LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday, February 18, 1969

The PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

PETITIONS: TRANSPORTATION STUDY

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL presented two petitions signed by 113 residents of the St. Peters and College Park area alleging that the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study Report will not accomplish any material advantages in the matter of traffic facilities, will force many thousands of citizens out of their homes and will be more costly than alternative schemes.

Received and read.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL presented three petitions signed by 141 residents of the St. Peters and College Park area stating that those people consider that the Hills Freeway proposal contained in the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study Report will bisect the College Park area, which they consider to be one of the choicest parts of the metropolitan area.

Received and read.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL presented two petitions signed by 57 residents of the St. Peters and College Park area alleging that the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study Report will not meet Adelaide's anticipated transport needs as it does not fully cover all aspects involved in the plan, that human rights have been ignored, and that the plan is premature and is causing considerable unnecessary anxiety and worry to property owners and occupiers.

Received and read.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL presented two petitions signed by 103 residents of the St. Peters and College Park area alleging that the Modbury Freeway, planned in the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study Report, will spoil the section of the river in that locality and its planned improvement, will necessitate the acquisition of many comparatively new dwellings and will detrimentally affect many others.

Received and read.

QUESTIONS

TRANSPORTATION STUDY

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: It has come to my notice that the Highways Department has already acquired a considerable amount of property for proposed freeways. In view of this, will the Minister of Roads and Transport say whether the Government intends to proceed with the M.A.T.S. Report, regardless?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: A decision has not yet been reached on the Government's intention regarding the M.A.T.S. Report.

DOGS

The Hon. L. R. HART: Has the Minister of Local Government a reply to the question I asked in relation to the registration of dogs owned by Aborigines?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Inquiries have been made regarding the number of dogs registered by Aborigines as a result of the recent change to the Registration of Dogs Act. I have been informed that, generally speaking, Aborigines on reserves have registered their dogs. However, Aborigines living outside of reserves present a problem, and I am unable to check whether the Act is being complied with. Registrars of dogs are aware of the legislation.

PENSIONERS' CONCESSIONS

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: My question relates to a question I asked last week about pensioners' concessions. With your permission, Mr. President, I wish to quote in part the reply that was made available to the Minister. He said that the concession offered by Wadmore's Coach Lines for aged pensioners was more than other applicants were prepared to grant and that, in view of the greatly reduced fares which obtained, the manager of Wadmore's Coach Lines was not prepared to extend the present concession. I am informed that in each case the publicity in the Barossa Valley referred to pensioners and not to just one category of pensioners. I have also been informed since I spoke to the Minister about this matter that the concession to invalid pensioners was granted until the end of January, when it was cut out. I understand that the Government's intention (I am subject to correction here) was that all those pensioners who were eligible for railway concession fares would be eligible for concessions on road lines. If, after he has received the contract, it is possible for a contractor to reduce the pensioners' concessions to one category, will the Minister indicate whether it will be Government policy to allow this to happen with future contracts, such as for the Adelaide to Moonta line?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I think the first step in this matter is for my officers to discuss this whole question again with Wadmore's Coach Lines, after which I can deal

with it further. However, the Manager of Wadmore's Coach Lines is absent from the city and is not expected to return until Thursday next, February 20, when the matter of concession fares for all pensioners will again be referred to him.

DRUGS

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Can the Minister of Health tell me of the estimated incidence of addiction to hard and soft drugs in South Australia?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I do not know whether I have the actual figures at my fingertips but I can give some figures for the honourable member's information. Recently, the Act has been changed in respect of the possession of drugs, both hard and soft. Since that change, there have in 12 months been eight cases of prosecutions under the Police Offences Act. As far as we in this State are concerned, the incidence of drug addiction is not as serious as it is in the other States, although we must be prepared for situations similar to those that have developed in other countries. However, I will make some inquiries and try to get more information for the honourable member.

BUSH FIRES

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: I desire to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Agriculture.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: The Minister for National Development (Mr. Fairbairn) made a press statement earlier this week when he called for a major bush fire control programme during the autumn and winter months of this year in order to try to curb the incidence of major bush fires such as have occurred in various parts of Australia. The water catchment area in the Flinders Ranges extends to some 10,000 acres in which no grazing is permitted by the Engineering and Water Supply Department. This country adjoins the Wirrabara forest country. Because of the high fire potential of this catchment area, will the Minister seriously reconsider adopting some of the controlled burning of undergrowth and scrub, as the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization and Mr. Fairbairn have suggested, in order to try to reduce the heat from this particular part of the country?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Mention of this area arises as a result of the Forestry Council meeting held in Canberra recently. It has been decided by the State Ministers and the Commonwealth that a meeting shall be held (I think in June) when this whole matter of fuel, such as he refers to, and any forestry decision will be examined. Much progress has been made, particularly in the Canberra forests and in Western Australia. The Conservator of Forests returned just before Christmas after having looked at what has been done in Western Australian forests. I am interested in the subject. As far as the problem to which the honourable member has referred is concerned, I will have to take it up with the Minister of Works, whose responsibility it is to attend to the 10,000 acres in that area, but I will liaise with the Minister and see whether a joint effort on the part of the two departments can take place.

TATTOOING

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: I seek leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Chief Secretary.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: There has been more than one report recently of children having tattoo marks impressed upon their bodies. That has usually been done as a result of a dare, and the children are unaware of the physical and emotional consequences that may result. It is incorrect for a fully qualified surgeon to operate upon a minor, except in a very acute emergency, without the permission of a parent or guardian. Can the Chief Secretary inform me of the position that exists with a tattoo artist plying his craft upon the bodies of young boys and girls?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I am not sure of the situation regarding the tattooing of minors, but I believe it is difficult for a minor in South Australia to get a tattooist to make tattoos upon his body.

The Hon. H. K. Kemp: That is not so.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I am not sure of the legal position, but I will make inquiries and bring back a reply for the honourable member.

M.T.T. BUSES

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: I seek leave to make an explanation before asking a question of the Minister of Transport.

Leave granted.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: This morning I was somewhat alarmed to read in a newspaper that the Municipal Tramways Trust is ordering another 142 buses, popularly known as "Barker's buses" (I do not know if they will now become known as "Ramsay's buses").

The fact remains (and this is a fact—I am not arguing the case) that the buses are more than the normal width of all other motor vehicles in the State, or in most other States. In addition, they are privileged vehicles not even allowed to go into certain areas of the Adelaide Hills. The buses have an excessive turning radius that causes many problems in traffic, and they have been the subject of much condemnation with regard to clear running on the Anzac Highway because of the absence of parking bays there.

Honourable members can go outside this Council Chamber and ascertian for themselves the turning movement required in order to enter and leave parking bays in one of the widest streets in the State, King William Street. In view of the great concern of people over improving transportation methods today, will the Minister immediately take up the matter of the specifications of these buses and see that they are more practicable for use in this city?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I will take up that matter for the honourable member and bring back a report on these specifications as they apply to the new buses. I understand that one similar bus has been on trial in Adelaide during the last month or two, and I presume if that trial has proved successful that that is the final reason for the decision announced today. However, I will obtain all the information the honourable member seeks and bring it back to this Council.

EDUCATION SUBSIDIES

The Hon. L. R. HART: Has the Minister of Local Government obtained from the Minister of Education a reply to my recent question about subsidizing governesses employed in outback areas?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: My colleague reports:

In South Australia it is usual practice to open a school where there is an assured enrolment of eight or more children. Several schools have recently been opened on station properties with numbers similar to this. Where numbers are insufficient for a school to be established correspondence lessons are regularly forwarded from the South Australian Correspondence School.

In addition, schools of the air have been established at Port Augusta and Alice Springs to complement the correspondence lessons. Under these conditions it is not considered that governesses should be subsidized.

RECEIPTS TAX

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: Has the Chief Secretary a reply to my recent question about the extra staff necessary to administer the new receipts tax?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: The present assessment by the Public Service Board is that the additional staff required by the State Taxes Department to administer the receipts duty legislation will not exceed 25.

TROUBRIDGE

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: Has the Minister of Roads and Transport a reply to my recent question about the *Troubridge*?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The Government is fully conscious of the needs of residents of Kangaroo Island as well as those of Eyre Peninsula. Discussions are currently being held between the Government and the Adelaide Steamship Company, the owner of the *Troubridge,* on the future of this service.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: Has the Minister of Roads and Transport a reply to my recent question about safety features on locomotives hauling the Overland?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: My reply relates also to some emergency services on South Australian trains generally. The undermentioned doors are at present fitted into passenger cars operating on the South Australian Railways:

The Overland and the Port Pirie service: Two side doors in the vestibule end of the car, together with a communicating door at each end leading to adjacent cars. These cars are fitted with a vestibule at one end only.

Country railcars: These vehicles are fitted with a vestibule at each end, together with two side doors at each vestibule, as well as end communicating doors. In addition the 250 class railcars have two baggage doors in the side of the car.

Suburban railcars: 300 and 400 class suburban cars are fitted with six side doors, together with a communicating door at each end.

Brake vans used on suburban cars: Fitted with two end doors in each compartment, together with a baggage door on each side of the car.

Emergency equipment is carried in the brake vans of all trains to assist in forcing entry into passenger cars should this become necessary. The situation with regard to doors is fairly common throughout the whole of the Australian railways.

NUCLEAR POWER

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: Has the Minister of Agriculture obtained from the Minister of Works a reply to my question about nuclear power?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: The honourable member asked me to ask my colleague about the possibility of Whyalla being considered as a site for any nuclear power development that occurs in this State. He reports:

The Minister for National Development (the Hon. David Fairbairn, M.H.R.) has indicated that he proposes to visit Adelaide shortly to discuss with the Minister of Works the whole question of nuclear power and the establishment of a suitable plant. Mr. Fairbairn intends to have discussions with each State on this subject. The Government will press the claims of South Australia for such a project, including the use of surplus electrical energy for desalination purposes. The case for Whyalla will be presented, together with that for other localities.

TOURISM

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: Has the Minister of Agriculture obtained from the Minister of Immigration and Tourism a reply to my question about the allocation of money to the tourist industry?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: My colleague reports:

Whilst no firm decision has been made, the present thinking is that if more money can be made available for the promotion of the travel industry in this State it will be used in the following ways:

1. More Government financial aid to local governing authorities for the provision of tourism facilities.
2. More research and planning.
3. More advertising and promotion.

The final answers depend, of course, on the extra finance which can be made available.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORT

The PRESIDENT laid on the table the report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence, on Hallett Cove to Willunga Railway Line.

PUBLIC PARKS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Read a third time and passed.

WHEAT INDUSTRY STABILIZATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

SUPREME COURT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. C. M. HILL (Minister of Local Government): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It is designed to increase the rates of salary paid to the Chief Justice and the puisne judges. The rates of salary were last fixed by the Supreme Court Act Amendment Act (No. 1), 1966, at $16,600 a year for the Chief Justice and $14,900 a year for each puisne judge. Since that Act was passed, all other States are either reviewing the salaries payable to puisne judges or have granted their puisne judges substantial increases of salary and allowances.

All the judges in South Australia are paying as contributions towards pension a proportion of their salary. No other State requires contributions from judges for pension rights, and account has always been taken of this fact when determining the level of judges' salaries in this State.

The Government has taken these factors into consideration, and it proposes that the salary of the Chief Justice be increased by $2,800 a year from $16,600 to $19,400 a year and that the salaries of the puisne judges be increased by $2,600 a year from $14,900 to $17,500 a year. This Bill gives effect to these proposals.

The amendments proposed by this Bill are contained in clause 2, which amends section 12 of the principal Act. Paragraph (*a*) of the clause strikes out subsection (1) of the section and inserts in its place a new subsection, the effect of which is to ensure that the present salaries of the judges will remain in force until the Bill becomes law, when the increased rates will apply. Paragraph (*b*) is consequential on the amendment effected by paragraph (*a*), and paragraph (*c*) corrects an error that appears in the principal Act, the effect of which was to deem the increased rates of salary "to have come into force for all purposes (including contributions for pension and rights to pension) on the date of commencement of this Act", namely, the Supreme Court Act, 1935, which came into force in 1937. By paragraph (*c*) it is provided that the new rates of salary will take effect when the Bill becomes law.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Central No. 1): I support the second reading. The Bill provides for increasing the salaries of the Chief Judge of the Supreme Court and the puisne judges. I think it is justified, bearing in mind the last review made by Parliament of the

salaries of judges and the length of the transitional period, especially in view of what has taken place with salary relativity as applying to officers holding statutory appointments, and also interstate relativities.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER (Central No. 2): I, too, support the second reading. There is a regular Parliamentary review of salaries of judges of the Supreme Court and other officers holding statutory appointments. I think it is recognized by all honourable members that before such a Bill is introduced an examination of the position is made by competent officers of the Government. Comparisons are made of salaries that apply in other States and all other conditions of service applying to judges and other statutory officers are fully considered. The judges of our Supreme Court carry very heavy responsibilities, heavier than those of any other office in this State. They work extremely hard and would be earning more than they are now paid had they continued in private practice.

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

POULTRY PROCESSING BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from February 13. Page 3590.)

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE (Central No. 1): My colleagues and I support the second reading of this Bill. Under a private enterprise system, where the profit motive is the paramount concern, it is inevitable that the avaricious operator will find a means to exploit the consumer and thereby increase his own profit, and it does not surprise me that some people have found a way to sell frozen water to the public disguised as chicken. However, for a Government that has for its policy a "hands off private enterprise" attitude, it does surprise me that it has taken action to control such exploitation of the consumer.

We have always been told by the supporters of this Government that unrestrained competition between individuals always produces and maintains a better article and that because of this it is not necessary to place any control on private enterprise. However, now we see that the Government has had to agree that such control is needed. Although surprised, I am nonetheless pleased to see that this Bill has been introduced to prevent at least some of the frozen water being sold to the unsuspecting public.

My Party has been concerned about this matter for some time. Indeed, it was the previous Minister of Agriculture (Hon. G. A. Bywaters) who presented to the Australian Agricultural Council certain facts regarding the problems of the poultry processing industry. It was agreed that South Australia should examine the question, carry out tests, and later bring down a draft model Bill. Despite this, Victoria was able to bring in legislation before we did. Because of the change of Government here, our Bill was not ready as early as was expected. Legislation similar to that now before us was introduced into the Victorian Parliament in November last year.

Mr. Bywaters told the Agricultural Council that processors of fresh and frozen chickens in this State were complaining about the unfair competition on the South Australian market from frozen chickens from other States that contained excessive quantities of water compared with the locally processed article. I have been told that the Agriculture Department in this State purchased from retail stores 20 samples of interstate and local brands of frozen chicken. Carcasses were then thawed for 24 hours at a temperature of 68 degrees Fahrenheit, and the loss of water from interstate brands averaged from 7.8 per cent to 10 per cent whereas that from the local brands averaged 3.1 per cent to 7.1 per cent.

Under this thaw test, all the water introduced into the bird is not recovered, although I understand that this type of test is the basis of the Tasmanian legislation, which explains why the allowable percentage in that legislation is the lower figure of 5 per cent. The Victorian Minister of Agriculture (Hon. G. L. Chandler), when introducing the Poultry Processing Bill in the Legislative Council in that State, said that investigations in Victoria showed that a similar situation existed there. Thawing tests on three samples from New South Wales showed average water losses of 9.3, 10.3 and 12 per cent. One sample from Queensland averaged 11 per cent, while the Victorian brands averaged 6.5, 8.6, 10.8, 3.8, 5, and 4.7 per cent.

Each of these figures represents the average percentage water loss from a sample group of individual frozen chickens. There are wide variations between individual chickens in each of these groups, with some individual packs losing up to 20 per cent water on thawing. Last year the consumer journal *Choice* also drew attention to the matter. This journal, published in Sydney, set out the results of

exhaustive tests, and according to the journal the water content of some samples was as high as 22½ per cent.

The average cost of frozen chicken is about 40c a lb. We have been talking about the unfair competition created by processors in other States introducing to the local market frozen birds with an excessive water content. The water content in these chickens from other States represents a profit almost equivalent, if not entirely so, to the whole of the freight cost expended on bringing these chickens to the South Australian market. This is why local processors maintain that there is unfair competition.

I agree that this has been happening, but what about the effects on the consumer? A consumer who was unlucky enough to purchase a frozen chicken with a 22½ per cent water content would be paying a considerable amount for frozen water. I do not think this would be an isolated example of what has been going on in this industry. In purchasing what to all appearances would be a 3 lb. bird, one would in fact be buying, on the basis of a 22½ per cent water content, a bird containing 11oz. of water for which, of course, one would have to pay. If the bird cost 40c a lb., a person would pay 27c for water in a 3 lb. chicken, which is not a bad profit on frozen water, at the present price of water.

Although chicken processing has been a major industry in America for many years, it has reached major proportions in Australia only in recent years. There has been a rapid expansion in the industry, some of which may no doubt have been brought about by the high price of meat which, in turn, has been brought about by the disastrous droughts we have suffered in recent years. Having now taken over a considerable portion of the market, the poultry processors will probably retain it in this country. What was at one time in the average household a meal for a special occasion has now become commonplace. As an indication of the growth of this market in South Australia, Commonwealth statistics show that the amount of poultry meat sold in 1965-66 was 7,496,000 lb., in 1966-67 it was 10,363,000 lb., and in 1967-68 it was 12,219,000 lb. Probably a considerable quantity of this poultry would have been frozen chicken, and, when one considers the amount of water present in the chickens that have been tested, one wonders just how much water was contained in the figures I have quoted, or, if not in those figures, what was contained in that poultry meat when it was eventually sold to the public after processing.

As the Minister has said, the thaw test is not suitable as a test for determining the amount of water taken up. This was found to be the case in America. The test which was decided upon by the Agriculture and Chemistry departments in South Australia and which was described by the Minister is similar to that used in America, where the figure arrived at as a fair percentage of water content is the same as that contained in the Bill, namely, 8 per cent. I am informed that, under present-day processing, the finished bird is washed in cold water and then spun in iced water. In this process the bird takes up water. Apparently, however, this can be controlled. This Bill limits the take-up of water to 8 per cent of the total weight of the finished product.

I am pleased to see that, as in the Victorian Bill, there is a provision so that, if regulations are formulated, another way in which the consumer may be charged for something he does not desire to purchase will be controlled. One finds on occasions that various internal organs of the chicken have been replaced inside the carcass of the frozen chicken after it has been cleaned. Although I have not experienced this, I have been told that on occasions even the legs have been included and, of course, this all adds to the chargeable weight. Provisions have been made that regulations may be issued making it mandatory that the pack containing the frozen chicken have imprinted on the outside what the carcass does or does not contain. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

The Hon. L. R. HART (Midland): In supporting this Bill, I commend the Government for introducing it. I also congratulate the Minister and the Agriculture Department on being given the task of preparing model legislation to be followed by the other States. I could not understand the Hon. Mr. Kneebone when he suggested that the Liberal Government was acting out of character in introducing legislation placing some control on private enterprise. Throughout the years Liberal Governments have always recognized that there is a need for control over various enterprises if there is a likelihood that malpractices will occur. However, the Liberal Party has always been against the unnecessary controls that Socialist Governments have introduced.

I think we all recognize that the registration of plants that process chicken meat is necessary. There are several reasons for this, one being the need to observe strict hygiene, which

is so necessary in dealing with this class of meat. That there has been a general acceptance by the processors vindicates the confidence placed in the Agriculture Department by the other States. In other words, the processors of chicken meat are in accord with this Bill.

The poultry industry has over the years been mainly a sideline industry but, as with many other industries today, specialists are entering into the field. When it was a sideline industry, demand usually exceeded supply, but with the advent of specialists into the field it was not long before supply outstripped demand. In recent years we have seen the number of processors in the field decline. We have also seen a take-over of a number of processors by interstate organizations. Once supply overtook demand, prices receded. Early in 1966 the average price of poultry was about 23c a lb. However, late in that year, due to the huge increase in production, the price had receded to 19c a lb. and even lower. Under these conditions it is virtually impossible for an inefficient producer to carry on and, if nothing else, the present situation has tended to weed out such persons. Indeed, a producer must now be extremely efficient to be able to survive.

I understand that one interstate-owned operator has about 70 per cent of the South Australian market. In March, 1967, a group of growers formed a co-operative and leased a processing works in an attempt to stabilize the industry. This group was subjected to many pressures during the first six months of its operation: inexperience and bad management of the plant, as well as an inability to compete with the price-cutting of large processors, created many problems. These things and some others eventually caused the co-operative to go into voluntary liquidation. Growers belonging to the co-operative group had an estimated investment in sheds and other equipment valued at just over $1,500,000. Since the closing of the co-operative many growers have been operating as contract growers to the large processors owned by interstate interests and are finding it difficult to make a living at the prices being offered. During 1966 some processors in other States in an endeavour to capture the local market began putting birds on to this market at below cost of production. To recover their costs, these people were processing their birds so as to retain a heavily loaded water content. This legislation is for the purpose of trying to combat this practice.

The Hon. Mr. Kneebone drew attention to the wide variation in the water content of samples of birds taken from the other States, but it must be recognized that every bird has a different water content prior to being dressed. A bird dressed in the hot weather has a lower original water content than a bird dressed in the cold weather. No doubt, this is one reason why there has been such a huge variation in the water content of the birds sampled. The introduction of this legislation will mean that alterations to many plants will be necessary. Some plants are operated so as to leave a certain water content in the bird, and some of these contents could well have been over the 8 per cent that will now be allowed. If this legislation is successful, it may well be extended to other foods capable of being processed with a high water content, such as crayfish, corned beef and green peas, but one thing we must ensure in this State is that the broiler chicken industry is not taken over by combines in other States.

At the moment we have only a relatively few processing plants not owned by interests in other States and overseas. Economics will dictate that production on a large scale in other States will be cheaper and will reduce overhead costs. It must also be remembered that over $2,500,000 worth of feed is used in the industry in this State, most of which is produced locally. In addition, there are over 2,000,000 day-old chickens hatched in South Australia, resulting in a huge consumer purchase that we cannot afford to lose to other States. Turning to the Bill itself, I want to make one or two comments. Clause 4 deals with definitions, the first of which is:

"Base weight" in relation to a carcass means the weight of the carcass as determined immediately before it comes into contact with water in the course of processing.

I think all honourable members are conversant with the method of processing a chicken: it is scalded prior to plucking, in which case, of course, it does come into contact with water. I do not think this legislation is meant to regard the base weight in that way, as that weight applies prior to the bird's coming into contact with water for the purpose of being plucked. The base weight should be taken after the bird is eviscerated or disembowelled. It is at that stage, the process of cleaning the bird with water under pressure (and, as the Hon. Mr. Kneebone says, with an iced water process as well) that the base weight should be taken. So I ask the Minister to look at this to see whether this definition of "base weight" can be amended in some way, possibly by inserting "after evisceration and" after "immediately". The definition would then read:

"Base weight" . . . means the weight of the carcass as determined immediately after evisceration and before it comes into contact with water in the course of processing.

I believe that that is the intention of the legislation, but the wording in this case is perhaps a little misleading.

Clause 6 deals with the appointment of inspectors. It does not here suggest any qualifications required by an inspector. I presume any person with a reasonable education could be employed as an inspector: there would be no need for him to have any meat inspection qualifications, as his only purpose here would be, possibly, to weigh the bird and determine its water content. I suggest we do not appoint an unnecessary number of inspectors because this, too, could add to the costs of the industry. In the United States of America they have found themselves in trouble by appointing an excessive number of inspectors, thereby adding unnecessary costs to the industry.

Clause 11 deals with the mode of registration. It sets out a provision for prescribing a fee for registration. Here, I should like some indication from the Minister whether this fee is a flat rate or a nominal fee, or whether it would be a fee based on some form of levy or on a sliding scale. I believe that in this case the fee should be only a nominal flat rate fee. Clause 12 deals with the weight gain exceeding 8 per cent. It provides:

Where an inspector by any prescribed method tests a prescribed number of carcasses in a plant . . .

We should spell out a little more clearly the prescribed number of carcasses. It must be recognized that a large plant would probably process more carcasses in an hour than a small plant would in a day or even a week, and the number of carcasses prescribed for a large plant may well be in excess of those it is necessary to prescribe for a small plant. However, generally, I support the Bill. It is perhaps necessary. I do not know that it is quite as overdue as the Hon. Mr. Kneebone has indicated. The birds that have been marketed in South Australia with an excessive water content have, I believe, mainly, if not entirely, come from other States. It is those that we are seeking to combat rather than our own.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE (Northern): I, too, support the Bill. It is necessary that legislation be passed to protect, as the Minister said in his second reading explanation, the housewife and the processor producing a good standard product. It is most obvious that the processors, whether from other States or not, have taken advantage of the water content in dressed poultry, even to the extent of 15 per cent, which is a large amount of water to buy in a fowl.

Previous speakers have dealt fairly thoroughly with the various clauses. The Hon. Mr. Hart made a point about inspectors, and I know that has raised some query among processors—whether the industry will be plagued by an over-loading of these officers. If this legislation is passed (as I sincerely hope it will be) it will give some protection to the public, so I believe few inspectors will be needed because people will be aware of their rights regarding allowable water content. It is not hard to see whether a plastic bag contains a lot of water.

I also raise the point that poultry processors are allowed to sell portions of the fowl's insides with the carcass. In many instances it is possible to buy a fowl that still has the giblets or portions of the fowl's insides in a separate packet inside the bird. No other carcass is sold in this manner; for instance, when buying a lamb from a butcher only the carcass is bought. If the purchaser wants to eat lamb's fry, then that is bought separately and the customer is not forced to buy it with the carcass. Nor should a person purchasing poultry have to buy portions of the fowl's insides with it. I hope the Minister will have something to say about this when he sums up the debate. I think the Hon. Mr. Hart, who has had considerable experience in the industry, did a remarkable job in bringing out all the points that were of most value to the people in the industry. I support the second reading.

The Hon. JESSIE COOPER (Central No. 2): In recent years the eating habits of our people have changed in many ways; we now have more exciting foods, particularly what we call continental products (some imported, but most produced locally). However, the most revolutionary change has come from the enormous growth in popularity of poultry as a main course. Gone are the days of "meat and two vegetables". The frozen chicken industry has flourished, but in recent years certain practices occurring in the processing have caused disquiet, not to say anger, amongst consumers.

Honourable members will see that in Part III clause 12 any weight gain of over 8 per cent will be an offence. The necessity to have this law introduced has come about because of the practice of adding considerably more than

8 per cent water to a chicken. In 1966, a Canberra publication reported that frozen chickens in the Canberra market contained up to 18.9 per cent water. In December, 1967, the magazine *Choice* brought out its report and the position was even worse—some examples were up to 21 per cent of water content, and so the figure of 8 per cent is a modest one. Other malpractices concerned the packaging of giblets, feet, and other spare parts inside the chicken—the Hon. Mr. Kneebone said that occasionly two or three hearts would be found in one bird—

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: Chicken hearts.

The Hon. JESSIE COOPER: Of course, you can buy chicken hearts for 25c a lb., and you may pay considerably more than that when hearts are packed inside a frozen bird. I was interested when the Hon. Mr. Kneebone said he had had no experience of getting legs with a carcass, but I would not buy a chicken without legs; I think he must have been talking about feet.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: I meant the lower portion of the bird.

The Hon. JESSIE COOPER: That is why it is understandable that this legislation has become necessary to protect both the consumer and the honest processor. It was, of course, necessary that this legislation should be made uniform throughout Australia. I therefore congratulate the Minister on all the preparatory work he has done in this matter, and I support the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 passed.

Clause 4—"Definitions."

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Minister of Agriculture): The Hon. Mr. Hart mentioned the definition of "base weight", and portion of it reads:

"Base weight" in relation to a carcass, means the weight of the carcass as determined immediately before it comes into contact with water in the course of processing.

Further down appears a definition of "carcass". At the point of "base weight" the bird is not a carcass because that does not occur until it is eviscerated; that is, cleaned to the point of being ready for processing. Therefore, the water uptake on the feathers will not come into it: it will not be exposed for the introduction of water at the base weight stage. I do not think this will create a problem.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: One speaker mentioned that if poultry is killed in the winter instead of in the summer there will be a difference in base weight because of there being less moisture in the area in summer time. From reading the definition of "base weight" and listening to the Minister's explanation, it seems that there is little variation at any time of the year in a carcass and little moisture content apart from the normal body content. The problem relates only to the water that gets into the carcass after the bird has been killed; it is not in relation to water the bird carries beforehand.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: The position is as the honourable member has stated. Variation in body weight, whether in hot or cold weather, does not matter while the bird is alive; it may have a little less in hot weather. Once the head is cut off and the process starts it is then that the water uptake commences. In the past we have had what one could term "smart practices". For instance, by slitting the tissue a good deal of water can be introduced. It is possible to do it by total immersion, by the spin-type method or by the old rocker-type method. The amount of water frozen in the bird depends on the method used. This was one of the problems. When I first started to negotiate on this matter the processors said it was completely impossible for them to freeze birds with only 8 per cent water content. However, they have since changed their thinking on this matter. The Hon. Mr. Kneebone referred to Tasmania, where a different system operates. There, processors use the thaw system, whereas we use the uptake system. Tasmanian processors work in accordance with a regulation under that State's Health Act, not directly in accordance with legislation, as we do. The net result is very similar. However, under our method we have a more accurate measure than the Tasmanians have.

Clause passed.

Clauses 5 to 10 passed.

Clause 11—"Mode of registration."

The Hon. L. R. HART: Can the Minister say on what basis the prescribed fee will be decided?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: It will be nominal. The whole purpose is to have registration, so that we have a means of seeing what things are happening.

Clause passed.

Clause 12—"Weight gain exceeding eight per centum."

The Hon. L. R. HART: I suggested earlier that we should have a better definition of the term "prescribed number of carcasses".

One plant may process 45,000 birds a day while another plant may process 45,000 birds a week. It seems wrong that the same number of birds should be taken as a sample from a large plant as from a small plant.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: This will be dealt with in the regulations. The present thinking is that it would be a minimum of 20 carcasses, and the number would be graduated according to the number of birds put through each day or each week.

Clause passed.

Clauses 13 to 19 passed.

Clause 20—"Regulations."

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I wish to deal with a point raised by the Hon. Mr. Kneebone, but I do not want to get involved in a political argument with my friend. I am sorry he got off the track today. I have had this legislation prepared as expeditiously as possible. Considering that my predecessor as Minister of Agriculture was working on it in 1966, I have not done so badly. This legislation will probably not come into operation until the other States have agreed to it.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: It is important that the other States agree.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Victoria was fortunate in that the Government had a decent majority in the Lower House, so it did not get bogged down with all sorts of extraneous matter. Consequently, it got its legislation through.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: You have a sympathetic Legislative Council.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Yes.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: The Minister said that enabling legislation would have to be passed throughout Australia. Earlier, in reply to the Hon. Mr. Hart, he referred to the different situation in Tasmania. Will it be necessary for Tasmania to alter its legislation?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: It is not as important for Tasmania because it does not process large quantities for export. It protects itself under regulations in regard to the inflow of chicken meat. It is important that at least three mainland States (South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales) have complementary legislation because they export to each other. Queensland is farther away, but there may be a problem in regard to trade between Queensland and New South Wales. I was notified that the New South Wales Government hoped to introduce legislation early this year, so I hope that it will be passed fairly soon. This matter will be discussed at the meeting of the Australian Agricultural Council in March.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

PHYLLOXERA ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from February 13. Page 3591.)

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD (Central No. 1): This Bill is necessary in order to bring the Act into line with modern knowledge regarding the variety of diseases that can occur in vines. Although it is a simple Act, it is necessary that it be amended from time to time as more scientific knowledge becomes available. I am sure that the present amendments are required as a result of research that has been undertaken. Therefore, I support the Bill.

The Hon. H. K. KEMP (Southern): I wish to speak briefly to this Bill because I think it is of such importance that some explanation is warranted. The important amendments are really only two in number. The first one is necessary because of the activities of the international Nomenclature Committee, which is going through all the Linngan classifications and frequently changing names to the original. In this case we have under consideration one of the most devastating diseases of grapevines, which is caused by an aphid-like insect feeding on the roots.

In our legislation it is called *phylloxera vastatrix*, but now these gentlemen have come along and said it is not that at all but that it is *viteus vitifoliae*. Therefore, the change in the Act has to be made. I point out to the Minister that in the *Hansard* pull on this subject a comma is misplaced, and I think the correction should be made before the record is published.

Regarding the second amendment, the Minister has glossed over some of the modern thinking and work which is having such a tremendous impact on the viticultural industry. It is work which a few years ago was just not thought of as a possibility, but today it looks like improving our vine yields, especially under irrigation, by unbelievable amounts—amounts which may easily double the production. It arises from two causes.

In the grapevine we have a plant which is vegetatively propagated, with the cuttings taken and struck. Within reasonable thinking one can say that a sultana grapevine growing on the Murray River today is part of the first sultana grapevine which I believe originated in Greece.

We have always taken these propagation methods as reproducing the parent exactly. They are part of the parent body reproducing exactly the characters of the parent. A few years ago, when looking at the yields of grapevines in a typical block of sultanas up in Mildura, workers from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization found tremendous variation from vine to vine in the yields of grapes produced, and it caused them to think, "Well, there is something wrong here."

The truth of the matter is that there was a great deal wrong. Regarding the variation in yield, although individual grapevines come from identical parent material, this proved to be well over 50 per cent. I think it could well be up to 200 per cent if the other base for expressing percentage is taken. The astonishing thing was that when the grapevines of high yield character were propagated separately, the difference perpetuated itself, and we now have a very high yielding selection of grapevines stemming from this original work. In varieties, this variation is proving to be very common indeed.

The Phylloxera Board has the duty not only of guarding us against the introduction of phylloxera but also, since the legislation was modified a year or two ago, of bringing to South Australia strains of the phylloxera-resistant stocks—the means by which phylloxera would be combated if ever it gained entry—and also grapevine varieties which are new to this State. These stocks must be clean and healthy so as not to endanger our grapevine industry. These are only a few words to describe complex work which is proving to be of tremendous moment.

In the late 1940's or possibly in the early 1950's we empowered the Phylloxera Board for the first time to bring in phylloxera-resistant stocks, which of course are a highly hazardous introduction to South Australia. We must take extreme precautions with them that the phylloxera insect is not introduced. However, when we got these here they were tested, I believe very largely out of curiosity, to see whether they carried virus disease. Practically all of the material which at that time was available to this State proved to be heavily virus-affected, and it would have been a very doubtful introduction indeed if we had got phylloxera and had to bring in these stocks which were kept in nurseries in another State ready for use.

The board was given power to test for these disorders, which were lying hidden in this stock material. This is a big feature of the work which has tremendous value to this State as a whole. If we can cut out these viruses and develop high-yielding strains together, the future of the grapegrowing industry will be tremendously different from what it is today.

Clause 3 of the Bill is indeed important. It makes it possible for all this work to proceed unhindered under the care of the body chiefly responsible: the Phylloxera Board. I strongly support the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—"Interpretation."

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Minister of Agriculture): The Hon. Mr. Kemp has raised an interesting point, and I agree that there is a slight discrepancy in my second reading explanation. I will, therefore, take the necessary action to have it corrected.

Clause passed.

Clause 3 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

PACKAGES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from February 13. Page 3589.)

The Hon. A. J. SHARD (Leader of the Opposition): I support this Bill, the sole purpose of which is to make the South Australian legislation uniform with that of the rest of the Commonwealth. It is usual for South Australia to follow the lead of other States but it is interesting that in this matter South Australia was the instigator in bringing this Australia-wide legislation up to date. I took an interest in the Bill and read the report of some speeches in another place, especially those of the present and past Ministers of Lands, who made some complimentary remarks about it. The Bill was accepted in another place with complete agreement.

It represents a compliment to the Warden of Standards in this State that after long negotiations in this matter uniformity throughout Australia has been achieved. I understand that this Bill will be of benefit not only to the manufacturers but of benefit to and a safeguard

for the consumers in that packages, weights and standards must be true to label, which has been so necessary for some time. With much pleasure I give my blessing to this Bill and wish it a speedy passage.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES (Northern): I support the Bill. It amends the principal Act because certain circumstances were not known at the time that legislation was dealt with. The quicker the legislation can be implemented throughout Australia the better. I was very enthusiastic about the Packages Bill in 1967, which prohibited terms like "King size", "Big dozen", "Big gallon" and other slogans that confused the gullible public. It appears to me that much labelling is still most inaccurate and most misleading. I hope the Minister can inform the Council when the legislation will be implemented throughout Australia.

It is a shame that in this world today we have to introduce legislation to tell the manufacturer or processor that he can use only certain types of name and that he can describe the packaging of his article only in certain ways. It is a shame that we have to spell these things out. I always believed that, if a manufacturer made a good product at a reasonable price, people would buy it and would know that the name was reputable and that there was a degree of honesty associated with it. It appears that, for every good article, there must be dozens of articles of more shoddy quality and at a different price that the people snap up. However, they find that they are not getting the type of service or quality that they deserve. The more foolish industry is the more Parliaments will have to legislate to restrict, control and spell out how industry should manage its dealings with the public. So, there is a great challenge to the processor and packager to be honest with himself when trying to sell his product.

In connection with other facets of marketing in Australia and in connection with marketing of oversea products, if these people put their heads in the sand Parliaments must legislate. I think it is to their detriment that they must be shown where the full stop shall be placed and that we must have a Warden of Standards who, on receiving an application, may approve a brand. It is beyond me why we have to do this. I am disappointed that the Minister has had to cede to the Warden of Standards his responsibility for approving a brand. It annoys me immensely that we must legislate in exactly the same way as do the other States. We are in a net and cannot get out of it. What happens when the South Australian Warden of Standards approves a package, design or brand comprising "letters and numerals allocated by him, specified in the notice"? If a manufacturer obtains the approval of the South Australian Warden of Standards, is that approval automatically recognized throughout Australia, or does that manufacturer, if he is sending goods to other States, have to register that brand with wardens there? If he has to do so, what happens if a warden in another State disapproves of a brand and suggests further alterations?

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: It would not be uniform legislation in that case, would it?

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: Will the set of rules observed by one warden conform to that observed by another? New section 15 (3) is confusing to me. It seems to mean that a person can go to a factory and buy a product, but the product does not have to be branded or to conform to the provision as long as it is to be used for human consumption by the person who purchases it. I cannot see why we should allow this small loophole. If we are going to tie these things up, let us tie them up all the way. If I go to a factory and take home a product for consumption, it does not have to be labelled or branded. Why does that same factory, when it sells to the shop across the road, have to label and brand its products according to the legislation? This does not make sense and one wonders whether, under the Health Act, we could not establish another set of arguments in relation to the same thing, particularly since the provision says that the product must be consumed by the purchaser. I am assuming that consumption means eating or use by human beings. Clause 9 and, to a certain extent, clause 10 cause me to ask when this legislation will be implemented. Clause 9 deals with the way a manufacturer or packer may stamp the weight on the package that he is selling. I understand that this clause deals with the problem of the weight of wool and things such as that which lose or gain moisture. Many articles, in addition to wool, which are still on the market in Adelaide have no weight marked on the packages containing them. The principal Act was assented to on November 16, 1967. I presume, since we still have packages containing such articles for sale in Adelaide that do not

have any weight marked on them, that the complementary legislation has not been enacted in other States. When will this legislation become operative? I think it is a pity that we have to treat everyone as though he is crook and that we have to spell out how a packer should sell or manufacture his product. I support the second reading.

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

WEEDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from February 13. Page 3592.)

The Hon. L. R. HART (Midland): I wish to speak only briefly on this Bill. We find it necessary from time to time to bring this Act before Parliament for revision and to bring it up to date, which is the main purpose of this Bill. Provision is contained in the Bill in relation to subsidizing an authorized weeds officer employed by a local government body. This amendment was inserted in the Act a few years ago, and it has been of great value to councils that weeds officers employed by them were subsidized to some degree. This has encouraged councils to employ weeds officers. The Act provided previously that such an officer had to be employed for at least 60 days a year, but pursuant to the amendment it is provided that he need be employed for only 50 days a year. Also, a council must obtain approval from the Minister before an additional officer can be employed and still qualify for subsidy. I do not think honourable members have any quarrel with that provision.

Another provision in the Bill brings within the scope of the Act certain areas which are at present outside local government areas and which are not now covered by the Weeds Act. Under the new provision, the City of Whyalla Commission and the Garden Suburb Commissioner fall within this definition. I believe this provision, too, to be necessary. Indeed, I wonder whether the whole of South Australia should not come under the Weeds Act, because there are many weeds in the State outside the area controlled by the councils and in due course those weeds will encroach on the more densely populated areas and get out of control. There are no particular matters in this Bill of which we complain. As I have said, it is necessary to bring the Act up to date, and I therefore support the second reading.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD (Central No. 1): The Hon. Mr. Hart said that the clause that will bring in the Whyalla City Commission and the Garden Suburb Commissioner was a good provision. However, under the Garden Suburb Act the Garden Suburb Commissioner is already operating under the Weeds Act, because section 23 of that Act provides:

. . . The Commissioner shall be deemed to be the corporation and the council of such municipality, and with respect to the suburb shall have and may exercise and discharge all the rights, powers, authorities, duties, liabilities, obligations and functions which by the said Act or any other Act are conferred and imposed upon the corporation and the council and, so far as the same are applicable, the mayor and the town clerk of a municipality.

The Garden Suburb Commissioner believes he already comes under the Weeds Act. This may clear up the position a little. The same thing may apply to the Whyalla City Commission Act; I do not know. The Garden Suburb Commissioner has not applied at any time for a subsidy, because he has not been involved to any great extent.

I do not think the amendment to the Act will bring any joy to the landowners or the occupiers simply because there will be a different method of assessing how much they will have to pay for weed destruction.

The Hon. L. R. Hart: It will bring great joy to the majority of landowners.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: It will not bring joy to any, because many landowners believe it is not their fault that weeds are on the roads adjoining their properties; they believe that these weeds are caused by outside intervention. Some good farmers look after their properties and attempt to keep them clean.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: So the honourable member has been out to look at them!

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Obviously, the Hon. Mr. Dawkins does not think so, but I cannot help that. Obviously, some conscientious farmers do the right thing and attempt to keep their properties clean, but a few months later they get an account from the local council for the destruction of weeds carried out by the council on the roadway abutting their property, which weeds could have been caused by stock travelling along that road or by seeds being blown from trucks—and, in some cases, even by the road graders used by the council stirring up the soil and allowing the seeds to germinate.

This Bill sets out a different method by which the owner of land abutting a road on which there are weeds can be charged. I am trying to track down the present method of charging used by councils. A charge is made according to the frontage of the land abutting a public roadway. From information I have received from various councils, it appears they are already, in effect, operating under the system proposed by this Bill; they have never operated under the system under which they were supposed to operate. This system whereby a council can charge the owner of land for the actual cost of destruction of weeds may be a better method than trying to work out some rate—

The Hon. L. R. Hart: But this has been in operation for some time.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I know that; that is the very point I make, but the fact remains that under the Weeds Act councils have been assessing landowners in a different manner from that in which they were entitled to assess him under the Act; they are already assessing him under this proposed system, with the result that perhaps some landowners will be able to make a back-claim on councils because they have been charged something not in accordance with the present Act. That is something else that the councils must face when it becomes known that they have not been observing the provisions of the present Act.

The Hon. R. A. Geddes: You mean that the councils have been charging landowners in the wrong way for the destruction of weeds?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I suggest that it would be practically impossible for the honourable member to tell me of a council that is not doing it in the way now proposed. I suggest he cannot produce to me the name of a council that is observing the provisions of the present Act. That may be one reason why this amending Bill is now before us.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: That is a reflection on all the councils.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: No; it is a reflection on the honourable member, because he cannot find one. I cannot find one. Clause 6 will cause much discontent among owners and occupiers whose land abuts a road where the major part of the road is not directly in the centre. Take, for example, a stock route three chains wide. The actual road may be over to one side. The owner who has not much space on his side of the road will not be charged, of course, nearly as much as the owner with probably 1½ chains of space on his side will be charged, yet the same stock passing down that road may have been the cause of creating noxious weeds on both sides of that road. So this provision will not pacify the farmer (not that I have ever seen the farmer who can be pacified) in any way.

One amendment deals with the method of recouping a council for any expense involved, but I think this is already being carried out. With regard to the subsidy to be paid to a council if an officer is employed for at least 50 days in a year instead of 60 days as at present, it is interesting to read in the Act that he must serve 60 days a year or at least one day a week before a subsidy is payable. How the two figures could be combined I do not know: somebody's arithmetic must have been bad. However, this will give a fortnight's holiday for an officer who works for 50 days instead of 60 as at present.

I think the system whereby some councils have combined and employed a full-time officer has worked well in some districts, and as a result the councils concerned ensure that an officer works for at least the full period stipulated, thus enabling the full amount of subsidy to be claimed. Possibly more councils will do this in future. I support the second reading.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS (Midland): I support the Bill. I wonder whether there is anything remaining to be said after the learned dissertation we have had from the Hon. Mr. Banfield, who proceeded to show the Council in five or six minutes that he knew absolutely nothing about the Weeds Act or its administration. I was surprised that he said he supported the Bill, and then sat down. In some contrast, I have had a little experience in a district council, and I do not think any council would knowingly contravene this Act. When the Hon. Mr. Geddes interjected, the Hon. Mr. Banfield asked him to name a council that had not contravened the Act, after he had said that he did not know of any council that had done so. This is a most regrettable reflection on local government in this State, and particularly in country areas.

I support the Bill because I believe that over the last 12 years the Weeds Act, generally speaking, has been successful. I also believe that large numbers of councils have attempted to carry out the provisions of the Act with some success; others have had to be, shall I say, educated towards that object. We have examples in the country of districts relatively free of weeds, while others are not so free.

Driving from one district council area to another, one can usually see easily whether the council concerned has been doing its best in administering the Weeds Act.

The Hon. Mr. Banfield made some comments about unfair practices connected with the application of the Weeds Act and the costs to ratepayers. In my experience, it is not often that ratepayers are billed with the costs incurred; that occurs when a ratepayer is irresponsible, but it does not generally occur because, in many instances, when a ratepayer realizes that he has to do something about weeds on his property he prefers to do it himself than to be billed by the council for having the work done.

The Act has worked well, subject to the degree to which councils have been prepared to apply and administer it. I would say that the number of councils that have been somewhat limited in applying the Act is becoming less and less; the general effect of the Act has been very good, and it will continue to be good.

Clause 3 widens the definition of "area", and I believe this is a good provision. It means that municipal areas, particularly in country areas and not only on the outskirts of the city, which abut district council areas must look after their weeds problem in the same way as district councils do. Because of this, in future we should not have the considerable difference that can be seen when driving from a district council area, where a subsidy is operative, into an area where it is not.

Clause 4 tightens the provisions covering the employment of weeds officers. As the Minister has said, the Weeds Advisory Committee has recommended a greater measure of control over this expenditure. I believe this is not a restrictive measure; it means that an authorized officer may now be employed for only 50 days if it is found necessary to employ him for that period or once a week instead of the previous minimum of 60 days. I do not see anything wrong with this, because in many areas councils have made considerable progress and do not need the officer as much as they did previously. It is also provided that councils must obtain Ministerial approval to appoint more than one officer. I think that is reasonable.

In many instances, as honourable members well know, it is the practice for four or five (or two or three, as the case may be) councils to combine and employ a weeds officer for one or two days a week. In some cases it has been advantageous for a council to employ one man on one day and another on another day. If that is so, it is necessary that a proper check be kept on this sort of employment, and I believe it is reasonable to expect the council to obtain Ministerial approval to employ an additional officer. I also believe it is reasonable for councils to keep records of the time spent by various officers employed in seeking out noxious weeds as well as the kind of work they have to do in writing up results of their work.

New subsection (4c) inserts in section 11a (4) a provision that a subsidy may be withheld from a council. I think this would apply on rare occasions, but it is a necessary provision if, in fact, a council has failed to carry out its obligations in a proper manner and yet has still sought a subsidy. Clause 5 expands the section in the principal Act to include all councils instead of confining it to district councils. I believe this will encourage better weed control in municipalities.

Generally, I think the Bill is to be commended. Clause 6(1) strikes out the words "district council" and substitutes the word "council". This provides that councils and not only district councils will come under the amending Bill. Also, the provision in this clause regarding owners and occupiers with land abutting the road is, in my view, an improvement. In previous years it was necessary for the expense to be shared, and this meant that a man on one side of the road who did his job properly was in an unfair position compared with a man on the other side of the road who did not clean up the weeds. If the council cleaned up the weeds the cost had to be shared. Now, however, the council can charge a man according to the amount of work that it had to do in the area for which he was responsible.

Clause 7 makes a formal decimal currency amendment. The amendments improve the principal Act, which, for the most part, has operated satisfactorily. From what little experience I have had in local government, I believe that more and more councils are getting the message and becoming more efficient in eradicating weeds. I will reserve any other queries I have until the Bill reaches the Committee stage. I support the second reading.

The Hon. H. K. KEMP (Southern): I support the Bill. The innovations that it presages are in every case desirable. I draw the Minister's attention to some serious problems that exist in the district in which I reside. If this Bill were administered without an understanding of these problems—and I do

not think it will ever be so administered—it would be disastrous. In some districts African daisy is out of control. If the Mitcham City Council, the Burnside City Council and the East Torrens District Council spent all their money on dealing with African daisy I do not think they would bring it under control.

In the Onkaparinga area, immediately on the eastern side, through the hard work of the council officers and, particularly, the landholders, African daisy is completely under control. In fact, it is amazing how a line can be drawn on the boundary of the council area. This work, however, is largely nullified by the nature of the weed. My district is faced with a recurring annual charge that adds to the costs of landholders and agriculturists. Seed by the million is blown by westerly winds from the heavily-infested areas of the hills. This condition must continue, because it is completely impracticable to control African daisy in the areas to which I have referred.

I refer to one property of 15,000 acres of frontal hills land in which African daisy is established. It is impossible to think of controlling African daisy there, because much of the area is vertical cliff. It would require special climbing gear to reach the middle of the vertical cliff. African daisy is well established in a garden in the Springfield area that I visited last year; it was one of the prize-winning gardens in a certain competition of which I know a little. On the chimney of the three-storey house I saw African daisy in full flower.

Certain other weeds are of great moment to landholders in the Onkaparinga area, a dairying district. We really fear salvation Jane. Immediately on the western side of Onkaparinga are areas of salvation Jane that are accepted as the normal thing, but we do not think they should be accepted. Other districts are bringing us a creeping menace that will make it difficult to work dairy herds. Weeds officers of the council and the landholders are systematically cleaning up isolated patches of salvation Jane.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: Are you referring to your political district?

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: I am referring to the district in which I reside. In this case it is fair to ask the councils concerned to control these isolated patches of salvation Jane that are a menace to our district. However, it is impossible to ask the Mitcham and Burnside City Councils to control the salvation Jane that lines the hills with purple every spring. Therefore, there must be much understanding of the problem. These provisions must be in the Weeds Act, but there must be tight control of their application, because it is a costly problem.

The problem posed by cape tulip really merits action and some pressure by the Minister to protect the Onkaparinga area. There is a tremendous, menacing patch of cape tulip spreading year by year on the Greenhill Road on the frontal face of the hills. Each year this is being carried by traffic and it is appearing along the sides of the roads that converge on Greenhill Road. This must remain a pressing threat to us if it cannot be brought under control. I have given three typical instances that relate to clause 4, which gives the Minister power to exert pressure, if necessary, where a "clean" district is being threatened by neglect elsewhere.

Another problem in the central hills is that of the slender thistle, one of the most difficult of the thistle family to control. This year it is completely out of control in a very large area of the Adelaide Hills, and I know that heavy pressure is being brought to bear on landholders who have this weed on their properties but, again, there is a defect in the technical means of control. If a man has scrub covering steep country where it is impossible to use agricultural implements safely, it does not matter how much pressure is put on him to eradicate slender thistle by the methods we know today. I have spent many dollars this year in buying weed poison, which has been completely ineffective. The fault may be mine, but I do not think so because this has been sufficient in other years. Owing to the late season, the check on this has been ineffective this year, and it will have to be accepted over a great part of the hills area that this difficult weed is out of control. This is indeed serious, because slender thistle leads to the contamination of any seed crop that is put forward for certification.

It is fair enough to charge the landholder for weed control work that is carried out on the roadsides, but one should consider the increasingly difficult situation that some of our councils are facing. I refer particularly to Gumeracha. It is not a large district council area but much weed control work is carried out on a large amount of forest and waterworks land in that area.

As a result, that council is spending much more money on this land from which it collects no rate revenue than is fair to the ratepayers of the district, who, finally, have to meet the cost. This subject has been discussed

with the Minister but I think it is time to examine the possibility of a charge for this service being levied by the Gumeracha District Council.

Another matter that worries many ratepayers is the control of weeds on Government reserves and particularly the wild life national park. Again, it is a matter of bringing common sense to bear. For instance, in our national parks, of which everyone in this State is proud, we have for many years had St. John's wort. Latterly this problem has become more complicated by the infestation of African daisy. It would be an impossible task if we asked the National Park Commissioners to undertake the control of these two weeds. I do not think they could do it, no matter how much money they spent. In this respect, common sense is needed.

A property above Measday's on the Mount Barker Road was recently acquired and demolished, and the outlet to the roadway was sealed. This has resulted in the clearing of land which had been under cultivation and which had probably been heavily manured. It is now becoming a tangled mass of blackberry and introduced exotics. Such areas as this are a menace to the district.

True, a small patch of blackberries might not seem to be a big nuisance but, unfortunately, it is more than it appears to be because birds can pick up the seeds and scatter them far and wide. Where old cultivated land is taken into reserve, special care should be taken to ensure that this sort of thing does not occur.

I think that has got most of the grumbles on this subject off my chest. Although they are not perhaps germane to this Bill, I am glad to see that the Minister has been noting in succession the points I have made. I do not ask for a reply from him in this debate, but I hope he will keep what I have said in mind. I strongly support the Bill.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE (Southern): I desire to speak briefly on this Bill. I congratulate the Minister on bringing down this Bill and dealing with a considerable number of points in it. It is progressive legislation. I think one or two speakers have drawn his attention to several matters, and I hope his paying attention to them will result in more efficiency in the administration of the Act. I wish to address myself to the subject of stock routes, because I am interested in one of the big stock routes in my district.

The Hon. C. R. Story: Which clause is the honourable member referring to?

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: To clause 6 and to about 17 subsections of the principal Act. The majority of stock routes that still exist are vested in the Crown as Crown lands and it has been Government policy in recent years, as the droving of stock on these routes has virtually ceased, to dispose of them to adjacent landholders, a policy which I sincerely endorse and which was followed by a previous Minister of Agriculture, the Hon. Mr. Pearson.

I emphasize the point about the disposal of stock routes because it is on these routes that the extension of weed growth mostly occurs, when stock is moved from one district to another. Sheep can carry a burr from which infestation frequently occurs. Indeed, the infestation of salvation Jane in the South-East has come either from stock travelling on the hoof or from the wool of sheep.

The stock route between Murray Bridge and Meningie has been heavily infested with some of our worst weed, particularly horehound. Also, there is an infestation of false caper near the Brinkley area, about eight miles south of Tailem Bend and, to some extent, Bathurst burr, which has been brought under control to a large extent by adjacent landholders. The landholders have now become responsible for half the road, but where the land is vested in the Lands Department the Government is responsible. I point out to the Minister that it would be possible to cut weed treatment costs greatly by passing those lands vested in the Crown to the adjacent landholders. They should be permitted to put up a decent fence adjacent to the highway, after ensuring, of course, that the Highways Department has its necessary requirements. The landholders could then get rid of the menace and the Government would not be liable for looking after a roadway about 10 chains wide.

I can only point out strongly to the Minister the desirability of urging the Lands Department to get rid of its surplus land on the stock routes and let the landholders take charge of it and be responsible for removing the weeds. It could do that, subject to the necessary requirements of the Highways Department, because I do not want land to be sold and then have the department needing to take some of it back again. I am referring to remote roads from the city (10-chain roads) which I cannot imagine ever being needed for a freeway. Having said that, I will wait until we get into Committee before I remark on individual clauses.

I congratulate the Minister on the Bill; it is an excellent one and it will mean additional efficiency in regard to the destruction of weeds.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Midland): I want to speak to one clause only. I endorse the remarks about the steps to be taken for more effectual weed control. I am concerned about new section 36a, which is inserted in the principal Act by clause 8 of the Bill. The new section provides:

Where any pecuniary liability attaches to the owner or occupier of land pursuant to any provision of this Act, that liability shall, until discharged, become and remain a charge upon the land, and the owner or occupier of the land, and any subsequent owner or occupier of the land, shall be jointly and severally liable to discharge that liability, which may be enforced by action in any court of competent jurisdiction.

As far as I know, this is the first time there has been an attempt to attach a liability under the Weeds Act to the continuing liability on land where there is a change of ownership. What worries me is that, if anyone went to the Lands Titles Office and searched title deeds to find out the charges on a piece of land, this charge would not be revealed. I admit, of course, that charges for district council rates would not be shown either on the title deeds, but people have become accustomed to making sure that these charges are paid up to date. If there is a liability under this Act, it will be a liability to the district council concerned. I think the district councils should be advised that, if they are asked at any time about the rates position in connection with any land, they should advise the inquirer whether there is any liability under the Weeds Act. That is the only way in which to handle this position. There is no requirement for it to be registered on the title deed. If the Minister will give me an undertaking that he will see that councils are advised of this liability, I think that is as far as we can take the matter.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 5 passed.

Clause 6—"Contribution by owners and occupiers."

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: I move:

After subparagraph (*b*) to insert the following new paragraph:

(*ba*) by inserting after subsection (1) the following subsection:

(1a) A council may, with the approval of the Minister, fix a minimum charge under this section.

This amendment arises from representations made to me by councils, many of which have the problem of spraying small patches of weeds adjacent to the properties of landowners. The assessment of the actual cost involved could mean a lot of book work and much time spent by people carrying out the spraying of these small areas of weeds in allocating time and material. Therefore, councils feel there should be a minimum charge for employees touring a district to spray weeds. This would be a big advantage to councils. This amendment ensures that the charge made has the approval of the Minister, in case excess charges are levied.

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Minister of Agriculture): I have looked at this amendment and have consulted a representative of the Weeds Advisory Committee. I point out that all these recommendations have come through that committee and have been considered by the Local Government Association. Both bodies were taken into our confidence and both agreed to all the amendments now proposed. This amendment has just been brought to hand but I see no objection to it. I have consulted the Parliamentary Draftsman and the Weeds Advisory Committee and am prepared to accept it.

The Hon. L. R. HART: I want some clarification of this. I assume that, if a council likes to adopt this provision of a minimum rate to be fixed, it would apply to the whole of its council area rather than to a particular job. I wonder whether in this case the minimum rate should apply to the whole State. The minimum rate fixed by one council would in many instances differ from the minimum rate fixed by an adjoining council. It is a little ambiguous as it is drafted. I support the principle of this amendment but it is a little loose as at present worded. I do not know whether the honourable member or the Minister has any views on this aspect.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 7—"Liability of owner or occupier."

The Hon. L. R. HART: I may be out of order in raising this point now, but this is the only currency amendment in the Bill. Two further currency amendments should have been brought in by this Bill, to deal with sections 38 and 41 of the principal Act. I do not know whether the Minister wishes to do anything about those sections while the Bill is before us. No provision is made for amending either of them.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I thank the honourable member for drawing my attention to this point. I do not want to do anything that will disturb what is happening in this Bill. However, I will be bringing down more amendments to this Act in the next session of Parliament and I will keep the honourable member's remarks in mind then.

Clause passed.

Clause 8—"Enactment of new s. 36a of principal Act—Statutory charge."

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: I made some remarks during the second reading debate indicating that we are making a new liability under this Act of a charge against the land, and that charge remains even if one owner sells it to another person. It may be difficult for a purchaser of land to make sure that no such liability attaches to him, or if the previous owner had paid the fees before or when the transfers were made. I think a council could apprise the purchaser of the position if asked to advise on the charge, and he could then be made aware of any liability under this Act. I think the Minister should be prepared to say that he will bring this matter to the attention of councils.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Yes, I certainly will. Local government is desirous it should have this power, and I would be very reluctant not to grant it. However, I can see the point raised by the honourable member and therefore I will give an undertaking that, through the Minister of Local Government, we will notify all district councils of amendments made here, and also ask district councils that, when information is sought, it be freely given. I think this should be a recurring thing every 12 months or so and that a reminder notice should be sent out to councils about it.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill reported with an amendment. Committee's report adopted.

WHEAT INDUSTRY STABILIZATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the House of Assembly without amendment.

DA COSTA SAMARITAN FUND (INCORPORATION OF TRUSTEES) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Chief Secretary) brought up the report of the Select Committee, together with minutes of proceedings and evidence.

Report received and ordered to be printed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.12 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, February 19, at 2.15 p.m.