LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday, November 2, 1965.

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

HIDE, SKIN AND WOOL DEALERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

His Excellency the Governor's Deputy, by message, intimated his assent to the Bill.

QUESTIONS

ROSEWORTHY AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: My question concerns the ablution block in the older portion of the Roseworthy Agricultural College. Honourable members will know that many improvements, including a new block for the older students, have been made at the college over the years, but some of the amenities of the old block have been in commission for many years and have become very inefficient. I understand that equipment has been purchased for rebuilding and modernizing the bathrooms and toilets of the older portion, but a considerable delay has occurred in their construction. I think as many as 50 students are using about two showers. Will the Minister of Labour and Industry ascertain from his colleague, the Minister of Works, the reason for the delay and whether the work can be expedited?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I shall be pleased to convey the honourable member's question to my colleague and bring back an answer as soon as possible.

TELEVISION NEWS.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: Residents in the north of the State have made many complaints about all television stations telecasting the news at 6.30 p.m. Could the Chief Secretary use his good offices in an endeavour to get the television stations to consider altering their newscasting time from 6.30 p.m. to a later time in the evening, possibly 7 o'clock?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: I appreciate the honourable member's question. We do not have to go to the north of the State to hear complaints about the fact that every television station uses the same time for telecasting its news bulletin. Many people have spoken to me about it and I have been annoyed myself. If my memory serves me rightly, I believe that a similar question was asked of the Premier in another place, and at that time he said he would have inquiries made to see what could be done. I am quite prepared to confer with the Premier to see whether any progress has been made and to urge that a satisfactory arrangement be made so that all television stations do not telecast the news at the same time, 6.30 p.m.

WATER SUPPLY.

The Hon. L. R. HART: Has the Minister of Labour and Industry, representing the Minister of Works, a reply to my question of October 27 about water pressures and the possibility of water restrictions applying in South Australia in the summer?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: My colleague has supplied me with the following reply:

Although the quantity of water stored in the metropolitan reservoirs at the present time is considerably less than at the same time last year, it is anticipated at this stage that it will be possible to sufficiently augment the storages with River Murray water to avoid the necessity to impose restrictions on the use of water this summer. This statement is based on the assumption that the consumption of water this summer will not exceed the department's prediction, which will depend to a large extent on the co-operation of the public in the careful usage of water.

PARINGA BRIDGE.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Has the Minister of Roads a reply to my question of October 19 regarding the breaking up of the decking on the movable span on the Paringa bridge?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Yes. Investigations into an alternative type of cladding for the lift span of the Paringa bridge have reached the stage where a recommendation has been made to remove the asphalt planks and surface the existing timber deck with a fibre glass-polyester resin laminate. This method has recently been used with success by the Country Roads Board on timber decked bridges in Victoria. This work will be carried out in the near future and in the meantime replacement of asphalt blocks as necessary will keep the surface in a safe condition for traffic.

MILLICENT HOUSES.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Has the Chief Secretary a reply to the question I asked last week regarding housing at Millicent?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: I have the following reply:

For the past few months the Housing Trust has been allotting the majority of its houses at Millicent to persons employed in the paper pulp industry. Within the next few weeks it is likely that the trust will be able to reduce this quota and make more houses available for other applicants. It is expected that the present waiting time for rental houses of approximately nine months will be reduced early in 1966.

COPPER.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: I have received reports that some holes have been drilled at Paratoo on a lease operated by Electro Winnings Limited and that in one of these holes native copper with a yield of 85 per cent has been found. It has also been reported that this company has removed the overburden and found a large quantity of copper with a yield of between 4 per cent and 7 per cent. Will the Minister of Mines obtain a report as to the correctness of these claims?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I will obtain the report that the honourable member desires.

AGINCOURT BORE SCHOOL.

The Hon. C. R. STORY (on notice):

1. Is it the intention of the Education Department to proceed with the erection of a school at Agincourt Bore?

2. What is the estimated cost of the school?

3. When will tenders be called?

4. In which financial year will the construction of the school commence?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: The replies are:

1. The honourable member was present at the deputation to the Minister on the subject of a school at Agincourt Bore and it was made plain then that it is the intention of the Education Department to proceed with the erection of this school.

2 to 4. The Public Buildings Department has been asked to prepare plans as soon as possible, but specific answers to these questions cannot yet be supplied.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT REVISION COMMITTEE.

The Hon. JESSIE COOPER (on notice):

1. What are the terms of reference of the Local Government Act Revision Committee?

2. What progress has this committee made to date?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: The replies are:

1. The terms of reference for the Local Government Act Revision Committee are to revise and re-write the Local Government Act and to make periodical reports of its progress to the Minister of Local Government.

2. The committee commenced its inquiry in September and has met on nine occasions. It has received written submissions from numerous persons and bodies, and has heard in evidence several persons, including the secretaries and solicitors of the Municipal and Local Government Associations. It will shortly receive submissions from Mr. K. H. Gifford, Q.C., a recognised authority on local government in Australia. It has publicly invited interested persons to appear before it. The committee is in its early stages and will be meeting at least once a week, but, as the inquiry proceeds, probably even more often.

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE ERADICATION FUND ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 26. Page 2330.)

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS (Midland): This Bill has been introduced to give effect to a recommendation made in April 1965 by the Exotic Diseases Committee. The 1958 legislation is amended by the insertion of the following definition in section 3:

"Foot and mouth disease" includes vesicular exanthema and vesicular stomatitis.

The Hon. Mr. Hart said that members of the veterinary profession, together with other persons concerned, including stockowners, are of the opinion that it is not a question of whether foot and mouth disease will arrive in Australia but rather a question of when it will reach here. I believe this to be true. Because of the quick transport of people from countries where foot and mouth disease prevalent, it is possible for travellers to return to Australia within 24 hours of leaving another country and be wearing the same footwear as they wore in and around properties in other places. Quarantine measures could well be stepped up. Also, in Indonesia, which has taken over West Irian, foot and mouth disease is rife. Migratory birds could well bring the disease to Australia.

Everything possible should be done to improve our quarantine regulations and make people aware of the imminent danger of the disease. Mr. Hart also said that the disease could cause a loss in our export income of about £500,000,000, and I believe this to be correct. It will give some idea of the serious consequences that could result from the arrival

in Australia of foot and mouth disease. It is certain that profitable overseas markets would dry up overnight under these conditions. The purpose of the Bill is to control two allied diseases under the same terms and conditions as foot and mouth disease. Some members may have had the privilege of seeing a film shown on several occasions by the Agriculture Department of the ravages of this disease in Canada and the extremely costly measures that had to be taken to eradicate it. Anybody who has seen that film, or who has heard of its details, will be seized with the importance of keeping the disease out of Australia, if it is humanly possible to do so.

The purpose of the Bill is to include the diseases I have mentioned. If it is passed, foot and mouth disease will include for the purposes of the Act vesicular exanthema, which is an acute feverish or febrile disease of swine characterized by the presence of vesicles on the nose, feet, and mucous membrane of the mouth. The reason for the inclusion of this disease and its consideration in the same category as foot and mouth disease is that in its early stages it is similar to that disease and it is not easy to distinguish between the two. The other disease mentioned—vesicular stomatitis—is an allied disease in which blister-like lesions of the mouth are characteristic. It is necessary that it be included in the Act for the same reasons as apply to the other disease. The considerable difficulty in distinguishing between foot and mouth disease and these two diseases provides ample need for the Bill, which I am happy to support, because it will bring these diseases within the scope of the Act.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES secured the adjournment of the debate.

VETERINARY SURGEONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

In Committee.

(Continued from October 19. Page 2193.)

Clause 4—"Additional qualification for registration of veterinary surgeons"—which the Hon. L. R. Hart had moved to amend by striking out "17a" and inserting "17 (1a)".

The CHAIRMAN: After discussing this matter with the Parliamentary Draftsman, I think the simplest way to make the alterations desired by the honourable member is to strike out "17a" and insert "17", and after "is" to insert "further".

The Hon. L. R. HART: I ask leave to withdraw my amendment with a view to moving another.

Leave granted; amendment withdrawn.

The Hon. L. R. HART moved:

To strike out "17a" and to insert "17", and after "is" to insert "further".

Amendment carried.

The Hon. L. R. HART moved:

In the marginal note after "17" to strike out "a".

The CHAIRMAN: As this is a drafting alteration, it will be corrected later.

Clause as amended passed.

Clauses 5 to 13 passed.

Clause 14—"Exemptions from Act."

The Hon. L. R. HART: I move:

After "animal" second appearing to insert a comma.

I think the Minister is prepared to accept this amendment. I understand that the spaying of dogs and cats calls for some skill and that some people carrying out this operation do not possess sufficient skill to do the job satisfactorily. I understand, too, that veterinary surgeons have to treat some animals spayed by other than qualified persons because of the need to rectify the injury done.

One aspect of this Bill that has not been made clear so far (I myself was not entirely clear about it) is that there are three types of practitioner. First, there is the veterinary surgeon who practised veterinary surgery for seven years prior to the passing of the principal Act. Secondly, there is the veterinary practitioner who practised for five years before the principal Act was passed. Also, a stock inspector who had previously been a stock inspector was entitled to be registered as a veterinary practitioner. Thirdly, there is the permit holder. This last provision was inserted in the Act in 1938 to include any local person who had had some experience of doing veterinary work. After 1938 he was entitled to be registered as a permit holder. So, in effect, there are three different types of person permitted to do veterinary work—the veterinary surgeon, the veterinary practitioner and the permit holder. I think that some members of this Chamber were under the impression that there were only two types.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Remaining clause (15) and title passed.

Bill reported with amendments. Committee's report adopted.

MARKETING OF EGGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 27. Page 2381.)

The Hon. L. R. HART (Midland): The reason for this Bill is that since the setting up of the Commonwealth Egg Marketing Authority it has been necessary for the States to pass egg marketing Acts to conform to Commonwealth legislation. There has been set up what we know as the C.E.M.A. plan, which enables the Commonwealth to levy egg producers for the purpose of providing a fund to subsidize losses incurred on the export market. It is really a means of stabilizing the egg industry. The amount that may be levied varies, depending upon the sum of money lost on the export of eggs or egg pulp. When a large amount of eggs or egg pulp is exported and a fairly high loss is incurred, the levy is increased to cover that loss. If, however, there is only a small amount of export and not much loss to the industry, the levy can be reduced.

Under an agreement between the Commonwealth and South Australia, the South Australian Egg Board collects the hen levies, which are then paid to the Commonwealth for application under the Poultry Industry Assistance Act, passed in 1965. This legislation is in two parts. First, there is the Commonwealth Poultry Industry Levy Act, under which the South Australian Egg Board, as I have already outlined, collects the hen levy. Secondly, there is the Poultry Industry Assistance Act, under which the egg marketing authority distributes the levy on the basis of losses sustained in the export of eggs and/or egg pulp. The export of eggs in shell or pulp form over recent years has been negligible because of the extremely low prices prevailing in most egg-consuming countries. Egg production in most countries today is being carried out on what one may term a mass production basis. The day of the small poultry farmer seems to be gone forever, and it is not uncommon today for poultry farms to consist of anything from 10,000 to 15,000 birds, and sometimes considerably more than that.

This Bill sets out to do two or three things. One is to provide for a casual vacancy occurring on the board. Under the Act, it would be necessary to have an election to fill such a vacancy but, by this amending Bill, the Governor may fill the vacancy with a person qualified to be a member of the board. The Act does not state whether a panel of names shall be submitted by the egg-producing associations. I assume that the egg producers as a whole will be consulted before such a vacancy is filled by the Governor. Secondly, the Bill sets out to clarify some definitions in the Act, particularly those of "hen" and "producer". Previously, whether a person was qualified to vote depended upon the number of eggs he produced but, by this amending legislation, he will be entitled to vote providing he keeps a specified number of fowls. The South Australian Egg Board will use the returns required by the Commonwealth authorities for the collection of levies as a guide in the compilation of electoral rolls. With the exception of clause 6 (4), which deals with corporate bodies, the proposed amendments seem clear to me. The clause reads:

> Where the name of a person is included in the roll of electors for an electoral district both as the nominee of a body corporate and as a producer in his own right, such person shall be entitled to vote in each capacity, but a person shall not otherwise be entitled to vote more than once at any election.

In other words, a company may nominate the person who is entitled to vote and, if that person is also a poultry farmer in his own right, he will also be entitled to vote in that capacity. What concerns me is that no provision is made to meet the case of a partnership. A partnership may be a multiple one, having two, three or more members, and whether each of those persons will be entitled to vote if the requisite number of hens is kept or whether the partnership will be entitled only to one vote is not clear.

In the case of the wool reserve price plan, special provision is made regarding the voting rights of partnerships, but nothing is said in that regard in this amending Bill, nor is there any mention of it in the principal Act. I ask the Minister whether he will give an assurance as to the position on that aspect. I understand that the matter was raised with the Minister in another place, who said that he would clarify it during the debate. However, that was not done. Therefore, we are still not clear on what is the position of a partnership in regard to voting rights. I support the second reading, but ask the Minister for that clarification.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 5 passed.

Clause 6—"Producer companies."

The Hon. L. R. HART: I have not heard the Minister on the voting rights of partnerships and, before I vote on this clause, I should like to hear his comments.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Minister of Local Government): The information I have is that a partnership would be on the same basis as a company. In those circumstances, it would be entitled to one vote. However, so that honourable members will be quite clear on the matter, I am prepared to ask leave to report progress and for the Committee to sit again to enable me to obtain full information on the position.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (MINISTERS).

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 27. Page 2381.)

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Leader of the Opposition): The object of this Bill is to provide for an additional Minister, a ninth Minister, in Cabinet. It is a rather interesting Bill, because it is a glorious example of the inconsistency of the Labor Party. On two occasions similar Bills placed before Parliament were defeated by the former Opposition, who are the members of the present Government. Regarding the conditions that existed at that time, I point out that part of the work that was my responsibility as a Minister is now being performed by two Ministers in this Chamber and the remainder of the functions that I performed are performed by a Minister in another place. Therefore, it seems to me that things have changed considerably now that the former Opposition finds itself in office and the Government now realizes some of the things that it did not realize when it was in Opposition.

It is pleading overwork and asks for some sympathy in regard to the responsibilities that Ministers have to carry. We are told that the reason for the additional Minister is the increase in governmental activity "during recent years", not this year; it has been going on for some time. However, when things are different, they are not the same, and so it is desired to appoint another Minister. Then, the Minister goes on to refer to a doctrine that Ministers of the Crown should manage affairs of State. That is no news. We see that prominently in the legislation being introduced: the Ministers are going to manage everything in their departments. They are going to initiate the rules, interpret them and dictate how they are carried out. That has nothing on the day-to-day news from the Middle East telling us how Governments there tell the people what they are to do. That seems to be the design of legislation here and the reason why we need another Minister.

Strangely enough, I am prepared to be consistent. I advocated the appointment of an extra Minister before and am prepared to support it now. However, what interests me is that the Government is so sympathetic towards its own affairs and the amount of work it has to do, yet it apparently considers there is no change in work so far as the Opposition is concerned. There is no consideration for the Opposition in this Chamber. Some facilities are provided for the Leader in another place, but any assistance that I have sought has been refused. The Government, to be consistent, must realize that if its work has increased and if the amount of legislation has increased (as I think it has this session) so as to give Ministers the opportunity to tell everybody what they are to do and to push them about, then that has put more responsibility on the members of the Opposition, who have not the benefit of officers to do research work for them. They must do the research entirely on their own. So I suggest that the Government might consider the members of the Opposition and the work that they have to carry out. The Minister might say, "You have got what we had when we were in Opposition", but my reply to that would be that the first recognition of the Opposition in this Chamber was given by the previous Government and appropriate action was delayed only because of the attitude of the Opposition at that time.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: Surely the honourable member is not going to claim credit for that now! He can give that one away.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: The Minister is like a lovely little chirping bird and he begins twittering away—

The Hon. A. J. Shard: You cannot claim credit for that recognition of the Opposition; I and I alone got that for the Opposition.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: I am glad the Minister believes that he is the Almighty!

The Hon. A. J. Shard: I had to plead my case before an independent tribunal and you refused to give me anything.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: I know the position, and it is not just what the Minister dreams about. The Leader of the Opposition at the time I have in mind did not want to leave the Public Works Committee, and so on the first occasion the Leader was left out of

consideration altogether. The Chief Secretary says that later, when he was Leader, he got recognition. He did: he got more than I have got as Leader. I am not making any personal—

The Hon. A. J. Shard: The amount decided upon for the Leader of the Opposition was given by a tribunal; the honourable member did nothing about it when he was in office.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: If the Minister has finished, I desire to make the point that the then Opposition is now dealing out a lot of self pity to itself as a Government.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: Twice you refused recognition to the Leader of the Opposition.

The PRESIDENT: Order! All members will have an opportunity to speak on this matter, and I ask them to wait until they are called before doing so.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: Thank you, Mr. President. I know it is not always pleasant to be reminded of happenings in the past, but I reassure the Chief Secretary that I am not one who craves retaliation or revenge but am always happy to hand out charitable consideration. I have already told the Chief Secretary that I am supporting the Bill. However, I am suggesting at the same time, not as a personal thing, but for the future of this Council, that similar consideration be given to the Opposition as is now being given to the Government. With those brief remarks I assure the Council that I intend to support the Bill.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD (Central No. 1): I think it is a good thing for the Government to bring down a Bill when it sees that the position warrants such action. Changing times make it necessary for changing action and consequently this Bill would come in that category. It is to be hoped that the support of the Opposition is not a form of blackmail to get extra help. It is to be hoped that its support is genuine and that the honourable member who has just spoken believes that it is necessary for the number of Ministers to be increased.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin: At a fee.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Yes; all Ministers at present receive a fee and no doubt the ninth Minister will, likewise. With the rapid growth and development of this State there is no doubt that an extra Minister is warranted. The Constitution Act of 1856 provided for five Ministers of the Crown and the practice at that time was that four Ministers—were chosen from the House of Assembly and one from this Council. At that time the population of South Australia was 107,000 and Government expenditure from revenue was then a little over £500,000. In 1873 when the population of the State had grown to 188,000 the Act was amended to provide for an additional Minister. By 1905, after federation, although the population had increased to 366,000 and Government expenditure had increased to £2,718,000, there were only four Ministers of the Crown. In 1908 the population had increased to 419,000 and the number of Ministers was increased to six, four being appointed from the House of Assembly and two from the Legislative Council. The number remained at six until 1953, when the population had increased to 785,000 with Government expenditure rising to over £49,000,000, and the number of Ministers was then increased to eight, five coming from the House of Assembly and three from the Legislative Council. Since 1953 until now the number of Ministers of the Crown has remained at eight but during that time the population has increased to 1,049,000 with Government expenditure rising to £121,500,000. Therefore, there is no question about the rapid growth of the State. As a result of that growth, and as the policy of the Government is to increase the number of members in the House of Assembly, there can be no doubt that it is necessary to have another Minister appointed. The Opposition will have an opportunity to vote in favour of an increased number of members in the House of Assembly and we are looking forward to their support.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: But your Party said it would not increase the number of Ministers until such time as it had increased the number of members in the House of Assembly.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The necessary Bill has been introduced, and the opportunity will be given to the Opposition to support such a measure.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: It has been at the bottom of the Notice Paper in another place.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: It has been, but every member will have an opportunity to speak and will be able to vote on it at the appropriate time. The Opposition should not be too anxious about it. We hope they will do the right thing when it comes forward.

The Hon. C. D. Rowe: That is provided the Government is still in office!

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: In the early stages of this session I heard a voice similar to the one that I have just heard, and that voice said that the new Government might not last for 30 days. The honourable member later suggested it might not last 30 weeks. We have got through those two periods and we are sneaking towards 30 months and we may be on the way to 30 years. We believe from outside reports that we shall remain in office for quite a long period. The policy of the Government in bringing down amendments designed to remove administration from statutory boards and placing the responsibility for policy decisions in the hands of the appropriate Minister is a good one and is sound in principle. There is no doubt that Ministers who are directly responsible to Parliament should be the persons responsible for the administration of those departments. On examining clause 3 (*b*) of the Bill we find that it lays down the maximum number of Ministers that can be appointed from the House of Assembly. I think that at this stage it would not be wise to refuse the proposed alteration, which would allow the additional Minister to be appointed from the House of Assembly. I support the second reading.

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland): As the Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, this is not new legislation; the last Government attempted to do this but was frustrated in its attempt because it did not have a constitutional majority in the Lower House. However, I think this Opposition is a much more charitable Opposition than was the last. The things that we often see in print about this being an obstructing Liberal and Country League dominated Chamber will be proved to be completely erroneous, as I think my colleagues will support this Bill. Some interesting things were said by the Hon. Mr. Banfield about the growth of this State. I do not know whether the honourable member implied that the State had grown extremely rapidly in the last eight or nine months.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: I mentioned the years.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: But the honourable member has pointed out that this measure is necessary because of the growth of the State. Surely it was just as necessary 12 months ago, when an attempt was made to put a similar Bill through the Lower House. It has been said that it is Government policy to do away with statutory boards, and I think the Government will live to rue the day it does this. This is a pipe dream; it has been attempted by practically every Government in Australia over the years but it has always been found that Ministers are not physically able to do all this work and that it is not in the best interests of the community to place the whole administration in the hands of one person. The talk about a Minister being responsible to Parliament is this year's funny joke; the Party with the majority in the Lower House has the power. I believe it is often very much better for administration to be in the hands of statutory boards. I am not a great lover of boards, but I know that the Ministers will find if they are saddled with the full responsibility of all these things they will have a big job in front of them. Another point that has been made by the Hon. Mr. Banfield is that the other place will bring forward a Bill to increase the number of members in that place. That Bill will also abolish the Legislative Council.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member must not discuss a Bill in another place.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I bow to your wishes, Mr. President. I merely wish to mention it. It was a great pity that the Labor Party adopted the attitude it did last year because, if it had not done so, it would have had the opportunity right from the time it took office to have the extra Minister. I believe that great troubles are ahead in relation to war service land settlement. The Labor Party has often told us that one man should have only one job, and I say that is why we should have a permanent Minister of Lands. If we had had this Minister, he would have been in full possession of the facts. I think it was an extremely short-sighted policy on the part of the previous Opposition not to pass the previous Bill and, as this Bill shows that the present Government recognizes that an additional Minister is necessary, I support the second reading.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE secured the adjournment of the debate.

PRIVATE PARKING AREAS BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 27. Page 2382.)

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE (Southern): I have perused this Bill during the weekend and can find little in it of a controversial nature. However, some clauses should be carefully considered by this Council. Although

this Bill has been considered for a year or two not to be urgent, I have no doubt that it is now very desirable. It virtually gives protection to the private owners of commercial premises who set out to provide facilities for the public doing business within the areas owned by them. In ordinary parlance, these facilities are what are known as off-street parking facilities. We all know that they are a highly desirable feature of modern development. However, I shall not enlarge on the matter and suggest that having these facilities creates the problem of getting to and away from them, particularly in narrow thoroughfares.

It has become obvious in recent months that the abuses mentioned by the Minister are growing daily. He mentioned hooligans using these areas virtually for car racing, children roller-skating on them, and so on. These things have become an undesirable feature of areas where motorists are provided with car parks to facilitate their business in the locality concerned. Facilities are also provided for pedestrians, particularly people pushing perambulators and having children running around. I have no difficulty in supporting the general principles of the Bill. However, I draw honourable members' attention to clause 6, which provides:

If any person leaves any vehicle on any private access road, private parking area or private pedestrian walkway and, on being requested by the owner of the private access road, private parking area, or private pedestrian walkway, as the case may be, or by the employee or agent of the owner or by a member of the police force, to remove the vehicle from the private access road, private parking area or private pedestrian walkway, fails so to do, he shall be guilty of an offence.

Although on the surface this does not appear to be unreasonable, it occurs to me (with respect to the Parliamentary Draftsman, who may disagree with me) that a person may park his car on a private parking area in front of a store and not intend to do business in that store. He may leave and go elsewhere. It is impossible for the agent, a police officer or anybody else to locate him for perhaps several hours. A policeman may have to hang around until he returns to his motor vehicle. Then he tells him, "You remove it. If you don't, you are up for a maximum fine of £5." The man says, "Thanks very much; I will remove it", and he comes back and does it again the next day, and disappears. Once again the police officer hangs around and says, "If you don't move this vehicle, you are up for a fine"; so he moves it. There is the possibility of incorrect drafting in this clause. If a person leaves his vehicle thus on this private parking area and is not a *bona fide* client, having been cautioned on the first occasion he should not be able to go back each day and, upon removing his vehicle, not be liable for a penalty. Will the Minister look at this? If there is a satisfactory explanation I shall be prepared to accept it. Otherwise, I suggest that either he or I would be prepared to amend this provision to meet the contingencies that might arise. Beyond that, I think the Bill is well timed and I commend it to honourable members.

The Hon. JESSIE COOPER secured the adjournment of the debate.

ELECTRICITY (COUNTRY AREAS) SUBSIDY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 27. Page 2384.)

The Hon. C. C. D. OCTOMAN (Northern): The principal Act was passed in 1962. It contains some financial provisions for subsidy payments. Up until June, 1965, a total of £600,000 was made available to the Electricity Trust for the purpose of subsidizing country electricity supplies. The subsidies provided for under the Act were in two parts: one for payments to the trust, to compensate it for any loss of revenue arising from tariff reductions in country areas, of amounts in respect of electricity undertakings taken over by the trust; and the other for payment of subsidies to country public electricity suppliers for the benefit of their consumers.

The purpose of this Bill is to authorize subsidies to country undertakings and enable a continuation of this subsidy beyond June 30, 1967, the date at which the present Act terminates. The overall position at June 30 of this year was that, as a result either of the operation of this Act or of trust action from its own resources, all trust consumers had available single-meter tariffs at metropolitan rates; and, in addition, those supplied indirectly by the trust (through bulk supplies) had substantially similar rates. All consumers supplied by other country public electricity undertakings with tariffs of more than 10 per cent above the equivalent metropolitan rates are also receiving substantial discounts under this Act, and I think they range from 20 per cent to as high as 50 per cent.

The fact that all trust consumers have single meter tariffs at metropolitan rates is of great benefit to country people and makes it possible for them to avail themselves of the power provided as well as of the household amenities

involved. Of course, most country people connected to the trust supply, although paying metropolitan rates, have an additional charge to pay called a standing charge, often between £25 and £30 annually for each house connected to the supply. As some properties have two or three or even more houses on them, this involves the payment each year of up to possibly £100 in standing charges. There is no great complaint about this, but electricity is still costing the country dweller more when this is considered.

It is interesting and even profitable sometimes to look back and see just what has made this Bill possible. Without the imagination and initiative of the previous Government in developing the Leigh Creek coalfield and building the Port Augusta power station, there would have been no electricity available to many country people at any cost, let alone at metropolitan rates. The Act providing subsidies for country consumers was, of course, also introduced by the previous Government. This Bill, which provides for a continuation of that policy, has my support.

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

PUBLIC WORKS STANDING COMMITTEE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 27. Page 2401.)

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL (Central No. 2): The main purpose of this Bill has been expressed to be to bring up to date the provisions of this Act in relation to the value of money. There are various ways of testing this. For instance, pre-war for many years the minimum amount of any works that had to go to the Public Works Committee was £30,000. I think it is generally felt in these days that one multiplies a pre-war figure by about four to get the present equivalent value of money.

If that is so, the amount should be £120,000. The Bill, of course, sets out to raise the amount from £100,000 to £150,000. The £30,000 minimum appertained, and continued to appertain, until 1955, when it was raised to £100,000, belatedly, because it was multiplied by 3⅓ then, which obviously meant that the Act should have been amended previously. In fact, the Chief Secretary, by interjection, indicated that he thought it had been, but that was not so. However, I think he was on the right track.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: My thinking was all right.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: Yes; it should have been altered before. The other principal criterion we have is the amount of the basic wage. During the late 1920's and the 1930's the basic wage was fairly constant; there was little change in value. I think it was about £4 a week.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: It got down to £3 11s. a week.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: Yes; it got down to £3 11s. and went up to £4 a week. It hovered at about that figure. In 1964 it had risen to £15 3s. a week, so here again we get this almost equivalent value by multiplying by four. So it seems to me on these various tests that, if anything, merely taking as the criterion the value of money, the amount is being raised in this Bill by a little more than possibly it should be at this stage, although, no doubt, as we live in the days of "sliding inflation", within a few years the amount will be fairly accurate on the sort of criteria I have quoted. Another test is related to building costs, because the relative costs of building in 1955 and in 1965 come into this matter. If honourable members look at the Chief Secretary's second reading explanation at page 2156 of *Hansard*—

The Hon. A. J. Shard: *Hansard* can listen.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: They will see that he is reported to have said that building costs have risen by 10 per cent since 1955. I did not recall what the Chief Secretary had said, but that figure seemed to me to be palpably low, so earlier this afternoon I checked with him and he showed me a copy of his second reading explanation as typed, which said there was an increase of 40 per cent, not 10 per cent as reported in *Hansard*.

The Hon. C. D. Rowe: The Minister did not check the *Hansard* report.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: I did not have time to read it.

The Hon. C. D. Rowe: It is your Ministerial responsibility.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: On the basis of the increase in building costs, the amount would be £140,000 and not £150,000. However, I consider that the increase proposed is somewhere near the mark, even if it tends to be a little high. It is clear that the committee, which is a very hard-working committee, cannot look over every project and a line must be drawn somewhere. The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin referred to this matter and pointed out that it is just as important in some cases for smaller works to be looked over as

it is for larger ones to be examined, and that small works get out of hand just as easily as larger ones. This is true but, as I say, it is impossible for the committee to look at everything and I think that the amount set by this Bill is somewhere near the mark.

In these days we do not get much in the way of a building for £150,000. A project costing that amount is not an enormous job. One other matter I should like to refer to has not been mentioned by honourable members, although it is part of the same Act. Although the fees of the members of the committee have been increased from time to time, if we apply to them the same criteria as, apparently, the Government has been applying in regard to costs of building, we find that the fees are lamentably lagging behind equivalent money values.

For instance, before the Second World War, the Chairman received £400 a year and the ordinary member £250 a year. If we multiplied that by four, the Chairman would receive £1,600 and the ordinary member £1,000, whereas now they receive only £750 and £500 respectively. In my observation, the work of this committee is extremely onerous. It involves members going far afield from time to time. Although it is ancillary to their Parliamentary duties, I think the Government might well look at the fees payable to them. They were last increased in 1960.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: Didn't the fees go up last time the Act was amended?

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: They went up in 1955, when the limit was increased from £30,000 to £100,000. They went up again in 1960. They were increased five years ago, whereas the limit on projects the committee looks at went up 10 years ago. The Government could have a look at this matter because the work of the committee at times is extremely exacting. It carries out very responsible and important work. I support the second reading.

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland): This Bill has been fairly well canvassed. At the outset, I should like to say that I oppose it not because it is a Government Bill, but because I consider I am helping the Government. A pattern has been worked out in connection with references to the committee, and as far back as I can remember the Auditor-General has always had something to say in his report about public buildings. In particular, he has had much to say about schools, saying that the costs of the buildings seemed to be extremely high.

As one who represents a country district where most of the schools are fairly old, and where the population has not increased to the extent that it has increased in some metropolitan areas, I know that they are not in as good condition as we would like to have them. However, because of the vast increase in development in new country areas, and in the outer metropolitan area such as at Elizabeth, we have to keep up with school development. Many of these older country schools are about 100 years old and really need to have something done to them. They get a coat of paint occasionally and sometimes more light is provided, but they are not being sufficiently improved. In these days we plan for a much better type of school building, almost verging on the over-elaborate.

Although these things are desirable and the committee is always striving for better conditions in school buildings, it must not be forgotten that in the attempt to get better school buildings on the one hand we may be depriving on the other hand other schools from getting improvements. I am thinking in particular of some primary schools I have seen while on inspections with the Public Works Committee in some parts of the State, and even in the metropolitan area. They are not good. I have been told that the increase in the cost of building primary schools in about 18 months was 23 per cent.

I listened with interest when Sir Arthur Rymill referred to the figure given by the Chief Secretary, who said the figure of 10 per cent in *Hansard* should be 40 per cent. One or two references that came to the committee were sent back to be looked at again. When one of them was returned to the committee the estimated cost was £27,000 more than the original estimate. Such estimating is a long way out, in my opinion. At the moment, the committee is awaiting an explanation from the Public Buildings Department as to the reason for this additional amount. Schools, principally the primary school section, usually cost between £70,000 and £140,000 or £150,000, and those projects need to be looked at. Most of the large secondary schools cost more than £150,000, and sometimes get as high as £200,000. Of course, the cost of technical schools is well in excess of that. We must consider primary schools where the cost is between £100,000 and £140,000. It is easy to lose sight of the fact that schools in certain areas are almost what we might call substandard yet we are building some schools with louvre windows, aluminium shades and fully

covered floors, and in this way spending a tremendous amount of money. I would like to see a close examination of new school projects in an endeavour to keep costs within bounds, so that some of the older schools may be rebuilt or at least brought up to standard.

It was not long ago that we spoke of all-purpose rooms and folding doors. I thought it was a good idea to provide assembly rooms in this way. However, they are frowned upon today because it involves moving desks and putting partitions back against the walls. The idea today is to have separate assembly halls, but this is most expensive, and it is an extravagant addition when some schools have not even an ordinary assembly hall.

I oppose this Bill not merely for the sake of opposing the Government but because I believe projects should be more carefully examined. The Public Works Committee has some references before it at present. The cost of high schools and technical schools is above the £150,000 mark. Some of the projects before the committee are: Port Lincoln tuna berth, £264,000 on one scheme and £600,000 on another; Renmark Primary School, slightly over £100,000; Port Pirie oil berth, well over £150,000; south-western drainage scheme, also well over £150,000; and Harbors Board headquarters, about £750,000. It can be seen that the committee has before it only one project at the moment that will cost less than £150,000. When I first became a member of the committee it met three days a week because there was an election in the offing and it was necessary to overcome the back lag. Also it was necessary for the references to be concluded before the Loan Estimates were prepared. The committee is well employed, but I would not say that at the moment it is overworked. The most important point is that it does not hold up any project with which the Government might wish to proceed, and I cannot visualize that it will hold up any projects merely because it cannot consider them. I think the committee can handle its work quite well at present, so I do not support the Bill.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS (Midland): As other honourable members have indicated, and as the Chief Secretary mentioned in his second reading explanation, the principal object of this Bill is to increase the limit of the cost of a public work from £100,000 to £150,000 before there is an inquiry by the committee. Long before I entered this Chamber, in common with many other citizens I knew of the Public Works Committee and regarded it very favourably. For many years it has been a valuable committee, and members on both sides of the Chamber will agree with that. The committee has thoroughly investigated many public works and it would be true to say that it has saved the Government of the day considerable sums of money from time to time. It has also been able to suggest improvements to projects. I do not wish to speak at length, but even today £100,000 is a large sum of money. Such a limit is adequate and should not be changed. Therefore, I am not able to support the Bill.

Mr. Story said the committee was not overloaded with work at present. If it was and was many months behind in its investigations, and there was a likelihood of such a position continuing, there could well be an urgent need for the Bill. However, it is well-known that the committee, while doing its job with its usual thoroughness, is not overworked at present.

I endorse the remarks of my colleague with reference to schools. It has been my privilege to inspect a number of schools during the period in which I have been a member of this Chamber. I am extremely pleased with some of the schools that have been built, and I have commented favourably upon them from time to time. However, there are occasions when they verge on the elaborate, something not quite necessary, and, while such buildings are highly desirable for new schools, we must not forget that some of our older schools have had nothing done to them for many years. I was recently connected with a deputation in relation to one of these schools, and, as the Minister pointed out and as unfortunately we knew all too well, it was only one of many. The situation has been brought about because there has been such a big increase in scholars and it has been the department's first objective to put a roof over the children. Therefore, one has to look carefully at the schools being erected to ensure that they have nothing that can be described as elaborate or unnecessary, because these things, although they may be desirable, mean that scholars now learning in substandard schools are having put off just so much longer the day when they will get a school that is up to present-day standards. For these reasons, I cannot support the Bill.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Southern): I oppose the Bill not to be obstructive to the Government but on the same grounds as those given by the Hon. Mr. Story—that it will not be in the interests of the Government, the taxpayer or the State generally. The intention of the measure is to raise from £100,000 to £150,000

the amount that can be spent on any one project without there being an examination by the Public Works Committee. One reason given for the increase is that there has been a change in the value of money since 1955, and you, Mr. Acting President, have said that another criterion is that the basic wage is now about four times more than it was in the 1930's, when the figure was fixed at £30,000.

The fact that building costs have increased to about the same extent during that period is perhaps an indication that the figure should be increased. However, I think the first thing that must be shown is that the committee has not sufficient time to carry out its duties. No evidence was given of this in the second reading explanation. Indeed, the Hon. Mr. Banfield commenced his remarks with the words, "Although it is true that the Public Works Committee is not overworked at present". I think this is the first criterion to be considered. In 1955, the Hon. Sir Norman Jude, in giving reasons for increasing the figure from £30,000 to £100,000, said that if the £30,000 limit remained the committee would be overworked and would not be able to give sufficient attention to all its tasks. The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin has said that the work of the committee over the past few years has not increased, and I do not think any evidence has been given that it has any difficulty in performing its allotted tasks. In the present economic position, the Government may be very thankful if the figure remains at £100,000. If it were not possible for the committee to deal with all projects put before it at the present figure, my opinion would be different, but in the circumstances I consider that the figure should remain as it is in the foreseeable future, as I think this is in the best interests of the taxpayer, the Government and this State. I therefore oppose the Bill.

The Hon. A. J. SHARD (Chief Secretary): I thank honourable members for their contributions to this debate. They have been fair, considerate and without bias. The Government's main reason for introducing this Bill is the change in money values. Although it is not suggested that the committee is overworked, sooner or later it will have before it many important matters that it will find difficult to deal with urgently. These projects include three hospital projects—additions to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the construction of a hospital in the south-western suburbs (which is necessary and on which a long inquiry will be necessary) and one in the northern area. The committee is now considering work on the hospital at Port Augusta. These big items come from just one department, and the committee does not want to be held up.

The Hon. L. R. Hart: Will these be dealt with within one financial year?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: The committee is now investigating the need for hospitals. I do not say that these matters will be referred in the same financial year, but the committee will need to deal with them simultaneously so that the Government will know what to put before the Loan Council. Apart from hospitals, the committee will have to consider the requirements of the Education Department. An objection to the Bill because the committee has not much work to do now is an ill-founded objection, as within the foreseeable future it will have plenty of work.

This committee has saved the Government much money and has enabled better buildings to be constructed: I think the latter is possibly more important than the former. If it is overloaded with small matters it cannot possibly give the necessary attention to important projects.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: The committee is not overloaded yet.

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: No. If that is the reason, it is not very sound. Sir Arthur Rymill referred to the time when the amount was £30,000 and suggested that we should multiply it by four, thus bringing it to a figure of £120,000. If £150,000 seems too large, surely we can agree on a figure between £100,000 and £150,000 to suit the present position rather than throw out this Bill and maintain the present £100,000? Neither the Government nor I will be upset, whatever happens.

The Hon. C. R. Story: Will the Minister submit an amendment?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: No. It is not my place to submit an amendment but, rather than throw the Bill out, why not see if we cannot agree on a figure between £100,000 and £150,000? The position in 10 years' time should be considered. I ask honourable members not to throw out this Bill. Nobody wants to say anything against the Public Works Committee. As costs have risen by 40 per cent since the last time the amount was fixed, surely the Public Works Committee will not be snowed under if the amount is fixed at £110,000, £120,000 or £130,000? I ask honourable members to consider that. I thank them again for the high standard of debate, which involved no personalities or politics. It is a question of everybody wanting to do the right thing for the community as a whole.

The Council divided on the second reading:

Ayes (7).—The Hons. D. H. L. Banfield, S. C. Bevan, Jessie Cooper, A. F. Kneebone, F. J. Potter, Sir Arthur Rymill, and A. J. Shard (teller).

Noes (11).—The Hons. M. B. Dawkins, R. C. DeGaris, R. A. Geddes, G. J. Gilfillan, L. R. Hart, Sir Norman Jude, H. K. Kemp, Sir Lyell McEwin (teller), C. C. D. Octoman, C. D. Rowe, and C. R. Story.

Majority of 4 for the Noes.

Second reading thus negatived.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

In Committee.

(Continued from October 27. Page 2399.)

Clause 10—"Duty to stop and report in case of accident"—which the Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill had moved to amend by striking out in new section 43 (3) (*b*) "is reasonably necessary and practicable" and inserting "he can".

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Minister of Roads): When we were last considering this clause I drew attention to the phraseology used in the National Code and suggested that, because of certain circumstances, the same phraseology should be used in this Bill. Having looked at the ramifications of this clause since the Committee last sat, I am prepared to accept the amendment.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 11 and 12 passed.

Clause 13—"Speed of heavy vehicles."

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: In my speech on the second reading and somewhat indirectly early is the Committee stages I drew attention to this clause. I consider that the alteration of the definition "commercial vehicles" will affect the definition of that term in legislation at present in another place. I understand that to be so, but am subject to correction on any confirmed information to the contrary. I have read in the press of a Bill regarding motor vehicles and it would appear that the alteration of this definition may affect many vehicles by bringing them under the clause dealing with commercial motor vehicles.

Further, paragraph (*b*) exempts motor buses from this definition. The Minister has referred to the construction and speed of heavy vehicles, with particular reference to front axle loading. I am concerned about safety. As I have been reminded, motor buses do have to undergo tests for roadworthiness from time to time, but, if the Government says that it is reducing the front axle loading because of the safety factor, I suggest that we make ourselves more informed of public reaction on the safety angle. It is perfectly obvious to me that one motor vehicle that should be safe is the passenger bus.

These buses will not only have a heavier axle loading than commercial vehicles of another type used for the cartage of goods but I understand that, in addition, they are to be exempted by special permit from the necessity to conform to the speed limits that would otherwise apply to the overall weight of such vehicles. If that is the case, I cannot agree to the clause as it stands. Naturally, I should like to have further enlightenment and hear not only the Minister but also other honourable members on the matter.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I understand that Sir Norman has in mind the inclusion of motor buses or passenger buses in the definition of commercial vehicles. This raises certain complications, of which I am sure the honourable member is well aware. He has been responsible previously for the administration of this Act and I am sure he knows why the passenger buses have been excluded from the definition. If the honourable member is so concerned, it is remarkable that nothing has been done before. Reference has been made to a Bill in another place but I have not examined the ramifications of any Bill that is before another place or is to be debated there and, obviously, I cannot say whether this particular clause will affect that legislation.

However, if the honourable member considers that motor omnibuses should be brought within the definition clause of the Road Traffic Act, I remind him that this involves many ramifications. For instance, we have the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act, under which taxation is levied on commercial vehicles. As a commercial vehicle, a road passenger bus would come within the category for that taxation. Is that the intention? I know that a contribution is made in respect of Municipal Tramways Trust buses because of wear and tear on the roads. I have given the reasons for this clause previously, but shall repeat them, as follows:

Heavy-earth moving, road and building construction equipment, mobile cranes, etc., are becoming bigger and faster and are in ever-increasing numbers on the road. Most of them are far in excess of the 3-ton minimum requirement under section 53 of the principal Act but, because they cannot be brought within the definition of "commercial motor vehicle", no action can be taken to enforce the speed limits under this section. Large mobile cranes with long dangerous booms ofter travel at dangerous

speeds having regard to the size, weight and stopping power of these vehicles. They also cause undue damage to the roadways.

I think we all admit that. It is desired to bring these vehicles within the definition so that they can be regulated in regard to speed and various other matters under the Road Traffic Act. I hope that this clause will be carried as it stands so that controls will be extended to the vehicles I have mentioned. Many other aspects are causing much concern to the Road Traffic Board and the department I have the honour of administering. It is desired to examine many clauses in the principal Act and there will be a complete examination with a view to eliminating many practices that are occurring at present. Of course, honourable members will appreciate that this will take some time to do but the matter that Sir Norman Jude has mentioned will be examined when the review takes place.

I remind the Committee that these buses must be inspected and they must comply with safety requirements. We know that a failure of brakes may occur without any prior warning, and this could cause a dangerous situation. That is one reason why passenger buses must be inspected and a certificate of roadworthiness issued before they can continue to operate. I consider that there are adequate safeguards at the moment and, for the reasons I have given, ask honourable members to pass this clause as printed.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I would like the Minister to clarify the definition of a motor vehicle constructed or adapted solely or mainly to carry goods, and the definition of a motor vehicle of the type commonly called a utility. The section that is being amended says that where the aggregate weight of the vehicle and every trailer drawn thereby exceeds three tons and does not exceed seven tons the speed limit shall be 35 miles an hour. I take it that a utility with a trailer attached having a total weight of three tons would be limited to a speed of 30 miles an hour. By adding the proposed words a tractor would be included but not an omnibus. I wonder whether it would be clearer to have a definition of specific vehicles. The Minister mentioned large mobile cranes that, at times, move at frightening speeds. I think the position should be more clearly defined. It should not be dealt with in an obscure part of the Act.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: I wish to return to the matter of buses. I have in mind the expansive and cumbersome passenger buses that travel on our major roads under special permits. They do not come under the definition of ordinary commercial vehicles. If the clause is left as it is it would permit heavy passenger buses with an exemption, carrying 50 or more passengers, to travel at any speed within the statutory limits for ordinary vehicles. That means that within city areas the buses would be limited to 35 miles an hour, but outside city limits they could go as fast as they liked. This appears to be a tremendous discrimination. We should be concerned with the safety factor far more than we are. Commercial vehicles are restricted, yet a passenger bus is not restricted on our outer roads so long as it does not become a commercial vehicle. That is surely a discrimination against a commercial vehicle.

From the data I have it seems that, with the exception of New South Wales, South Australia has the most restrictive limits on commercial vehicles of any State. I have given the Minister a copy of the statement showing the speed limits permitted in the various States. We should not allow passenger buses to travel outside the metropolitan area at any speed, even 60 or 70 miles an hour. Surely, as a Committee, we should ask the Minister, while the Bill is before us to raise the general speed limit of commercial vehicles to a reasonable standard. We should make it 45 miles an hour, having regard to the general improvement in road surfaces, the vehicles themselves, and the safety provisions. I appreciate the reply of the Minister that this matter involves many considerations. However, I would like the Minister to consider the permit bus that is over-wide and over-heavy on the front axle. I assure the Committee that I shall take up the matter more strongly when we deal with axle loadings. The Minister will not be able to convince anybody that a passenger bus should have this heavy weight on the front axle but not the commercial vehicle. All the clauses are supposed to deal with the safety factor.

I accept the explanation of the Minister that the clause is intended to deal with a special type of vehicle. Has consideration been given to the effect of exempting permit buses? We seem to be referring everything to the board or the Minister for decision, when such minor matters could well be dealt with by statute.

The Hon. L. R. HART: For some time I have considered that the speed limits for commercial vehicles are unrealistic, considering braking power and the power steering of modern vehicles. Under the Act three-ton vehicles must

travel at no more than 30 miles an hour through a municipality or a township. Such a vehicle could be loaded excessively over the front axle. We propose to reduce the permissible load on the front axle with a view to reducing the accident proneness of a vehicle, and if that is so we should increase the speed limit. I agree with the Hon. Mr. Story that the speed limits in relation to section 53 should be investigated. The Minister said that these matters were to be looked at by the investigating committee. The clause places a restriction on certain commercial vehicles, and I do not know that I am prepared to support it.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I am not sure that a speed limit of 30 miles an hour in built-up areas is realistic. Occasionally I drive a 15-year-old truck which, like other trucks of that age, is geared down to such an extent that it can travel at this speed without any strain on it. However, sometimes I drive a modern truck that has a higher cruising speed and a better braking system. This is a safer vehicle, and it would be quite safe to drive it five miles an hour faster. This would mean less strain on the driver and the vehicle. These restrictions are probably out of date. I do not want speeds to be increased beyond safe limits, but I think they should be increased so that drivers can observe them without there being any undue strain on vehicles.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: I think the Hon. Mr. Story has a good point about the drafting of this clause. Section 53 contains prohibitions against driving a commercial motor vehicle at more than 30 miles an hour if the aggregate weight of the vehicle exceeds three tons. It is intended by this clause to entrap motor vehicles that are outside the definition of "commercial motor vehicle" in the Act. It seems to me, however, that the Bill does no more than repeat what the Act already says. I think it would be better to amend section 53 (4) so that it would read "In this section 'commercial motor vehicle' includes a mobile crane, a tractor" and whatever other vehicles the Minister has in mind "but does not include an omnibus". I think the Minister might well consider Mr. Story's point.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: All the opposition to this clause has been in relation to the speed limits, but that is defined in the Act; this Bill does not amend the existing speed limits of commercial vehicles.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: I draw your attention to the marginal note, which is "Speed of heavy vehicles".

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I know that. It is remarkable that honourable members compare speeds in this State with those in other States, yet in relation to another matter they disregard the comparison with other States and want to make comparisons with oversea countries! I do not intend to discuss the speed limits defined in the principal Act, as they are receiving attention; I will deal only with the interpretation of "commercial motor vehicle." The Hon. Mr. Story said it would be better to name the vehicles we had in mind. Perhaps that is so, but these matters have been examined by the Road Traffic Board, which considers that the clause is adequate.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: But the board is not always right, is it?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: No, and neither are honourable members. I do not mind if the Act is amended to read "In this section 'commercial motor vehicle' includes heavy earth-moving equipment, road and building construction equipment and mobile cranes"; if that is what honourable members desire, it is for them to determine. However, I think the clause as it stands is adequate, and I ask honourable members to accept it.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I think the wording the Minister has used is sufficient to get a conviction, but I want to pass laws so that people will understand them and not just so as to get convictions. The Minister has been fair and I think is prepared to accept an amendment. However, we cannot take sheets of *Hansard* before courts to show what is meant; these things must be written into an Act. That is why I wanted to draw the Minister's attention to it. He agreed it would take a little time to draft an amendment in layman's language. I do not know whether or not the Minister would like to deal with another clause until an amendment could be drafted. I should be prepared to move along the lines that the Minister has suggested. I leave it to him to decide the best way of doing it.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: At this stage I am inclined to side with the Minister in his explanation of the reason for using the phraseology "commercial motor vehicle". I disagree with the explanation of the Hon. Mr. Story and the Hon. Mr. Potter that the worry is that, if the name of one heavy type of motor vehicle is not included in this definition, the intent of the amendment is lost. I agree with the Hon. Mr. Story when he says that, when a judge interprets a definition, it must be clear, but in these days there are commercial vehicles, weighing over three tons, of various names,

some of which could well be missed here. Therefore, the broader term "commercial motor vehicle" should be adequate. The definition of "commercial motor vehicle" in the principal Act is:

(*a*) a motor vehicle constructed or adapted solely or mainly for the carriage of goods; or

(*b*) a motor vehicle of the type commonly called a utility.

That is fairly broad. Then section 53 (4) states:

In this section "commercial motor vehicle" includes a tractor.

Although there is a problem about buses, that is another argument. At this moment, I think the broad interpretation is wiser than using specific names. If we start at the beginning of the alphabet and go right through dealing with the various names of vehicles, we can still omit some.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: I am prepared to accept the Minister's explanation about the clause as printed, regarding unusual types of motor vehicle. I am a little uncertain about a specific amendment to cover buses and their axle loadings. Unfortunately for the Minister, the marginal note refers to the speed of heavy vehicles. Section 53 is the guiding provision in this clause. That section refers to prohibitory speeds for motor vehicles. Will the Minister, in the circumstances, postpone consideration of clause 13 until after the reconsideration of clause 8 to permit me to have an amendment drawn to vary the speed limits of certain commercial vehicles, in addition to the present wording of the clause, as I understand that this is the correct place to insert such a provision?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I am not prepared to give any assurance about such an amendment. This matter deserves investigation; it cannot be examined in five minutes. This Bill can be passed here tonight, tomorrow or on Thursday. How we can hold an investigation into the ramifications of these things in a few hours I do not know. I am not prepared at this stage to do it. I have already stated that this matter is being considered. If it is agreed that this State should now do something about extending the speed limits for commercial vehicles, then, in the future, amending legislation can be introduced to deal with it. In the matter of speed limits, the difference between this State and other States is five miles an hour. In fact, in one instance, the speed limit here is higher than it is in the other States. How many commercial vehicles observe their speed limits? How many prosecutions have there been for travelling at excessive speeds? We get regular reports about prosecutions under this Act. We know from the Police Commissioner how many prosecutions there are for excessive speeds by commercial vehicles that do not observe the prescribed limits. I am not prepared to defer this clause so that an amendment can be drawn.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: I have the right to move to recommit the Bill at the end of our present consideration of it and move an amendment to the clause. I do not intend to do that, but I should like an assurance from the Minister that, if a recommendation is made that the speed limits of certain motor vehicles be altered, he will introduce legislation so that it will be done by statute and not by regulation.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I am quite prepared to do that at any time.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: There have been many skirmishes around the problem of omnibuses and the speeds at which they travel. I do not know of any provision in the Act that omnibuses must observe certain speed limits. In fact, the belief that there are no speed limits for omnibuses is fairly general. I have noticed motor buses full of passengers travelling on country roads at speeds well in excess of 60 miles an hour. They are a nuisance in such circumstances, particularly if the sealed highway is narrow. I ask the Minister whether, if there are no speed limits for buses, he will consider the matter.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: In these days, good buses, such as those operated by Greyhound, should not be restricted to the same speed as commercial motor vehicles. These buses are operated on schedules and rarely have I heard of a passenger bus being involved in an accident on level terrain. Of course, something can go wrong occasionally in hilly country.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I agree entirely with what the Minister said in regard to this particular clause. This is one of the few occasions where an amendment to the Road Traffic Act does exactly what the Minister said in his second reading explanation that it would do. The Minister said clearly that the idea of this clause was to bring into the net of speed limits certain vehicles that at present may exceed the speed limit without risk of penalty. He said that this provision includes such vehicles as large mobile cranes with long dangerous booms that often travel at dangerous speeds, having regard to their size, and that also cause undue damage to roadways.

Section 5 of the principal Act defines a commercial motor vehicle and this amendment inserts in section 53 "a motor vehicle the weight of which exceeds three tons". A tractor is still included in the definition in section 5. I think that when the word "motor vehicle" is used in section 53, it includes all tractors under a weight of three tons. However, we still have mobile cranes that are under three tons in weight exempt from the speed limit. Notwithstanding this amendment, a mobile crane with a long boom can exceed the speed limit if it does not exceed three tons in weight.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: No.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: The Minister will see that it refers to a motor vehicle that exceeds three tons in weight. A mobile crane comes under the definition of "motor vehicle" and, if it is under three tons, it can exceed the speed limit. However, a tractor, which is a much safer vehicle than a mobile crane, is caught in the dragnet and cannot exceed a certain speed. That is already in the Act.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: This seems to get down to a matter of drafting. There does not seem to be any real objection to the principle and, to test the feeling, I move:

In paragraph (*a*) to strike out "passage" and insert "words" and strike out "a motor vehicle the weight of which exceeds three tons and" and insert "heavy earthmoving equipment, road and building construction equipment, mobile cranes and".

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: As I understand the position, all these definitions in the Act relate to motor-propelled vehicles. However, much heavy earthmoving equipment is not motor-propelled. I do not understand whether this amendment is adequate direction on the matter. We have not had the amendment on our files and have not had time to study it. Unless it is in some way related to the definition of motor vehicle, heavy earthmoving equipment can mean a roller, or many other things.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: The words were taken directly from the document the Minister has in front of him. I do not know whether the word "equipment" is intended to mean "vehicle" or whether it is intended to be exactly what it says, namely, equipment. The Minister may be able to explain this. In any case, we could again urge on him that he postpone consideration of this clause to enable the drafting to be further altered if there is any difficulty.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: If these other vehicles are brought into the definition of "motor vehicle", a category of commercial motor vehicles in clause 53 will be brought in. If we are consistent about the definition of "commercial motor vehicle" and put a tractor in the same category, surely we bring in these types of vehicles. I would have thought that a mobile crane and a heavy earthmoving vehicle came into that category. I can see the problem that the Minister has in drafting this provision, but it is rather airy fairy. Mr. DeGaris argued that it should be included, and I thought he was on my side, but apparently he supported the Minister.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: As far as I am concerned, I know where I am going. I ask leave to have further discussion on this clause adjourned and that it be taken into consideration after clause 8.

The CHAIRMAN: Unfortunately, the position is that we have an amendment before the Chair at the moment. It will first be necessary for the Hon. Mr. Potter to withdraw his amendment.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Leave granted; amendment withdrawn.

Further consideration of clause 13 deferred until after consideration of clause 8.

Clause 14—"Right of way at intersections and junctions."

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Comments have been made on the present form of this clause with stress on the word "approaching", and there appears to be doubt as to how far away a motorist would be when "approaching". I have given the matter some thought and I believe this clause should again be amended in accordance with the words of the National Code as they relate to intersections. I move:

In paragraph (a) to strike out "(a) by inserting after the word "approaching" where it first occurs in subsection (1) thereof the words "or in";" and insert

"(a) by striking out subsection (1) thereof and inserting in lieu thereof the following subsection:

(1) Subject to section 64 of this Act when a vehicle has entered or is approaching an intersection from a carriageway and there is a danger of a collision with a vehicle which has entered or is approaching the intersection from another carriageway the driver who has the other vehicle on his right shall give way to the driver of that other vehicle."

I am of the opinion that this amendment clarifies the position.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: Honourable members will remember that I spoke at length on this matter in the second reading debate and I then suggested that the words

"or in" were included only in one part in relation to "approaching" and might well be included in the other part because I thought in that way it would be a more sensible line of interpretation. I think this amendment is a great improvement on what was in the Bill originally and also on my suggestion. I am happy with this verbiage and I am interested to hear that it comes from the National Code. I remember that Mr. Justice Angas Parsons years ago said that this Act was directed to motorists and had to be interpreted with that in mind. I think the verbiage should be such as to have that in mind and I think this amendment achieves that. It seems clear to me, and I think some of the interpretations that I forecast during the second reading debate may be averted by the adoption of this amendment. I support the amendment.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: In section 5 of the principal Act the definition of "carriageway" reads:

"carriageway" means that portion of a road ordinarily used for the passage of vehicular traffic. If a road has two or more portions ordinarily used for such traffic and separated by a dividing strip or strips, each such portion shall be a separate carriageway.

I understand that in the courts of law there have been differences of opinion on how to give way to the man on the right between two separate carriageways. I would presume that a man would give right of way to both carriageways on his right if that occasion occurred, but I would like clarification on the point. I do not object to the amendment, but I hope it will cover the problems that have occurred in the past, particularly that of traffic crossing the Port Road where there are two separate carriageways.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: I thank the Minister for his consideration of this clause because I was not happy with the proposed amendment as I considered that there were several questions unanswered on which I required more information. Looking at the clause in detail, and in view of what the Minister has said, I would like to know why this amendment is necessary and what it does to clarify a situation not already clarified by the existing clause. The Minister mentioned in a previous explanation the subject of traffic turning to the right, but that is covered in section 72 of the Act and it does not seem to apply here. Without a clear explanation as to the purpose of this amendment I would not be prepared to support it.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: After having had a quick look at the amendment, I think I can support it. I intended to vote against the clause as printed, as I thought it would lead to more confusion than the present section does. The Hon. Mr. Geddes has raised an important point in that section 63 of the principal Act does not use the word "carriageway" yet the Minister's amendment uses that word. If one looks at the definition of "carriageway" one sees that this can lead to complications. The amendment mentions both parts of a divided highway. At present a vehicle going from one side of a divided carriageway to another must stand until the roadway is clear, but if the amendment is passed I believe right of way would have to be given to vehicles on the right coming through the divided carriageway. Although the amendment has overcome my original objections to the clause, I should like the point raised by Mr. Geddes to be clarified.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I was concerned about the clause as printed and thought I would have to vote against it. However, the Minister's amendment, which is said to be in line with the national code, has largely overcome my objection, but I, too, should like to have further clarification on what constitutes a carriageway. Subject to this, I shall support the amendment and the clause as amended.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: A carriageway is a portion of a road used by vehicles, as is understood by everyone. Section 63 deals primarily with intersections and junctions, and the divided highways mentioned have crossovers governed by "give way" signs.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: Not all are; many along Anzac Highway are not.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Then the ordinary rule of giving way to the right must be followed.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: There would not be "give way" signs there, as they are not intersections.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: These signs are erected along the Port Road and the Main North Road. I thought I had explained these matters adequately in my second reading explanation and in answering objections raised earlier by honourable members. The Hon. Mr. Geddes spoke about crossovers, but they are not relevant to this clause. My amendment will leave nobody in doubt about the position.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 15—"Signalling device to be switched off after turn completed."

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: During the second reading debate I said that, as it was easy for these devices to remain operating after a turn that was less than a right-angle turn had been completed and for the driver to be unaware of this for some distance, the penalty was high. Sir Arthur Rymill said by interjection that the danger was in relation to traffic coming in the opposite direction. That eased my objection somewhat, but I still think the penalty is severe. The penalty should be more in keeping with the other penalties of £25 referred to in the principal Act—walking without care and attention, walking on the right-hand side of the road, the duty of pedestrians at level crossings, and so on. It is only the more serious breaches that attract a £50 fine. There are fines of £25 in connection with the miscellaneous duties of road users: for instance, the opening of a car door so as to cause danger. That often happens. People pull up and get out on the right-hand side, thus causing danger to other traffic. Therefore, I move:

To strike out "Fifty" and insert "Twenty-five".

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 16 to 18 passed.

Clause 19—"Angle parking forbidden in any area unless board approves."

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: I have recently put on honourable members' files a proposed amendment to this clause. They need have no qualms about its verbiage because it follows exactly, except that it is a provision for this clause instead of for the other clause, the amendment moved by the Minister to clause 7. There is an identical amendment giving a right of appeal from the board's decision to a council in respect of one-way carriageways, whereas in this case it is in respect of vehicles standing at an angle on roads. Both clauses are in the same category at present, in that every other decision of the Road Traffic Board is subject to appeal but decisions in respect of these two clauses are not. I regret that I omitted to discuss this amendment with the Minister and the Parliamentary Draftsman when we were considering this matter after I had raised the point. The amendment that I propose to move is designed to make the Minister a court of appeal against any decision of the Road Traffic Board under this clause, just as he is a court of appeal under other provisions of the principal Act; and, as is the case under the amendments to clauses 7 and 8, where he is the appeal authority. My amendment makes the whole matter consistent, in as much as it gives a right of appeal to the Minister from a decision of the board in every instance instead of every instance except one. I move:

After "therefor." to insert the following new subsections:

(2) Where the board refuses to approve of a council authorizing a vehicle to stand at an angle on any road the board shall if requested by the council which sought the approval state its reasons for its decision.

(3) The said council may within 28 days after receipt of the board's reasons apply to the board to review its decision. Upon such a request the board—

(*a*) shall give the council an opportunity of submitting information and arguments; and

(*b*) may obtain further relevant information; and

(*c*) shall reconsider its previous decision; and

(*d*) shall report to the Minister who may affirm or reverse that decision.

(4) Before affirming or reversing a decision of the board under this section, the Minister shall give the board and the council an opportunity of making representations to him thereon.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I support this amendment. I have recently been approached by representatives of local government to request that an opportunity for appeal be inserted in the Bill in this way. I intended to proceed along those lines but had not time to speak to the Parliamentary Draftsman about it because of short notice. I thank Sir Arthur Rymill for moving his amendment along exactly the lines I had in mind, and exactly as the Minister himself moved in respect of clauses 7 and 8. It will enable a council to appeal to the Minister and get a reconsideration of the matter if angle parking is refused by the board. I am aware of the reasons for this clause and am in sympathy with the Minister in his introducing it. I am also aware that on occasions local government has not co-operated in this matter as it should have done. Nevertheless, I, too, believe that the right of appeal should be there.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: This amendment in part covers the objection I raised on the second reading to the fact that so many powers are being taken away from councils and passed into the hands of a central authority. The amendment gives councils the right of appeal to the Minister. I should have preferred the proviso to section 82 to remain as it was, except that the words "or resolution" be struck out, which would then mean

that, if a council provided for angle parking, it would have to be done by by-law, which would then go through the usual procedure and come before the Subordinate Legislative Committee. It would then be laid on the table of this Chamber. If the words "or resolution" were deleted from section 82 of the principal Act—

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: We are dealing not with section 82 but with section 82 (*a*).

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: This has reference to the proviso in section 82. Although the amendment moved by Sir Arthur Rymill is better than the original proposal, it does not cover my objection completely. If that amendment is not carried, I shall move a further amendment that the words "or resolution" be struck out.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: The Bill adds a new section 82 (*a*) to the principal Act. During the second reading debate objections were raised because there was no right of appeal by a council against a board decision, and Sir Arthur Rymill rightly has an amendment on file to meet the difficulty. Attention should be given to the Hon. Mr. Gilfillan's suggestion. The new section 82 (*a*) and Sir Arthur Rymill's amendment to it create a rather lengthy new section, but the objection is still there. We will still be removing from the councils power to make by-laws which can be objected to, and which must come before Parliament through the Subordinate Legislation Committee.

Sir Arthur Rymill's amendment makes a slight improvement, but there can be no denying that powers to make by-laws are being taken from councils. It is better to have Parliament decide these matters than have the Minister or a board decide them. Therefore, I ask members to seriously consider the suggestion put forward by the Hon. Mr. Gilfillan.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I am amazed at the arguments advanced by the Hon. Mr. Gilfillan and the Hon. Mr. DeGaris, especially when they say that there is an attempt to take power from councils. Both honourable members are prepared to take power from the councils by not allowing them, at properly constituted meetings, to carry resolutions dealing with angle parking.

The Hon. G. J. Gilfillan: Proposed section 82 (*a*) does that.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: It appears in section 82, and that is the section the honourable member is complaining about. Power is given to councils to do certain things by resolution. The honourable member suggests that we take out the words "or resolution". I am easy about the matter. If honourable members want to take powers away, that is their prerogative, but I certainly will not agree to any such amendment.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: We are taking power away from Parliament, too.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Nobody is interfering with the word "regulation". Honourable members want to take out the words "or resolution". If those words are taken out, councils will no longer have power to decide this matter by way of resolution. However, if members want to do that we cannot prevent them, because there are only four Government members in the Chamber. To be logical, I should let honourable members take the responsibility if their amendment is carried. However, I am pointing out what they are attempting to do.

In relation to the amendment moved by Sir Arthur Rymill, that is in conformity with what we have done in other sections, but the need for the clause before us is the result of actions by a council creating dangerous situations. I have had representations, rather remarkably, from a council on angle parking, although the council has full jurisdiction on eliminating angle parking. The council refused to do that but pointed out to me the danger. When I explained that the answer was in the council's hands and that if I had my way there would not be any angle parking in the particular street, I was told that I was looking at these things as an outsider. I said that if the council did the right thing it would rank cars in the street and not allow angle parking at all. These things cause a serious position on a road.

Allow me to repeat the reasons why this amendment to the principal Act is desired. They are, as I said in my second reading explanation:

The board considers that a council should be required to obtain the board's approval before it permits angle parking in its area. Police records show that accidents have markedly increased where parallel parking has been changed to angle parking or centre of the road parking has been introduced. An example is the comparison of accident rates between Norwood Parade and Unley Road. Until recently angle parking was permitted in the former street, whilst parallel parking only was allowed in the latter. Norwood Parade, which is much wider than Unley Road and carries less traffic, has three times the accident rate of Unley Road. The cost to the community is too great to allow councils to experiment with angle parking merely for the purpose of storing more vehicles on roadways primarily constructed for travel. The board should be

able to control angle parking only where it is safe to do so. All parking in New South Wales is controlled by the State and is administered by an inter-departmental committee (Parking Advisory Committee), comprising representatives of the police, Main Roads Department, Department of Motor Transport, etc. In Victoria, angle parking comes under the jurisdiction of the Victorian Traffic Commission.

It has been submitted that the power given to the Road Traffic Board is too great and that many of the decisions emanate from the Secretary to the board. Surely none of us will accept that the board maintains its position in that way. Surely we accept the membership of the board, which includes the Police Commissioner, and that serious consideration is always given before decisions are made. The members are responsible officers, and surely honourable members have enough faith to know that the board does not act capriciously.

I think Sir Lyell McEwin on one occasion mentioned the matter of an appeal to the Minister and voiced the opinion that he considered the Minister had enough to do without being overloaded with appeals, but here is an instance where it is suggested that there should be the right of appeal. If the Committee considers that there should be the right of appeal it has the opportunity to support Sir Arthur Rymill's amendment for an appeal to the Minister. However, I believe all members have sufficient confidence in the board and its ability to give full consideration to all aspects of a matter before saying "Yes" or "No". I ask them to support the Bill in its present form.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: In view of the pronounced policy of the Government to abolish all boards, what assurance can the Minister give that we will continue to have a Road Traffic Board? If it should be necessary to amend this legislation at a later date because of that policy, will the Minister take over all the powers of the Legislature? Parliament has always insisted that it should have the power of control through its Subordinate Legislation Committee taking evidence on such matters. I am prepared to support the Minister regarding temporary signs but his amendment removes Parliament's powers. I cannot balance Government policy on the abolition of boards with the comments of the Minister that in this case there should be an exception. I oppose the amendment.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: I have listened with interest to the comments of honourable members and I agree with some of the points that have been made. However, I cannot understand the Minister when he says that what we suggest will take power from councils, whereas the whole amendment does just that. It will do that unless the councils can obtain prior approval from the Road Traffic Board. The board does a good job, but some councils are frustrated when they attempt to do something in the interests of safety in their districts and attempt to get information from the Road Traffic Board. I speak particularly for distant areas and not for those councils in the metropolitan area. The best way to deal with this matter is to allow regulations and by-laws to go through the usual channels, and when a by-law has been framed the Road Traffic Board and the council concerned could give evidence if they wished to do so. That would be the fairest method, and for that reason I do not intend to vote either for the amendment or for the clause.

The Committee divided on the amendment:

Ayes (7).—The Hons. Jessie Cooper, M. B. Dawkins, Sir Lyell McEwin, F. J. Potter, C. D. Rowe, Sir Arthur Rymill (teller), and C. R. Story.

Noes (11).—The Hons. D. H. L. Banfield, S. C. Bevan (teller), R. C. DeGaris, R. A. Geddes, G. J. Gilfillan, L. R. Hart, Sir Norman Jude, H. K. Kemp, A. F. Kneebone, C. C. D. Octoman, and A. J. Shard.

Majority of 4 for the Noes.

Amendment thus negatived.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: It seems to me that the Government has been entirely inconsistent on this Bill. It has accepted amendments to clauses 7 and 8 but, for some reason best known to itself (possibly because on this occasion I did not allow the Minister to move the amendment but had the temerity to move it myself), it has rejected this amendment. This leaves me no alternative but to vote against the whole clause.

The Committee divided on the clause:

Ayes (6).—The Hons. D. H. L. Banfield, S. C. Bevan (teller), Sir Norman Jude, A. F. Kneebone, A. J. Shard, and C. R. Story.

Noes (12).—The Hons. Jessie Cooper, M. B. Dawkins, R. C. DeGaris, R. A. Geddes, G. J. Gilfillan, L. R. Hart, H. K. Kemp, Sir Lyell McEwin, C. C. D. Octoman, F. J. Potter, C. D. Rowe, and Sir Arthur Rymill (teller).

Majority of 6 for the Noes.

Clause thus negatived.

[*Sitting suspended from* 6.3 *to* 7.45 *p.m.*]

Clauses 20 to 24 passed.

Clause 25—"Width of vehicles."

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I move:

After "amended" to insert "(a)".

In his second reading explanation, the Minister said that many of the matters contained in the Bill concerned safety and my amendment is concerned with the safety of the movement of goods on large vehicles. There have been many prosecutions on the ground that the distance between large mirrors on semi-trailers has been more than 8ft. 9in. These mirrors are of a particular type, designed to give the driver a complete view of either side of his load and, having regard to the accidents that have occurred recently in the Adelaide Hills as a result of loads shifting, it is in the interests of safety that a driver should have such a view.

It is interesting to note that, in terms of section 141 of the principal Act, a mirror can extend on the driver's side to 8ft. 7in. and, on the left-hand side of the vehicle, it can extend 2in., and this is within the concept of that section of the principal Act. When a large tarpaulin is used on a vehicle, air pressure causes this tarpaulin to balloon and, if a mirror is not extended to at least 8ft. 6in. on the driver's side, adequate vision cannot be obtained by the driver. My amendment provides that, if the distance between the mirrors exceeds 9ft., the mirror or device shall be at least 5ft. above the level of the ground. I think the Minister will see that it is designed in the interests of safety of transport on our roads.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I have an amendment on the file dealing with this clause and my amendment comes before the amendment that the honourable member is attempting to move at the present time.

The Hon. Jessie Cooper: It is not on the file.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: The Hon. Mrs. Cooper has an amendment to this clause and my amendment deals with suggestions that have been made. I do not know whether the honourable member is desirous of moving her amendment or whether my amendment would be acceptable to her. The Hon. Mrs. Cooper said that the present phraseology could be misinterpreted, and I think my amendment will clear up the position. I have no information at the moment whether Mrs. Cooper wishes to go on with her further amendment, but if she does so desire I am willing to give her preference. However, if she does not so desire, I will move my amendment.

The Hon. Mr. DeGaris's amendment carried.

The CHAIRMAN: The Hon. Mrs. Cooper's amendment must be disposed of before the insertion of the new subclause.

The Hon. JESSIE COOPER: Since putting the amendment on members' files I have had consultations with the Assistant Parliamentary Draftsman and he indicated that the Minister had a further amendment. If we could have a copy of that amendment and read the exact wording of it I believe it would be more satisfactory than my amendment, which I would be prepared to withdraw. However, as we do not have the Minister's amendment I am not disposed to withdraw my amendment at this stage. This is a small matter, but when drafting such legislation I believe it is best to be precise. In this clause the subclause states:

The following vehicles may be driven on a road between half an hour before sunrise and half an hour after sunset.

I said that this could be interpreted to mean in the hours of darkness as well as in daylight hours; between point A and point B, which is the same as saying between point B and point A. To carry that argument further, if a rule was made that a fly could crawl from the figure 2 to the figure 6 on a clock it could well mean that it could go from the figure 6 to the figure 2. That is, clockwise or anti-clockwise, and that is my point. My amendment is a simple one, being the insertion of the word "until" before "half an hour after sunset". I move accordingly.

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: The amendment should have "from" instead of "between". This is a grammatical matter.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I was under the impression that the amendment I desired to move had been distributed to members. I want to move the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: I think that the Hon. Mrs. Cooper is in order in proceeding with her amendment if she so desires.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I submit my amendment and I think that it is better than that offered by Mrs. Cooper. My amendment is as follows:

To strike out the words "may be driven on a road between half an hour before sunrise and" and insert in lieu thereof the words "shall not be driven on a road except from half an hour before sunrise and until half an hour after sunset".

In my opinion that clarifies the position. The word "shall" is used instead of the permissible "may".

The CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Cooper's amendment appears to be the same as the Minister's proposed amendment.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I submit that my amendment is satisfactory and that the phraseology is better. I seek leave to move my amendment because it clarifies the position.

The Hon. JESSIE COOPER: I repeat my earlier comment, that if members had been acquainted with the amendment proposed by the Minister we would have understood the position. I now understand what the Minister seeks. From what I heard of his amendment I consider it is better than mine. It covers the ground and it overcomes the grammatical error that upset Mr. Kemp. I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Leave granted; amendment withdrawn.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I move:

To strike out the words "may be driven on a road between half an hour before sunrise and" and insert in lieu thereof the words "shall not be driven on a road except from half an hour before sunrise and until half an hour after sunset".

It has been suggested that it is not necessary to have "and" in the amendment, but I think it is.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: The words "shall not" are being used instead of "may be". I am not sure what changing to the negative does—perhaps this means that these vehicles cannot go on the road at all.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: They shall not be driven except at certain times.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I know that, but I should like to have the consideration of this clause deferred until the other clauses are considered.

The CHAIRMAN: Unfortunately, that cannot be done. The only way to do it is to have the Bill recommitted.

Amendment carried.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I have now had a look at the amendment just carried and it seems satisfactory. I move to insert the following new subclause:

(*b*) by striking out the passage "eight feet nine inches" in subparagraph (ii) of paragraph (*b*) of subsection (4) thereof and inserting in lieu thereof the passage "nine feet" and by inserting at the end of the said subparagraph the following passage:—"and that mirror or device is five feet or more above the level of the ground."

The Hon. L. R. HART: I support the amendment. I think the 9ft. provision is reasonable, but it seems to me that a large mirror may cause a reflection that will distract the attention of other drivers.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: Do you mean an overtaking vehicle and not an approaching vehicle?

The Hon. L. R. HART: Yes. Can the Minister say whether there is any legislation governing the size of mirrors?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I do not know.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 27—"Maximum axle weight."

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I move:

To strike out paragraph (*a*) and to insert the following new paragraph (*a*):

"(*a*) by inserting after the word 'weight' in subsection (2) thereof the passage—

'shall be distributed so that—

(*a*) the weight on the front axle of a vehicle other than a trailer shall not exceed six and a half tons unless otherwise approved by the board; and

(*b*) the weight on any other axle shall not exceed eight tons'; and"

In his second reading explanation the Minister said:

Clause 27 amends section 146 of the principal Act. The limit has been suggested by the Australian Motor Vehicles Standards Committee and has been adopted by all other States. The amendment will limit the load which may be varied on the front axle of a vehicle to 10,000 lb., approximately 4½ tons. Loads in excess of this amount would make the vehicle difficult to steer and could also cause damage to road pavements.

Later, another inconsistency was revealed. The Minister is not correct when he states that all other States have to conform to this. There is no uniformity in Australia about front axles. I think the Minister said, in closing the second reading debate, that he still thought there was uniformity in the other States. That is not so, according to the *Australian Automotive Year Book* for 1965, which is recognized throughout the Commonwealth.

I join issue, too, with the Minister on tyres. We have in this State always dealt with axles, not tyres. The Minister has taken a fragment of another Act and tried to apply it to the front axles of South Australian vehicles. It will not work, because in attempting to bring 5,000 lb. over a tyre we become completely inconsistent. If we are to talk about tyres, we have to go the whole hog and talk about the width, ply and pressure of tyres. We have not done this but have merely taken a fragment from the code and tried to apply it to our own Act. However, that does not work, because we would have 5,000 lb. over each of the two front wheel tyres, which would mean 4½ tons on the front axle. Our present permissible limit over our axles is 8 tons over

pneumatic tyres. If we apply what the Minister is suggesting and come back to single tyres over our rear axles, it will mean that the weight over one rear axle will be reduced to 4½ tons, as against the permissible 8 tons at present. If we put two bogies on, we are allowed to carry 16 tons under the present law. The Minister says that this is in the cause of safety and of not tearing up our roads. With the new super single truck tyres that are available and used extensively in some places, being infinitely better on a wide low-pressure tyre than two narrow duals, we would gravely penalize a person over the rear axles of a truck. Some sturdy trailers have been constructed in this State. In fact, we are producing trailers for other States. They have big solid tyres. At present, we are allowed to carry 8 tons over each axle, front and rear, which allows a vehicle to carry a maximum of 16 tons. If we apply this 5,000 lb. limit per tyre, we reduce it to 9 tons maximum, 4½ tons over the front and 4½ tons over the rear, which is ludicrous. It is also most uneconomical, because these trailers are used in the wheat, grape and other industries. These trailers are specially constructed for this purpose.

I do not intend to be stupid and say that some people have not overloaded their front axles, for I am sure they have. We are as interested as the Minister is in road safety but suddenly to drop from 8 tons to 4½ tons in respect of a large industry that employs many people, and in which many people are self-employed, is not right. These vehicles are geared up with the object of carrying 8 tons over the front axle and perhaps 16 tons over the two axles. If we suddenly drop from 8 to 4½ tons it is too drastic a reduction, particularly as many of the vehicles are specially designed forward-control trucks, where the cabin is round-nosed and the engine is inside the cabin, the wheels being directly under the driver and the weight distribution poised over the truck. If we reduce the limit to 4½ tons, the load will be thrown further back on the truck and the nose of the truck will start to stick up in the air. Light steering is as dangerous as heavy steering.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: More dangerous.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Yes, because the driver has no control over the front of the vehicle. I am surprised that we have to conform. I have been chastised by the Minister about my views on conforming because I cited some overseas examples to illustrate my point. I also said that we in South Australia had a terrain different from that used by people in Tasmania. To conform for conformity's sake is bad. The United Kingdom and Europe use the same type of vehicle as we do. The Minister says that they have much better roads. I made a cryptic comment that this was an ideal case for sending the Minister overseas, because obviously he has not had a good look at the position lately. He does not appreciate that European roads do not compare with the wide open spaces in South Australia. The roads are not as wide or as good as ours.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: With the exception of the autobahns.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Yes; that is so. The autobahns are fantastic, and we know what is being done in the United Kingdom. Although 6½ tons is a safe figure and a reduction from 8 tons, it is still 2 tons more than 4½ tons.

The operators mainly affected here are the intrastate carriers, the sand carriers and the gravel and wheat carriers. They are not the big trucks that run from Queensland to Western Australia. I consider that the cost of cartage will be increased by 40 per cent under the Government's proposal.

The Hon. R. A. Geddes: This affects trucks, as against semi-trailers.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Yes. This will affect the timber industry (particularly the pine industry), the grape industry and the wheat industry. In South Australia 1,250,000 tons of gravel and soil is carted in a year by one company. If we cut down the capacity of trucks that were purchased to do a specific job, what are we going to do, first, to the people who own them? Obviously, some people will be put out of work, because a business cannot be run on air. There will be difficulties for people who have entered into contracts for the purchase of trucks.

Secondly, there must be an effect on the building trade, upon persons trying to make gardens and upon local government authorities making roads. Therefore, I consider that I have every justification for moving this amendment. The Government's proposal would impose severe economic stress upon the people of this State, particularly those in country areas.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I support the amendment. The Minister has said that these particular provisions have been adopted by all other States, but a table that I have had incorporated in *Hansard* shows that that is not so. New South Wales still works on axle limits. They have a limit on the front axle of 4½ tons with a certain type of tyre and 5½ tons where the tyre pressure is below 75 lb.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: They work on both tyre pressure and axle load.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Yes. I do not see any reason why South Australia should slavishly follow uniformity with other States. The terrain and geography of South Australia are vastly different from those of the other States. Although the Minister has mentioned a limitation on the front axle, the proposal will also affect the rear axle loading on certain vehicles. He has said that vehicles with more than 4½ tons on the front axle are difficult to steer and that a safety factor is involved. This may be so when a truck not designed to carry such a heavy load has 6 tons or more on the front axle, but it is just as unsafe to have 4 tons on a vehicle designed to carry 2 tons. A forward-control vehicle designed to carry six or seven tons is a far safer vehicle than the one just mentioned.

The Minister also claimed that there had been excessive damage to the road pavement, but no evidence was submitted to substantiate this claim. I have no doubt that this clause as it stands will mean an increase of about 25 per cent in the cost of carting many articles, particularly sand and wheat. The Minister has scorned figures given by the Hon. Mr. Story relating to oversea countries. However, it is interesting to note that in Great Britain at present the limits are 5 tons on the front axle and 9 tons on the rear axle and this is being amended to provide for six tons on the front axle and ten tons on the rear axle.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: How do you know that? Can you substantiate that, other than from a roneoed statement that has been distributed?

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: It is printed in the National Road Federation publication.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Great Britain must fall in with the accepted standard in the common market countries, because trucks are travelling from Great Britain through those countries and difficulty arises if there is not uniformity.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: Do they drive from London to those countries?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Yes. Not only do motor vehicles, but trains also cross the English Channel. We must consider what the Minister's proposal will mean to operators. If the amendment goes through, not only will costs rise—

The Hon. C. R. Story: If it does not go through, costs will be higher.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I am referring to the proposal in the Bill, not the honourable member's amendment. However, not only the front axle but rear axles will be affected in some cases by the Bill.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: Such as?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: If the honourable member will wait a moment I shall give a concrete example. Operators are faced with problems of getting rid of a particular truck that will be uneconomic on the front axle loading allowed and going in for a cheaper type of truck, a lighter front end vehicle that is probably designed to take 2½ tons and not 4½ tons. That is what the Minister is asking operators to do, not only increasing costs in a series of fields but decreasing safety because the operators will be forced to use these cheaper, lighter and probably faster vehicles. However, the front end will still be over-loaded with the particular design they will be forced to use.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: Maybe also on a four-ply tyre and the operator will probably charge the same amount to cart a smaller tonnage.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I do not know about that, but it is possible. This amendment will affect bulk grain cartage in trailers, carriers of superphosphate, sand, and metal and also grapegrowers. I know that the Bill provides for the granting of exemptions by the board but under the wording of this Bill I am certain that the board will be hard pressed to deal with the flood of applications that will come before it and I do not consider that this would be desirable. Even if Mr. Story's amendment is carried, there will still be applications made to the board for exemptions. However, if the Bill is left in its present form a special staff will be necessary to deal with the exemptions.

The main problem in my district is firstly the grain carriers and bulk trailers. There will also be a problem in the forest areas of South Australia. I do not know what the Minister of Forests thinks of this amendment, but I venture to say that he is not aware of what is going on. Most of the trucks used in the forest areas of South Australia have single tyre rear axles and they use a modern tyre, probably a 14.00 x 20, which is a big tyre with a big road coverage. However, this tyre does less damage to roads than a high pressure dual tyre. These trucks are used because they operate in sandy conditions a great deal more efficiently than do trucks with dual tyres. I refer to the G.M.A.C. and the Mack diesel vehicles that have four tyres, each

14.00 x 20, with a tare weight of 8 tons. Operators in the various areas are tooled up with these vehicles. If this clause is not amended it will mean that these trucks, without an exemption from the board, will not be able to operate because as soon as the operator puts one ton on the vehicle he will immediately be over the allowable weight. That is how ridiculous this concept is of merely introducing a tyre loading limit without giving consideration to all the matters to which it applies. It is quite foolish because all of these operators using this type of truck, unless they got an exemption, would not be allowed to operate.

I believe that the Government has not fully considered the implications of this clause and that a case has not been made out by the Minister for transferring the old concept of an axle loading to a tyre loading. I can see an almost chaotic condition arising in many sections of the transport industry if we agree to a change from an axle loading to a tyre loading. I support the amendment as moved by Mr. Story.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I oppose the amendment. I have listened with interest to the opposition to this clause. It has been stated that in the introduction of the Bill I was rather brief in explaining the clause and the reasons for it. I submit that, irrespective of whatever explanations I do give, they will not be accepted by some members. In this debate there was reference to interstate conditions; immediately this was checked and it was found that the loading permitted in other States was below that proposed here that subject was abandoned. The average in other States is 4½ tons over the front axle, with some States lower than that, being only 4¼ tons. So there was no further mention of that aspect.

It is necessary to deal with local problems, and I agree with the honourable member who said we should not have uniformity with other States merely for the sake of uniformity. I also made that statement on a few occasions when dealing with Bills introduced merely because similar legislation operated in other States.

Examples were given of conditions existing in England, and I remember one member saying, "Surely our roads here are as good as those in England." I do not know that they are as good, for some of the foundations in England are a foot deep.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin: Some of our foundations are a foot deep.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I have not found any so far. It was suggested that we should take cognizance of English conditions, but at present the front axle loading in England is five tons. However, the amendment to the clause limits the front axle loading to 6½ tons! Therefore, we disregard the conditions prevailing in England when it suits us to do so. I have been inundated with deputations and people visiting my office seeking interviews in relation to this question. I have also had a considerable quantity of correspondence, which I have no intention of quoting. However, I could quote some if required to do so where representations have been made from transport owners in relation to this clause. I have such a letter in front of me now and I want to quote one paragraph from it. It states:

In my opinion if we were to adopt the English rating of 5 tons on the front and 9 tons on the rear axle, the 5,000 lb. weight per tyre being discussed now will virtually mean the above idea being adopted.

What he is advocating is the same as Mr. Story advocated earlier—a five-ton maximum on the front axle.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin: Are you working on short tons?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I am saying what the position is. The 9-ton provision in England deals with dual wheels on the back axle. I should like to hear honourable members tell us the English provision relating to single tyres. The objections which have been raised and which are contained in the circular sent to every member by the federation are all based on the assumption that this provision will come in overnight and everyone will be ruined. However, it is not intended that this clause will come into operation overnight.

The Hon. C. R. Story: That is not stated in the Bill.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I will give a guarantee to that effect now. If the honourable member wants it, I will have it written into the Act that the clause will not come into operation until July 1, 1968. This will enable operators to replace vehicles as they wear out with satisfactory vehicles. It has been said that nothing has been put forward to substantiate my claim about damage to roads. I will now read a statement by the Acting Chairman of the Road Traffic Board (Mr. Johinke), who said:

The proposed amendment to section 146 concerning the maximum load of 5,000 lb. on a single tyre would place a load limit of approximately 4½ tons on (1) the front axle of a vehicle and (2) any other axle which is fitted with only two tyres. The Act in its present

form limits the load which may be carried on any one axle to 8 tons regardless of the number of wheels fitted to the axle or the size of the tyres. There are several reasons for limiting the loading on a single tyre. These broadly come into the following categories—(1) the prevention of road damage.

Honourable members have said that no road damage is being done by these vehicles, but this is what Mr. Johinke has to say:

With the present axle limit of 8 tons (approximately 18,000 lb.) it will be essential for an axle to be provided with at least four tyres. This in turn will mean that the load will be distributed to the pavement by dual wheels on either extremity of the axle. This, of course, is the normal practice for the rear axle or axles of a conventional truck or semi-trailer. It has been established that this tyre arrangement causes less damage to a road surface and its base than would the equivalent load carried on a single tyre even if this were larger than the normal dual wheel arrangement.

In other words, the proposed legislation would not affect the vehicles to which honourable members have referred, as most of them have dual wheels except on the front axles. The vehicles affected are the single-tyred vehicles, which are the vehicles that cause most of the damage. He continues:

The State Minister of Transport and the Minister of Roads have recognized the need for standardization of all facets of road transport throughout Australia. They have, together with their interstate counterparts, assured the Australian Transport Advisory Council of their intention to promote uniformity within their individual States by introducing legislation in accordance with the provisions of the National Road Traffic Code and the code of the Australian Motor Vehicles Standards Committee. In this regard, this State lags behind all other States, and the introduction of the tyre limit, together with other provisions of the Bill now in question, will bring this State more into line with the others. All other States, with the exception of New South Wales, have an express provision of a 5,000 lb. loading. New South Wales has a maximum gross axle load of 4½ tons for an axle carrying two tyres and with a tyre pressure of 100 lb. a square inch (that is, the same as that in South Australia). This is the same as a single tyre load of 5,000 lb. for conventional vehicles.

He then goes on to mention conformity in relation to vehicle design, and states:

As the 5,000 lb. vehicle load exists in the rest of Australia, most vehicle manufacturers have designed accordingly. If vehicles carry loads heavier than the design will safely permit, then the overload on the front axles in particular means that the vehicle is difficult to steer, the wheel and the tyre is overloaded beyond manufacturer's rating and there is an increased risk of broken stub axles and an overloading of the braking system. Additionally, many operators are having extra two-wheeled axles either in front of or behind the rear axle of their trucks. With the existing law, this would entitle them to carry an additional 8 tons, and this results in a considerably overloaded vehicle and is evidenced by "crawl" speeds on uphill grades and runaway vehicles on down grades due to the overloading of the transmission and brake "fade".

These things are happening. Mr. Johinke then deals with the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act, and here again his remarks are interesting:

For the purpose of the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act all vehicles are being assessed to carry 4½ tons, that, is, 5,000 lb. wheel loads on the front axle. This was considered reasonable, as many vehicles cannot carry loads in excess of that amount. However, it is not an offence at present to load that axle up to 8 tons. Hence road contribution payments are being avoided as some vehicles are known to be carrying loads in excess of their assessment.

We all know that that is a fact. At the moment they carry up to 8 tons on the front axle and they are not breaking the law. He concludes:

It is pertinent to point out that the move for the introduction of a single tyre limit has been requested by several local government authorities.

That is quite different from the statement made by, I think, the Hon. Mr. DeGaris that local government authorities oppose this Bill.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: I did not say that.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I am sorry, but one honourable member did.

The Hon. C. R. Story: Only two members spoke on it.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: That statement was made in this Chamber, yet local government authorities have requested this provision. Mr. Johinke continues:

It is considered to be in the best interests of the community at large and is a positive step in the protection of roads, the achievement of national standardization and the improvement of road safety. If this legislation is passed it could be made to apply to vehicles registered for the first time after a date to be determined, say January 1, 1966. The Act would permit the Road Traffic Board to issue permits for vehicles which are now in use and which exceed the proposed 5,000 lb. loading.

That is what he suggests in this matter. It is not a question that has just been raised; it was considered by the previous Government. The ex-Premier suggested that we should introduce this legislation to limit the front axle loading to 4½ tons. The Commissioner of Highways reports as follows:

A most important aspect which is neglected by the opponents to the 5,000 lb. maximum single tyre load (equivalent to 4½ ton load

limit on axles with single tyres, for example, front axles) is that the cost to the community is the total transportation cost, made up of the cost of construction and maintenance of the road as well as the operating cost of the vehicle.

I pointed this out earlier in the piece, that we have to consider not only the owner but also the cost to the State. He continues:

If it were not for the present over-liberal loading limits in South Australia, our road construction and maintenance costs would be less and roads would last longer before reconstruction. This is particularly significant in South Australia where long lengths of road through sparsely settled country must be constructed and maintained at as low a cost as possible. Also, although we use the recognized U.S.A. standard loading for bridge design, our bridges are being over-stressed by the types of vehicles and loadings which have come into use in South Australia, because of our lack of legal load limitations. A number of bridges are currently showing signs of distress. This department (the Highways Department) has not the staff or the funds to carry out the investigations necessary to determine the optimum axle loadings in relation to the costs of road and bridge construction and maintenance, but very large sums have been spent on these investigations overseas, and this State, as has been done in other States in Australia, should accept and benefit from the results of these investigations. The Australian Motor Vehicles Standards Committee, on which all bodies interested in road transportation are represented, has produced a recommended set of motor vehicle standards after many years of investigation, and these standards were endorsed in 1964 by the Australian Transport Advisory Council. These standards include the 5,000 lb. single wheel load, 18,000 lb. on axles having dual tyres, and load limitations in accordance with axle spacing and manufacturers' gross vehicle weight specification. In South Australia no consideration is given to the manufacturers' gross vehicle weight rating, with the result that many trucks are being operated with gross vehicle weights far in excess of the makers' specification. These vehicles are in effect operated in an unsafe condition owing to insufficient braking capacity and understrength axles, and they also cause delays and congestion by their low speed of operating on grades. An examination of truck manufacturers' specifications shows that there are very few commonly used trucks designed to carry more than 4½ tons on the front axle. The claim that the introduction into South Australia of the single tyre load limit would increase cartage costs is open to dispute. The maintenance of correctly loaded vehicles is less than overloaded ones and many of the fixed standard rates are calculated in accordance with the makers' specification for vehicles. It is probable that operators carrying loads in excess of the makers' specifications are, at the expense of our road system, making greater profits than operators of correctly loaded vehicles. A comparison has been made with the front and rear axle limits of five tons and nine tons respectively in England. If consideration is given to the entirely different conditions and the stage of development reached in England after centuries of road construction, the limits of 4½ tons on front axles and eight tons on axles with dual tyres cannot be considered unduly restrictive for Australia.

I am prepared to insert in the Bill that this provision shall not come into operation until July 1, 1968. That would give everybody an opportunity to replace his vehicle with another type if he wanted to. It would remove the objections of honourable members and 95 per cent of the objections raised by operators. It would give them an opportunity to enter into future contracts taking into consideration the new limits, and new vehicles would be purchased by operators, bearing in mind the new load limits. The Chamber of Automotive Industries of South Australia sent out the circular. It has made representations to me on this matter. I gave it road maintenance and construction costs. This year a record sum of £15,250,000 is allocated for roads and bridges. If I had another £15,250,000, I could spent that, too. Our finances are strained and we are lagging in road construction but are making progress. Our roads were not built to carry the present loads. We have to protect our roads. The provision will not come into operation until July 1, 1968. I hope that honourable members will consider the matter from the point of view of the State, and not only from the point of view of the carriers.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: I support the amendment moved by the Hon. Mr. Story. All members agree that we need to limit the weight carried on our roads, but it is a matter of what is a fair and just load to be carried on axles. The greatest development of our roads has taken place under the present load limit of 8 tons. The Minister has given an undertaking that this alteration will not come into effect until July 1, 1968, but it is unfortunate that that was not provided in the Bill originally.

The position in England or in the other States of Australia has no bearing on our problems. In South Australia, in addition to having trucks operating on sealed roads, we have them operating on bush tracks. On Eyre Pensinsula and in the pastoral areas it has been the practice to use single-wheeled vehicles on the bush tracks, because stones get between the tyres of dual wheels in what is known as the gibber country. The matter of tyre load is much different from axle load. It is almost impossible to define a safe front axle limit, because what is safe an one truck is completely dangerous on another. We have had no proof regarding tyre wear on our roads. My experience of driving on

country roads has been that the roads appear to have been cut up by large transports on straight stretches. If the front tyre was responsible for this, one would expect it, as the steering tyre, to affect the bends and curves, and one would expect to see excessive wear on the tyres themselves. The Hon. Mr. Story's amendment will define the axle loading as distinct from tyre loading and, considering the construction of our roads and our transport problems, together with the reasons put forward by the Minister, it is, perhaps, more sensible than the old loading of 8 tons. I support the amendment.

The Hon. C. C. D. OCTOMAN: I support the Hon. Mr. Story's amendment. The cereal industry was my main point in the second reading debate. There is no doubt that the forward-control type of truck costs much more than the conventional type, and if a low front axle limit is imposed much money will have been wasted by people who purchased the forward-control vehicles. The Minister stated that claims that cartage costs will increase were open to dispute. However, there is no doubt at all that costs will be increased. Since this Bill was introduced I have asked many carriers who operate in my district for comparable prices based on front axle load limits of 4½ tons and 6½ tons respectively, and the prices quoted on the basis of 4½ tons are about 20 per cent higher than those quoted for a 6½-ton front axle load limit.

We often have academic opinions expressed on these matters, but the man who has to pay soon finds that he is faced with increased costs. I again refer to the economic effect on cereal producers, in particular, of the proposal originally submitted. The Commonwealth Bureau of Agricultural Economics has estimated fairly accurately, as a result of investigation over many years, that the percentage return on capital outlay in cereal mixed farming is between 2 per cent and 4 per cent and every added cost will reduce this slight margin of profit. The Minister also cited the front axle loadings in other States and said that 4½ tons was the average loading on front axles or single-wheel tyre axles. However, a schedule issued by the *National Association of Australian State Road Authorities* in September, 1964, showed that 4½ tons was the lowest front axle load, not the average of all States. It appears that 5,000 lb. a tyre is the lowest, or 10,000 lb. an axle. I support Mr. Story's amendment with a view to keeping down costs to the primary producers.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS (Midland): The Minister had much to say about our roads not being meant to take heavy loads. Remarkably good progress has been made in this State in the construction of roads in the last 10 to 15 years. I can remember when the Minister's comments would have applied to most of our roads, because then many of our main roads had only a thin shell of bitumen on top. The weakness was discovered in about 1950 when some of those main roads sealed with bitumen, and considered satisfactory, began to break up. Since then the Highways Department has gone almost to extremes in spending money to ensure good foundations for roads. However, we still have many roads requiring attention, and, as the Minister said, he could probably spend another £15,000,000 on road works. However, considerable progress has been made in spite of the fact that trucks have increased in size. It is possible now to drive a modern truck of increased capacity with more safety and less road damage, if driven carefully, than would have been the case in the past with a smaller truck. The Minister has overstressed the position as regards road damage. He has indicated that this is an important amendment and necessary to protect the roads and ensure that trucks are not overloaded to such a degree that they become a menace on the road. The Minister said it was not proposed to make the amendment operative for three years. I cannot understand why he should say it is an important proposition and then say that it will not become effective for three years.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: It is to give people an opportunity to adjust themselves to the situation. I give this opportunity, yet honourable members still complain.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: It will give them an opportunity to go back to the type of truck fast going out of date. All over the world we have well-constructed forward-control trucks, and that type of truck is with us to stay. I believe the Hon. Mr. Story's amendment is a reasonable compromise in view of the situation now obtaining. I do not think anybody with any knowledge of the matter would deny that some trucks are overloaded, and that matter concerns all of us.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: Honourable members do not show it.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: The Minister does not show it when he proposes to hold it back for three years. However, some people have overloaded their trucks and it is necessary that there be a limit of some kind. I believe the Government's proposal to change to an individual tyre loading is far too sweeping and

it will result not in a safer situation but probably in the overloading of small trucks. They will be just as unsafe and just as overdoaded at 4½ tons as present-day trucks are overloaded with eight tons on the front axle. These overloaded smaller trucks, with less braking power than the forward-control trucks, would not be as safe as the latter. The operating costs of the smaller trucks would be almost as much as present operating costs, and they would carry less than the larger trucks. Freight charges would therefore be higher and we would have another example of the slogan "Live dearer with Labor". Many forward-control trucks operate and they are designed to carry more than 4½ tons on the front axle. The amendment moved by Mr. Story for a 6½-ton limit on the front axle appears to be fair and reasonable. I indicate, first, my concern that trucks should be overloaded to the extent that they are overloaded today, and secondly, my support for the fair and reasonable amendment moved by Mr. Story.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I listened to what the Minister said about our roads being destroyed and the Bill being in the interests of safe driving. He also said he would give an undertaking that the matter being discussed would not become effective until July 1, 1968. I take it that the Minister will accept Mr. Story's amendment. If we are to have damage to our roads, lack of safety, and so on continuing until July 1, 1968, surely Mr. Story's amendment assists by reducing the front axle limit to 6½ tons. I think it would be much better to accept Mr. Story's amendment and allow the next Government to decide whether to have tyre or axle loading.

The Hon. L. R. HART: We must keep uppermost in our minds that what we do to reduce the load capacity of transport vehicles must inevitably increase costs. Statistics show that since the introduction of forward-control vehicles the accident rate has been reduced by 80 per cent, so it is hard to understand why the Minister has made such a point about safety. After all, an overloaded 30-cwt. truck is a dangerous vehicle. The clause does not prevent the overloading of small vehicles, and to reduce costs operators will buy lighter vehicles. If their costs are increased they will be forced to apply to the Prices Department for a review of charges. We all know how long such a review takes, so these people would have to wait for perhaps six months before being permitted to increase rates. A person operating under a contract, perhaps for two years, would already have submitted his price, so he would lose much money.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: It would be worked out under these conditions before he took the contract.

The Hon. L. R. HART: But would the Prices Department make its decision retrospective for the six months it took to decide the matter? The amendment will reduce slightly the load capacity of certain trucks now operating. This is reasonable because it will give operators a reasonable time to adjust their operations to any new provisions that may ultimately be introduced. In the meantime a new type of truck may be built. We must consider the motor industry because if we make it uneconomical for a certain type of truck to be operating obviously people will be thrown out of work, which nobody wants to occur.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: It has been said that nearly 80 per cent of these trucks come from England.

The Hon. L. R. HART: If this clause is passed many trucks will be forced off the road, so there will be no sense in making more of them. I know that many orders for trucks and tractors have been deferred pending the consideration of this Bill. If these changes to the Act are necessary, the motor manufacturing and transport industries should be given a chance to adjust their programmes. The Minister said that a committee was investigating the Act. It may decide something that will necessitate further amendments. I oppose the clause and favour the amendment.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Is this Bill a subtle way to get goods off the road and on to the railways? It seems to me that it will have this effect, because the Minister has made an impassioned plea in relation to road damage. If the clause is passed, 25 per cent more trucks will be needed to carry the same tonnage. Does the Minister think this will save the roads? Trains cannot go to the loam pits at Athelstone, and if only 75 per cent of the present load can be carried on each truck there must be more trucks used or less loam will be carried. Road damage is a small facet of this matter; the State's economy is at stake. The road tax imposed by the previous Government encouraged people to use roads sensibly. I am prepared to go half way in this matter; we shall face up to the bigger problem in another Bill. I suggest that the committee referred to by the Minister should be strengthened. I do not know the personnel, but the whole Act is being reviewed. The Minister by interjection has said several times why semi-trailers are tipping over, but he has not given

the real reason. We are speaking of forward-control vehicles. One reason why semi-trailers tip over is that they can be driven by inexperienced drivers. Anybody who can drive a 3-ton truck and can pass a test for driving such a truck can be turned loose on the road with a semi-trailer loaded with, perhaps, 25 tons of goods. One reason why they tip over is badly adjusted brakes and the operator not knowing when or how to apply them. A person has to be skilled to work air-brakes, in the first case with the hand lever on the rear wheels. If they are not adjusted properly and the speed of the vehicle overtakes the engine speed, the driver applies the first pressure on his foot-brake, which immediately brings in the bogies behind the prime mover. He pushes further down and gets his front wheels on the prime mover, thus locking the prime mover, and the rear of the truck is still overtaking the front. It jackknifes the truck and over it goes.

Both those things should be looked after in the Bill, but they are not there. A number of necessary precautions are missing. If we are to talk about tyres, let us deal wholly with tyres and put the whole Act on the basis of tyres and not deal with the question piecemeal. To say that we intend to defer the operation of this clause for three years does not impress me, because much injustice will be done within three years. A forward-control truck worth about £6,000 now will, in three years' time, go on the scrap heap because it becomes uneconomical when we start carrying less than 4½ tons on the front axle. The amendment will fill a gap until the Minister can get an expert committee to bring something to us before the next electio.n I stand by my amendment and hope I have the support of honourable members. The Minister has said that they will put the clause back in another place. If he wants to put it back in another place, he can. If he wants to lose the Bill, that is the surest way of doing it.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: When did I say that?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: The Minister said it twice, by interjection.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I should like to correct an impression held by some honourable members. I passed a remark to a colleague of mine and, because it was overheard by the honourable member, he gets up on his feet and says that the Minister has said this. When an honourable member uses such terms, he usually refers to what an honourable member has said when on his feet on the floor of this Chamber.

The Hon. C. R. Story: What about all the interjections?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I resent the implication of the honourable member's concluding words. The tactics being used by him are obvious. I know what will happen to this clause and that I am crying in the wilderness. The honourable member has referred to committees and said that he does not know their constitution. That is so—I would not expect him to be able to name the personnel of the various investigating committees. These matters have been thoroughly examined for a number of years. I draw the attention of honourable members to the Australian Motor Vehicles Standards Committee, comprised of representatives of the Commonwealth Government departments, State Government departments, State road authorities, police, chambers of commerce and manufactures, the Transport Workers Union of Australia, the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries, the Australian Road Transport Federation (both passenger and goods sections), the Institute of Automotive and Aeronautical Engineers, the Standards Association of Australia, and the Australian Automobile Association. Those people have after many years of investigation and consideration recommended a set of vehicle standards, which were endorsed in 1964 by the Australian Transport Advisory Council.

These recommended standards include the 5,000 lb. single tyre load limit, the 18,000 lb. axle load limit or single axle fitted with dual tyres, and the total loading according to the axle spacing of the vehicle or vehicles and, to keep transportation costs to a minimum, the Australian Motor Vehicles Standards Committee standards should be adopted for South Australia. The maximum gross vehicle weight of 32 tons exclusive of the front axle load in South Australia at present over-stresses our bridges. One day when a bridge collapses an honourable member will rush to me to have something done about it. However, after investigation, I am convinced that many truck drivers or truck owners and drivers would be glad to adhere to the load permitted by the makers' specifications. They have been forced to load beyond these limits because other truck drivers have done so, and are carrying loads lower than required to make a profit if adhering to the makers' specified loading. Many drivers realize that the operation of the trucks under these conditions is unsafe both to them and to other road users and, for this reason, it could be advisable to form a committee to look at the whole position not with a view to forming the standards, which has been done by the Australian Motor Vehicles Standards Committee,

but to explain the position to truck operators and to devise a way of introducing the limitations without affecting the economy of the transport industry.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: Are you quoting?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: These are the opinions expressed on a State basis, which should be considered. I know perfectly well what will happen. It would not matter what I said in support of the clause, it still would not be carried, but the amendments will be. That is quite obvious.

The CHAIRMAN: The question is that the words proposed to be struck out stand part of the clause. Those in favour say "Aye"; those against say "No". The Noes have it. The question now is that the new paragraph proposed to be inserted by the Hon. Mr. Story's amendment be so inserted. Those in favour say "Aye"; those against say "No". The Ayes have it.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: Divide:

The Committee divided on the new paragraph:

Ayes (14).—The Hons. Jessie Cooper, M. B. Dawkins, R. C. DeGaris, R. A. Geddes, G. J. Gilfillan, L. R. Hart, Sir Norman Jude, H. K. Kemp, Sir Lyell McEwin, C. C. D. Octoman, F. J. Potter, C. D. Rowe, Sir Arthur Rymill, and C. R. Story (teller).

Noes (4).—The Hons. D. H. L. Banfield, S. C. Bevan (teller), A. F. Kneebone, and A. J. Shard.

Majority of 10 for the Ayes.

New paragraph thus inserted.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I wish to speak to paragraph (*b*) of this clause. I should like a further explanation of the words "two or more", which are to be inserted in section 146. I have looked at this matter from various angles and have the explanation that this is being inserted to make prosecutions easier and to make it easier for those who are being prosecuted, because it will be possible to prefer one charge instead of having to split it if the offence is committed in relation to three or four axles.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: The other position arises where twin axles or dual axles are fitted and the weight of the vehicle on the weighbridge is considered. It is not possible to do that in terms of the present phraseology. The other reason is that already given by the honourable member. At present, the Act provides for an offence for an overload on one, two or four axles but there is no mention of three axles. A former Crown Solicitor has advised that it would be unfair to charge a person with an offence in relation to one axle-and-with another offence in relation to the other axles. That brings in the point that the honourable member himself has mentioned. That is the explanation of this particular clause.

Clause as amended passed.

Clause 28 passed.

Clauses 29 to 33 passed.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Sir Arthur Rymill): The Committee will now deal with the postponed clauses. The first is clause 4.

Clause 4—"Signs near school playgrounds".

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Considering the lengthy debate we have had on this Bill tonight, I ask that progress be reported.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

PUBLIC SERVICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 27. Page 2387.)

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Leader of the Opposition): Nothing gives me greater pleasure than to speak to this Bill, because it indicates that something in which I have had an interest for many years is about to reach a conclusion—the establishment of a group laundry in South Australia to cater for the requirements of our hospitals. This project first interested me at the time that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was being built, when the problem of laundries was examined. It was not possible then to consider anything relating to a laundry without being involved in talking about a boilerhouse and the hundreds of thousands of pounds to go into a laundry to provide for it. We were almost at a deadlock as regards laundry services at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, Parkside and other hospitals operated by the Government. A group laundry was operating successfully in Melbourne, and it was at this time that the first step was taken for the establishment of a similar laundry here through the appointment of a departmental laundry manager.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: That is right—Mr. Spencer.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: Yes, I am coming to that. After our calling for applications and not getting a suitable applicant, the question was resubmitted to the Public Service Board. A proper position with an adequate classification was created and we got a suitable person to fill it, namely, Mr. Spencer, who was appointed in December, 1955. He really worked miracles, not only in our Government hospitals but also in overcoming the problems involved in the subsidized hospitals, where it

was a question of using anything between a domestic washing machine and a steam laundry. From that beginning planning commenced for the introduction of the group laundry. Mr. Spencer has been a most valuable officer to the department. I am sure the Minister is fortunate that he has somebody of his calibre already appointed to inaugurate the group laundry now about to be put into operation. It is fortunate that we have a person of his capacity, ready-made to fill that position. I could spend much time explaining what happened and the assistance Mr. Spencer gave not only to Government but also to community hospitals.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: To everybody.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: Yes, to the various institutions. Having advised about appropriate equipment, he did not leave it at that but was only too keen to go out and give demonstrations, which were of great interest to the people concerned. I am glad that we have the benefit of his services to set the Group Laundry and Central Linen Service on its way. I do not know whether every honourable member appreciates what is involved in a group laundry and linen service. It means that all the supplies for the hospitals are serviced. I hope that as many public institutions as possible will take advantage of this service, for it is an organization that can cope with almost unlimited requirements. It remains only for the institutions to use it. I am sure the Minister will not hesitate to give approval to any community or other large hospitals that wish to participate in the services of the group laundry and linen service. This will do away with the need for various institutions seeing to their own supplies of linen and all that is involved in the management, distribution, checking and dispatching of many items for laundering. It means that all the linen belongs to the group laundry and the necessary mending, repairs, etc. will be handled there. All that an institution needs to do to participate in this laundry service is to place its requirements. Everything is handled by weight rather than counting out handkerchiefs, napkins, etc. by the dozen. The laundry guarantees everything will be returned fit for use. So it is a big change-over involving the closing down of laundries in some institutions—for instance, at Parkside.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: And at the Queen Victoria Hospital.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: The Royal Adelaide Hospital, Parkside, Queen Victoria Hospital, the Children's Hospital, and possibly others. They can apply and, if the Minister approves, they can use this laundry service.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: There are 15 institutions involved in this project.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: I would expect all that. It has not applied in the case of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital because Yatala Labour Prison has been able to handle that, but the Home for Incurables, the Lyell McEwin Hospital at Elizabeth, and a number of community hospitals, including some about to be established, will, I am sure, want to use this service. Where laundries are in existence (especially at Parkside and the Queen Victoria Hospital) equipment has been installed capable of being moved, subject to local requirements. So it means that some people trained in laundry work will be out of a job. As the Minister stated, this Bill is modelled on section 76 of the principal Act relating to employees transferred from the Commonwealth Public Service. The difference in this case is that there are transfers from institutions that will be serviced by the group laundry, and the employees will retain their privileges that applied in their original employment. This is fair and reasonable, so I am happy to support this Bill. I am privileged to live to see the Group Laundry and Central Linen Service brought into operation.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD (Central No. 1): This is a comparatively short Bill but its provisions will save much heart burning and conjecture amongst the employees concerned with its outcome. The principle involved is one that could and should be followed by outside industry. The Bill provides that when a person becomes an employee of the State in the group laundry and linen service of the Hospitals Department, providing that that person has had continuous service as an employee at an approved hospital, the continuous service shall be recognized for the purpose of granting and paying for recreation leave, sick leave and long service leave. I believe that where a person has given service to an industry through either one or more employers he should be entitled to all benefits regarding recreation leave, long service leave and so on. Frequently it is not the fault of an employee that he has to leave his place of employment and seek a position elsewhere within the same industry, but because he has been forced to do so he finds he is at a disadvantage to the other employees who have been able to stay with the one employer. In these circumstances, I think that all such entitlements should be on an industry basis, and I congratulate the Government on the provision of the principle set

out in the Bill. I understand that a number of employees are ready to start at the group laundry and I can imagine their doubts as to their position if their service is broken with the present employer and they go to the group laundry without the benefit of the provisions of this Bill. I can well imagine that these employees would not settle into their new positions while worrying about this matter. It is a matter of some importance and urgency so that employees will transfer gratefully to their new positions. With those thoughts in mind I support the second reading.

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

MAINTENANCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the House of Assembly and read a first time.

COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 27. Page 2385.)

The Hon C. D. ROWE (Midland): This is a fairly simple Bill and clear about what it proposes to do. The amendment to Item 3 is designed to remove a doubt about whether on an increase in share capital companies should pay the fees specified in the schedule. Apparently some people have taken the point that a company incorporated when the fees for incorporation were set at a lower figure than the present fees is entitled, if it increases its capital, to pay only the lower fees instead of the rather heavily increased fees that now apply. I think it is reasonable that if a company increases its capital as at today it should pay the fees applicable today and not those applicable when it was incorporated. Consequently, I do not have any objection to this provision.

The second matter dealt with provides that the fee in respect of a licence to dispense with the word "limited" in the name of a charitable or non-profit-making company will be payable on the application rather than on the granting of such a licence. It seems to me this is rather a trivial matter. I should not imagine that there would be many companies that would want an exemption from using the word "limited" on the basis of being of a charitable nature or non-profit-making. This provision is to ensure that if the Minister investigates the matter the fee must be paid irrespective of whether the request is granted. It seems to me that in cases of this nature we should perhaps be a little generous and leave the law as it now stands. I consider that no great principle is involved, and probably the sum involved is not very great. This seems to be a small matter, although the appropriate time to deal with it is when we are considering amendments to the legislation. I cannot agree to the third amendment. In his second reading explanation the Minister said:

> The amendment to Item 39 provides that the fee for lodging an annual return of a company would be increased from £2 to £3.

He then said that the reason for the increase was to obtain funds for the purpose of investigating the affairs of companies. As I understand it, about 10,000 companies are registered in this State at present, so the additional £1 will mean that an additional £10,000 will be collected. I cannot imagine that it is necessary in this State for the Government to spend £10,000 on investigating affairs of companies. There are two dangers in this matter, the first of which is that if this money is lying there it may lead to an investigation being authorized when perhaps there should be no investigation. We all know there are busybodies in the community and others who for various reasons like to see some harm done to a company, and the mere fact that an investigation is authorized can do a company harm irrespective of whether it is justified.

The second reason why this is not desirable is that it is much better for the cost of this investigation to be met by the Treasurer out of general revenue. I cannot see that it would amount to more than £1,000 or £2,000 in any particular year, and I believe that general revenue is the appropriate source. If that is not done, after three or four years there will be an accumulation in the fund of £30,000 or £40,000, and the same thing will happen as has happened to other funds—the money will be paid into revenue and will not be available when required. This happened many years ago in relation to the assurance fund under the terms of the Real Property Act. That fund was established to meet any deficiencies that might occur in the administration of the Lands Titles Office. The fund built up to considerable proportions and eventually was taken into general revenue. Three or four years ago the then Government abolished the farthing in the pound assurance fee, as it was called, and undertook to meet out of general revenue any claim made against the Lands Titles Office. Because of this possibility, if it becomes necessary to investigate the affairs of companies it will be much better to have a debit against revenue. I may

say more about this in Committee, but that is my present view. I know that in New South Wales and Victoria a year or two ago there was a spate of company failures involving large sums of money, and the Treasurers of those States were involved in a considerable pay-out to the people appointed as investigators. However, I think it is a good commentary on the economy of South Australia that nearly all the failures that occurred were in those other States and that we did not have anything like the same history in relation to companies incorporated here. I think this will be the case in future; I do not think many companies will call for investigation or that a large sum of money will be involved. I therefore oppose this third provision. Increasing fees to bring in £10,000 to take care of something that may not cost anything, or may cost only £2,000 a year, is too severe. Subject to this reservation, I support the Bill.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

At 10.23 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, November 3, at 2.15 p.m.