Book, as courts and the

committee have rightly said. Many clauses in this Bill will clutter up the Act further, against the committee's recommendations.

This measure could have been delayed until the Act was rewritten, which would mean that it would be delayed for a long time. An important amendment made by one of the three Bills passed in 1969 conferred voting rights on spouses. That provision was well overdue. The same Bill also enabled women, for the first time in South Australia, to take office in local government. Members on both sides supported that move.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: What about the wives of ratepayers? Aren't they entitled to the same consideration?

Mr. COUNBE: The franchise was given to the wives of owners. There was difficulty about knowing who were leaseholders, but the action taken was a step in the right direction.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Well, let's take another step, with adult franchise.

Mr. COUNBE: I have much more to say about the Bill. Members opposite have tended to dwell upon adult franchise, and I shall also speak about that. I consider that the Bill should be withdrawn and redrafted, because most of the amendments being made to the principal Act have not been requested by councils, ratepayers, the public, or the Local Government Association and have not been recommended by the Local Government Act Revision Committee. The persons that I have mentioned comprise a formidable list.

This Bill is a creature of the Minister or his Government. Obviously, in a Bill of this size, drafting errors will occur, and in saying that I am not reflecting on the draftsmen. In some cases the wrong sections have been referred to, as the member for Light has said. I have read the Bill, the Minister's explanation, and submissions that have been made to me. The value of the plums or good things in the Bill disappears rapidly because of the objectionable clauses. I have no doubt that some improvement regarding the multiple voting system in this State is long overdue.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Thank you very much. You're the first one from your side to say that.

Mr. COUNBE: I have said that some improvements are required in this Bill.

Mr. Brown: We are suggesting big improvements.

Mr. COUNBE: The Minister has asked me to refer specifically to some matters. Clause 71, which amends section 287 (j4), seeks to

limit the amounts that can be spent by a council for certain purposes. The Minister has referred to this clause and also to the provision by which councils will have to get the Minister's written consent to promote a Bill before Parliament.

Mr. Payne: So they should.

Mr. COUNBE: What the member who has just interjected has said is that the council should not have the right to promote a Bill before Parliament unless it has the written permission of the Minister. Anyone can promote a Bill before Parliament if he wants to, but the honourable member says that a council, which has the right now to do so, should not have the right unless the Minister approves. The present Minister is such an excellent Minister that he would never deny any council the right to promote a Bill, but we never know what might happen in the future, so this is a bad principle. A council that promotes a Bill is promoting it on behalf of the people of its district, and it is for Parliament, not the Minister, to decide. That is the essence of democracy.

Mr. Payne: The Minister has to answer to Parliament.

Mr. COUNBE: Exactly, the Minister has to answer to Parliament and to the people, but this Bill places conditions on the rights of councils. Some clauses provide that the Minister has the right to tell councils what money they can spend in their districts and what association or bodies they may join. Although I know the Minister would never do this, it has been suggested to me that the Minister, in writing, could prevent a council from joining the Local Government Association. This is an extreme case, and I am sure the present Minister would never think of doing it, but it could be done. I am opposed to legislation that provides loopholes of this kind. I am confused about the clause relating to the payment of returning officers. I find a strange clause that says that the returning officer in one case is to determine what his fee will be, and another clause puts it differently. Because some clauses are wrongly placed and mistakes have occurred in others, this Bill should be withdrawn and redrafted.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: You have no hope.

Mr. COUNBE: The Minister is most encouraging: he has a completely open mind! I have given much consideration to the question of adult franchise. I know the great majority of councils in the State certainly do not want it. I have received over the last few weeks more than 250 letters from people in my district objecting to this clause.

Mr. Payne: That would be all the rate-payers who voted last year, wouldn't it?

Mr. COUMBE: As the honourable member knows all about my area, can he tell me what area I represent?

Mr. Payne: I wouldn't have a clue.

Mr. COUMBE: No, the honourable member would not have a clue. In parts of my district last year there was a record poll.

Mr. Payne: What percentage?

Mr. Brown: Was it 3 per cent?

Mr. COUMBE: No. Because I have received so many letters objecting to this provision, and because councils, as well as many other people, do not want it, I cannot support the Bill. Further, I point out that this provision is not recommended by the Local Government Act Revision Committee, which, having been specifically set up by the Hon. Mr. Bevan to improve the Act, has reported to the Government. Every member of this House eagerly awaited the report, but this provision was not recommended. In almost every section of this voluminous and well-researched report, we find a reference to ratepayers, not electors; yet the Minister, for his own political reasons, has now switched the provision to an entirely different form, in opposition to the valuable work undertaken by this hard-working committee.

In the front of the report are photographs of and references to the members of the committee; it is a fine gallery, comprising people who have had experience in this type of work. Incidentally, two of the members are highly respected members of the Minister's own department whom I personally hold in high repute. These people have signed this report, which does not recommend the move now being made by the Minister.

Mr. Brown: What's your personal view?

Mr. COUMBE: My personal view is that the responsible person who pays the rates is the person who should have the vote. Also involved in this matter of adult franchise are the roll and the returning officer. This valuable report recommends that councils should appoint the returning officer, who should be the town clerk, district clerk or a deputy, and that the roll should be obtained or prepared by the council. However, under the Bill, all this goes overboard: the electoral roll for the State is to be used (this was not recommended by the committee), and the State Returning Officer is to appoint the returning officer, or authorized officer, for each district (also contrary to the recommendations in the report). The Minister is

promoting this provision regarding adult franchise on his own behalf and on behalf of his Government. Other members have referred to disfranchising certain people.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: It's untruthful.

Mr. COUMBE: I will not be saying anything untruthful.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Let's get the true story now.

Mr. COUMBE: I am rather suspicious of the Minister, after he has completely ignored the report prepared by this committee, acting contrary to some of its recommendations entirely for his own Party political purposes.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: You tell me one person who is disfranchised by our proposal.

Mr. COUMBE: I will certainly have pleasure in doing so. This matter must be considered in its full context. As I understand the Bill, a person who is interested in more than one ratable property has the opportunity to elect either to vote in respect of his residential property or to use an absent vote and vote in respect of his other property. We reach the position where the Premier will want to exercise his vote in Norwood, in his local council area, so he will not have a vote in respect of his other property in Goolwa for which he will be paying rates. He will have no say in the affairs of the Goolwa council. This applies also to other members, including the member for Price.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: How are they disfranchised?

Mr. COUMBE: They are disfranchised in those other areas where they are responsible for paying rates.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Utter rubbish!

Mr. COUMBE: I remind the Minister, who quoted Abraham Lincoln, of a quotation in connection with the Boston tea party: "Taxation without representation!", which led to the American War of Independence. People who have an interest in more than one council area will now have no representation in the second area, but they will be taxed. Someone referred the other day to the privileged class. There is to be a privilege to pay rates, without having a say in how any of the moneys will be spent in the district concerned. I remind the Minister of the numerous shacks in the district of the member for Goyder.

Mr. McAnaney: And in Wallaroo!

Mr. COUMBE: Yes, and in various towns extending south on Yorke Peninsula. Many working men who have saved money have, through thrift, built a shack in this area and have bought a boat, and they spend holidays

there with their families. These people pay rates in respect of those shacks but they will not have the slightest say in how their money will be spent in the area. The Government is disfranchising many of its own supporters.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: We are not disfranchising one individual, and you know it.

Mr. COUMBE: If I own a property in more than one district, I apparently have the privilege of paying rates in another district but not of having any say in how my money will be spent there.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: You believe in buying votes.

Mr. COUMBE: I do not.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: That's what you're saying.

Mr. COUMBE: The Minister says I believe in buying votes: quite frankly, I can see no logic in that statement.

Mr. Keneally: Would you agree that Wallaroo should be controlled by the owners of shacks?

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order.

Mr. COUMBE: The other evening, something was said about the Hindmarsh ward, which is in the city of Adelaide and which is bounded by North Terrace, King William Street, Wakefield Street and East Terrace. Undoubtedly, that ward would return more rates to the Adelaide City Council than would any other ward. At present, there are about 3,200 voters on the council roll, of whom only 1,500 are company nominees. The electoral roll for this area has on it 429 people, of whom 155 are ratepaying residents, being principally caretakers of buildings in the area. Under the Bill, ratepayers will be disfranchised, having no say in how money is spent in a council area. Of the many stores in the city area, let us take as an example John Martin and Company Limited. The Minister has said that such a company can have a nominee, and in this case it may be one member of the Hayward family, or it could be anyone. If that nominee prefers to vote in his residential area, this company, which probably pays about \$40,000 or \$45,000 a year in rates, will have no say in how the council spends its money, but a caretaker living in that area will have a vote.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: How much say does John Martin's have in regard to the tax it pays to the State?

Mr. COUMBE: That company or any other company pays a considerable sum in

annual rates and a far larger sum in land tax; three-quarters of the land tax collected by the State Government comes from the square mile of Adelaide.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Do we give it a vote in the State Parliament?

Mr. COUMBE: All members of the staff of John Martin's have a vote for the State Parliament.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Your argument has broken down completely.

Mr. COUMBE: It has not, because a completely different aspect is involved, the vote in respect of local government being completely different from the vote for State and Commonwealth elections. Every taxpayer is affected in some way by State or Commonwealth legislation. His taxes go to the Commonwealth or State in some way or another and he has a say in what type of Government is elected. The taxes apply equally throughout the Commonwealth. In the case of ratepayers, these matters affect the council area.

If we follow the Minister's argument, we could say that a person might be eligible to vote for the Commonwealth Government, as he was a taxpayer, but not to vote for the State Government. I submit that the case of a ratepayer is different. The principle is that where there is an obligation to pay rates there should also be the right to have some say in how that money will be spent, and that right is being denied in many instances. I live in Prospect and have served on the Prospect council. Members know that I have an interest in an organization whose premises are in the Woodville council area. If the Bill passes, I will have no vote in the Woodville area in future, for I will vote in my own council area. I will be disfranchised in a way similar to that in which trustees of the Trades Hall will be disfranchised.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: The trustees are denied a vote now under the Local Government Act.

Mr. COUMBE: I am glad to hear the Minister say so.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Minister has given his second reading explanation.

Mr. COUMBE: I take it that this Bill will apply also in respect of the South Terrace property.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Yes, because of the terms of the association, and you should know that.

Mr. COUNBE: I am glad to receive the Minister's assistance. Having dealt with the question of adult franchise, I now come to the other matter to which so much objection has been taken: the provision for a compulsory vote. People have written to me asking why they should be compelled to vote at local government elections when they already have to vote at State elections, and on different days at Commonwealth elections in respect of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Mr. Clark: Who will compel them?

Mr. COUNBE: The Bill, which provides that a council shall determine, within three months, whether it will have compulsory or voluntary voting. Within one month of that (and this could be, say, September 30, if the Bill goes through) electors can petition the council to have a poll to see whether or not the council's decision should be upheld. This is the question that councils have to face, and it is taken from the Victorian system, which was referred to in the report. Where the committee differs from the Minister is that in Victoria adult franchise voting does not apply: compulsory voting powers, as suggested in the report and in the Bill, apply, but councils have the right to determine it and the right to change it within five years. However, the difference is that it is not under adult franchise. People have told me and have written to me and complained that possibly they will be forced to go to a council poll and vote in future, as a result of the Minister's adroitly putting forward his plan whereby the council has the chance to make up its own mind. If the decision is incorrect according to what the Minister wants (and I am not suggesting this of the present Minister) he could get 100 cobblers who were not ratepayers (although they could be) to demand a poll, the result of which would be that most of the councillors might not pay rates.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: That is the weakest of many weak arguments that I have heard.

Mr. COUNBE: The position could arise where most council members were not ratepayers.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Is anything wrong with that?

Mr. COUNBE: I believe so, as it would not be in the best interests of local government. I say that as one who served for 11 years in local government and has been associated with councils for many years.

Mr. Keneally: A member was elected to this Government who did not pay tax.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: The Opposition places wealth before human beings.

Mr. COUNBE: I remind the member for Stuart of his illustrious predecessor, who was highly respected by all members and who had one of the longest records of service to local government of anyone in this State. I do not like many of the Bill's provisions. I believe that errors have occurred and that the Bill should be withdrawn and redrafted. Certain items are accepted by local government, but I think the value of these items rapidly disappears when we consider the obnoxious clauses to which councils have objected. I am completely opposed to the franchise provisions which, as I have said, are not wanted by councils in my district or by many other districts throughout the State. They are not required by ratepayers and many of the public, and they have not been recommended by the Local Government Act Revision Committee.

That committee's report was to be the bible of local government matters, but the Minister in his first act since receiving the report has deviated to a marked degree from the committee's recommendations. What benefit has been derived from the time spent by this committee, which provided an excellent report, and from the money that we gladly spent as taxpayers in order to obtain a valuable document, which the Minister ignores completely and proceeds contrary to its recommendations in a most flagrant manner? I point to many anomalies concerning adult franchise, polling booths, the appointment of returning officers, and various rating systems. If the Minister had, as I had hoped, introduced a Local Government Bill which was an interim measure including some good ideas from the report and which was a holding operation until the Act was rewritten (and I know how long that will take), he would have had my support and the support of every council in this State.

However, the way the Bill has been presented has resulted not only in opposition in this place but also, and more cogently and importantly, in tremendous opposition throughout the local government areas of South Australia. It has aroused opposition from the common people, the people who pay rates and who have an interest and stake in the future of this State. Many of them are humble people and working folk: ordinary folk like you and I. These people are being penalized, and I suggest that what the Minister is doing is a retrograde step, which does not have my support. In Committee I will try to introduce

amendments. It is a difficult Bill to amend, but I will try to make it at least partially acceptable and less obnoxious to the people of this State.

Dr. TONKIN (Bragg): I think my distinguished colleagues who have spoken before me have adequately covered most of the provisions of this Bill. Nevertheless, some things must be said. The member for Torrens has covered well the fact that the Local Government Association's recommendations have been ignored and that the committee's findings are being over-ridden. I do not disagree with many of the findings but, as the member for Flinders has said, this is a bitter pill surrounded by a sweet coating of things that are acceptable. We are being asked to accept the Bill *in toto*: with sugar coating, indeed!

The major provisions of the Bill (those concerned with a change in franchise, the roll, and the method of enrolment) are basically unacceptable, and the Local Government Association has made no secret of its opposition to this Bill. All members have received representations and I have received several letters from ratepayers. Unlike the member for Unley, who apparently does not take much notice of representations he receives in the mail, I take notice of them because they represent the points of view of people.

Mr. Langley: How many do you get?

Dr. TONKIN: I do not mind if I get one or two only: that is a viewpoint that has to be put forward. I think it is important to decide what local government is before discussing this matter: who should vote, how they are enrolled, and what their franchise should be. As opposed to State and Commonwealth Parliamentary systems, which deal with constitutional matters affecting the people and their well-being, local government deals with the management of local affairs. It is a means whereby concerted action can be taken by ratepayers and occupiers, who pay rent and thus indirectly pay rates, for the common benefit of people within a community. They pay on a proportionate basis for a share of the work that is done and the benefit they therefore enjoy.

Local government began as a means of providing the necessary services to make possible the settling of an area, and since that time it has dealt with the day-to-day management of local affairs. Just as all shareholders in any public company have a right to vote, so do all ratepayers. All those who pay rates indirectly are given an opportunity to vote.

I think the system is very fair. Comparing that system with Parliamentary and Constitutional government is completely out of place. I do not think the Sanitarium Health Food Company would give a say in its affairs to anyone who ate Weeties for breakfast every morning. If a man owns property he pays rates in proportion to the value not only of his property but also of the work and services he receives from the council, and it is right that he should have some fair say in how those rates will be used in relation to his property. If he has more than one property, he should have a say in relation to each one, because local conditions may vary from property to property, and matters affecting each property may differ quite markedly within the same council area.

The member for Torrens and other members have adequately dealt with the problem of disfranchisement. That point must be brought out again. People are being robbed of their franchise and of their right to decide the management of the particular properties for which they are paying rates. The member for Unley will do no good by scurrying back to his place in order to try to interject, because interjections are out of order and I will take no notice of them. Many people oppose the major provisions of this Bill. I have received communications from the Mitcham, Burnside and Unley councils. They all express the gravest disquiet about the Bill. I have nothing but the highest praise for council members, who give their skills and time for the benefit of the community. By and large, council members are dedicated members of the community who give their time freely to the management of local affairs. I cannot ignore the attitude of the member for Unley. Having said all the nicest things he could in exactly the same if not more fulsome terms about members of the Unley City Council, he went on to make the widest criticisms of that council.

Mr. Langley: The officers, I said.

Dr. TONKIN: He accused it of discrimination in enrolments between ratepayers and occupiers, and he said that the Unley City Council had always been political. He made much of the fact that he had never been asked to speak at naturalization ceremonies, and I think that this may be the thing that rankles most of all. By his words he intimated that the Australian Labor Party never took part in council elections. Can he honestly expect us to believe that? What if mayors of Unley have been prominent members of the community, members of Parliament and members of the L.C.L.? That simply goes to prove that

members of the L.C.L. have a far more highly developed sense of community service in that council area and in other council areas.

Members interjecting:

Mr. VENNING: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, we cannot hear what the honourable member is saying.

The SPEAKER: If the honourable member wants to take a point of order, he can do so, but he is not allowed to interrupt another member's speech.

Dr. TONKIN: I repeat: do members opposite say that the A.L.P. never takes part in council elections?

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: That is quite correct.

Dr. TONKIN: The A.L.P. does not endorse candidates, and the Minister says, "That is quite correct. Members of the A.L.P. take no part in council elections."

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: I did not say that. I said that the A.L.P. takes no part in council elections. What members do in their private right is their own business.

Dr. TONKIN: Yes, and that is the point I have been making to the member for Unley. We have heard that the A.L.P. does not endorse candidates, but it supports them very vigorously, as in the campaign before the Kensington and Norwood council elections in July, 1968. On that occasion a circular was issued on Parliamentary stationery containing a plea addressed to the ratepayers to support a Mr. Coventry. The circular was signed in his capacity as Leader of the Opposition by Mr. Dunstan. The circular said:

It is essential for us to see that the Liberal Party does not capture control of the Kensington and Norwood City Council.

It goes on to mention Mr. Brian Essery as a member of the L.C.L. Yet members opposite say that members of the A.L.P. take no official part in council elections. In another pamphlet is a message from Mr. Dunstan; the circular was authorized by Mr. J. D. Richards.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order.

Dr. TONKIN: I do not think anyone can say that this involves a non-participant role in council elections. The name Essery represents generations of non-Party-political service to the Kensington and Norwood council, a reputation that is known throughout the Norwood area to be of the highest quality. I believe that ratepayers are served best by individuals with a spirit of community service and public duty rather than by a group committed to a poli-

tical Party, particularly when members of that Party have to vote as they are directed, as we saw in this House not long ago. Members of a council voting on a particular issue may be directed to vote against the interests of their own ratepayers simply because the Labor Party calls the tune. Members should ask what the members for Mawson, Playford and Tea Trce Gully have to say about this matter. My main reason for opposing the Bill is that it is directly intended to make easy the introduction of Party politics into council affairs. I will not have local communities dictated to by A.L.P. members, by the A.L.P. executive and by the Trades Hall. Events in the last few months have proved that it could happen; indeed, it has happened in other spheres. I oppose this Bill as strongly as it is possible to do so.

Mr. HARRISON (Albert Park): It gives me great pleasure to support the Bill. Members have often heard it said that local government is the form of government that is closest to the people. I have often wondered just how close to the people it really is. It seems that, because of the apathy shown in many council elections by ratepayers, many elections are left wide open. I am sure that the amendments to the Act contained in the Bill before us will be a means of creating more interest in local government, by extending further opportunities to residents in council areas to exercise their right to vote in council elections, a right that they have hitherto been denied. In this respect, I make no attack on the efficiency of council officers or mayors, aldermen or councillors. Indeed, quite the reverse position obtains. Having had 12 years' experience in the city of Woodville, I know exactly what difficulties confront these people. For this reason, I would be the last to attack them.

Any councillor, alderman or mayor has two types of eligible voters in the area he represents: first, he has the contented people who have all the amenities that the council can give them and, secondly, he has the discontented people who have not been given amenities, such as footpaths and roads. Some may have a few of these amenities, but others have none. The hardest working councillors, aldermen and mayors are frustrated simply because they do not enjoy the support of the people they represent. Therefore, if people could be made to realize just what their duties were regarding local government elections, they would tend to get closer to local

government, and the Bill will ensure that this happens.

Some members have referred to persons who are eligible to vote under the legislation and, although this matter has been raised previously, I should like to discuss it again. Having had 12 years' experience of the Woodville council, I realize that the Lands Titles Office notifies the council concerned that certain people have a dwellinghouse in joint names. The council subsequently lists the wife as the owner of the house, and it puts the husband on the roll as the occupier, which ensures that they both have the right to vote. Of course, some people rent houses, in which case the person whose name appears in the rent book is entitled to vote, but then only after he applies to be enrolled. As persons who have served in local government would know, there is also what is commonly known as the business vote. As soon as a company becomes established in a municipality, its manager is advised that he has the right to nominate from one to three persons' names for placement on the roll, depending on the assessed value of the property involved. It cannot be disputed that some companies could be established in one or more wards, which could mean that, depending on the value of the property, that company could be entitled to up to three votes. Indeed, it is entitled to from one to three votes for each ward in which it is established. For this reason, I said recently that some persons could be entitled to six or more votes. For instance, in the Woodville council area there are eight wards and, if a company was established in each of those wards, it would be entitled to as many as 24 votes. Although the persons involved might not be voting for the same person, they would at least be voting for a person who would be looking after their interests. When it comes to the election of a mayor or alderman, who would cover not just a ward but the whole city, a person can exercise his rights in each ward where he has an establishment to vote.

I should like now to refer to local government rating. At present, most local government organizations in this State assess the rates of ratepayers in their areas by obtaining from the Engineering and Water Supply Department its assessment books, from which they take its assessed values of properties. This means, in effect, that properties are assessed by councils on E. and W.S. Department ratings. As the Minister said in his second reading explanation, the Assembly roll could be computerized and supplied to the

various municipalities as required. I cannot therefore see any stumbling block in this respect. Much has been said about other provisions, so I will not deal with those now. Suffice to say that I sincerely support the Bill and compliment the Minister for introducing it.

Mr. BECKER (Hanson): In a report to local government in selected papers from two schools (Port Augusta and Mount Gambier) in October, 1966, Professor Ruth Atkins said:

In books about Australian government and politics, local government gets very little attention. And when it is mentioned there is almost always the suggestion that, by comparison with systems in other countries, Australian local government is unimportant, fulfils very few functions and, even (according to one Professor of Political Science in a major Australian university), cannot be described as real local government at all.

Professor Atkins later continued:

In my view, this is just ignorant nonsense; written or said, generally, by people who have never studied local government.

That would be a fair assumption. The Government is finding itself in the position of having to introduce a Bill with certain amendments to the Local Government Act that are still in its platform, something that has been left over from olden days. It is a pity that the Government did not even update its policy thinking on this matter. The city of West Torrens, which covers the bigger portion of my electoral district, has this to say:

At the direction of the council, I have been instructed to write to our local members of Parliament, informing them of council's opinion concerning certain proposed amendments to the Local Government Act. The proposed amendments in respect of which the council has expressed an opinion are as follows:

1. The council is opposed to adult franchise and compulsory voting at council elections and polls.
2. The council is opposed to permitting the resignation from council by a member without licence of the council.
3. It would prefer that no alteration be made to the existing provisions relating to the signing of cheques.
4. It is strongly opposed to an amendment to widen the existing provisions relating to the subscribing of funds to any organization to further the interests of local government.
5. It is opposed to the making of provision for the payment of expenses of councillors in connection with attendance at council or committee meetings.
6. It favours authority being given to councils to expend portion of revenue in the provision of various structures for the use and enjoyment of aged, handicapped, or infirm persons, provided that such expenditure shall be limited.

7. The council opposes the amendment in regard to an existing constructed private street being declared a public street.
8. It opposes the amendment to provide that park lands may be converted for use of camping and caravan areas.

The West Torrens council circularized all members on August 31. The council expressed its opinion in relation to compulsory voting.

The Hon. G. R. Broomhill: What does it say there about the Kurralta Park reserve?

Mr. BECKER: May I remind the Minister that as the Minister for Conservation he has not planted a tree or put a blade of grass there. Let him worry about his own portfolio first. The circular states:

The West Torrens council is of the opinion that the introduction of compulsory universal suffrage in council elections would be undesirable for a number of reasons. My council believes that it would result, in the first instance, in quite an appreciable increase in our annual election costs. At present all owners and occupiers have a right to vote and the introduction of universal suffrage would not unduly increase the number of voters, who, in any case, may not take kindly to the right being transformed into an obligation to vote. Admittedly, this Bill does provide that the councils themselves shall decide, by referendum three months after the next council elections, whether local government voting shall be compulsory or voluntary. The council says further:

Many companies have their establishments in West Torrens, and these companies have a vital interest in the wellbeing and development of the area. My council would hope that, should the Government proceed with the proposal, consideration be given to allowing nominees of said companies to retain their right to vote. Much has been made of the small numbers of people who vote at local government elections but my council feels that the holding of the annual elections in mid-winter does nothing to help to rectify the position.

I think that is a good point—that people have to be brought out in mid-winter to vote at local government elections, and the Government would force this on them if it could have its own way about compulsory voting. As we look at this Bill—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hanson is supposed to be speaking.

Mr. BECKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In reference to the clause dealing with adult suffrage, about 85 per cent of the adult population of this State is entitled to vote. Therefore, we are concerned with only 15 per cent. It is most unusual for the Government to be coming along and thumping the barrel, as it

is at the moment, sticking up for a minority when it reminds us time and again that it has a majority: it has the authority of and a mandate from the electors to introduce certain legislation. It is an unusual twist that the Government is now supporting, or making out that it is supporting, the desires and wishes of 15 per cent of the population. To back this, the Minister said that those people who contribute to taxation should have a say in local government. Of course, here again there is the anomaly that the word "ratepayer" has been deleted and the word "elector" substituted. As a ratepayer, I object to being called an elector in local government. When we look at the money raised by local government in this State we find that, in the Adelaide statistical division, according to the *South Australian Year Book, 1970*, the total amount of money received was \$24,839,000. Of that amount raised, \$16,791,000 came directly from rates, including arrears and fines. That is well over 50 per cent. Other moneys raised would be contributed to in part by most of the ratepayers. Certain moneys are, of course, given to the councils by the Government, but the local councils are acting only as agents on behalf of the Government, because they construct the roads, do some bridge work and put in drains and sewers and so forth. Therefore, the Minister's argument that everyone should be entitled to a vote at local government elections is not valid.

I may be adopting a selfish attitude, but I pay \$94 a year in council rates, about \$103 in water and sewerage rates—and I can spit better than the water pressure in my tap! I pay \$13 in land tax—yet I am to be told what to do about the administration of my council by people who pay nothing at all!

Mr. Hopgood: What is your council area?

Mr. BECKER: We know about the member for Mawson's character assassination of members on this side of the House. Those people who pay council rates have every right to a say in the administration of a council.

Mr. Clark: What percentage of them votes at the council elections?

Mr. BECKER: I am not talking about percentages.

Mr. Clark: I am sure you are not.

Mr. BECKER: I return now to the argument that with compulsory voting politics will enter into local government. Of course it will. It is all very well for members of the Government to say that there is a political influence in local government. I do not deny the fact that that may be so in one or two areas, but

I know of other areas where the Labor Party has a very strong influence in local government. However, the Labor Party is shrewd. It does not publicly endorse its candidates, so it does not have to go through that cumbersome procedure. However, what it does is say to Fred, "You put up. No worries, we will give you the assistance of the campaign committee that looks after the Commonwealth member of Parliament for the area, and we will organize the distribution of literature and use the Party machine to assist you in the local government elections." Sometimes, in some areas, persons such as Fred are elected. When this happens, members of opposing political Parties in the area will say, "Why don't we do something about it?" We may get the position where Labor is working quietly and effectively to support a representative in local government, and it is only natural that members of the Liberal and Country League will say, "What are we doing about this?" This does happen. It is no use denying that, because people are expressing their points of view on politics now and they have the courage of their convictions to say whether they are L.C.L. supporters or Labor supporters. I do not blame anyone for doing that: I admire a person who has the courage to say which Party he is a member of or supports.

Mr. HOPGOOD: So, where's the problem?

Mr. BECKER: There is no problem, but Government members should not continue to throw at us the drivel that the Labor Party does not engage in politics in local government.

Mr. HOPGOOD: How will this Bill make it worse?

Mr. BECKER: The honourable member can repeat the interjection if he likes, but it is out of order.

Mr. HOPGOOD: How will this Bill make the situation any worse?

Mr. BECKER: This Bill will possibly encourage politics in local government on a greater scale but it will bring it out into the open, and that is something the honourable member does not want to see happen. We have three levels of government in Australia now, and this Bill is the final move, in my opinion, to bring politics into local government. If politics come in, we will have a continuous battle and continuous elections. I think that we have had far too many elections in Australia in the last three years, and I hope that we will not go through another period of elections, whether for the Commonwealth Parliament, the State Parliament, or local govern-

ment. I know that honourable members have received a letter from the Local Government Association of S.A. Incorporated, and I thought that by now Government members, in particular, would have commented on it. The second paragraph of the letter states:

The association opposes the whole of the present Bill, because member councils have indicated strong opposition to any changes in the electoral and voting system and, further, because it considers the present Bill will aggravate the present complex interpretation of the Local Government Act as a whole, which has already been described by a Chief Justice of this State as "not so much a thing of shreds and patches as a heap of junk." The association considers substantial amendments to the Act, if any be made, should be made at the time when the whole Act is revised.

I do not think that statement needs any further comment from me, because the member for Torrens did an extremely good job on that point earlier in this debate. However, I consider that what the association has said should be incorporated in *Hansard* so that honourable members and those persons who will be watching carefully the actions of members in certain areas will know what has happened in regard to this Bill. The association goes on to say:

This provision appears to be arrogant and an insult to Parliament itself.

That is a gentle comment on the Bill. The letter also states:

Parliament should decide what Bills are promoted before it and no single person. It appears, however, to reflect the attitude of the Minister of Local Government as regards the passing of this Bill. It would give him the complete right to decide what Bills he thinks should be promoted before Parliament.

There the association is referring to the clause in the Bill that precludes local government from promoting any Bill before Parliament without the Minister's consent. Government members continuously remind us that we live in a democratic society, that we have the right to protest and to object to anything, and to defend anything we want to defend.

Mr. VENNING: This Bill is different, somehow, isn't it?

Mr. BECKER: Yes. We have this small clause providing that local government is not to promote any Bill before Parliament. Where will we in this community get if we tolerate this sort of thing? I cannot see any Government, responsible for introducing legislation in this House, saying to the trade unions, "You are not allowed to promote any Bill before Parliament."

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

Mr. BECKER: Further on in the circular the Local Government Association states:

The association has ample evidence that councillors and the people they represent in this State do not want any change in the voting system.

Here I may quote the member for Stuart, who stated:

The opposition from those participating in local government counts for nothing—

What a disgraceful statement that is! The honourable member continued:

—because those persons see a threat to their existence.

I do not know how that honourable member will be able to hold his head up in his area when he goes around amongst the local councillors, and the public relations section of the Liberal Party ought to draw attention to that statement. It is a disgraceful comment about the efforts of those who work so hard in local government.

Mr. Mathwin: Voluntarily, too.

Mr. BECKER: Yes, they encourage people to come to the area and they encourage development and growth, yet the member for Stuart has made the following statement:

The opposition from those participating in local government counts for nothing, because those persons see a threat to their existence.

Mr. Mathwin: As though they were getting paid for it!

Mr. BECKER: Yes. I think the comment by the member for Stuart is poor. That honourable member told us that he has to pay 90c a day so that his family can use a swimming pool in the area in which he lives. He was protesting against that charge, and I support him in that. I, too, would protest against such a charge.

Mr. Mathwin: He wants a gold pass.

Mr. BECKER: I do not know about that, but I would protest at that charge.

The ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. RYAN): Order! Will the honourable member please address the Chair?

Mr. BECKER: That charge is extremely high, and I hope the member for Stuart will help the council to reduce it so that everyone can participate in an amenity that local government has provided. The Minister, in explaining the Bill, stated:

Clause 115 amends section 783 regarding depositing of rubbish on roads and public places Section 783 provides a penalty of up to \$80 for depositing rubbish. In an endeavour to help stamp out this practice,

the maximum penalty is increased to \$200 and a minimum penalty of \$10 is introduced.

I consider that those fines are not severe enough.

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

Mr. BECKER: The fines provided for depositing rubbish illegally should be doubled or even trebled. I am a little disappointed that the clause relating to this provision does not authorize local councils to impose beach litter fines. Beach litter represents a great worry to councils, particularly those councils in whose areas there are great expanses of beach. The additional costs incurred by councils that have to contend with this problem are actually borne by the ratepayers. One would have thought that included in this clause there could be a provision empowering councils to levy fines in this respect. Referring to bridge-works, particularly in the Glenelg council area, as I said earlier ratepayers contribute over 50 per cent of the general revenue of the council, and the Government makes grants in respect of various projects. As a result of alterations to the Patawalonga Basin, the King Street bridge will be upgraded and, while this work is being carried out, the Anderson Avenue bridge, which is a single-lane bridge of wooden construction, will have to be used more often.

Although I am not too sure how old this bridge is, it can only accommodate vehicles of a maximum gross weight of 2 tons, and I expect that the council will have to spend money on upgrading the bridge to carry the increased volume of traffic. This could embarrass the council, because it would require money that would be eventually wasted because, once the bridge over the basin was reconstructed, the existing bridge would have to be dismantled. I will in due course be asking the Minister to provide a Bailey bridge, which I know is in stock for emergency purposes, so the Minister, expecting that question, can probably undertake an exercise in trying to assess the traffic flow along Anderson Avenue in that area.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member must speak to the Bill.

Mr. BECKER: As I said this afternoon, I have taken the liberty of reading from letters addressed to me, as the local member, from councils in my district. I believe that the best way of acknowledging letters I receive in connection with measures such as this Bill is to refer to them in the House. One of the comments made by the Local Government Association of South Australia, which has undertaken

much work in connection with this Bill, is as follows:

The association regards local government bodies as representative of ratepayers and each council as the management body of an association of ratepayers. The proposed change in the voting franchise will alter the whole relationship between the ratepayer and his council. It will no longer be his council as it will be elected by persons other than ratepayers. Councils generally do not favour any change in this concept of the form of local government.

As a ratepayer, I may seem to be selfish, but I should like a definite say in the administration of the council in the district in which I reside. I do not wish to be like a friend of mine who has developed his property and erected five flats on it: under full adult franchise he could be outvoted by his tenants. In other words, by developing the property he will have to pay increased rates and taxes and he will be instructed what to do by his tenants. We must have rules and regulations concerning local government, but I cannot see why anyone willing to spend capital in a local government area should not have some say in the council's administration. I do not see why that person should be outvoted by people who are not willing to contribute anything. These people come into the area, stay for a time, and then move to another area. They should have the right to vote in local government when they acquire their own properties. The Local Government Association circular states:

The Minister obviously wishes and has openly said that he wants compulsory voting for council elections. The association considers the present Bill to be a back-door approach to that objective.

I do not have to enlarge on what has been by Opposition members concerning that aspect in supporting the association's views. This is a round-about way of doing it, because we were told that the Government's plans were to introduce compulsory voting for local government, but now it has thrown the onus on to councils, which will have to hold a referendum three months after a council election.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: It is not a referendum: read the Bill.

Mr. BECKER: Of course it is. Call it what you like: to me it is a referendum. I believe that a ratepayer has the right to express his point of view, and I have taken this action as a ratepayer to express mine.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Are you going to deny the rest of them their right?

Mr. BECKER: No. I will not deny ratepayers anything. I referred earlier in the debate to a comment by the member for

Stuart, who has now pointed out to me that I quoted from the *Hansard* pull and not directly from the corrected *Hansard* version. If, by saying what I said, I have offended him, I apologize. I cannot support the Bill, because there are so many amendments that I find objectionable. I would support one or two but I believe my best course is to oppose the Bill outright. In doing so, I suggest to the Minister that it was a pity that his Party did not outline its policy fully prior to last year's election. I believe that the Government is saddled with having to introduce amendments to the principal Act because these points are in the A.L.P. platform and, consequently, it is stuck with them. I hope that Government members will do some homework and then review the Bill. The people who gave Government members a mandate will find that the provisions of this Bill are objectionable. I record my appreciation of the work done by mayors, aldermen, councillors and council staff in this State. Under this Bill the Government is loading them with additional work and additional responsibility. If politics enter local government through the introduction of compulsory voting, those officers will be put to the wall. I therefore strongly oppose the Bill.

Mr. GUNN (Eyre): I am totally opposed to this Bill. It is typical of what we have come to expect from this Socialist Government, which is completely out of touch with the people, particularly ratepayers. This Bill is nothing more than an expression of Socialist doctrinaire philosophy which Government members are trying to push on to the people against their will. At Ceduna, I recently attended a local government conference at which the delegates spoke on this Bill. I was interested in what the delegates from Whyalla said, particularly in view of the remarks of the members for Whyalla and Stuart, who so strongly support the Bill. However, councils in those members' districts oppose the Bill. After listening to the member for Whyalla, I wonder whether he is aware of the opinion of his council; it seems that the honourable member does not know much about the Bill's provisions. People in my area and members of the six councils in my electoral district are all opposed to this Bill for several reasons. In my district politics have not entered into local government.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: They're all Liberal.

Mr. GUNN: I have a clear conscience on this matter. The people who have sought election as councillors have done so because

they wished to assist the people in their areas; they did so for the benefit of all people. This Bill is nothing but an insult to the people who have been administering local government in this State. It is a deliberate attempt to disfranchise the ratepayers.

Mr. Brown: Rats!

Mr. GUNN: This Bill will make it possible for people who have no stake in an area, members of the floating population, to come into a local government area, reside there for a short time, and at one election change the membership of the council.

Mr. Brown: Voting need not be compulsory.

Mr. GUNN: The honourable member should do his homework on this subject and face reality. Flat dwellers may get a vote.

Mr. Brown: Many good people live in flats.

Mr. GUNN: I do not have anything against individuals, but I do support the point of view that my electors have taken and whilst I am a member of this House I will put their viewpoint here—not like members opposite who have to sign a pledge that they will abide by their rule book and who are subject to outside control. However, I will not continue in that vein.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There are far too many interjections and they must cease. The honourable member should speak to the Bill and take no notice of interjections.

Mr. GUNN: Thank you, Sir. I should like now to refer to some remarks regarding the Bill made by the member for Unley, who has used this legislation purely as a vehicle to attack the Unley City Council. He did not address himself properly to the Bill. He also took the opportunity to attack two former mayors of that council, which is an absolute disgrace. The member for Mawson once again showed what an impractical man he is. Although I do not wish to be personal in this regard, he has shown that he is purely a theorist, and his remarks should be totally disregarded. Full adult franchise for local government is an ill-conceived principle, and I should like to know who has been asking for it.

The Hon. D. H. McKee: You are out of touch with your electors. You don't know what the people want. Someone is campaigning against you right now.

Mr. RODDA: On a point of order, Sir, I think the references to the honourable member's electors and to the honourable member's being out of touch with his district, as well as accusing other people of campaigning

against him, are entirely out of order, and the Minister should be asked to withdraw his remarks.

The SPEAKER: I cannot uphold the point of order.

Mr. GUNN: I was discussing full adult franchise for local government.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. D. H. McKee: You are completely out of touch with your district.

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order.

Mr. GUNN: I am completely in touch with my district: indeed, even more so than is the Minister of Labour and Industry with his. I have not come in contact with one ratepayer that favours this legislation. I should like now to read the following portion of the address given by the President of the Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association:

My report would be incomplete without reference to the proposal of the Government to introduce legislation to provide for a radical departure from existing practices in voting procedures and for the introduction of adult franchise. We would be the first to acknowledge the necessity for improving our operation. However, the proposals outlined in Mr. Virgo's speech, at the opening of the annual general meeting of the Local Government Association, are diametrically opposed to local government and must be opposed by our association. Individual councillors, ratepayers and interested organizations, let us all hope that Parliament will vote on this issue according to the wishes of the electorate . . .

That is just what I am doing. It is obvious that the members for Whyalla and Stuart do not intend to do this.

Mr. Clark: Did this gentleman bother to tell you why?

Mr. GUNN: Yes, he did.

Mr. Clark: You might let us hear it then.

Mr. GUNN: He considered (and rightly so too) that the idea of full adult franchise for local government elections would be detrimental to local government generally, because the very people who provide the finance for the administration and running of local government and the services it provides would lose control of their council. The only right they would have would be to pay substantial rates. The Minister knows that this is so, yet he continues to interject. Since he has been on the front bench he has not made one sensible contribution to the debates. The matter of full adult franchise in local government has been conceived by the Government for sheer political purposes and against the wishes of most people in this State. I am totally opposed to it, as are my constituents and

those of other members in this place. This is only a back-door method of getting compulsory voting. This Government is a Government of compulsion.

The Hon. D. H. McKee: What about you? Do you support conscription?

Mr. GUNN: Of course I support conscription, and I'm proud to support it.

Mr. Clark: Compulsion is all right, then?

Mr. GUNN: Compulsory voting in any form I am opposed to.

Members interjecting:

Mr. GUNN: Compulsory voting in local government has never been asked for. Members opposite think that the people do not take an interest in local government but, if in a ward or an administrative area of local government the ratepayers are not satisfied, they soon register their protest. For instance, the council area with which I am connected has a high percentage of voters turning out at council elections.

Mr. Clark: Eleven per cent?

Mr. GUNN: The only reason why this provision has been included in the Bill is to assist the Labor Party in its policy of bringing politics into local government and making people vote who would not normally vote. That is the only reason for this provision, and members opposite know it. In the local government area with which I have some association, the council is more interested in looking after its ratepayers and the welfare of the people in its area than worrying about introducing politics into local government.

I oppose this Bill. I do not want to say much more at this stage, for the members for Light, Torrens and Kavel have adequately put our point of view. When the Bill reaches the Committee stage, I shall have more to say about it.

Mr. RODDA (Victoria): I shall not say much about the Bill. I speak as an ex-councillor. I am not referring to another place, because I want to reassure members that it is my wish to continue to be a member of this place.

Mr. Ryan: You have to do what your Party says and you know it.

Mr. RODDA: We do not take directions; we are free agents on this side of the House. We are concerned about this Bill. Much has been said in this debate about politics in local government. Throughout South Australia local government has a wonderful record.

The Hon. D. H. McKee: What about the Adelaide City Council?

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order.

Mr. RODDA: It is the great majority of people in whom we are interested. Local government in this State is the form of government closest to the people. It has been financed by the people in the district by the proper raising of capital taxation in the form of rates. It is being whispered in dark alleys and around corners that, once this Bill is passed, the Government will impose a \$10 poll tax on everybody in this State. As a result of this Bill many people will be denied some of the rights they have as ratepayers. Controls will be placed on ratepayers, who provide the income for local government, by people who have no responsibility for providing that income. It seems that the Minister has had a change of heart since this Government came to office and that local government, in specific areas, will be able to decide what will be done regarding enrolment.

Mr. Payne: Well, there's no compulsion about it, is there?

Mr. RODDA: No, but we are somewhat distrustful of members opposite, after the references that have been made to the Adelaide City Council, and about lining people up, as the Minister said in the opening part of his explanation. It is good to quote good things several times. The Minister commenced his explanation by saying:

It makes several separate and unconnected amendments to the Local Government Act. Two aspects of the Bill are of considerable importance and of wide-reaching effect on local government.

That is an understatement. First, we are told that the Bill is designed to introduce full adult franchise into local government, and then the Minister rushed for an authority. He was almost in the same category as the member for Mawson, talking about Abraham Lincoln. The Minister went on to say that his Government had put this matter to the people at the last election, and that is true; but many things were quoted at the last election. I may mention the three white horses that this Government came to office on.

Mr. Jennings: You had only two blind mice.

Mr. RODDA: In view of some of the things that we were subjected to at the time, we were probably lucky to have that. However, at least we have credibility and we are going forward with a good conscience, not cutting across the rights of people who have, in the long history of this State, given their best and provided a form of government that is

closest to the people. The councils have worked freely and voluntarily and now the Government is disfranchising those who have made such a valuable contribution. The ward of Robertson, in my own district at Naracoorte, is a sparsely populated and highly productive area, comprising absentee landowners, of whom I am one. Few people live in this area, because, as the Minister of Works would acknowledge, it is subject to inundation. What sort of representation will we get out of this hotch-potch Bill? I believe the measure is ill-conceived and that the instance that I have cited regarding the District Council of Naracoorte can apply equally to the Adelaide City Council, which I understand will have about 300 electors, although metropolitan members may correct me if I am wrong. There are in the city of Adelaide many worthy people who have given sterling service through the years and whose efforts have made this city a focal point of Australia. The city council has a record that would stand up to the closest scrutiny, so why interfere with its activities?

Mr. Coumbe: It is the oldest council in Australia, and it promotes the Festival of Arts.

Mr. RODDA: We have that qualification from the former Minister of Works, and he should know what he is saying, because his district comprises much of the City Council area. When this Bill becomes law, this position will be changed, and there will be repercussions. We are interested in South Australia as a whole, and it is somewhat distressing to people, including me, who have served in local government to know that concern is being expressed by district councils and corporations throughout the State about this Bill.

Mr. Payne: Not by the people, though: just by councils and corporations.

Mr. RODDA: Members opposite become hot under the collar when we are dealing with local issues. Some poultices are being prepared by the people about whom the honourable member is so fond of talking.

Mr. Coumbe: Late closing.

Mr. RODDA: That is one of them. There are also the high-speed corridors.

The SPEAKER: There is nothing in this Bill about high-speed corridors. The honourable member must speak to the Bill.

Mr. RODDA: There is nothing in this Bill about many things, but they do exist, and we on this side are extremely suspicious of things that are hidden under beds. The member for Mitchell talks about people not having their

say, but the people have had extremely good government for most of the time that this State has been administered at its various levels.

Mr. Payne: I think it would be fairer to say they have had government.

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order.

Mr. RODDA: I only wish the honourable member was not so biased, for he, probably more than any of the other new members, will be subjected to the consequences of this rather strong bias that he exhibits when any Bill is being considered by the House.

Mr. Payne: My bias is to give the people a fair go. That's a good bias to have, believe me.

Mr. RODDA: I hope the future will be reasonably kind to the honourable member. However, that does not apply to his future in this House, because I hope it will be short. I am sure that, if we have many more measures like this Bill, there will be no doubt about his future in this House. This is a Committee Bill and there will be many questions asked of the Minister in that stage. In the meantime, I oppose the Bill.

Mr. MATHWIN (Glenelg): I, too, oppose the Bill, although I support the second reading. Much needs to be changed in the present Bill, and I speak with a knowledge of local government, having been a mayor for five years and a member of a council for more than 11 years. The Bill has some good provisions, but the Government has selected a few recommendations made by the Local Government Act Revision Committee, the report of which took some time to compile and which should be carefully considered. The \$50 question concerns compulsory voting, which has reared its head in this Bill. This is an attitude that we have seen often in Bills introduced by the Government. Knowing full well that most people in South Australia and in local government opposed such a move, the Minister, on the advice of his moderates on the one hand and possibly because of the reasonable majority he has in his own district being affected by the effect of compulsory voting, has now introduced a weak compromise. He has made it weak, because he is really committed to compulsory voting. I now turn to the little black book (the inside is black, not the outside) and, under "Local Government," item 3 states:

Adult suffrage for council elections with a simple majority by the cross system of voting and with compulsory voting.

This is what Labor members signed the pledge to support.

Mr. Jennings: This is not in the Bill.

Mr. MATHWIN: In this book, and again under "Local Government", preference for unionists is mentioned. Councils are giving this now, and I agree.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is nothing in the Bill concerning preference to unionists, and the honourable member is required to speak to the Bill.

Mr. MATHWIN: Payment to councillors is a matter that is referred to in the Bill. In the book we see that aldermen and councillors shall be granted a minimum of \$50 a year towards expenses.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is nothing in the Bill about that matter.

Mr. Coumbe: There is.

Mr. MATHWIN: If this matter hurts Government members I will not persist with it, as they know what the book contains.

Mr. Payne: It cost you 50c.

Mr. MATHWIN: Yes, and it was worth it, because I have never had so many laughs in all my life. The Minister has decided to put the responsibility on to councils, which will have to make the decision. I am opposed to any form of compulsion; this Bill is the thin edge of the wedge, and I am sure that compulsion will follow its implementation.

Local government has had a long and proud history. The first local government bodies were called township moots; they were established in the United Kingdom in 925 A.D. Westminster has often been referred to as the mother of Parliaments, and it has been shown that local government was the original form of government in England. The first local government body in South Australia was set up in Adelaide; I do not think that people bothered then whether they were Liberal or Labor people. Undoubtedly, local government in South Australia has proved that it is competent; it is the form of government closest to the people. Up to the present it has had a happy relationship with State Governments. "Local government", in the English sense of the term, means local self-government; that is to say, the administration of public affairs in each locality.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: That is why councils sought a vote of no confidence in the Hon. Stan Bevan when he was Minister of Local Government! That was the good relationship you were talking about!

Mr. MATHWIN: We have heard much from Government members about democracy and the rights of the people, but do they believe that people should be disfranchised?

Mr. Brown: You believe that.

Mr. MATHWIN: Undoubtedly people will be disfranchised by this Bill.

Mr. Brown: They already are.

Mr. MATHWIN: When we speak of interested people we are automatically speaking of ratepayers because, if ratepayers are unhappy, they will take the trouble to vote. They can nominate as candidates in council elections and they can lobby councillors. An elector is entitled to vote for the House of Assembly. An elector may be interested in the welfare of the State, no matter where he may travel in the State. However, that does not necessarily mean that he has an interest in local government in an area in which he may reside only temporarily and for which he makes no financial contribution to the council. The ratepayer does, of course.

Mr. Brown: So does the elector.

Mr. MATHWIN: I would term an elector a casual resident.

Mr. Clark: He might have been there for 40 years. It is a wonder you allow him to walk on the footpath that the ratepayers pay for.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MATHWIN: I am sure the honourable member has paid his road moieties. He must have done so, as he wears a nice blue tie.

Mr. Clark: What's that got to do with it?

The SPEAKER: There is nothing in the Bill about blue ties. The honourable member must ignore interjections.

Mr. Jennings: You're just a B.P.

Mr. MATHWIN: The honourable member is trying to say that I am a "B.P." At least I am a South Australian by choice and not by accident, as he is.

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections must cease, and the honourable member for Glenelg must not get personal. I ask him to confine his remarks to the Bill. He will help considerably if he will do as I ask.

Mr. MATHWIN: Thank you, Sir, but I was called a "B.P." Full adult franchise is the thin edge of the wedge, and will lead to compulsory voting.

Mr. Clark: You have just said that most people in this State are against compulsory voting, so how could that happen?

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order.

Mr. MATHWIN: Only ratepayers are reasonably static and have personal or financial grounds for desiring responsible representation. This legislation will disfranchise many people who, for many reasons, are interested in the progress and betterment of local government. I suggest that these people are loyal to their council and their district. Section 100 of the Act allows up to three persons to enrol on behalf of a corporate body, and section 115 allows three joint occupiers of a premises to vote at an election. I say "allows" because the member for Unley has said that people are not told they can enrol. However, they are allowed to enrol if they so desire.

In the United Kingdom, people are entitled to vote wherever their interests lie so that, if a man owns a shop or business, or if he builds a block of flats, his material interest will be in the place in which he has that business, block of shops or flats; but he also has an interest in the area where he lives. Obviously, different questions must be considered. Both council areas can be vital to him if he contributes financially to both. Of course, different councils can have different problems, and it is bad to disfranchise a person in this manner. It is no good one's saying that the use of Assembly rolls will simplify the whole procedure, because this is not so. Under this Bill, a person can nominate where he wishes to vote, and a person living at Brighton, Port Augusta or Glenelg could nominate to vote at Wallaroo if he had a shack there. I suggest that this will entail much more work. It will have to be policed. When more work is done in this direction, as it will be, extra cost will be involved. I suggest that, if the councils or the electors do not pay for that, the people of the State will have to. Who will follow up this matter of who has failed to vote? I suggest that the little people in local government, the people that the Government is always telling us it is here to protect, the small men, the workers of the area, will have to pay, one way or the other, for this extra cost—and, believe me, it will cost plenty.

There is no doubt that this Bill will lead to compulsory voting. The seed has been sown and it is obvious to us on this side what will happen: a splinter group, a group of only 100 people, can demand a poll, and that is how politics can be brought into local government. The Minister has said openly that in his opinion it is unacceptable that no follow-up proceedings are taken. Therefore, extra cost must be involved in compulsory voting.

The members for Unley and Whyalla in their speeches made much of politics in councils.

Mr. Langley: Too right!

Mr. MATHWIN: We are all familiar with the Adelaide City Council. I do not agree with the principle that that council is nominated from political Parties. In my experience of local government, I have seen no Party politics brought into the councils. Some members of the council of which I am a member belong to a different Party from mine, but that does not alter our decisions or the debating that goes on. Just because a man has different ideas from mine, it does not stop me from supporting him if I think his views are worth supporting. The member for Unley mentioned the Unley City Council, and the politics in it. I am surprised at that. If it worries him, I suggest he join the Unley council—he would make a very good mayor.

The member for Whyalla said that big business interests controlled councils. I have never heard so much trash in my life. He added as a rider (which surprised me, because I should have thought he would know differently) that big businesses did nothing in the district in which it was situated. We do not have to go very far to see Chrysler's buildings in a certain area. They and others are made attractive not because it will sell them an extra car but because they are proud of the area in which they are situated and they try to beautify it as much as possible. Also, the Coca Cola people have put a lot of money into local organizations.

Mr. Brown: Whose area are they in—yours?

Mr. MATHWIN: It is general. Another point is that candidates will be required under the Bill to pay a deposit of \$20. This does not worry me: I am happy about it and think that it is a reasonable idea. However, I am surprised that Government members have not thought of the fact that some people could be penalized by this entrance fee, as it were, of \$20. The little man, the family man, who may have several children and may be working on the production line at Chrysler Australia Limited, General Motors-Holdens, or one of those places, may be finding it hard to make ends meet. If he is interested in local government and desires to nominate, he must pay a deposit of \$20.

Members opposite have asked how Party politics can come into local government, and I suggest that this is one way in which it could. A man who finds it hard to pay a

deposit of \$20 may be a good man for local government, and there is no reason why such a person should not be a member of a council. He may seek the deposit from the L.C.L. or the Labor Party (the Party concerned does not matter to me) by saying, "How about it? Can you run me?" This is how politics could intrude into local government. Once he is on the council, beholden to one of the Parties, his job is finished! He will not be able to make his own decisions, and this would ruin local government. I also point out that the Government is inconsistent in this matter.

A further point is that a member of a council will be able to resign from the council without council's approval. This is a good point. I know that two councils in the Adelaide area have refused persons permission to resign to contest the mayoralty, so I agree with this provision. However, the Government ought to consider whether this provision should cover a person who may wish to withdraw before election day. At present, once a nomination is lodged, the person nominated must stand, whether he likes it or not.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: No. He can withdraw up to nomination day.

Mr. MATHWIN: That is right.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Well, quote it properly, if you want to quote it.

Mr. MATHWIN: The Minister has made a little splurge. He answers me better in debate than in Question Time.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Someone has to put you right when you're on the wrong track.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MATHWIN: Once the nomination is lodged and accepted, he cannot withdraw. I suggest seriously to the Minister that such a person should be able to withdraw his nomination.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Well, move an amendment. You can do it.

Mr. MATHWIN: I thank the Minister. I see that he is sympathetic on this matter, so I will leave it. There has been no mention of a poll tax. We have heard much about people who pay taxes and are entitled to do various things. If the Government is so keen to get everyone to pay a tax, why not place a poll tax on those people who are not paying rates and, therefore, not contributing? The member for Mount Gambier has said that there would be no cost to councils for preparing rolls, and I refer him to new section 89 (4), which provides:

The council shall pay to the Returning Officer for the State such fees and expenses as may be fixed by him in respect of the preparation of the electoral roll for the area.

The honourable member said that this would not be possible, but I suggest that he reads the provision, for it may help him. Clause 48 relates to the appointment of a town clerk or district clerk and reduces the age of appointment from 21 years to 18 years. As the Leaving standard is required of those wishing to undertake the course, I point out that the people concerned would be well over 18 years after completing the three-year course. Also, as I understand that an effort is being made to upgrade the course to a five-year course, I think the Minister should look into this matter.

I am pleased that the Bill seeks to simplify postal voting. After an application has been received, the officer concerned will be able to hand the postal vote personally to the applicant to be completed, and this is a step in the right direction. Many people have religious beliefs that preclude them from voting on a Saturday, and, in addition, many people are away on holidays when an election is held. This provision simplifies the existing procedure. However, I am concerned that councils' rights are being taken away to some extent. Why should not councils retain their existing rights to conduct their own affairs? There is no evidence of inefficiency within councils and no evidence of unacceptable practices. In any case, the Minister has the power to request the State Electoral Department to conduct a council election if he desires. Why penalize local government in general for the sake of a few? In no other State in Australia except Queensland does this provision exist. No doubt the provision exists in regard to Brisbane as a matter of convenience. Under these provisions, costs are bound to rise, thereby creating an even greater hardship on ratepayers. The Brisbane City Council is a different kettle of fish, for it has a greater sphere of activities than has any other council in Australia. The general rates there form only a part of its income. Why insist on changing a form of government that has proved most successful in the past? There must be a reason, but I am sure it is not a good one. The Bill contains a provision relating to naturalized citizens.

Mr. Payne: Are they patriots?

Mr. MATHWIN: Some of the people concerned are not ratepayers, but someone has to speak up for them, anyway. I refer here

to clause 36 (d), which seeks to strike out paragraphs III and V of section 122 (1). Clause 161 sets out the form that is to be used for those who intend to nominate for councils, and, in part, it states:

I, the abovenamed candidate, hereby consent to the nomination and I declare that I am a natural born (or naturalized) British subject and that I am an elector for the municipality (or district).

It states, "I am an elector", and to be on the State roll one must be a naturalized citizen. I suggest that under this schedule the Government is trying to make the un-naturalized, and the New Australians who arrive here, second-class citizens. If the Labor Party is the great benefactor why does it not provide for those people? It has wiped them off, even though some of them pay rates.

Mr. Hopgood: Let them take up nationality.

Mr. MATHWIN: They are not allowed to unless they have been here for a certain time.

The Hon. D. H. McKee: Who stops them?

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: The Liberal Party in Canberra!

Mr. MATHWIN: In this debate the member for Stuart said:

There has been a great clamour about politics in local government. However, we must remember that every activity is a result of a political decision made at some time or another, and politics is tied up with humanity. We simply cannot divorce politics from local government. Of course, Party politics should be kept out of local government; but what politics we find in local government is Liberal Party politics.

That is a mis-statement of fact if I have ever heard one. We all know what happens, under certain conditions, and we know that some political Parties assist their candidates. The honourable member also referred to others who work in local government. I wonder whether he realizes how many hours are spent on a voluntary basis by people who work for the benefit of society in general. I know that "voluntary" is difficult for the Government to accept because it would rather use "compulsory". The honourable member said that all people who paid any sort of taxes should have a vote. I remind the member for Stuart that the Glenelg and Brighton councils receive more than \$2,000 a year from dog registrations. Does he suggest giving a vote to dogs? I suggest that ratepayers in the community pay more taxes than do most people. I wonder whether members know just how much is paid by councils to various bodies. Councils pay many thousands of dollars a year to the Royal Adelaide Hospital. Further, they pay large sums to the Fire

Brigades Board and they have to pay for street lighting. I suppose the member for Stuart is like many other people who think that the only thing local government does is to empty rubbish bins. The member for Mount Gambier made great play of the fact that local government receives many thousands of dollars from the State Government. However, I point out that that money is used on main roads, not the less important roads, and those main roads are used by all people. I oppose the Bill in its present form, and I shall have more to say during the Committee stage.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO (Minister of Local Government): I do not desire to inflict on the House comments on all the extraneous matters that have been raised during this debate, but I must deal with a few matters to put the record straight. The member for Eyre is trying to interject. I am not very concerned about interjections from the honourable member, because when he had his opportunity to speak he contributed practically nothing. The member for Glenelg complained about the clause requiring deposits to be lodged by candidates in council elections. I suggest that the honourable member should read section 142A of the principal Act; if he does he will find that there is currently a provision requiring deposits to be lodged by candidates for Adelaide City Council elections, and that provision was inserted by a Liberal Government!

Mr. Mathwin: I am concerned about the small man.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I heard the honourable member and the member for Torrens allege that this Government had disregarded the recommendations of the Local Government Act Revision Committee. The trouble is that Opposition members have not even taken the trouble to read the committee's report; if they have read it, either they clearly have not understood it or they have deliberately misled this House.

Mr. Coumbe: That is not true.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The Government has been told that it disregarded the committee's recommendations in all aspects. Recommendation 284 is as follows:

The council of each local authority should have the power to decide for itself whether or not voting at elections and polls is to be compulsory.

Is that recommendation incorporated in this Bill? Of course it is. Yet we are accused of taking no notice of the committee's report.

How many Opposition members have read recommendations 217 to 224? If they had read those recommendations they would not have made the stupid remarks that they made during this debate. The purpose of the Bill is practically in line with the committee's recommendations. I have heard much about expenses. Members opposite have said that we should not pay councillors. However, there is nothing in the Bill providing that we should, although there is a provision to enable councillors to be reimbursed for their expenses. Indeed, recommendation 127 provides that councils should be reimbursed. For goodness sake, let us get the record straight. We have heard so much twaddle in opposition to this Bill.

Mr. Venning: And we're getting a fair bit of it now!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: We have had a fair bit of it for the last half hour from a person who knows precious little about local government in South Australia.

Mr. Coumbe: Come off it!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The member for Torrens can say "Come off it." Let me remind him of something he has said. In the column headed "Coumbe's comment", which appeared recently in the *Northern Standard*, he is reported as having said:

On Thursday, a new Bill on local government was introduced—

not "will be" but "was"—

which includes among many other items a provision for compulsory voting and full adult franchise.

That is a deliberate lie.

Mr. Coumbe: No.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: There is nothing about compulsory voting in this Bill, although there is a provision for the electors in each area to determine whether there should be compulsory voting or voluntary voting. This Bill does not provide for compulsory voting. I know that members opposite are fairly sour that we did not include it. They hate like hell to give the people of the State the opportunity to express their views. They have never been accustomed to it; they have always been able to have a Government in this place, irrespective of the views of the people, and suddenly, when these things catch up with them, they absolutely go to pieces on it. They resist strongly the views of the people.

Mr. Goldsworthy: Speak up! We can't hear you.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I am sorry if the honourable member cannot hear me, but

there are plenty of people in Adelaide who provide hearing aids for such unfortunate people as himself. Let us get this matter of being disfranchised clear. I am pleased that the Leader has finished reading Barry McKenzie, because he has made some comments about this, too—comments that were completely untrue and misleading. No person will be disfranchised as a result of this Bill's provisions.

Mr. Hall: That is not so, and you know it.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The Bill provides that every person can have a vote. We are certainly taking away the advantage that wealth has endowed on people by enabling them to have multiple and plural voting. If that means disfranchising, I can only say that members should drop down to the library and have a look at the dictionary. The true position is this: the Act as it now stands, which has been sustained during 30 years of Liberal Government, has disfranchised 50 per cent or 60 per cent of South Australia's population.

Mr. Venning: Is that what you think?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: It is the fact, and I am sorry if the member for Rocky River cannot accept it. He usually cannot.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The member for Torrens told us that many of the clauses would clutter up the Act. Although I asked what clauses would do this, the honourable member did not tell me. I hope that he will do so in Committee. I am anxious to hear what they are, because I think all the clauses of the Bill are highly desirable in the interests of the people of the State.

Mr. Gunn: The people do not think so.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Let me remind the honourable member of several things about this. First, he has no idea what the people think.

Mr. Gunn: That is untrue, and you know it.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: How many people from Eyre have told the honourable member that they do not want this Bill—five, 10? The honourable member cannot answer that because all he has heard is the voice of the councils that were elected under this restricted franchise. There is only one area of the State where the voice of the people has been significantly heard—the Walkerville Corporation; so obviously a campaign has been waged

by people desiring to defeat the Government on this matter.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Honourable members on both sides of the Chamber have had the opportunity to speak to the Bill. The Minister is replying to the debate. The member for Rocky River is entirely out of order when he interjects while the Speaker is on his feet. The Minister must be accorded the courtesy of replying to the statements made during the debate. The Minister of Local Government.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: As I was saying, the only area in which there has been any significant voice of the people is Walkerville. There has obviously been a campaign (I do not complain of this) to influence members and to influence me. For the rest, no significant voice of the people has been heard despite the campaign that was sponsored by the Local Government Association, aided and abetted by members of Parliament in certain areas. Let us not fool ourselves. What did the Local Government Association do? It contacted all councils throughout South Australia, including those that were not members of the association, and asked for a campaign amongst their ratepayers to oppose the Bill that was coming before Parliament. What response did the association get? I have heard nothing of it and I am sure that, if there had been any significant response, it would very smartly have advised me as Minister.

Mr. Venning: Not in the ballot-box.

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

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: There was no response that I know of. Furthermore, I think the House should know what the Local Government Association attempted to do in respect of the councils' finances. It asked the councils to pass resolutions to make donations to a trust fund of the Local Government Association of half of 1 per cent of their rate revenue. It did that in accordance, it is claimed, with section 287 (k) of the Local Government Act. That section provides that funds can be used for "promoting any Bill before the Parliament which may be necessary or desirable for the benefit of the area". I have not heard that the Local Government Association was promoting any Bill. It may have been promoting opposition to a Bill, but that backfired. If all councils had given effect to the request by the Local Government Association, do members opposite know

how much of the ratepayers' money would have been taken out of provisions for works in their areas and put in a central fund for propaganda purposes? Does the member for Rocky River know that? The amount involved was \$137,000, and are members opposite advocating that that sort of money ought to be taken out of local government funds rather than be spent on roads, footpaths, and so on?

Member opposite (and the member for Eyre is one of the most persistent) are always saying that councils in their areas do not get sufficient money. However, the member for Eyre is supporting a move to take money out, for propaganda purposes. How inconsistent can one get? I thought the brightest spot from the other side in the debate came from the member for Torrens, who agreed that the present system of multiple voting needed some sort of alterations. That is a system by which people can vote according to their wealth, not because they are people but because of what they own. This is the system to which I referred in the second reading explanation and which Great Britain threw out in 1870, yet 101 years later, because of the backward thinking of members of the L.C.L. we still have to fight like hell in Australia to get rid of it. I hope that, as a result of this Bill, we will see the end of that type of thinking.

The member for Hansen said that, in the interests of the people, the ratepayers ought to continue as they are, or words to that effect, and that the councils knew best. I challenge that honourable member to go down to the Kurrulta Park area and ask the people there whether the West Torrens council is acting in the best interests of the ratepayers. I challenge him to go down there, because if he did he would come back hung, drawn and quartered. He knows as well as I do that the people in that area are violently opposed to what the council is trying to foist upon them.

Mr. Becker: It's not in my district.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: That is the weak excuse we get from members opposite. What a weak excuse it is! I am introducing this Bill not for my own district but for the sake of South Australia. I tell members opposite that, for God's sake, they ought to get a better view of South Australia than their own districts.

Mr. Goldsworthy: Let's have more debate and less profanity.

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I feel sorry for the member for Kavel and a few of his colleagues but, if they cannot take the truth, I suggest they go outside and have a cup of tea, because that will do them more good. The Leader has said that South Australia is serviced with local government better than is any other State in the whole of Australia. I am always anxious to see things improve, and I do not believe in merely sitting on records, but what an insult a statement of that kind must be and how inconsistent the thinking behind it must be when we realize that the States of Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania have exactly the same franchise as we currently have in South Australia. How has our franchise made us any better than these three other States? The Leader did not worry about that. He went further and said that Adelaide had become the best seweraged city in Australia because of local government. He did not tell us that sewerage has nothing whatsoever to do with local government.

Mr. Hall: That's not so. I didn't say that.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The Leader did say it.

Mr. Hall: You mislead this House once more.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The Leader did say it. I am not attempting to mislead this House.

Mr. Hall: You aren't attempting; you are.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I am sorry if I have struck the sensitive nerve of the Leader once more. I cannot be blamed for what he said, but I am entitled to comment on it. In saying that people were being disfranchised, as reported in the press, the Leader was completely misleading the House and the public. I wonder how often people have stopped to think just what multiple voting does. I wonder how many members ever took the trouble, before they participated in this debate, to look at some election results. I will quote an example although, for the sake of the people concerned who cannot speak for themselves in this House, I will not refer to either the district or the persons' names; but I shall be happy to give details to any member who wants them. In a mayoral election in 1964, one candidate received 2,578 votes, and another candidate received 2,571 votes and the election was won by seven votes. I know of several people who exercised the great privilege that

is endowed on the wealthy by the present Act by giving them multiple voting, and these people voted for the winning candidate. In other words, the majority vote for the people was abrogated as a result of the plural voting that the Act bestows on the wealthy and the privileged class. This is what the Bill is seeking to end.

Mr. Goldsworthy: You would have to examine all those votes to sustain your argument.

The SPEAKER: Order! I am warning the member for Kavel that he is not permitted to interject when the Minister is replying, and when I call for order he must cease. I am warning the honourable member not to do it again.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I refer to Standing Order 173, and I should like your ruling on this matter. This Standing Order has been invoked against members on this side of the House frequently today. I was threatened with expulsion from the Chamber for interjecting twice. During this debate members on the Government side, including the Minister of Labour and Industry, have been interjecting frequently and, against your ruling, have continued to interject. I would ask for an interpretation of this Standing Order.

Mr. Langley: Look out for your head.

Mr. Goldsworthy: You watch yours. All we want is consistency and fairness.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member should take the point of order when it occurs. There is no point of order. The honourable Minister of Roads and Transport!

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, the point of order—

The SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Roads and Transport.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: I have raised a point of order and I will raise it again. In fairness, I should like an interpretation. We want more consistency in the interpretation of Standing Order 173. That is all we ask.

Mr. Jennings: That's a reflection on the Chair.

Mr. Goldsworthy: It's not a reflection: it's a request for direction.

The SPEAKER: For the benefit of the member for Kavel, I am not here to explain Standing Orders. I am here to apply Standing Orders as Speaker of the House of Assembly when they apply. The Minister of Roads and Transport.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I have one other comment in relation to the ballot to which I

was referring when I must have touched a nerve spot. I do not want to pursue it other than to make one point. Of the people who exercised this privileged vote not one lived within the district, and that proves the farce of the current position. I refer now to the member for Light who made a statement to which I took strong exception both personally and on behalf of the staff who have given me and previous Ministers utter fidelity and loyalty and have been diligent at all times. For the honourable member to suggest that this Bill has been introduced against the advice of my officers is an insult not only to me but also to members of my staff, for whom I have the highest regard.

The honourable member may laugh, but I assure him that the provisions of this Bill have the wholehearted support of the members of the staff whom he seeks to ridicule. The same honourable member suggested that the Bill indicates that, as Minister, I am not satisfied with the integrity of the town and district clerks in their conduct of elections. This comment was made by other members in different ways, but the point was loud and clear that, by asking the Returning Officer for the State to assume the responsibility, the Government was casting a slur on the integrity and ability of the people who conduct municipal elections.

Dr. Eastick: That's what many people believe.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I have no doubt that the honourable member has peddled this thought amongst those people he is able to influence in an endeavour to stir up trouble. It is obvious from his attitude that he, like other members of his Party, has no confidence in Norman Douglass as State Returning Officer for South Australia, and—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: If members opposite want to take up that position the responsibility is on them.

Members interjecting:

Mr. Hall: Prove that!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Members opposite can protest as long as they like. The fact is that by taking up that position they have adequately demonstrated their lack of confidence in a man of the highest integrity.

Mr. Coumbe: That is your interpretation. It is a matter of principle.

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: If it is a matter of principle, obviously the member for Torrens

has to support the Government because this is a strong matter of principle. The whole of this Bill is based on the principle of whether we believe in the rights of people for being people or whether we believe in the rights of people for what they own. The present Local Government Act makes provision for people for what they own, but the amending Bill provides for people because they are people. One either believes in people or one believes in property and wealth: if one believes in property and wealth then he should vote against the Bill. If a member believes that people are human and, irrespective of possessions, should have no more or no less say than anyone else he must support the Bill, which I commend to members.

The House divided on the second reading:

Ayes (23)—Messrs. Broomhill, Brown, Burdon, Clark, Corcoran, Crimes, Curren, Groth, Harrison, Hoggood, Hudson, Jennings, Keneally, King, Langley, McKee, McRae, Payne, Ryan, Simmons, Slater, Virgo (teller), and Wells.

Noes (16)—Messrs. Allen, Becker, Brookman, Carnie, Coumbe, Eastick, Ferguson, Goldsworthy, Gunn, Hall (teller), Mathwin, Millhouse, and Rodda, Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Tonkin and Venning.

Pair—Aye—Mr. Lawn. No—Mr. Wardle.

Majority of 7 for the Ayes.

Second reading thus carried.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—"Arrangement of Act."

Mr. COUMBE: Assuming that this clause will be used as a test case, I will raise the points put forward by my Party regarding full adult franchise. It is on this clause that the rest of the clauses dealing with voting will stand or fall. The Minister referred to the Local Government Act Revision Committee report, and tried to stress that members on this side were wrong in criticizing the recommendations contained therein. The report does not recommend full adult franchise, although the Minister has implied that it does. Indeed, the opposite position obtains. Where the recommendations deal with voting rights, they repeatedly refer not to "electors" but to "rate-payers", and they provide that council clerks shall be returning officers and that councils concerned shall conduct their own polls and appoint their own returning officers.

The recommendations provide that, if the ratepayers of the area disagree with the council's decision on compulsory voting, they shall have the right to substitute their own

choice. The Minister, however, says that the electors, and not the ratepayers, shall have the right. In several cases in this report the word "ratepayers" is used. The report states:

The voters' roll should continue to be known as the voters' roll. Prior to the consideration of any objections to it the voters' roll should be known as the voters' list.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ryan): Clause 2 deals with the arrangement of the Act. The honourable member's objection would apply to the later clauses dealing with the enrolment of electors and not with the arrangement of the Act. Would the honourable member confine his remarks to clause 2? The honourable member can speak to this clause, but not about the preparation of the voters' rolls, as he was doing just now.

Mr. COUNBE: Very well, Mr. Acting Chairman.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: If the honourable member continues to speak on his present basis, it will allow other members the same privilege of continuing the debate on clause 2, whereas I believe the subject matter that is objected to is contained in another clause of the Bill.

Mr. COUNBE: I am sure, Sir, you understand the difficulty I am in: if I do not oppose this clause, it will stand part of the Bill and it strikes out certain words and inserts in lieu thereof other words. I know the clause deals with the arrangement of the Act.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: That is all it deals with at this stage.

Mr. COUNBE: Yes, but, once this clause is passed in its present form and the parts dealing with voters' rolls and with meetings and polls of ratepayers is struck out and the part dealing with meetings and polls of electors is inserted in lieu thereof, I am completely hamstrung.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member is not hamstrung: he will always have the right to have a clause reconsidered in the light of any vote taken on any other clause in respect of the matter raised by him. We can always come back to reconsider a clause.

Mr. COUNBE: I see your point. Incidentally, the Minister, when I started to speak, acknowledged that this clause would be a test clause. That is why I proceeded with it.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Yes, but I cannot accept your speaking to it in the way you are, although it may be a test clause. I know what you want.

Mr. COUNBE: Very well. I will confine my remarks within your ruling. I am opposed, however, to the parts being struck out and the insertion in lieu thereof of the word "enrolment", because this is, in effect, substituting a different system for the present system. Therefore, I oppose in clause 2 the striking out of "voters' rolls" etc., because this would mean that instead of the existing voters' rolls we would have an electoral roll substituted in each place, and an electoral roll, which we discussed earlier this afternoon at some length (and at times heatedly) is the House of Assembly roll for a district. The revision committee does not recommend this alteration. In fact it goes the other way and refers at considerable length to the voters' roll, without suggesting that the general roll be substituted. By implication, it recommends the retention of the present system, as do councils, ratepayers, and the public. Doubtless, the objection to the substitution of the general roll is made because people realize that in some areas they will be taxed without having any representation. When the Minister spoke about privilege and wealth, he was not correct, because many little men have saved to purchase holiday shacks, and it is the little man who will lose his vote.

Mr. Hall: Such as the Acting Chairman.

Mr. COUNBE: I did not want to mention anyone specifically, but the Government says it represents these people, yet it imposes taxation without representation. I think I would be out of order if I commented on your personal position, Mr. Acting Chairman, but you will not have any say in the district where you have the other property.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: As Acting Chairman, I cannot comment on any Bill before the Chair.

Mr. COUNBE: It is absolute rubbish for the Minister to say that talk about disfranchising is poppycock. He talks about privilege, but the privilege is that of being taxed.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I think the honourable member is getting away from clause 2. We are dealing not with tax or wealth but with the arrangement of the Act. Many other clauses specify who shall be enrolled and the entitlement of electors.

Mr. COUNBE: If this clause is passed, although I know that I would have the opportunity later to recommit, I think that, in view of what the Minister said earlier, I would have Buckley's chance of success. An attempt has been made to compare local government

elections with Parliamentary elections. However, a person who votes in a Commonwealth or State election is subject to taxation whereas a person who votes in a local government area attracts a rate. However, people who have interests in other areas will be denied a vote there. This clause is a stepping stone for a new system of enrolment and I am completely opposed to this. I will regard the vote on this clause as a test vote, as the Minister said just now that he would treat it.

Dr. EASTICK: I agree that this will be a test vote. This clause shows the cunning behind the Bill, because, although we support some parts of it, the whole idea of compulsion runs through it. I cannot see how the change brought about by altering the headings will benefit local government. The Minister could easily have arrived at an advanced position by evolution rather than by revolution, but clause 2 is part and parcel of the revolutionary action that the Minister seeks to effect.

The Committee divided on the clause:

Ayes (22)—Messrs. Broomhill, Brown, Burdon, Clark, Corcoran, Crimes, Curren, Groth, Harrison, Hoggood, Hudson, Jennings, Keneally, King, Langley, McKee, McRae, Payne, Simmons, Slater, Virgo (teller), and Wells.

Noes (16)—Messrs. Allen, Becker, Brookman, Carnie, Coumbe (teller), Eastick, Ferguson, Goldsworthy, Gunn, Hall, Mathwin, Millhouse, and Rodda, Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Tonkin and Venning.

Majority of 6 for the Ayes.

Clause thus passed.

Clauses 3 to 5 passed.

Clause 6—"Petition for new area."

Dr. EASTICK: I do not think this clause will assist local government in South Australia. Under this clause it is likely that there will be sniping operations between councils, whereas in the past there were discussions between the parties by the time an application was made. This clause provides an opportunity for individual councils to make a move independently of any discussions they have had with neighbouring councils. Whilst I do not intend to vote against this clause, I am concerned that it may lead to disharmony between councils and not be in the best interests of local government.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I suggest that the honourable member has not studied the Bill very well, because his comments really relate to clause 7.

Clause passed.

Clauses 7 to 20 passed.

Clause 21—"Repeal of sections 88-101a of principal Act and enactment of sections in their place."

Mr. COUMBE: This clause deals with enrolment and the change in various systems of voting. I stress the abhorrence of my constituents and of many other people in this State regarding this change. As the enrolment of House of Assembly electors was not recommended in the report, I should like the Minister to explain why he has introduced it. This report, which cost so much to produce, was prepared by very conscientious officers, some of whom are prominent in local government and some of whom are from the Minister's department. Also, the services of a prominent Queen's Counsel from Victoria were engaged. I fully support the preparation of the report by these gentlemen, who brought to bear a wealth of experience. Nowhere does the report refer to enrolments.

The Minister has superimposed over the Committee's recommendations his own political ideology and philosophy, purely for political reasons. The report refers to ratepayers, not electors, having a vote. I protest against this provision. The reason for the American War of Independence was that the settlers in those early days felt so strongly about paying taxes without having representation that they revolted against British rule and the United States of America was born.

That is what will happen under this Bill, because everyone on the electoral roll in a district will have a vote but he will not be able to vote anywhere else in the State: he will have but one vote. That means that very many people will not have a vote in an area in which they are taxed. For instance, if a young man is saving up to be married and paying rates for the flat he is occupying, and he is at the same time building a house in another district, he will be taxed without representation. This is a question of principle. The Minister will now tax people who have not one iota of say in how their money is to be spent in another area in which they are involved. This means that the non-rate-paying elector could so sway the council that those people could be penalized by having to pay higher rates. Most people on a council could be non-rate-paying electors, and that is not in the best interests of local government. The Bill provides that, regarding compulsory voting, electors, not ratepayers, may petition the council for a poll. The committee did not mention electors: it

referred to the ratepayers having the right to do this. I express my views on behalf of my constituents and on behalf of other people in this State about the iniquitous imposition of a system of enrolment that is politically inspired and not in the best interests of local government. This method of enrolment will not improve the function of local government or enable it to raise more money. I oppose the clause.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: We must decide what is the purpose of local government and whom it should serve. Does it exist for those who contribute the rates or for the benefit of all the people who live and spend time within council boundaries? I consider that local government operates for the people in the latter category. Local Government provides services for all the people; it does not provide a service merely because many rate-paying residents live in a certain street. It provides the same service in the street where there are rented homes, from whose occupiers no direct revenue is received, and those people are entitled to the same sort of representation. Why should they not have a say in what is being done? Are they not interested?

The member for Flinders was at a meeting recently, at which I was also present, as well as various local government representatives, all of whom suddenly shut up completely when a local resident stood up and stated his case: because of his employment, he had lived in Port Lincoln for 20-odd years and had had to rent a house, but this automatically deprived his wife of a say in local government affairs. However, the minute that a charitable organization embarked on a project in the area, his wife was the first person on the committee. I think even the member for Flinders changed his mind that evening, although he may have changed it again since. To talk about taxation without representation is just so much balderdash that it is not worth pursuing. I stand solidly behind the principles enunciated by Abraham Lincoln, regarding them as the true principles of democracy, and these are the principles upon which this Bill is founded. Members opposite talk about taxation without representation: do they say that the amount of taxation a person pays should determine the amount of representation he receives? Is that the policy that members of the Opposition want us to pursue? That is the policy under the present Act.

Mr. Mathwin: People should have a right to vote.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Again, it comes back to this basic principle. If the member for Glenelg believes that the more a person owns the more votes he should have, he must oppose this Bill, because he does not have a semblance of democracy in him. Local government functions for the people of the area, as do the State and Commonwealth Governments, and the same voting powers ought to apply. Why should the corporations of South Australia have voting within local government fields? I have heard it said that they should have voting powers merely because they pay rates. They pay enough taxation to the Commonwealth and State Governments, so why should they not have the right to cast, say, another 50 votes at Commonwealth and State elections? That is the argument members opposite are following.

Mr. Mathwin: It is not.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: It is. The member for Torrens asked me to give some reasons, apart from the fact that it was Party policy. One of the major reasons why this Bill has been introduced is that it represents Party policy that was enunciated to the electors and endorsed by 52 per cent of them and, as such, we have a mandate to give effect to it. Of the formal voters in the member for Torrens's district 42.9 per cent voted for what we are suggesting now.

Mr. Coumbe: But not the majority.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: True, 53.87 per cent said they did not want it. I will amend that to 56.07 per cent, because we will assume that the D.L.P. candidates did not want democracy in local government, either. Why should one have to state other reasons when the majority support of electors is enough? Opposition members are not accustomed to accepting majority decisions.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I wish to bring the Minister back to clause 21, and I ask him to confine his remarks to that clause.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I was dealing with points raised by the member for Torrens who said that the Government was ignoring the advice of the Local Government Act Revision Committee, because there was not one reference in its report suggesting that non-paying electors should have a vote. Paragraph 218, the last recommendation on page 10, states:

The right of a spouse to vote should apply to the spouse of a tenant as well as to the spouse of an owner.

In other words, the committee has gone seven-eighths of the way to adult franchise, and we have gone 100 per cent to that objective.

Dr. EASTICK: The Minister said that provisions in this Bill were part of his Party's policy and that the Government would implement it. Earlier this evening he took me to task for what he suggested I said about his staff. I have the highest regard for members of his staff, as do people involved in local government in this State.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I suggested to the Minister, when he was referring to Party policies, that he should deal with clause 21. I ask the honourable member to do likewise, and that clause deals with enrolments.

Dr. EASTICK: The Minister told the member for Torrens that his Party had gone seven-eighths of the way. It depends on what sort of assistance one has.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: The committee went seven-eighths of the way: we went 100 per cent.

Dr. EASTICK: That is taking the matter beyond reasonable lengths. In this clause we have mentioned that the cost will be borne by councils in the preparation of rolls; in many instances the preparation of such rolls will be more expensive than at present. Under the Kalamazoo system a council can, within five minutes of a request being made, take a photo-copy of a roll and give it to the person who desires to see it. Many councils base their rates on unimproved values, and those councils will be required to pay 10c an assessment for the services of the computer in this connection.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: That includes the cost of the assessment.

Dr. EASTICK: In the past there has been no charge for the assessment. The only charge to councils in this connection was the charge for the services rendered at the office.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! Can the honourable member link his remarks to clause 21?

Dr. EASTICK: Yes; my remarks relate to the preparation of rolls. A charge is made for the preparation of a list of assessments, and there is a small charge for the office space used by council employees. However, there is no charge for the cost of the assessment. Here is an instance where local government is required to pay a larger sum for the use of the computer than it paid when it used a typist. How correct is the roll that the computer will provide for councils? In the recent

referendum the Gawler Corporation area was included for a particular purpose. It would appear that the computer that compiled the roll for the referendum was programmed to place on the roll the name of every person who was associated with an address in Gawler and/or Willaston. Many people who use Gawler or Willaston only as a postal address but who live in other district council areas, some of them 15 miles away in the area of the Mallala council, have been asked why they did not vote in the referendum as their name was on the roll. Their defence will be that, although they were on the roll, they were there incorrectly because their residence was not within the subject area of the referendum.

I should like to know what additional expenditure is to be charged against councils or the people of South Australia in the compilation of these council rolls because, if this is to be the method of compilation, the cost will apply to people throughout the State. Is it to be the responsibility of the town clerk or district clerk to proof read the rolls forwarded to him and to determine and pass on altered information to the State Returning Officer or other officer concerned? If the town clerk or district clerk is to be used in this way, is local government to receive compensation from the Government for his time, or will it just be another cost to be absorbed because of centralist policy and control? I do not think the Minister or his officers can answer those questions.

It is incorrect to say that sooner or later everyone in the community pays something towards the cost of local government. The Minister said that the one thing that all people living in an area do is spend some time in the community. I do not deny that. However, many people who spend time in an area do not necessarily spend money therein. Although I do not suggest that parents are necessarily wrong, I do not believe that the adult children of many ratepayers that provide finance for local government will necessarily contribute any tangible amount towards the rates and taxes that their parents pay. If we are to update the Act in relation to the conduct of polls and rolls, it is strange that, as is provided in proposed new section 90, the Returning Officer for the State is to declare by notice in the *Gazette* that the roll is to be closed. Who reads or has access to the *Gazette*? If we are really sold on this idea of improving the situation for local residents, I suggest we could have the advertisement published in the paper circulating in the area,

Clause passed.

Clause 22—"Returning officer."

Mr. COUNBE: I draw the Minister's attention to new subsection (3), which provides:

The council shall pay to the returning officer, in respect of the conduct of any election, such fees and expenses as may be determined by the returning officer.

The corresponding paragraph in the summary of recommendations by the Local Government Act Revision Committee is paragraph 179, which states that the fee should be between \$20 and \$50. The way the new subsection is worded is a little unusual, in that it is the returning officer who shall determine his own fee for conducting an election. Possibly this is an oversight, but it should be remedied because it places an unfair onus on the returning officer. Section 102 (2) of the present Act provides:

The council shall reimburse the returning officer all reasonable and proper expenses incurred by him in the discharge of his duties, and pay him any fee as returning officer agreed on.

Recommendation 179, to which I have just referred, states:

Fees for returning officer. Because of the number of cases in which there is no contested election in a local authority in a particular year, it would be unfair either to the local authority or to the returning officer (or both) to attempt to estimate the amount that he should be paid for the additional work as returning officer, and therefore no provision for it can properly be made in his salary.

That is fair enough. The recommendation continues:

Accordingly, the Act should provide for him to be paid a fee as returning officer, and that fee should be a minimum of \$20 and a maximum of \$50.

I invite the Minister's explanation of this new subsection.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I move:

In new subsection 102 (3) after "officer" second occurring to add "for the State".

This is a matter of the difference between layman's wording and the wording used by people with legal training.

Mr. COUNBE: I support the amendment. Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 23 to 31 passed.

Clause 32—"Repeal of sections 115-117 of principal Act and enactment of sections in their place."

Mr. COUNBE: I take it that the council elections in the first week in July will be held under the present Act?

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Yes, I have given an undertaking that this Bill will not be proclaimed before the first Saturday in July.

Mr. COUNBE: I take it that, the election having been held and the poll declared, a proclamation can take effect from any time after that, so the proclamation could be made in the second week in July. Is that the position?

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Yes, bearing in mind anything supplementary.

Mr. COUNBE: Yes, I am speaking of general matters. Within one month of that day, any 100 electors may petition the council to hold a poll on whether that determination should be upheld or reversed. What is the reason for the three months, the one month and the 100 electors? Further, if a council elects to have voluntary voting, there could be a small vote of, say, 1 per cent (to take the extreme case). I should like the Minister to say why he has selected these times and proportions.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: There is no magic in any of the three specific numbers to which the honourable member has referred. There is provision elsewhere that 100 ratepayers may petition a council to do certain things and, as we proceed through the Bill, that 100 ratepayers will change to 100 electors, and this will introduce a degree of consistency. I am not wedded to 100 here any more than I am wedded to it elsewhere, but I suppose 100 is as good as any other number. Again, there is no magic in the two periods referred to. I do not think that three months after proclamation is an unreasonable time for a council to comply with the Act in this regard. If a council cannot make up its mind within three months, I think it should be told to make up its mind. If members consider that three months is too long, we can shorten the period, but I do not think that that would achieve anything.

I think a council is entitled to a reasonable degree of protection where it makes a decision subject to challenge by the people within the district, and that protection is, I think, afforded by the fact that the people in the district do not have an undue period in which to lodge a protest; they have an adequate time to do this. I was interested to hear the honourable member express the fear that under a voluntary system only 1 per cent of the people might vote and his suggestion that a safeguard should be provided by stipulating a minimum number. I believe in a majority vote and, if the sort of danger to which the

honourable member referred does exist (and I accept that it exists), he ought to be the first one advocating compulsory voting in order to take care of the position.

Dr. EASTICK: I am assured that a council can reverse a decision of the ratepayers after a certain period, if it is proved that that decision is against the interests of the electors of the district generally. However, I do not find a clear provision for this. Why not make it clear what the Government intends by this clause rather than leaving it in its present condition?

Clause passed.

Clauses 33 to 47 passed.

Clause 48—"Appointment, removal and salaries of officers."

Mr. MATHWIN: The course for a town clerk's certificate is of three years duration, and a person must have the Leaving Certificate before attempting this study. He would be 16 years to 17 years old before starting, so that the change from 21 years to 18 years is meaningless. Will the Minister consider this aspect?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Whilst it is not expected that this would happen often, it would be a tragedy if, because of an antiquated attitude about age, a person, having obtained the necessary qualifications before reaching the age of 21 years, found a barrier in the Act to prevent his occupying the position. The clause does no harm and may cater for an unusual case in the future.

Mr. MATHWIN: I am told that the course is to be extended to a five-year term.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: What difference does that make?

Mr. MATHWIN: It makes this provision more meaningless. What person could pass a five-year course by the time he has reached the age of 18 years?

Clause passed.

Clauses 49 to 56 passed.

Clause 57—"Rate in respect of garbage removal."

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I move:

In new section 215a (2) to strike out "owners and".

I am informed that new section 215a as it stands has virtually the same effect as it will have in its amended form. At present the new section provides that the rate in respect of garbage removal can be levied against owners and occupiers, but I am sure that it can be levied only once on each property. However, the amendment involves a question

of legal interpretation. Since the occupier is the person who has accumulated the garbage, he ought to be the person who pays the rate.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 58 and 59 passed.

Clause 60—"Contents of memorial."

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I move:

To strike out all words after "(d)".

This clause deals with the presentation of memorials to a council. As a result of the change in the franchise for council elections, the clause as drafted requires the memorial to "state the names of all electors resident in that portion of the area". Occasions may arise when it is just not possible to know who all the electors are and to get their names. No rolls are now kept that show the electors in street alphabetical order. If a large area was involved, it would be tedious and perhaps impossible to get the required information. New paragraph (c) at present provides that the memorial shall state the names of all electors, but some smart councillor may say, "I have checked this memorial and one elector has been omitted. Therefore, the memorial is improperly before us." The amendment will prevent that from happening.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 61 to 69 passed.

Clause 70—"Payment of moneys into bank."

Mr. BECKER: Proposed new section 286 (3) (a) is most unusual. Indeed, this is the first time that I, as a bank official, have seen this wording. As many banks have special forms for district councils, I wonder whether the associated banks have been consulted.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I do not know whether any banks have been consulted. Indeed, I do not think they need be consulted. I should have expected the honourable member to tell the Committee that accounts were operated in accordance with instructions given by the person or firm operating them and, as long as some justification for the signing could be provided (a resolution of a meeting or, in the case of societies, a rule book, or an Act of Parliament), that was all the authority that the bank needed.

Mr. BECKER: This appears to be a cumbersome way of approaching the matter. If there is a sudden change of signing officers, any person nominated must be approved by the Minister. This could take time and, in turn, the council concerned could be embarrassed. Although I realize that the Adelaide City Council has requested the inclusion of this

provision, it may cause problems for suburban and country councils. I am not happy with it, and should like to see it deleted.

Clause passed.

Clause 71—"Expenditure of revenue."

Dr. EASTICK: I move:

In new paragraph (j4) to strike out "(if the Minister approves in writing of expenditure for that purpose)".

The action taken by the Minister here is dictatorial. If there is one thing designed to destroy the autonomy of local government, this is it.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: There is nothing dictatorial in this provision. It is a normal provision being inserted for the exercise of the authority vested in the Minister by the Legislature of this State. To suggest that this is placing some restriction on local government is not true: it is normal procedure. If the honourable member was consistent in his approach, he would have come to this Committee armed with about 20 amendments, for he would have gone through the Act and, wherever he saw that a council could do something "subject to the approval of the Minister", he would have moved for the deletion of those words. I do not want to deal with specific councils but any assistance forthcoming from my office to local government, and particularly by a provision of this nature, will do much to raise the status of local government and keep many people in local government out of trouble. In fact, if more people in local government were to confer with my office, some of the difficulties that some areas of local government have got into would not have arisen. There are instances where councils have acted illegally, and such actions could have been avoided if the Minister had been consulted. I hope this provision will prevent anything of that nature happening. If the honourable member can at any time show me where either I or any subsequent Minister abuses this provision by refusing a council a legitimate request, I shall be the first to advocate its deletion. Until that time comes, however, I believe it will be a great safeguard to local government.

Dr. EASTICK: The Minister referred to consistency. One could make many suggestions for amendments to the Act. I am confining myself to the matters now before the Committee. Having regard to the statements made by the Minister about certain councils, I believe that on that basis alone it is right that the amendment be moved. I accept the Minister's assurance that this provision is not

meant to restrict the activities of councils in certain areas, but he cannot speak for the next person who occupies this office. It is not in the best interests of local government to insert these provisions now.

The Committee divided on the amendment:

Ayes (17)—Messrs. Allen, Becker, Brookman, Carnie, Coumbe, Eastick (teller), Evans, Ferguson, Goldsworthy, Gunn, Hall, Mathwin, Millhouse, and Rodda, Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Tonkin, and Venning.

Noes (23)—Messrs. Broomhill, Brown, and Burdon, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Clark, Corcoran, Crimes, Curren, Groth, Harrison, Hopgood, Hudson, Jennings, Keneally, King, Langley, McKee, McRae, Payne, Simmons, Slater, Virgo (teller), and Wells.

Majority of 6 for the Noes.

Amendment thus negated.

Dr. EASTICK moved:

To strike out paragraph (c).

The Committee divided on the amendment:

Ayes (17)—Messrs. Allen, Becker, Brookman, Carnie, Coumbe, Eastick (teller), Evans, Ferguson, Goldsworthy, Gunn, Hall, Mathwin, Millhouse, and Rodda, Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Tonkin and Venning.

Noes (23)—Messrs. Broomhill, Brown, and Burdon, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Clark, Corcoran, Crimes, Curren, Groth, Harrison, Hopgood, Hudson, Jennings, Keneally, King, Langley, McKee, McRae, Payne, Simmons, Slater, Virgo (teller), and Wells.

Majority of 6 for the Noes.

Amendment thus negated; clause passed.

Clauses 72 to 92 passed.

Clause 93—"Repayment of borrowed money."

Dr. EASTICK: I move:

After "out" to insert "from"; and after "(2)" to insert "the passage of seven pounds ten shillings per centum per annum" and inserting in lieu thereof the passage "from time to time fixed by the Australian Loan Council for local government borrowing".

Clause 93 strikes out section 437 (2), which places an upper limit on the interest to be paid on loans for local government. I fully appreciate that the Australian Loan Council has, by a gentlemen's agreement, fixed an upper limit for interest rates in connection with semi-government and local government borrowing; at present that upper limit is 7.4 per cent. I doubt whether the complete elimination of an upper limit is in the best interests of local government.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Section 437 (2) of the principal Act provides that the current

maximum rate is £7 10s. per centum per annum. At present the highest interest rate being paid by councils is 7.4 per cent. So, it is rather timely that the clause should be included in the Bill; otherwise, this Parliament might be asked to do something expeditiously because, if it did not, councils would be prevented from borrowing. I have no strong views on the amendment. If the honourable member thinks that it is still desirable to have some form of restriction, I shall be happy to agree to the amendment. It is purely and simply a notional restriction.

Mr. BECKER: I support the amendment. If we eliminate reference to an upper limit for interest rates we may find that a council that is having difficulty in borrowing money will go outside the banking system for finance and pay considerably higher interest rates to finance companies. The amendment will protect the ratepayers or electors, because it will keep interest rates within reasonable limits.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: Councils would not borrow at, say, 25 per cent interest.

Mr. BECKER: Nevertheless, I think the amendment provides a protection for electors. Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 94 to 96 passed.

Clause 97—"Power to dispose of small reserves."

Mrs. BYRNE: I support this clause. At present section 459a of the principal Act empowers a council, with the Minister's consent, to dispose of areas not exceeding half an acre if the land is not required as a reserve. The clause removes that restriction of half an acre. In disposing of reserves, the Government has decided that the usefulness of the reserves for purposes of public use or enjoyment and not size should be a determining factor. This clause has been included, because it has come to the Government's attention that the Act does not permit councils to use or lease public parks or parklands for the purpose of erecting kindergartens. These lands are reserved for recreation purposes and, in many cases, a Government subsidy has been made available for their purchase.

In the past some councils have sought the permission of the Minister of Local Government to dispose of small reserves up to half an acre in size and, following approval, small areas have been made available for kindergarten purposes. At present, no similar power is contained in the Act for larger areas. Generally speaking, it should not be beyond the resources of local government to make other

land available for the establishment of kindergartens. At present, the establishment of kindergartens in some areas has not been possible because of the restrictions contained in the Act. I trust that all members will support the clause, for it will enable kindergarten committees, which cannot at present obtain money to erect buildings as well as purchase land, to become established. With the consent of the council concerned, it will be possible in the future for these kindergartens to be erected.

Dr. EASTICK: The draft Bill before the House did not contain subclause (b), the inclusion of which makes the real value of the proposed alteration apparent. It is indeed a desirable feature of the Bill, and the inclusion of the words "or portion thereof" will be highly significant in some areas.

Clause passed.

Clauses 98 to 114 passed.

Clause 115—"Penalties for depositing rubbish on streets, roads, etc."

Mr. BECKER: I move:

In paragraph (c) to strike out "ten" and insert "twenty"; and to strike out "two" and insert "five".

My amendments increase the minimum fine for depositing rubbish in a local government area from \$10 to \$20 and the maximum fine from \$200 to \$500. It is time we took a strong stand against people causing pollution by dumping rubbish. Far too often we see carloads of rubbish dumped by the side of the road. It is also thrown into the creeks that flow down to the Patawalonga area. People deposit their household refuse by the roadside and in paddocks and this creates general pollution problems. It also causes more work for council employees, who have to remove it and clean up the area.

My reason for increasing the minimum fine to \$20 is that, although a council if it catches somebody doing this has the right to sue for costs, it becomes involved in much work preparing documents for the prosecution. The \$20 would make it worth while for a council to do this. The maximum fine of \$500 is to discourage people from acting in this way. The size of the fine would depend on the amount of rubbish deposited.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The motive behind the amendments is commendable. I see that in the Act \$80 is a maximum fine and there is no minimum fine. The Bill prescribes a minimum fine of \$10 and a maximum fine of \$200, which is a substantial increase on something that was apparently set in about 1959. I am not averse to the honourable member's suggestion but a fine of \$500 is fairly high.

I think it is enough for a person to be fined up to \$200 for a serious offence of this nature. As regards the cost incurred by a council recovering costs against an offender, he has to be caught in the first place, anyhow. Whilst the amendments have merit, they take things a little too far.

Mr. BECKER: I may be a little high with \$500 but I should like to insist on a minimum fine of \$20, which conforms to what is happening in New South Wales. If a signpost states that the fine for depositing litter is \$20, that amount will seem to be much more severe than \$10.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The fine is a matter for the responsible authority to decide. If a council erects a signpost stating that the depositing of rubbish is a breach, the maximum penalty, not the minimum fine, will be shown on the sign.

Amendments negatived; clause passed.

Clauses 116 to 144 passed.

Clause 145—"Issue of certificate and voting papers."

Mr. MATHWIN: The principal Act provides that a postal vote certificate, printed on an envelope, shall be posted to the ratepayer. Will the Minister consider providing for the certificate to be handed to the person concerned, rather than posted? This would expedite matters.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: As I have no quarrel on this point, I will try to see whether we can include a provision of this nature when the Act is next being amended.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (146 to 163) and title passed.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO (Minister of Local Government) moved:

That this Bill be now read a third time.

Dr. EASTICK (Light): Notwithstanding that this Bill has certain beneficial provisions, I repeat that, in my opinion, many aspects of it do nothing to improve the status of local government in the community. The Minister's dogmatic attitude, as well as the attitude he took in defence of his staff, was understandable but unnecessary, for the way he spoke was not the way the original statements were made. I do not believe that the Bill was brought to the House by the officers of the Minister's department.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: They can't bring a Bill to the House; what are you talking about?

Dr. EASTICK: The Minister said earlier this evening that the Bill represented Party policy and would be proceeded with. I oppose the third reading.

The House divided on the third reading:

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

Noes (18)—Messrs. Allen, Becker, Brookman, Carnie, Coumbe, Eastick, Evans, Ferguson, Goldsworthy, Gunn, Hall, Mathwin, McAnaney, Millhouse (teller), Rodda, and Mrs. Steele, Messrs. Tonkin and Venning.

Pair—Aye—Mr. Lawn. No—Mr. Wardle.

Majority of 6 for the Ayes.

Third reading thus carried.

Bill passed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11.42 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, March 11, at 2 p.m.