LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday, August 2, 1966.

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

QUESTIONS

CHILDREN'S CLOTHING.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: I ask leave to make a brief explanation prior to asking a question of the Chief Secretary.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: During the weekend a television documentary film emphasized the tragedy of children being burnt through wearing inflammable clothing. I think most honourable members are aware of these tragedies. Can the Chief Secretary say whether the Government has considered introducing legislation to control the type of material used in the manufacture of clothing? I point out that these controls now apply to other inflammable substances, and explosives.

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: To give a brief answer would be of little service to the Council. I am sympathetic to the point of view expressed by the honourable member. I do not think this matter has been discussed but I will get some advice from the Department of Health and see what has been done in other parts of Australia and whether anything can be done here. It will not be easy, because many difficulties are involved. However, I shall look at the matter and in due course I may be able to bring a report to the Council.

ROSEWORTHY CROSSING.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I understand that the Minister of Transport may have an answer to a question I asked recently of the Minister of Roads, then representing the Minister of Transport, about the Roseworthy rail crossing.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Yes; I have an answer to the question. The provision of automatic warning devices at level crossings is undertaken on a system of priorities determined from time to time after consideration by the officers of the Highways and Railways Departments. The level crossing between Roseworthy and Freeling is not, at present, listed for such installation. It is considered that, provided reasonable care is exercised by drivers of road vehicles, this crossing presents no unusual hazard.

LAKE BUTLER.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Has the Minister of Transport, representing the Minister of Marine, a reply to my question of July 20 regarding the dredging of Lake Butler?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: My colleague the Minister of Marine has supplied me with the following information:

Although the request of the District Council of Robe is being investigated, it was not possible to accede to the council's request that the dredging equipment recently operating at Robe should be utilized to carry out the work of dredging portion of Lake Butler to provide facilities for pleasure boats. The reasons for this are as under:

1. The Lake Butler haven was promoted under the fishing havens scheme to provide facilities for the fishing industry. It is conceivable that the area subject of the council's inquiry could eventually be needed to accommodate fishermen. Problems involved in allocating space between commercial and amateur interests must first be solved.
2. To deepen portion of Lake Butler without reference to a plan and without financial authority, simply to make use of the opportunity to employ plant already on the site, would be unwise.
3. The work envisaged by the council would be costly ($10,000 at least) and could not be financed from the Harbors Board Loan funds, nor could funds be provided under the Fisheries Act to build facilities for pleasure craft.

When the report of the Harbors Board on the council's proposals is received, the matter will be considered by the Government.

RENTAL HOUSES.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question of the Chief Secretary representing the Minister of Housing in another place.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: As honourable members are aware, the Housing Trust has contributed largely to the development of this State but, because of the pressures involved in providing housing, it has been reluctant in the past to build rental houses in the smaller and medium-size country towns. In many such towns I find a definite demand for rental houses, and the inability to provide them affects local enterprises that would otherwise employ more people in their businesses. Will the Chief Secretary inquire whether the Minister of Housing is prepared to give some attention to providing more rental houses in country towns, particularly in view of the employment position in and around the metropolitan area?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: I shall be pleased to convey the question to my colleague the Minister of Housing and obtain a report for the honourable member.

STATISTICAL RECORD OF LEGISLATURE.

The PRESIDENT laid on the table the Statistical Record of the Legislature, 1836 to 1965.

DRIED FRUITS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Minister of Local Government): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It makes two minor amendments to the Dried Fruits Act. First, clause 3 (*a*) amends section 18 of the principal Act in consequence of the change to decimal currency. The maximum rate of contribution to the funds of the Dried Fruits Board is changed from one-sixteenth penny a pound to $1.20 a ton, which represents a very slight increase. In the past the actual rate of contribution has always been less than the maximum rate.

In the second place, paragraph (*b*) inserts a new subsection in section 18 empowering the board to fix differential rates in respect of dried tree fruits and dried vine fruits. The board is of opinion that the present uniform rate does not represent a just contribution to administration costs by producers of dried tree fruits. Clause 4 is a formal provision providing for all monetary references in the principal Act to be expressed in decimal currency. It is a small measure and is necessary for conformity with present-day services and currency.

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland): I support the Bill. As the Minister has said, it is a small amendment, and is necessary to bring this matter into line with present-day conditions. The board has operated for many years at low cost to the growers and its functions are necessary for orderly marketing in the industry. The change from one-sixteenth penny a pound, as in the present Act, to $1.20 a ton is an increase of about 4d. a ton. The tax last year was on about 17,000 tons; therefore, there will not be a substantial increase in the board's administrative fee. The production of tree fruits is increasing. Apricot production in South Australia will increase sharply in the next few years as a result of the new Waikerie scheme and increased plantings on the upper end of the Murray. I consider that it is necessary for the board to have money for publicity and the handling of the commodity. I see no reason whatever for delaying the measure.

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

STATUTES AMENDMENT (WATERWORKS AND SEWERAGE) BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from July 27. Page 694.)

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Leader of the Opposition): This Bill amends the Waterworks and Sewerage Acts and mainly relates to the collection of rates. Water is a commodity that is vitally important to every inhabitant of the State; without it we cannot survive, and its conservation and supply control the final limits of the State's resources, both primary and secondary. As we further develop supply, the more expensive it becomes. With the exhaustion of gravity supplies, it becomes necessary to rely upon power and pumping to supplement reticulation and so increase the supply. The purpose of this Bill is to obtain more revenue for the Government. I am not complaining about that; in fact, I indicate now that I support the Bill, regardless of any comments I make relating to it. Increased assessments will substantially increase the payments for water. I have no doubt that the Government believes the increases will be less apparent and more palatable if collected in smaller amounts, having four payments over the year. The method of collecting water rates is divided between rating on capital assessment and water consumption.

The late Mr. Condon, when the Leader of the Labor Party in this place, often spoke on the subject of charges for water and propounded the merits of paying upon consumption, believing it to be a means of conserving and preventing the waste of water. Apparently nobody has yet found an easy way to give effect to this, because the Bill does not alter the present system of rating, which returns rebate water revenue up to the equivalent of the assessed rate. The consumption of water over this quantity is charged for as an excess at the end of the year. That practice will continue. The alteration in this measure means that water rates shall be payable in four instalments in the months of July, October, January and April, in proportionate amounts. The amount of excess water will not be known until the end of the year, and presumably there

will be a separate account, making five in all, and this must increase costs in sending out the accounts. Another provision is to alter assessments during the year, all of which suggests that increases in revenue are being sought through the operation of the Bill. The change will involve an increase in the cost of collections, which will have to be passed on to the consumer if the Government is to obtain the full benefit of increased charges. An amendment inserted in another place at the instigation of the Opposition permitting the owner or occupier to pay water rates and minimum charges in one transaction is a desirable amendment, of which I approve. If a person has five accounts to pay, involving five transactions and five lots of postage and exchange, it is likely he will prefer to pay in one lump sum for the whole year rather than have to deal with a number of accounts. As an option, that will be appreciated. I hope so, for it will be an advantage to the Government if that option is used, because it will mean that the Government will collect the money at less cost and it will also have the money in advance rather than have to wait for the quarterly periods to come around.

Another clause in the Bill gave powers of entry into private dwellings, which is new in the Waterworks Act. As stated in the Minister's second reading explanation, this power is incorporated in other legislation, even in the case of local government, but this is the first time it has appeared in the Waterworks Act. This, too, was modified in another place, because of pressure from the Opposition, to provide that prior notice of intention to enter premises must be given. The privacy of the home is always something that must be respected; intrusion should be kept to a minimum. I am pleased that the Government accepted this modification regarding right of entry.

Clause 11 amends section 121 of the principal Act which brought the Tod River system into the Act, because of a railway line running parallel to a roadway. That gave the department the power to rate on the opposite side of the railway line. With the construction of the Coonalpyn Downs water system the same circumstances apply because the main runs parallel to the railway line. It is now covered by section 121. I think it is only reasonable that a provision that applies to Eyre Peninsula should apply also to the Coonalpyn Downs water district. I have no objection to it.

While offering my support of the Bill, I am a little concerned about the application of the minimum charge as it affects certain allotments in defunct country towns, as provided in the principal Act. There are allotments in some places (I am speaking of towns that have ceased to exist, which abound in the country) where, because of changed circumstances, the actual owning of an allotment becomes a liability. I have in mind one such place with which I am familiar because I happen to be a co-trustee. This is a property of only half an acre, a small area, that once accommodated a store, an unofficial post office and a telephone exchange, and it was supported by agencies for wheat and barley buying. It provided a good livelihood for a family. I know the family that lived there. The children grew up and were sent to school. They have all been supported from the earnings from this little local store. Bulk silos have been established at towns on either side of this place and this business has ceased. The local school has been closed and now the children are collected by bus to go to nearby towns on either side of the place, according to circumstances. An automatic telephone exchange has been erected consisting of the typical little places in the country where windmills are used to generate electricity. The property once supported a family but today it is completely unsalable. It has been closed for about 12 years. It has been offered for sale but there have been no offers for it. Yet, it has commanded a minimum rate as high as $12; I think it is now $8, although I stand to be corrected on that. I am relying on memory for that, because I was not the trustee who actually handled the property. Anyway, the estate has petered out and, as far as I am concerned as a trustee, the property will not be transferred because it is not worth the cost of transferring it. It is a liability. Yet, the only section in the Act to deal with these circumstances (I am not complaining about it) is section 98, which sets out the position when rates are not paid. It states:

(1) If any water rates in respect of any land or premises are in arrear for the space of two years, the Commissioner may cause to be published three times in the *Government Gazette* a notice, in the form prescribed by by-law under this Act.

Then it goes on to state:

(2) If, after one year from the last publication of the notice, all or any part of the water rates due at the time of the first publication thereof are still unpaid, the Commissioner may—

(*a*) let such land or premises from year to year, and may receive the rents and apply the same towards the payment of the water rates and the

costs and expenses, and hold any surplus for the owners of the land or premises.

That is all right where there is a property worth something; otherwise it is no good to anybody. The section continues:

(*b*) by petition to the Supreme Court or any judge thereof, apply for a sale of the lands described in such notice, or of so much thereof as may be necessary.

Then a list of procedures is given. A report to a judge is involved. This is the only thing I can see in it. It is all right with a property that has some value but where something worthless is involved, what is the purpose of it? It is no use to anybody. A person has to default in payment simply because it is not worth going on with it and paying out money that amounts to more than the original value of the land. The building concerned is probably being demolished, because white ants are getting into it. It is better to knock it down, because now it is only a menace and an eyesore.

I know the position exists in many places throughout the country. Nobody has yet found an answer to the problem of decentralization. The section is equitable under normal circumstances, but I can find nothing in the Act to permit voluntary surrender to the Crown. If it is worth nothing to the Crown, or anybody else, it should not be the subject of tax. There appears to be no power for anybody to deal with the matter, and it is difficult to imagine anybody saying, "I don't want this any more; I cannot give it away—you can have it. I cannot accept the liability imposed under the Act." I wish I could suggest an amendment to overcome the problem. It would not matter if the land represented an asset, but the problem I refer to is not related to that position.

The land is rendered more useless because it is hemmed in on one side by a railway line, together with a row of empty cottages, and on the other side by a house which I believe will soon be occupied by the widow of the previous occupier. That person is returning owing to her advancing years. Next to the house is a school, belonging to the Government, and it would be under no obligation to pay rates. The land would be unsuitable as farmland because its area is only half an acre. It would not be practicable to use normal farm implements on such a small area.

As I have said, I cannot find anything in the Act to solve the problem. I have given details to the Minister. Unfortunately, anybody can earn the right to have his name published in the *Government Gazette* for non-payment of rates. I hope that something can be done to cope with a position that is completely unfair and impossible. This matter is not mentioned in the Bill, but is referred to in the principal Act. I support the Bill.

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

HOUSING AGREEMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from July 28. Page 750.)

The Hon. A. J. SHARD (Chief Secretary): I thank honourable members for permitting this Bill to pass the second reading stage today. The Hon. Mr. Hill sought some information during the second reading debate, and I have obtained the following detailed reply for him:

Clause 4 refers to expenses incurred by the State which, in accordance with clause 16 (2) of the agreement, may be met from the Home Builders' Account. The arrangements previously agreed between the Treasurer and the Commonwealth Minister provided that the State should lend the moneys from the account to the lending institutions at a rate of interest of not more than three-quarters per cent above the rate at which the Commonwealth makes the advances to the State. That provision, of course, limits the margin available for the State's expenses. However, at present the lending rate to the institutions is only one-half per cent above the rate upon Commonwealth advances, and of that margin only one-eighth per cent is being drawn as a recoup of the State's expenses. The remainder is left in the account for further lending through the institutions for home builders, and has, in fact, been lent to home builders, as the object is to arrange regular and full usage of the funds available for lending. The present expectation is that the current rate of drawing to cover State expenses, which is equal to one-eighth per cent per annum of aggregate funds advanced, will continue to be adequate, and that an increasing balance will be lent to home builders. This forms a reserve which could ultimately be called upon if necessary to meet any losses which may impinge on the State through Home Builders' Account operations in less favourable times. At June 30, 1966, the reserve undrawn by the State on account of the administration margins and lent to home builders was $1,186,413. There is no intention or expectation that any part of this amount might be withdrawn for the benefit of State revenue, for in accordance with the agreement it can only be drawn upon to cover the State's expenses in connection with the Home Builders' Account.

As to the proportions in which the $20,750,000 to be received under the agreement in 1966-67 will be allotted to the Housing Trust and to the Home Builders' Account, these will be advised when the Loan Estimates are introduced shortly. It is anticipated that there will be little alteration of the earlier proportions, and that when repayments available for

re-spending are brought to account both the trust and the Home Builders' Account will be rather better off than last year.

No funds whatsoever which are received under the agreement are used by the Housing Trust for purposes outside the agreement. The purchase of land for schools, expenditure for roadmaking, for shops, for industrial purposes, for public utility services and the like, are all covered from funds secured by the trust from its own direct borrowing as a semi-governmental authority, or from profits, or from recoveries of funds which originally came from the State Loan Account or from earlier semi-governmental borrowing. The State has never sought the approval of the Commonwealth Minister in accordance with clause 12 (*b*) of the agreement to be permitted to use agreement moneys toward the cost of public utility services, and present plans do not contemplate the use of agreement funds in that way, at least in the immediate future.

I hope that this explanation is satisfactory and that the Bill will have a speedy passage through Committee.

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

UNDERGROUND WATERS PRESERVATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from July 28. Page 746.)

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Southern): I support this measure, although I have one or two queries that I should like the Minister to answer. This matter of the deterioration, contamination and conservation of underground waters in South Australia has had a rather checkered history. A Bill that was similar in context to this was introduced in 1957 and lapsed in the House of Assembly. In 1959, a further Bill was introduced and passed both Houses. That Bill dealt only with the prevention of contamination and deterioration of underground water. It did not relate specifically to conservation.

In dealing with any matter of this nature, one can only reflect upon the development of South Australia. As all honourable members know, we have limited resources, and I think we all agree that the development of any State depends upon the economic utilization of its natural resources and that the first and most important of the resources that any State can possess is an adequate supply of water. South Australia, because it does not enjoy a heavy rainfall, has utilized its underground supplies, as is logical for a dry State. There is need to conserve these supplies as well as to conserve the surface water. Much work has been done already to assess the quantity of underground water available in the State, and I commend the work of officers of the Mines Department, who have published much excellent material. However, I consider that insufficient work has been done so far and that much more information is required regarding underground supplies and the quantity of water available for use. I hope that the work of assessing our resources will be expedited by the department.

I consider that legislation along the lines of this Bill is necessary, but we must be sure that we do not impose the unnecessary controls, restrictions and red tape that go with much of this type of legislation. People are often compelled to fill in all sorts of forms when, in point of fact, there is not much necessity for them to do so. I consider that some legislation dealing with the conservation of underground supplies and the prevention of contamination is necessary. We in South Australia should be extremely thankful for the foresight, knowledge and method by which our finances have been handled, because this has enabled us to do probably more in regard to water conservation than any other State in the Commonwealth has been able to achieve.

When we consider the availability of water in some of our sister States and the limited amount of conservation work and development that has been done there in regard to those resources, we can take much pride in the development that has taken place here. Even the Premier said recently on television that, I think, about 96 per cent of the people of South Australia can turn on a Government tap and receive mains water. I think that bears out that previous Governments in this State have dealt with the matter of stewardship very effectively. In future, more reliance must be placed on underground resources and their orderly development. Some control is necessary to ensure that these resources are not overdrawn.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin said that, in the development of water reticulation in the State, we are already relying heavily on underground supplies for town water, and there is no need for me to repeat the towns concerned. Not only are we reliant on underground supplies for town water, but we also rely on them for part of our irrigation water, almost all our stock water, and for the development of the pulp industry in the South-East. That industry is completely reliant on adequate resources of underground water and the two mills, Apcel

and Cellulose, are drawing millions of gallons a day.

We have always considered supplies in the South-East to be inexhaustible but, as a result of the heavy draw by the pulp industry (and it is reasonable to assume that the draw will increase as the industry grows), many bores that were drawing water at 20ft. for many years have had to be deepened to 90ft. in the last year. I am not saying that this is entirely due to usage by the mill, but it is rather strange that this year, after the very heavy draw by the pulp industry, most of the bores in the area have had to be deepened to about 90ft. We also have the problem of contamination of the underground supplies. The pulp industry and other industries always have vast quantities of effluent (50,000 gallons a day in the case of one of the pulp mills) that must be disposed of, and it is necessary to ensure that this does not reach the underground water and contaminate it. Therefore, it is vitally necessary to have control on the questions of contamination and deterioration.

In the eastern division of the South-East there is a vast potential for irrigation. That subject has been dealt with by various speakers, notably my colleague, the Hon. Mr. Kemp, during the debate on the Address in Reply. This water is in the stratum known as the Knight sands and was the area referred to by Mr. Kemp when he said that 250,000 acres could be developed by means of the water in this area. This is the water, I believe, that is drawn off in the Kingston area by artesian bores. Some 10 or 12 years ago there were very few artesian bores in the western division of the South-East. Many of the artesian wells in this area flow for the full 12 months; they are not capped or controlled, and while it is not doing any harm at this stage, there is no reason why water of this type should be completely wasted. I consider that any artesian bore put down should be recorded, capped and fitted with a valve. I cannot see any excuse for allowing water to escape without being used for its proper purpose.

There are large reserves in the Padthaway-Keppoch Basin that are being drawn on. We have no informtaion as to where this water is coming from, how it is being replenished, or how long we can go on drawing water from this basin. Although I have mentioned that quite a lot of work has already been done by the Department of Mines by assessing the potential of these underground reserves, I consider there is a need for greater understanding of the potential supplies.

In the Keith area we have some difficulty where there are very small reserves of underground water. I think we all agree on the importance of the Tailem Bend to Keith main and that the completion of this main is of extreme importance to the area. It was with some concern that we learned that the completion of this main was to be deferred. I point out to the Government the necessity of taking stock water through that area as quickly as possible. One might even say that the Government, by deferring its scheme of taking water to the Keith area, has probably contributed not only to the retarding of the development of this area but to possible misuse of underground water in the area.

The first thing that concerns me a little is the removal, by clause 6 of the Bill, of the advisory committee. This advisory committee was included in the 1959 Bill—legislation that was never proclaimed. At that stage all members of this Council agreed that an advisory committee was necessary. The scope of the Bill is being enlarged to take into question conservation, as well as contamination and deterioration, yet this advisory committee, which under the original Bill was to act as an advisory committee on contamination and deterioration, has been removed. I should like the Minister to deal with that question a little more fully, and give the reasons why, in this context, an advisory committee is no longer thought necessary. I consider that, with the wider scope of this Bill, an advisory committee is probably needed more now than it was previously.

There is another question on which I should like some information. The Bill includes in the definitions a new definition of "prescribed depth". Subclause (*d*) of clause 6 states:

"prescribed depth", in relation to a well, means the prescribed depth for the particular area in which the well is situated.

Section 5 of Part II deals with the question of wells, and states:

The Governor may, by regulation—

(*a*) Prescribe any part of the State defined or indicated as a defined area for the purposes of this Act;
(*b*) Alter any such defined area;
(*c*) Abolish any such defined area;
(*d*) Exempt from the provisions of this Act or any part thereof any well of less than a prescribed depth for the particular area in which the well is situated.

I cannot see that there is any need for a power to exempt from the provisions of the Act a well shallower than the prescribed depth. Turning to section 21 of Part III, dealing with well drillers, we find:

(1) A person shall not—

(*a*) construct a well to a depth greater than the prescribed depth;

(*b*) deepen or enlarge a well so that it becomes deeper than the prescribed depth;

(*c*) deepen or enlarge a well which is already deeper than the prescribed depth;

(*d*) remove, replace, alter or repair the casing or lining of a well which is deeper than the prescribed depth,

unless he holds a driller's licence of the kind appropriate to the well or is working under the personal supervision of a person holding such a licence.

Under Part III a driller does not need a licence if he is boring to a depth shallower than the prescribed depth. These provisions seem to need some explanation. I consider that the prescribed depth has been included in the definition clause without a realization of its application to other parts of the principal Act. Clause 11 of the Bill states:

(1) Every artesian well shall be capped or equipped with valves so that the flow of water can be regulated or stopped.

I do not think there is any argument with that provision. New section 20b states:

No person shall—

(*a*) cause or allow or suffer any underground water from a well to run to waste.

Referring once again to the definition of artesian well, the Bill states:

"artesian well" means a well from which water flows naturally to the surface of the land, together with all works constructed or erected in connection therewith;

In many parts of South Australia there are wells that flow over the top for a short period of the year, possibly two or three weeks, but some for as long as one, two, three or four months. Under the "definitions" clause of this Bill, all these wells are going to be classified as artesian wells. The Minister is shaking his head, and perhaps he may be able to inform me why this is not so.

The Hon. H. K. Kemp: Does this apply to natural springs? What if they want to improve the wells?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: If they wanted to improve the wells, I am sure they would come under this definition; but a natural spring does not come under the definition of an artesian well. To me, the definition of an artesian well is a bore that flows at any time of the year. If a well flows for three or four weeks of the year, in my opinion it is still defined as an artesian well. Many bores are not artesian wells.

The Hon. C. R. Story: There could be a tidal influence?

The R. C. DeGARIS: Yes; there could be a tidal influence as well. The definition in this Bill is too wide. Clause 11 enacts new section 20b, paragraph (*a*) of which states:

Cause or allow or suffer any underground water from a well to run to waste.

I think some saving clause is required in this regard. There is the instance I have just given of bores put down which are pumped for 10 months of the year, and for the other two months they flow over the top. A person is breaking the law by allowing this to happen. The Bill is concerned with the fact that any underground water—

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: Where you have a well today, you may have an artesian well tomorrow, depending on whether you deepen that well and strike an artesian flow of water.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: That is not my interpretation of the Bill. I seek the Minister's assurance on some of these questions. From my reading of the Bill, an artesian well is defined as any well from which water flows naturally at any time of the year, no matter whether it is in the depth of winter, when the water table is above the top of the well or tidal influence. This is classified as an artesian well. I refer to my original remarks, when I said that I hoped that this Bill did not introduce unnecessary controls where I thought controls were not necessary.

The Hon. L. R. Hart: This would have to be in a defined area.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Not necessarily. Clause 11 of the Bill applies generally, and not in a defined area. It deals with artesian wells, which need not be in an area defined by regulation. However, by and large, I approve of the ideas behind this Bill but I ask the Minister to look at the few points I have raised. I hope he will give me some answer to them. I support the second reading.

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

NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from July 28. Page 742.)

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Leader of the Opposition): This Bill is really an amendment to the legislation we passed in the last session relating to the constitution of the Nurses Registration Board. As stated in the Minister's second reading explanation, an alteration is

made in respect of the five nominations to be made under section 5 of the principal Act, which, as amended, states:

Five shall be nominated by the Royal Australian Nursing Federation (S.A.) Branch—(*a*) one of whom shall be a registered psychiatric nurse or registered mental deficiency nurse elected by members who are registered psychiatric nurses or registered mental deficiency nurses, as the case may require.

This provision, as at present worded, has been deemed to override what Parliament intended—that the nominee shall be elected by registered psychiatric nurses or registered mental deficiency nurses. It is apparent that the purpose of this Bill is only to give effect to what we thought was being enacted and what was agreed upon at the time. I myself had something to do with the negotiations with the Minister on this special clause. That is the only real amendment effected by the Bill; as far as I can understand it, the other is consequential. Therefore, I have no criticism to offer of the amendment. It simply gives effect to what was decided on last session and I support the Bill as introduced by the Minister.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.25 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, August 3, at 2.15 p.m.