LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, August 19, 1964.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. L. H. Densley) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

TAXI LICENCES.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH: I understand that the Taxi-Cab Control Board intends to issue 50 licences, 25 to take effect from October 21 and the other 25 from December 1. I believe that in other States the allocation of taxi licences is done by ballot. On this occasion in Adelaide there have been 112 applicants for 50 licences. Is the system of allocation by ballot of all the applicants or is it done by the board on a selective basis?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE: I am unable to inform the honourable member of the method used by the board in selecting these people, but I will obtain the information for him and let him have it.

SPARK ARRESTERS.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS. I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I understand that the Minister of Agriculture some time ago asked the Bush Fire Research Committee to inquire into all matters relating to the use of spark arresters in South Australia. That committee, with money made available by the Government, elicited the support of the engineering faculty of the University of Adelaide, and Mr. W. H. Schneider, a retired professor of mechanical engineering, was asked to make an inquiry. Is this report available, and, if it is not, when will it be available?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: I have not seen the report referred to by the honourable member but I will get the information from the Minister of Agriculture and let the honourable member know.

ROAD TRANSPORT.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: A landholder north of Orroroo, in what is very dry country this year, has today been refused a permit to have cattle transported by road to the abattoirs. These are mixed cattle ranging from horned steers to calves. Can the Chief Secretary say whether the Government will give early consideration to the introduction of legislation to free road transport from the present permit system administered by the Transport Control Board?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: If the honourable member submits the information to me I shall try to get an answer for him.

DRIVING LICENCES.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: I was interested in an answer given yesterday by the Minister of Roads to a question by the Hon. Mr. Robinson concerning the matter of the age at which drivers' licences are issued. If I remember correctly, he said that no statistical evidence was available to show that the age of 16 years in any way contributed to the accident rate in this State. Last session I raised in this Chamber the matter of the age at which licences could be obtained. Replying to a query by Mr. Robinson, who asked about the 17 to 21 years group, and for the figures for the 16 to 17 years group, I said:

> I am glad the honourable member raised that point because I remember that some years ago the then Registrar of Motor Vehicles, the late Mr. Kay, was asked to give a report on this matter and, although I have not a copy of it at the moment, I know he said that as far as he could ascertain there was not much difference between 16 years and 17 years. However, that conclusion is really based on fallacy. Whichever age one takes as the starting point—whether it is 16, 17, 18, 19 or 20—the first year will show a much lower percentage of accidents, because throughout the first year in which one can obtain a driver's licence applications will be staggered and there may be a considerable number of people who do not obtain their licences until late in that year.

I do not know whether I made clear what I wanted to say, but I was really trying to say that in the first year of starting to collect statistics, irrespective of the age, there are 365 days in the year on which people may have a birthday and reach 16. Consequently, no statistics of any value can be collected in the first year the compilation is commenced.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph: Did you say the first year?

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: Yes, any year—the year of entitlement to apply for a licence, the age of entitlement to apply.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member must not debate the question.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: I was led astray by the interjection. Does the Minister of Roads agree that what I have put forward is correct and, if so, has this inevitable deficiency in statistical recording been taken into account in arriving at a decision on the matter?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE: I say categorically that I strongly disagree with the honourable member's contention. The statistic that is taken of a person's age when he has an accident is taken on the basis that he is 16 years for 12 months; it does not matter when he obtains the licence. But, having regard to the background that I think the honourable member has in mind, the Government is fully aware of the necessity to consider the age at which driving licences should be issued. It has considered it at some length in the past. The outcome of that consideration has been, first, that we have introduced learners' licences and, secondly, that we have introduced driving tests, which we believe will contribute to a large extent in dealing with the problem. Statistically, there is nothing to show that the person of 16 years of age is more prone to accidents than the person of 17 or 18: in fact, the statistics tend to show the reverse, that people aged 18 to 21, and even older, contribute, unfortunately, to the majority of our accidents.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GAS COMPANY'S ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 18. Page 445.)

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH (Central No. 1): I support the second reading of this measure. It was indicated by the Minister that it was introduced at the request of the South Australian Gas Company for the purpose of enabling it to transfer certain of its bonds and stock in the manner ordinarily applicable to share transfers instead of by deed, as at present required by the principal Act. I want to compliment the Gas Company, because it is one of the few large organizations in South Australia directly owned and controlled by South Australians.

Its worker-managerial relationship over the last decade is something that some of the larger industries could well emulate, for there has been no industrial trouble and most of the demands made by the trade unions have been resolved around the conference table, thus indicating that disputes of this sort are more capable of being settled by those acquainted with the workings and details of industry than by taking them to some other institution where people have to be made conversant with the various activities of the particular industry concerned before a decision can be made.

The history of the company goes back to 1861 (not so many years after the establishment of this State), when the company was formed. Its operations are governed by the South Australian Gas Company's Act, 1861-1952. Honourable members in this Chamber will remember that we passed enabling legislation similar to this Bill in regard to some of the activities of the Gas Company, and I want to interpose here that this is one of the few industries in South Australia where the price of its product (in this case, gas) is governed by an Act of Parliament. From time to time various increases have been asked for by the company, which have been ratified by Parliament. The quality of the gas supplied is also controlled by Act of Parliament. The Act of 1861-1952 incorporated certain sections of the Companies' Clauses Consolidation Act, 1847, the Companies' Private Amendment Acts of 1874-1882 and 1912-1919; also the Meters and Gas Act, 1881, and the Gas Act, 1924-1961. Honourable members will thus see that the industry is governed by Parliament. All of its activities have to be ratified by Parliament before it can proceed with any scheme it may desire to put into operation.

The company has a long history of renown in the industrial and housing development of this State, and it has greatly helped the economic advancement of South Australia. We hear much about monopolies. The Gas Company is one of those monopolies that have been condoned over the years in South Australia because it has not exceeded its statutory powers. It has not used them for arbitrarily increasing the price of gas (remember, it is governed by Act of Parliament), and its development has played a most important part in the economic advancement of South Australia.

It has laid a total length of 1,711 miles of gas mains. For the year 1962 it manufactured 4,405,800,100 cub. ft. of gas; it also manufactured 113,434 tons of coke, and over 3,000,000 gallons of tar were made, thus indicating that the by-products of gas and coal have become a most important and stable industry in South Australia.

The Hon. C. R. STORY secured the adjournment of the debate.

NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 18. Page 447.)

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland): I rise to support the Bill. As I see it, it is designed principally to lift the standard of dental nursing in this State. That is a worthy motive. The Government is spending large sums of money at present on a dental hospital in this State, the object of which is three-fold: (1) it will provide a dental hospital as good as any in Australia; (2) it will afford the opportunity for dental students to be trained completely within this State; and (3)—and it is this Bill which, I think, brings me to this point—it will be a suitable place for dental nurses to be trained.

The Bill deals with several aspects. It deals first with people now known as chairside nurses in private practitioners' surgeries; it deals secondly with people who have had a short experience and who are doing training outside ordinary surgery work by attending part-time courses; and thirdly it provides for the future in that some of these dental nurses will be fully trained in the dental hospital. Anything we do to lift the status of any profession is most worthy, and I think that is why this measure is before us. I do not see the problems posed yesterday by the Hon. Mr. Shard.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: I have had enough experience to do that.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: When I was a small boy I was often beaten about the ears for expressing my opinion, but I intend to express an opinion now, even though the honourable member may try to intimidate me by saying that I have not had much experience. I have had some experience, and one of the things I have learnt is that it is a good thing to be trained professionally and to be an expert in a particular thing. That is what the Bill sets out to do—to give nurses better training than they have had previously and to give them status. Nurses in this profession have no status at present, although they are employed by dentists and have learnt from their experience, but the Bill will enable them to be in the same category as trained nursing sisters or nurse aides. The points raised by the Honourable Mr. Shard were somewhat intimidating to young girls in the profession, as he suggested they might be worse off with the passing of the measure.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: Time will tell!

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Time will always tell, but we can go only on experience. I believe nursing sisters in this State are properly looked after by their own organization. The Royal Australian Nursing Federation (South Australian Branch) has attempted to amend its constitution, and when it is amended that body will take in nurse aides and dental nurses, so I do not think we have much worry in this matter. I am not sure who would be the people the Honourable Mr. Shard said would be deprived of this protection. As far as I can see, there is no compulsion in the Bill for them to be registered if they want protection outside its provisions. If they have that protection now and do not want to register, they need not do so; they can continue as they are now and still have protection.

This is a genuine attempt by the Government to lift the status of this profession in the interests of the public. We should not forget that we have to worry about the public, as this dental hospital is being set up for the type of people mentioned by the Honourable Mr. Shard. Far more benefit will be derived by them than by other sections of the community. It is essential that people employed by a hospital should have the necessary qualifications. I should like to have the Minister's opinion on one or two points. It has been said that chairside nurses in an ordinary surgery at present will be accepted for registration if they have been so employed for two years and have passed an approved examination, and that those who are qualified by examination at the new dental school will also be accepted.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: How do you know that they will do a course at the dental school?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Some will.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: How do you know that?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Obviously the dental school is not intended to be just a monument. I think people who want to enter the profession will be proud to have it.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin: This is only an entitlement. It is not compulsory.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: That is so. The girls do not have to go to the dental school, but I am judging on past performances. If the honourable member had been dealing with this matter 40 or 50 years ago he might have said the same about the nursing profession. Would the mid-wives who used to walk around the metropolitan area, or other girls in those days, have gone into hospitals to be properly trained? Of course they would;

that has been proved. It has also been proved that nurse aides were happy to get the status of being a recognized group—people who had learnt under a specific scheme. This applies to mothercraft nursing; these people have a recognized status and qualification.

I can think of no reason why, if we provide facilities for dental aides (as they can be called at the moment), they will not go to this establishment to be fully qualified. However, that gets away from the point I was raising with the Minister of Health, that those who at present have the qualifications will be accepted for registration.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin: That is in section 33nb in two places.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: In future will a nurse, after serving three years, without attending a dental hospital or some other teaching school, be accepted for registration?

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin: Not after 12 months, without passing an examination.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: That seems to me to be a sane and satisfactory safeguard, so I do not think the Honourable Mr. Bevan need have any worries. Dentists can still train dental nurses; there is nothing to stop them from doing that. However, if the girls want to become registered and qualified and receive all the benefits, they must satisfy the requirements of this measure.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin: There is nothing to say dentists must not employ them.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I agree; there is nothing to say that a dentist must employ only a qualified girl, so I do not think we should worry about whether these people will be exploited or not. The provisions exist for them to enrol if they wish to do so. I have pleasure in supporting the second reading.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER secured the adjournment of the debate.

LOCAL COURTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 18. Page 448.)

The Hon. F. J. POTTER (Central No. 2): I support the second reading of the Bill, which has for its purpose the making of three amendments that are really administrative amendments, each of which is important. The first amendment will enable the Attorney-General to appoint bailiffs for the serving of local court processes without having to go through the rigmarole of appointing them under the Public Service Act. This is something that has been done for many years and I support the Minister's statement that it is quite unnecessary. Obviously it imposes a great deal of administrative work upon him and Executive Council. I noticed yesterday that my friend the Hon. Mr. Bevan stated that he supported this amendment because it would enable the Attorney-General to appoint people other than police officers to do this kind of work.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: I did not say that. I have not even spoken on the Bill yet.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: I am sorry; it was my friend the Hon. Mr. Kneebone. From what the Minister has said, such appointments are not likely to happen and there was no indication to the Council by the Minister that he intended to do that. I think the time has come when some consideration could be given to the appointment of people outside the Police Force to do this very necessary work. However, I do not think this is necessary at the moment in country districts, but it should apply to the four metropolitan local courts, namely, the local courts of Adelaide, Port Adelaide, Salisbury and Elizabeth. Consideration should be given at an early date to the appointment of licensed bailiffs and suitable persons to act as assistant bailiffs to serve ordinary summonses and unsatisfied judgment summonses, and even for the purpose of seeing that warrants of execution are executed. I say this because I think it is fairly obvious to anyone who looks at the position that members of our Police Force are becoming embroiled in too much administrative work—work that perhaps could be done by people other than police officers. I hope to say something more about this matter on a more appropriate occasion. I consider that this is one instance where police officers could be relieved of much routine work in the serving of summonses.

As far as I can see, there is no real objection to appointing suitable qualified people to do this work. Indeed, it is something that would probably cost the Government next to nothing, because fees are always provided for the serving of these processes; and I am sure that it would greatly accelerate the rate at which these particular processes were dealt with. There is no reason why a litigant should not serve his own summonses, or employ someone to serve an ordinary summons for him. However, in practice this is rarely done. Usually it is left as a chore for the local police officer. I know that this is not true of the Adelaide Local Court, which has its own bailiff and assistant bailiffs. For the reasons given, I have pleasure in supporting the first amendment.

The second thing that the Bill seeks to do is enlarge the jurisdiction of the local courts in relation to actions for the recovery of premises. To some extent I may have been responsible for initiating this particular amendment, because some time ago I drew the Attorney-General's attention to an anomaly existing in the Act and at the same time I took the opportunity to suggest that this question of the amount of rent mentioned in the section dealing with the recovery of premises was perhaps overdue for revision.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: You will agree with the Hon. Mr. Kneebone's suggestion on another matter?

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: I am in favour of an increase to £520 but unfortunately the particular anomaly to which I drew the Minister's attention at the time has not been dealt with. The anomaly is that the existing Act says that one may bring action for recovery of premises in the local courts (and it is very desirable that the action should be taken in the local court, because the fees, costs and expenses involved are very much lower than those in the Supreme Court) where the rent does not exceed £312 a year. I would suggest that it was designed to cover a situation where the rent of premises was £6 a week. It is normal for rent to be expressed in this way—so much a week. The anomaly that I pointed out to the Attorney-General was that £6 a week is not £312 a year, because 52 weeks in a year make 364 days, and there are at least 365 days in every year and on every fourth year they total 366. So, unless the amount is slightly higher than £312, anything over £6 a week has to go to the Supreme Court. Increasing the jurisdiction to £520 obviously indicates that it is intended to be £10 a week. But again, £10 a week does not amount to £520 a year. It is fractionally higher. If the amount had been £525 or even £530, I would feel that the anomaly would have been dealt with.

The Hon. C. D. Rowe: Not many rents are stated in that way.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: No; they are stated in so many pounds a week. That is what drew my attention to the anomaly. When I was instructed by a client, where the rent was exactly £6 a week, I said "We can go to the local court; it is a very simple and easy procedure there. Six pounds a week." I took my summons to the local court, which said "Sorry, you are out. You have to go to the Supreme Court. Six pounds a week is not £312 a year." After some thought I had to agree with that. The £312 a year would cover 364 days, or 52 weeks. Consequently, I had, in that case, to drop proceedings and start in the Supreme Court of South Australia because it was alleged that I was not within the jurisdiction of the local court. It was that instance that caused me to write to the Attorney-General pointing out the anomaly in the Act and hoping it would be corrected. I am attempting to point out that the anomaly has not been cured by stepping up the amount to £520. Later I would like to hear from the Attorney-General whether there is any substance in this matter. I commend the Attorney-General for stepping up the jurisdiction, for the move is long overdue.

The third amendment, another jurisdictional amendment, involves the Workmen's Liens Act. There is little I want to say about it, because it was so obviously out of line with the existing jurisdiction in the local court where the jurisdiction is up to £1,250. It is desirable that this Act should cover that figure. I suggest this matter was overlooked when the jurisdiction of the local court was increased.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph: Do you agree that the amount should be fixed by arbitration?

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: We should keep out of the arbitration field. It does enough damage in other ways. I was interested to hear that the Hon. Mr. Kneebone had discovered that this Act had not been amended since 1893, and he said that consequently it was time we looked at the matter again. I have had some experience of the operation of this Act, and it is one Act that has stood the test of time. It has worked very well, Unfortunately it is in rare cases that a workman finds there is money left under a contract, and it is only in those circumstances that he can get his hands on any money. The other big deficiency in the Act is that those who come first are served first. If a person happened to be the first in, and there was some money left in the kitty, he could get the lot, and others down the line would get nothing. I am talking about unpaid subcontractors who can claim under the legislation, but it has a wider application than that. Generally there is little incentive to use it where a contractor has got himself in a financial mess and has not paid his subcontractors because there has not been sufficient money left to pay everybody. These are matters of general interest and they bear no real relationship to

the Bill, which merely increases the jurisdiction—something long overdue All in all, I support the second reading, and unless I can be persuaded otherwise I shall probably move in the Committee to deal with the anomaly I mentioned—the amount involved in clause 5. I support the second reading.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS secured the adjournment of the debate.

SECOND-HAND DEALERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 18. Page 449.)

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS (Midland): I have pleasure in supporting the second reading of this Bill, which, as the Minister said, seeks to remove an anomaly that exists in the provisions of the Early Closing Act and the Second-hand Dealers Act. To my mind this Bill is a straightforward measure, which should accomplish what it sets out to do. I suggest however, that in the short title after "Second-hand Dealers" and before "Act" there should be inserted in brackets "Early Closing". I do that with the idea of making it clear what the Bill sets out to do, and possibly to supply a note for the convenience of members when referring to it in future. I believe that my friend (Mr. Bevan) in his speech yesterday seemed a little confused about his opposition to it. I understood him to say at one stage that he was opposed to the Bill, but later I thought he was supporting it, but I was unable to find any evidence of that this morning. I also recall that he said he did not think the legislation would have much impact, whichever way it went. He proceeded to search, and I felt unnecessarily, for complications in it, and attempted to connect the Bill with three Acts. I realize it is the duty of Opposition members to oppose, but I do not know whether it is necessary to look for complications that do not, in fact, exist when they oppose legislation. I gather from Mr. Bevan's remarks that he wishes to make Easter Saturday an additional holiday.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: It is not an additional holiday at all; it is already one. You should look at the Act.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: The honourable member wants to make the Early Closing Act apply to that holiday, as it is listed in the Holidays Act. I remind my friend, and I say "remind" as I am sure he knows this, that it was during the regime of the Hill Labor Government that the then Minister of Local Government introduced a Bill to amend the Early Closing Act. In it Easter Saturday was deemed not to be a public holiday for the purposes of the Early Closing Act. I believe that the Hon. Mr. Jelley, who was the Minister of Local Government, and all the Ministers in that Government were very much in favour of the amendment, and whatever my friend desires to do about Easter Saturday, and whatever the merits or demerits of his requirements, it was a Labor Government that dealt with the matter in this way. I said earlier that I believe this Bill will accomplish what it sets out to do and there is no need to drag in other Acts to make it appear unnecessarily complicated.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Southern): I support the second reading. Clause 3 of the Bill amends section 3 of the principal Act by including the definition of "public holiday":

> "Public holiday" means any day, other than the day after Good Friday, which is by or under the Holidays Act, 1910-1959, declared to be a public holiday.

This amendment is designed to remove a present anomaly in the Early Closing Act and the Second-hand Dealers Act. The Early Closing Act provides for the closing of shops and the non-selling of goods other than exempted goods on public holidays. The original Early Closing Act did not contain any definition of a public holiday. As pointed out by the Hon. Mr. Dawkins, this amendment to the Early Closing Act was introduced in 1932 in this Chamber by the Hon. Mr. Jelley.

I should like to read to this Chamber part of the second reading speech on the introduction of that amendment to the Early Closing Act. This was on October 26, 1932 (32 years ago) at page 1493 of *Hansard*:

> The only other amendment made by the Bill is contained in clause 2, and deals with the application of the Holidays Act, 1910, to Easter Saturday. Under that Act Easter Saturday is a public holiday, and consequently is also a public holiday for the purposes of the Early Closing Act. It is recognized by traders generally that it is most inconvenient for places of business to be closed on that day, and in successive years the Minister, after application by the persons interested, has secured the suspension of the Early Closing Act for such day and permitted business establishments to carry on business. Ever since the passing of the Act in 1910 Government after Government have agreed to the suspension of the Early Closing Act at that particular time. In view of the fact that business people have requested for many years that the Early Closing Act should be suspended for this particular period it is about time the Act was amended, and that Parliament wiped out an anomaly which has proved objectionable to business people and consumers alike.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: They changed their minds this year.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I do not doubt that. The report continues:

> It is desirable that Easter Saturday be not a public holiday for the purposes of the Early Closing Act as, by reason of the occurrence of public holidays on the preceding Friday and succeeding Monday, it would greatly inconvenience both the traders and the public if all shops were closed on that day. Clause 2, therefore, provides that Easter Saturday shall not be deemed to be a public holiday for the purposes of the Early Closing Act. This is a Bill on which members will have an opportunity of departing from their attitude of opposition. There can be no opposition to a clause which makes provision for excluding Easter Saturday from the operations of the Early Closing Act.

I daresay that, if Mr. Jelley in introducing that Bill had been aware that the Second-hand Dealers Act, when this public holiday was defined in the Early Closing Act, constituted an anomaly, the Second-hand Dealers Act would have been amended at the same time.

The Hon. A. J. SHARD secured the adjournment of the debate.

LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 18. Page 449.)

The Hon. F. J. POTTER (Central No. 2): I support the second reading of this Bill, the purpose of which is to increase the numbers available for selection to the Statutory Committee of the Law Society from seven to nine. This committee exists for the purpose of inquiring into and hearing charges of misconduct against legal practitioners. It is a committee that meets and performs its functions voluntarily with no payment to the persons concerned. I am certain it is a body that has earned the esteem of the legal profession and outside bodies over a long period of years.

As the Minister has explained, certain difficulties have been encountered from time to time in soliciting persons to comprise a panel to hear a certain case. It is desirable, as has been suggested to this Council, that the Attorney-General himself be not on that panel. There is little more to be said about the matter, except that this is obviously an amendment that has been found necessary, and it should have the support of all honourable members.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS secured the adjournment of the debate.

CREMATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 18. Page 450.)

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland): I rise to support the second reading of this Bill. As has been pointed out in two previous speeches, only two small clauses are involved. They deal with South Australians outside South Australia. I understand that in Victoria the relevant provisions are not quite so stringent as they are in South Australia. I do not at all disagree with the South Australian Act, because I believe that when dealing with cremation one needs to take every precaution to ensure that abuses are not indulged in by people who have some reason to cover up misdeeds. At the same time, I am in complete sympathy with people who have a relative who dies in Victoria, who have obtained permission to carry out the cremation in Victoria but who decide that they would like that person's body cremated in South Australia. They should not be put to any inconvenience by time lag, which could be considerable.

We can fully support the provisions of this amending legislation, which also clears up the matter of the definition of "coroner"—a wise precaution. The Hon. Mr. Kneebone gave some most interesting material yesterday on cremation in general. The way cremation has increased in the last 20 or 30 years has been remarkable. It has been one of the means of disposal of the dead almost since man has had any ideas about hygiene, though it was not until 1884 that Mr. Justice Stephen ruled that it was a legal procedure in England. In the past, great difficulties have been experienced in the United Kingdom by people who have desired and expressly stated a wish to be disposed of after death in this manner. I suppose the chief arguments that can be propounded against cremation are religious reasons, that it destroys evidence when there has been violence or foul play, and that it is an incentive to crime. I think under the provisions of the legislation in this State most of these things have been very well looked after.

It is not our prerogative or wish to interfere with the religious beliefs of anybody, so there is no question of compulsion, and I do not think there should be any. The other dangers seen by certain people are well safeguarded by the requirement that certificates must be provided by the doctor who attended the deceased and by another doctor, that a post-mortem was held, or that a coronial inquiry was conducted. Cremation is favoured by some

people mainly on the ground of hygiene. Arguments have been advanced over the years regarding large cities where there is overcrowding and where epidemics have occurred and have carried off large numbers of the population because drinking water taken a few hundred yards away from a cemetery has been contaminated. It is favoured also on purely economic grounds, as valuable land is used for cemeteries and is held in many cases for at least a century.

This is a morbid subject, although we should interest ourselves in it, and I think we should consider what the Italians are now doing. The majority of Italians are followers of the Roman Catholic religion, which does not believe in cremation, but in Italy the problem has been overcome in crowded areas by the construction of special cemetery buildings where niches are provided and coffins are sealed in them with cement, so the burial is done in a compact area instead of in large open spaces that often become eyesores, which happens in many parts of this country. People have an interest in cemeteries for only a limited time, and after they are filled they become the responsibility of nobody. This is not so in the newer cemeteries, for which fine trusts have been set up. Two of them that come to mind are Centennial Park and Enfield.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: Enfield Cemetery is very well kept, but don't say too much about the costs.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: The cost is a matter for the individual, of course, but I agree that that cemetery is very well kept. This subject involves great personal sentiment and emotion, and it is entirely up to people whether they desire to be buried or cremated. It is interesting to note the trend in Great Britain, where in 1960 one-third of the people who died were cremated. It is also interesting to note that the country with the second highest proportion of cremations in that year was Australia.

This Bill deals with something that is becoming increasingly important, and I believe that in a few years we may have to overhaul the legislation in the light of conditions prevailing then. Perhaps more facilities will be provided, but those in Parliament then will, I am sure, make equally sure that the provisions are not abused and that it is not easy to circumvent the law. It seems to me that cremation is being exploited by undertakers generally, as the charges are much higher than I think they should be; I believe the same applies to all funeral charges now. The emotions of people are being played upon, and this matter is getting out of hand. Something should be done about it, because it is much cheaper to live than to die! I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.25 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, August 25, at 2.15 p.m.