

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, September 15, 1971

The Council assembled at 2.15 p.m.

APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY PRESIDENT

The Clerk having announced that, owing to the unavoidable absence of the President, it would be necessary to appoint a Deputy President,

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE (Minister of Lands) moved:

That the Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill be appointed to the position.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition) seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

The Deputy President took the Chair and read prayers.

QUESTIONS

BUSH FIRES ACT

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I seek leave to make a short statement with a view to asking a question of the Minister of Agriculture.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: My question concerns the Bush Fires Act. As I go around the country, I notice that there is now more potential fuel for bush fires than in any year I have known since 1967. At the moment, when the country is still wet and it is raining, it is normal for most of us to forget the tremendous hazard that bush fires present. Can the Minister say whether the Bushfires Advisory Committee has any amendments it desires the Minister to bring before Parliament and, if it has, have we his assurance that those matters will be brought forward soon so that they can be implemented? Secondly, will the Minister undertake to take up with the appropriate Minister the matter of a reprint of the Act, which at present one can only describe as being in tatters, because it is spread over many pieces of paper which people find hard to get, even from the Government Printing Office? Will the Minister consider those two matters?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: As honourable members, and particularly country members, are aware, the bush fire hazard will be extreme this year owing to the tremendous season that the whole State is encountering at present. Recent visits I have made to country areas have emphasized the fact that there is a great amount of undergrowth throughout the State.

I assure the honourable member that these matters are being looked at at this very moment to see whether we can expedite the whole procedure of preventing outbreaks; it is advisable to do so. On the matter of the appropriate Minister having a look at the Act, the honourable member is probably aware that this is a long drawn-out problem, but it will be attended to as soon as possible. I assure the honourable member of that, but I cannot say when.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking a question of the Minister of Agriculture.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: Soon after he took office the Minister said that he would set up a committee to consider suggested amendments to the Bush Fires Act. I believe that that committee will shortly be taking evidence in the North. The council in whose area the committee will be taking evidence believes that only fire control officers may give evidence. Will the Minister consider allowing responsible members of the public to give evidence to the committee if they desire to do so?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I am amazed at this turn of events, and I do not think this is quite right. I think the honourable member will find that anyone can give evidence to the committee. I give an unqualified assurance to the honourable member that that will be the case.

MORGAN DOCKYARD

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: Further to the question I asked on this matter some time ago, will the Minister of Lands, representing the Minister of Roads and Transport, inform me of the present stage of negotiations regarding the possible transfer of the Highways Department's Morgan dockyard to some other location?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Expecting this question to be asked, the Minister of Roads and Transport has reported that this matter has been the subject of much consideration over a long period. The Commissioner of Highways has discussed the matter very thoroughly with the Minister of Roads and Transport, and the matter has been considered by Cabinet. My colleague has received several deputations regarding the matter and has also visited Morgan to see the situation at first hand. The Assistant Commissioner (Construction) in the Highways Department met representatives of the District Council of Morgan yesterday to

ascertain whether the council wished to bring forward to the Government any other factors that had not already been raised. My colleague has been informed by the Assistant Commissioner that all the matters raised by the council have been fully considered.

The Government and the Highways Department are fully conscious of the social and economic repercussions that could result from the shifting of the Morgan dockyard to another location. It was necessary to weigh these matters against the desirability of continuing the dockyard virtually in isolation to the rest of the departmental activities in that general area. About three years ago the Highways Department decided that it was desirable to establish a substantial district office at Murray Bridge. This district office is now an accomplished fact and the department's activities in that area should logically be brought together. Accordingly, the Government has decided that the recommendation of the Highways Department that the Morgan dockyard be progressively shifted to a site at Murray Bridge is the only proper and adequate solution to this matter.

Also, much consideration has been given to the matter of the transfer of any employees who wish to move from Morgan to Murray Bridge. The Commissioner of Highways will provide appropriate housing, and every facility will be given to these employees in order to minimize the effect that this decision may have upon them. I point out that no employees will be retrenched.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking a question of the Minister representing the Minister of Roads and Transport.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: To a large extent the Minister's reply covered the question of inconvenience to Highways Department employees, but the removal referred to will adversely affect schools and businesses in the Morgan area. The Morgan District Council, a small council, is fighting to keep Morgan alive. I am not questioning the department's attitude to its employees, nor am I questioning departmental efficiency. If it is inevitable that the dockyard will be moved, I ask that consideration be given to phasing out the operations in such a way that there will be a minimal impact on the businesses and the school at Morgan. Will the Minister bring these matters to the notice of his colleague?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Yes.

DINGO BAITING

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: I seek leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Lands.

Leave granted.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: I was interested yesterday to hear the Minister's reply to the question asked by the Hon. Mr. Banfield regarding the baiting of dingoes with 1080 poison. I congratulate the Minister on his ability to predict that honourable members will ask such questions. Can the Minister name the three properties on which the experiments with 1080 poison are being conducted so that the members representing that district can watch the result of the baiting? I am sure the Minister would be aware that dingoes are killing many calves in areas in which there are at present no rabbits.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I will bring back a reply to the honourable member's question tomorrow.

POLLUTION

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking a question of the Minister of Agriculture.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: An article headed "Board Waits for Report on Stench" in the *Border Watch* of September 9 states:

The Health Inspector (Mr. D. E. Whitmore) has recommended that the City Board of Health ask the Woods and Forests Department to improve stormwater and waste creosote disposal at the State sawmill and that plans and specifications for the improvements be submitted to the board for perusal before the work is carried out.

The sawmill referred to is at Mount Gambier. The article continues:

It appeared that no new treatment was responsible for the stench, which had been evident periodically since the beginning of the year. . . . The Health Inspector stated that the area around the treatment plant was a quagmire and a substantial area was fouled with creosote. A large pool of creosote on the adjoining railway property had drained from this treatment plant.

Has the Minister's attention been drawn to this problem and, if it has, will action be taken to solve it, because it affects Mount Gambier residents?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: The matter has not been drawn to my attention, but I shall follow up the honourable member's question, get a comprehensive report from the Conservator of Forests, and bring back a reply as soon as possible.

SALISBURY TEACHERS COLLEGE

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: On August 26, I asked a question of the Minister of Agriculture, representing the Minister of Education, with reference to the number of students from other States attending the Salisbury Teachers College and to whether or not there was a reciprocal arrangement with the other States. Has he a reply?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: The Minister of Education has supplied the following information:

Entry to teachers college is competitive and is based on personal qualities, academic results and a medical examination. Preference is given to students with sound qualifications gained at examinations equivalent to fifth year (Matriculation) in South Australia. Applicants from outside South Australia must have qualifications superior to those of South Australian applicants to gain entry to a teachers college. Teachers college students recruited in other States for entry to a teachers college in South Australia are not entitled to invoke the reciprocal agreement; a condition of entry to a South Australian teachers college is that they will be required to serve as a teacher in South Australian schools for three years. Women students under bond at a South Australian teachers college who move to another State to marry or to accompany their parents are eligible to apply for transfer to another teachers college or, if they have completed their training, for a teaching position in another department. Once the reciprocal agreement is invoked, such students would complete the requirement of their South Australian bond in the receiving State. The policy of the South Australian Education Department in this matter has the full support of the Directors-General in all the Australian States.

STOBIE POLES

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Has the Minister of Agriculture, representing the Minister of Works, a reply to the question I asked on September 2 concerning the results of an evaluation of electric light or power poles in the Glenelg area as a possible alternative to stobie poles, and whether there are any other plans that might be put in train to dispense with some of the poles commonly called stobie poles?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I had this reply for the honourable member yesterday, but I understood that he was involved in a derailment of a train from Alice Springs. I hope he was not responsible for it. My colleague, the Minister of Works, has informed me that experimental work carried out at Glenelg has been completed. As a result, a new method of tapping-off services to consumers has been adopted which gives an improved appearance.

However, modifications to the appearance of the pole itself were in each case more expensive than could be justified by the results achieved. The Electricity Trust is not planning to use impact absorbing poles in place of the standard concrete and steel pole. The trust's present view is that a pole designed to absorb adequate energy on impact is likely on such impact to bring down live wires and thus create a greater hazard than the one it is designed to prevent.

HALLETT COVE DEVELOPMENT

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking a question of the Minister of Lands representing the Minister of Environment and Conservation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: Over the last few days there has been very serious disquiet amongst responsible people over the proposed development of the Hallett Cove area. As you would know, Mr. Deputy President, this is a completely unique area and very important in this State. The implication is that the whole matter is being bulldozed through by people with vested interests. However, I am sure that this cannot be the case. Will the Minister make a responsible statement about exactly how this project is being guided?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I will refer the question to my colleague and bring back a reply as soon as it is available.

ANSTEY HILL QUARRY

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Has the Acting Chief Secretary a reply to the question I asked recently regarding the consent of the Government or the State Planning Authority being given to quarrying operations in the Anstey Hill area?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: The Minister of Environment and Conservation states:

Some 180 acres of land at Anstey Hill was acquired by the State Planning Authority in October, 1970, for recreation purposes. Thirty acres of this area comprised part of the excavation of a stone quarry being operated by Quarry Industries Ltd. In August, 1970, the Government approved the renegotiation of a lease to Quarry Industries Ltd. for a period of 10 years from January 1, 1971. This was done in order to enable an otherwise unsafe and difficult part of the land to be brought into a condition rendering it usable for recreation purposes. Between October 6, 1970, and June 30, 1971, the tonnage of stone removed was 142,331 tons 19 cwt. If this rate is maintained for the 10-year period the total quantity removed could be of the order of 2,000,000 tons. No consent has been given to any other quarrying interests to use the land for access

or otherwise. The adjoining land, which includes the remaining part of the operating quarry, has recently been acquired by the State Planning Authority. The total area will continue to operate under lease on the same terms as were negotiated for the first area of land.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (SEAT BELTS)

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 1. Page 1265.)

The Hon. H. K. KEMP (Southern): I approach the subject of this Bill, which refers to the compulsory wearing of seat belts, with very mixed feelings. The statistics put before us *ad nauseam* are intended to establish that to be safe in a car one must wear a seat belt. I was driving a car at the age of 14½ years, long before I was officially authorized to do so.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Breaking the law?

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: Undoubtedly!

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: Was it on private property?

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: No, not on private property. I have worn a seat belt at times, and I do not like the idea of the wearing of them being made compulsory. I realize that the most serious thing we are up against in the matter of accidental death is the road toll, but I am quite sure the compulsory wearing of seat belts is not the answer. I will go further. Saying that people must wear seat belts is an answer to the problem is an attempt to avoid the responsibility attaching to people who must find out the cause and the cure of this cancerous disease, the cancerous rotting away, particularly of our young people, which is occurring through road deaths and is so tragic in our community. I really believe that legislation of this nature, where we say "Do this" and where it is obviously not a complete answer to the problem, is absolutely wrong. This is an attempt to get out of responsibility; it is a palliative that does not get to the central problem.

People are being killed on the roads to a horrifying extent, but it is not only that that is horrifying: I gather that over half of the tremendous costs incurred in running our hospitals in this State are devoted to looking after road casualties, which are so tragic in their long-term implications. That is where most of our paraplegics and less seriously disabled people are going. I am sure that making people wear seat belts in this way is not the answer to the problem.

Also, it will be intensively restrictive. If a man's wife takes the family car out to go up the street to do some shopping, is preoccupied with the order she is to hand in at the shops and drives 50 yards up the street without wearing a seat belt, she will be committing an offence. That is the sort of silly circumstance we can find ourselves in with this type of legislation. Just how, why and where this legislation should be amended I do not know because I am not a specialist.

I am quite sure that the people who have investigated this matter and have said that everyone who enters a car must wear a seat belt regardless have not studied the problem enough. There is a promise that people who frequently get in and out of vehicles for the delivery of goods and that sort of thing will be exempted from wearing seat belts, but there is just as much reason to exempt people who will not drive dangerously.

This Bill has been introduced before the matter has been investigated to sufficient depth and before sufficient responsibility has been taken in regard to the burden that will be placed on every person using a motor car. In many ways, this is utterly ridiculous. At present only motor vehicles manufactured after a certain date must have seat belts fitted to the front seat; none of them at present has to have seat belts fitted to the back seat.

We have the promise that this measure will not be enforced on the many vehicles that do not need seat belts fitted. Can anyone responsible for this say that there are more people being killed in cars not fitted with seat belts because they were manufactured before a certain date than there are people killed in cars fitted with belts today?

In any case, the statistic, which I believe is correct (I have not heard it officially but unofficially it has come to my notice recently), is that, of the people who should be wearing seat belts and have them fitted in their cars at their own expense, only one in 10 is wearing a seat belt provided and paid for by himself.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Where did you get that figure from?

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: That figure was published in a motoring paper circulated in South Australia last month. One person in every 10 people sitting in seats equipped with seat belts is using a seat belt: in other words, this legislation will cause nine people out of 10 who have the choice of wearing seat belts to commit an offence.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I think you will find the figure is 28 per cent.

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: That 28 per cent is a figure coming from people who are biased.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: One of them is speaking now.

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: In this case I ask for freedom from bias. I am completely dedicated to my attitude. People can be forced into fitting seat belts if the Government believes that this Bill is equitable, but there should not be compulsion to wear belts. I oppose the Bill.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT (Southern): I have listened with considerable interest to what the Hon. Mr. Kemp has said because, amongst other things, he said he did not know how or why this legislation should be amended. I agree with him that it is difficult to know how the rules should be amended to obtain the maximum degree of safety for the greatest number of people. It is because I am convinced that this Bill is not the final answer but that it is a step in the right direction that I shall speak along the lines I shall follow this afternoon.

The first thing I think of is how far back we must look in history to realize what a menace as well as a blessing the wheel has been since it was invented. When it was, a few decades ago, coupled with the internal combustion engine, it was a lethal combination, and one was faced with a joint cause of more deaths and injuries than anything else in the world. Even within the lifetime of the more elderly citizens of the world today, a man had to walk in front of a motor vehicle waving a red flag, the speed limit then being 5 m.p.h. Since then the motor manufacturing industry has produced vehicles that on racing tracks have attained speeds of over 300 m.p.h., while the cars that we as ordinary citizens drive sometimes have speedometers that can measure speeds of well over 100 m.p.h.

We take our roadways and vehicles for granted; we consider the type of road as the yardstick of the speed at which we can drive. We say, "This is the sort of road on which it is quite safe to go as fast as 60 m.p.h., 70 m.p.h. or 80 m.p.h.", yet research has proved (I emphasize that point) that many fatal accidents occur on wide interstate roads with good surfaces which are completely free from heavy traffic. Unfortunately, with this sort of road so often the human element comes in, and the combination of a wide road and the human element, plus speed, leads to death. In other words, speed kills. The modern car, with its technical capacity to speed, is available in all varieties to persons of 16 years or more. It is a fascinating thought that no res-

triction is placed on the model of car that can be sold to a person of 16 years. One can purchase whatever car one likes.

The Hon. Mr. Kemp referred to the hospitalization cost of those injured in accidents. I understand on good authority that more than one-third of the facilities in our large metropolitan public hospitals are used to service road traffic accident victims. Is it any wonder, therefore, that last week a certain person, when speaking in this city, referred to the "national disaster", the "20th century disease": road accidents. However, it is pleasing to know that there has been a drop in the number of accidents during the past few months. Rules are devised to give maximum safety to road users, but too often the rules are devised in relation to what is happening now and not in order to keep pace with forward planning. Far too often we forget that car manufacturers are planning years ahead. Indeed, at present they are planning at least two models ahead. However, legislation is so often passed to catch up with the situation obtaining today, not with what is going to happen two models hence. Honourable members need no reminder that three main factors, both safe and unsafe, are involved in road travel. I refer, first, to the highway itself, and to its width, surface, curves, adequate grading for cornering, safe lanes, lights, signal controls, and so on. If I have one criticism to make of our main interstate roads, it is that there is not sufficient banking at some corners to increase safety.

The Hon. M. B. Cameron: At speed.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Even at a speed of 30 miles an hour, a certain amount of banking on some corners is a great asset. I refer, secondly, to the vehicles in use. These vary from the pedal cycle and motor cycles to family cars, sports cars and massive transports. Thirdly, I refer to the human beings themselves: the designers of roads and vehicles, the workers in the motor plants, the drivers and passengers, and even the pedestrians on the road. The three categories I have mentioned must be at a pitch of perfection; otherwise, there will be a serious risk of tragic accidents. There are good and bad roads, vehicles, and persons.

Our approach to road safety is not dissimilar to that regarding the medical care of the community. Society spends millions of dollars curing illnesses, although comparatively it spends a pittance on environmental and public health matters to prevent and destroy the causes of diseases. The same principle applies when dealing with road

accidents: we make cars that can go faster and faster (indeed, too fast for some roads), and we therefore increase the risk of accidents and the cost that they throw upon the community. We make good roads and say immediately that they are safe for high speeds, only to find that the accident rate increases. After making cars that go faster and faster, we then frown on the driver who uses a car at speed.

A few months ago the Minister of Roads and Transport said that no-one had the right to drive: it was only a privilege. However, this is questionable because, provided I am sound in mind and limb and can demonstrate by a test that I know the rules of the road and that I can drive a motor car, I have a right to be on the road. Certainly, that right can be taken from me in some circumstances, and I think it is far more serious and punishing to lose a right than it is to lose a privilege.

In this respect, surely we are approaching the nub of the Bill. When should a responsibility be a voluntarily accepted code, and when should it be a legal obligation binding with the full weight of the law? I have a right to expect the manufacturer of my car to build the vehicle soundly so that its construction will not cause an accident. Over the years the construction and fitting out of cars has been refined so that the number of accidents as a result of poor quality workmanship has been reduced. This is not a perfect answer to the problem, however. As honourable members are aware, only a few days ago it was announced that the mechanical construction of one model of car was responsible for many accidents.

I draw honourable members' attention to the fact that an analysis of accidents has revealed certain relatively absolute factors, the first of which is the increased possibility of serious injury or fatality if a person is flung from a vehicle. This is one of the main reasons why people should wear seat belts. The risk of a fatal or extremely serious injury if a person is flung out of a moving vehicle is five times greater than it is if the person stays in the vehicle, whatever happens to it: whether it rolls once, twice, or three times, or whether it turns hither and thither. Also, head-on collisions are far more lethal than are collisions involving side swipes. A police officer who was concerned with accidents told me many years ago that I should at all costs, if I am about to have an accident, avoid a head-on collision.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: The same applies in politics.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Yes. The greater the speed, the greater the risk of death. This is a fact, although death can occur at very low speeds.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone. Those in the middle of the road get run over in both cases.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: I will assume that the driver to whom I am referring is on the right side of the road. I refer also to the problem of the whiplash injury, resulting in broken necks and paralysis. In this respect we have the tragedy of healthy, active young people who, following a crash, suffer an injury to their spine and become dependent on others for the rest of their lives. Headrests, which are now being used increasingly, help people to avoid many such injuries.

The Hon. M. B. Cameron: Do you think their use should be compulsory?

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: I think the day will come when they will be automatically fitted in cars. I refer now to protrusions in the car itself. When an accident occurs and a person moves around in the car, a protrusion can tear one's tissue apart. These things are steadily being altered by car manufacturers. Then, of course, there are protrusions outside a car, such as bonnet mascots, which used to be popular but are not so popular nowadays, because it is realized that a person can be impaled on them after he has been tossed through the air in an accident.

There are many other safety features—good quality tyres, adequate braking systems, and so forth. Moreover, there has been a tendency to install features that diminish the risk of serious injury when the body comes into contact with them. We are all familiar with recessed instrument panels in our own cars, collapsible steering columns, padded dashboards, snap-off rear vision mirrors, sun visors that bend easily under pressure, and the increasing use of headrests. All these things have been put into cars without our having the opportunity to say "Yea" or "Nay".

I feel strongly about the use of car radios that are not of the pre-set type. I have seen young people as well as old people driving along and looking down to change to another station, when their eyes should have been on the road. I believe that the use of press-button pre-set radios is as much a safety measure as many other things in cars. All these things have been installed on the recommendations of the Road Safety Council, motoring organizations,

and manufacturers. They have been installed to protect the driver and his passengers. Very few of them are optional: they have been put into cars, and we have accepted them.

Seat belts are designed to support the body when the car is subjected to a forcible impact. A seat belt will not prevent an accident: no-one in his right senses has ever thought it would do so. However, a seat belt will reduce the seriousness of injuries resulting from car accidents, because it keeps the person inside the car, and he has a five times better chance of being saved from serious injury if he is kept inside the car than if he is thrown out of the car. Furthermore, a seat belt will keep the person away from direct contact with, say, a windscreen or the driving wheel. Obviously, a seat belt is absolutely useless if it is not properly adjusted.

With all due respect to any honourable member who has different views, I believe that very few people doubt the efficacy of seat belts. Years of research have proved that the risk of death and severe injury is reduced by up to 50 per cent when a person is wearing a combined lap and sash belt and by up to 30 per cent when a lap strap alone is worn. I fully realize that probably all of us can produce evidence of accidents in which seat belts have been a hindrance, not a help. I can produce evidence of two of the more bizarre types of accident in which people broke their legs through becoming entangled in the seat belt strap that was hanging down at the side of the seat. However, surely no-one will say, as a result of that evidence, that seat belts are not safe.

There are two main types of event in which the use of a seat belt could be a hindrance—fire and immersion. However, even in these cases, a seat belt may, by keeping a person in his seat, prevent his being knocked unconscious; as a result, he will be able to help himself.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: There must be other cases, though.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Yes, odd cases. Of 10,000 cases studied in New York, 0.2 per cent had a fire component and 0.3 per cent had an immersion component. I refer now to figures supplied by our own Police Department. The Hon. Mr. Kemp referred to this matter, and I assure him that our own police (and I am sure he trusts their veracity as much as I do) say that 28 per cent of drivers use seat belts; that figure has remained constant since 1968. Furthermore, 60 per cent of cars are fitted with seat belts.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: The Hon. Mr. Kemp referred to passengers as well as drivers.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: That may be so. In 1970, a total of 87 drivers who had not been wearing seat belts were killed, five drivers who had been wearing seat belts were killed, and in 26 cases it was impossible to ascertain whether the drivers killed had been wearing seat belts. In other words, out of the 92 drivers killed, only five had been wearing seat belts. I am still quoting figures supplied by the South Australian Police Department. A total of 46 front-seat passengers who were not wearing seat belts were killed, but only four front-seat passengers who were wearing seat belts were killed.

A survey conducted by the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons shows that 78 per cent of people injured in road accidents in Victoria were not wearing seat belts. Of 153 people who were injured after being thrown from their cars, 149 had not been wearing seat belts, according to Dr. P. Nelson, who conducted the survey. A facet often forgotten is the way the belt diminishes the risk of severe facial lacerations, head injuries and eye injuries. The Hon. Mr. Hill has said that one person a week enters the Royal Adelaide Hospital with an eye injury that has resulted from a car accident and the failure to wear a seat belt. What would we feel like if a member of our own family suffered facial lacerations simply because he was not restrained by a belt and was thrown against the windscreen?

I refer now to a statistical analysis of 28,000 accident cases which was provided for a conference on car crashes in Los Angeles in October, 1967. The paper was given by Mr. N. I. Bohlin of Sweden, and it was concerned with occupant restraint value. The cars involved were all Volvos of two models, the P.12 and the P.11. Obviously, this eliminated certain of the variable factors that would be present if various makes of cars were used.

The outstanding finding was that at less than 60 miles per hour there was not one fatality amongst people who were using a belt. Although the report did not say that there were no injuries, it showed that the seat belt offered full protection against a fatal injury up to accident speeds of about 60 m.p.h. The ejection of front seat passengers out of the car happened in 159 not-belted cases and possibly in one belted case. Bearing in mind what I said earlier, the risk of being slaughtered if one is shot out of a car

is five times greater than if one stays in the car. I repeat that 159 not-belted cases were shot out and one belted case was shot out.

I recognize that there are some people who through deformity, either temporary or permanent, cannot adjust to a seat belt. I agree that some people find it claustrophobic, and I agree that some people, including myself, find it difficult to reverse a car when wearing a belt. Some cannot wear a belt, but the majority just do not wear a belt. I think if the whole question at issue was whether seat belts were valuable, most people would say that they were.

A few days ago I spoke to Dr. Cheshire, the doctor in charge of the Austin Hospital in Victoria. This gentleman runs the paraplegic unit in that hospital. He told me that between January 1 and June 30, 1970, there were 36 new admissions of paraplegics, 31 of them motor vehicle accident in origin. In 1971, of the 27 admissions 18 were motor vehicle accident in origin.

This man emphasized one point, and I think we should make this point very clearly here. The obligation to wear seat belts was preceded and sustained by a vigorous education campaign in the newspapers. One paper voluntarily for six months used its columns to press home to people the value of belts in cars as a safety measure in accidents. For six months that paper gave examples of what the road carnage really meant and of what a belt could really do. During that period, people got used to the idea of using their belts and therefore they accepted them more readily when the law came into force.

I draw honourable members' attention further to that group of people who come from the Council of Civil Liberties, who are very quick to take up arms in the interests of people whose liberty is being infringed. The council does not object to this measure because it realizes the seriousness of the situation. I assure honourable members that the Australian Medical Association as an organization approves. I was speaking to the President of that association only this morning, and he gave me full permission to use his name and his office in support of this measure.

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and the Royal College of England commend this move, and so does my own Royal College of Edinburgh. The Professor of Pathology at Adelaide University says there is ample evidence that seat belts are effective. I realize that the bone of con-

vention is not the effectiveness of the belt but the compulsion of its use. However, I ask honourable members to think what an accident involves. First, the vehicle is damaged: the damage may be slight or the vehicle may have to be totally written off. The cost of insurance, with its ultimate spread to all road users in the form of increased premiums, comes into it. If we believe in freedom to drive without first belting up, should an extra premium not be paid? Or should we not get less return from the insurance company in an accident where we have not been wearing a belt which we know to be and which has been proven to be effective in preventing or reducing the severity of accidents?

The injuries that are sustained range from a shaking up right through the various severities, up to death and even up to multiple deaths. These injuries require ambulance services far in excess of the needs of ordinary illness transportation. They require a casualty service at the hospital, and they require hospital beds. I am told that about one-third of our hospital facilities and services are taken up with caring for accident victims, and that 25 per cent of the beds in our major public hospitals at any one time are occupied by the victims of accidents.

We must think also of the other ancillary services, ranging from nursing, resuscitative, through to social services and right up to the permanent pensioner. I suppose that all these things can be measured reasonably in terms of money. Or can they? We must think of the grief and loss, the husbandless family, the fatherless family and the loss to the community of citizens who have skill. So often when I see an accident or come into contact with the result of an accident, I think to myself: to what purpose is this waste of life perpetuated? I have never met one bereaved relative who has said to me, "It does not matter; it should have been left to a voluntary choice." I have not met one person who, when entering an aeroplane, has objected to the fastening of a lap strap.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: They are not wearing them all the time, though.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: I agree with the honourable member. They are not wearing them all the time because they are not needed all the time. I have not met one person who objects to the wearing of motor cycle helmets being compulsory. There are very few people, especially those who have been diagnosed as

having a disease, who object to the compulsory X-ray.

May I ask: when does freedom become synonymous with self destruction? That surely is the crux of the matter. As I said earlier, if we were discussing the usefulness and the effectiveness of seat belts, there would be very few people opposing the measure; but if we are not to ensure that these measures are effective for the protection of the car driver, surely it becomes nonsense compulsorily to improve the safety of the inside of the vehicle. Why insist on a safety dashboard fascia, safety doors, and safety windows, but say there need be no restraint against smashing oneself against them? Without wishing to be emotional, I say that anyone who has looked down on seven corpses in one accident cannot but ask whether it could have been avoided. On the law of averages, as we have quoted here today, at least three of the seven, if they had worn belts, would have been saved.

I conclude my remarks by quoting the motor correspondent, Courtney Edwards, of one of the leading British papers, writing in July, 1971:

I have come around to the view that the wearing of seat belts should be made obligatory. Close contact with road safety officials, police, doctors, and garage men has convinced me that seat belts, properly fitted—

and I emphasize that—

and adjusted could make the biggest single contribution to road safety, apart, that is, from making cars as safe as possible to drive and making drivers as proficient as possible. Enforcement will be a problem, but insurance companies could help by making their cover dependent on the use of belts.

How ironic that we have to force people to protect their own lives and save themselves from death! I support the Bill.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE (Minister of Lands): I support the Bill, and I compliment the Hon. Mr. Springett on his contribution to the debate. I am quite sure that if anyone had doubted the efficacy of the proposal in the Bill his doubts would have been removed by the honourable member's remarks. Those who are not convinced never will be until they are themselves involved in an accident without wearing seat belts. Although, while the Hon. Mr. Kemp was speaking, I felt I should make some comment on his remarks, it would be anti-climactic after the most effective way in which his points were answered by the Hon. Mr. Springett.

The measure we are considering has come to us from another place, where it was intro-

duced by a private member. My colleague the Minister of Roads and Transport supported the general principles of the Bill which, as everyone is aware, calls for the compulsory wearing of seat belts if they are fitted to a vehicle. However, my colleague moved a number of amendments to the Bill in another place, and we are now debating the improved version of that Bill. It is coincidental that, just prior to notice being given of the introduction of this private member's Bill in another place, Cabinet had before it a recommendation for the introduction of legislation on this very point.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: Do you think there has been a Cabinet leak?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: No, I am not saying that. The honourable member who introduced the Bill had previously introduced a measure regarding the installation of seat belts in cars. That member had evidently made up his mind to do it irrespective.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: The Bill has been improved, though.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I have already said that. I am interested to see, too, that there is as yet no amendment on file to remove the amendments inserted in another place at the suggestion of my colleague. No doubt honourable members in this Council think the amendments were suitable.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: We may not get that far!

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: That is true. I think it is clear from the speeches we have heard that the majority of members in this Chamber are convinced.

The Hon. C. R. Story: We are keeping the best until last.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: No, I think the best have already spoken. A number of figures have been quoted and I do not propose to go into statistics in support of the Bill. I genuinely agree that the wearing of seat belts will reduce the loss of life and minimize the severity of injuries resulting from accidents. This has been proved conclusively, in my opinion, by the figures other people have given and by the experience of many people associated with this problem over a number of years, who all agree on the results of wearing seat belts.

I have been to Victoria and I have seen the way in which the wearing of seat belts is operating there. Some people say it is a difficult job to make people wear them, even if it is compulsory, but each time I go to Victoria

I see that it is becoming a habit for people to do just this. Many statements have been published by people well qualified to pass an opinion, and recently Adelaide was visited by Miss Anne Raymond, a research officer for the Australian Road Research Board, and a Bachelor of Arts. Miss Raymond had spent 15 years in Scotland and Australia working with a research team to provide an insight into road accident problems. She is quoted in the spring issue of the official journal of the Road Safety Council, *Road Alert*, as follows:

People go to great length to insure their cars, but they do not insure their bodies by wearing seat belts.

Miss Raymond went on to say that this was irrational because the motorist had one chance in 50 of an accident every time he drove a car and it is astonishing the number of people who say they are interested in road safety but do not wear seat belts.

In the September issue of the *Readers Digest* Dr. Michael Henderson, Executive Director of Traffic Safety, N.S.W. Department of Motor Transport, and a noted safety expert, reminds us that the best of excuses will not save your life, but a seat belt may. What Dr. Henderson has to say answers effectively some of the reasons advanced for opposition by people opposed to the wearing of seat belts, and I quote from his remarks:

In an air age where no one objects to fastening his seat belt in a plane, we have been slow to apply the same kind of protection in our cars. Why don't more people buy and use what the Australian Medical Association has called the cheapest and most efficient safeguard available against injury and death on the roads? From a number of independent surveys, here are the alibis most often sighted—and the reasons why these alibis are dead wrong.

Fear of being trapped in a burning or submerged car. This type of mishap is the least likely to happen. In an analysis of 10,000 injury-producing accidents, a research team at Cornell University, New York, found that fire was involved in only 0.2 per cent of the cases; submersion in only 0.3 per cent.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: Doesn't that deal with the fear of its happening, which is different from the actual happening?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Yes, but they say there is no need for the fear.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: You cannot convince a person of that.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: You cannot convince some people of anything.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: It is a psychological problem that you cannot overcome.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: This is true, but how many cases are there of this nature?

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: True.

The Hon. M. B. Cameron: How many people have been saved in aircraft through the compulsory wearing of seat belts?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: That is difficult to say. The article continues:

The New South Wales Traffic Accident Research Unit, investigating fatal crashes, found that fire broke out only once in every 100 cases. Even if your car caught fire or plunged into water, you would still be far safer with a seat belt, because it can keep you from being knocked unconscious or otherwise injured and so left unable to extricate yourself. And the belt is designed for easy, immediate release by the passenger or rescuer.

Fear of confinement in a crash. Undeniably, there are cases where people who were thrown clear on impact survived a crash in which they might have been mortally crushed if they had remained in the car. But they had exceptionally lucky landings. Statistics from thousands of such accidents show that your chances of fatal injury are five times greater if you are ejected than if you remain in the vehicle. Consequently, preventing ejection is considered by experts to be one of the seat belt's prime functions.

Belts are unnecessary in low-speed, urban driving. Australian research has found, from annual state- and national-wide studies of injury-producing accidents, that nearly half the fatalities occur at speeds of 40 m.p.h. or less. There are authenticated instances of death occurring in crashes at speeds of less than 15 m.p.h. Well over half of all fatal injuries and about 80 per cent of all accidents occur within 25 miles of home.

They would be useless in a high-speed accident. No seat belt or other restraining device can be a cure-all. This protection is designed for the survivable accidents—which, according to Australian researchers, account for more than half our traffic casualties. Notwithstanding, there are recorded cases where seat belts have saved wearers in what have been considered non-survivable accidents, such as head-on crashes at speeds around 70 m.p.h. Moreover, thanks to their seat belts, drivers have been known to walk away from demolished vehicles in accidents in which cars have left the road and rolled over at speeds of 90 to 100 m.p.h.

Restricted freedom of movement while riding. The comfort provided by a snug-fitting belt greatly outweighs any fancied physical restraint. Not until you've worn one can you appreciate the freedom from sliding on the seat in sharp turns, bouncing up and down on harsh bumps, or hurtling forward in unexpected stops. For 11 years the Snowy Mountains Authority has insisted on employees wearing seat belts in its cars. In all this time, despite hazardous alpine conditions, only one man has been killed in an authority vehicle—and he had released his belt to turn in his seat while reversing. Snowy Mountains drivers are enthusiastic about the comfort and peace of mind that seat belts provide. At the Traffic Accident Research Unit it has been found that the more a seat belt is used the less its wearer is aware of its supposed inconveniences. The discomfort

alibi is being further confounded by the development of devices like the inertia reel, which allows free movement when the belt is being worn, automatically adjusts to the size of the wearer, yet locks and provides lifesaving restraint in crashes. Currently being tested in Britain for the Standards Association of Australia, which passes judgment on the quality of all seat belts here, the inertia reel costs between \$12 and \$20, compared with \$6 to \$18 for a conventional belt.

Despite all the facts, fewer than 50 per cent of Australians use seat belts regularly. However, the overall incidence of usage is rising because of legislation in New South Wales and Victoria which makes the wearing of seat belts—when fitted to the car—compulsory. Any argument against seat belts seems trivial when you realize that more than half the 2,500 Australians killed in cars each year need not have died. Thousands of case studies prove conclusively that securely fastened seat belts would have saved them. All the lame alibis for avoiding seat belts are eclipsed by the positive reasons for installing and using them. That is the opinion of Dr. Henderson of New South Wales. It is apparent that the appalling number of fatalities and serious injuries resulting from vehicular accidents on our roads is causing more and more people to realize that the wearing of seat belts is one measure that can result in a reduction in this most disturbing aspect of modern transportation—death on the road.

It is interesting also to quote from the Pak Poy Committee's Report on Road Safety, which does not specifically recommend that legislation be introduced making the wearing of seat belts compulsory where they are fitted to vehicles, but it has several things to say on the matter. I quote from page 21, dealing with seat belts:

The Australian Committee on Vehicle Performance has issued recommendations concerning the fitting of seat belts for both the front and rear seat occupants. The seat belt is unlike most other car design standards in that, to be effective, it requires the co-operation of the occupants of the vehicle in wearing them. Surveys conducted in South Australia indicate that in 1968 only 27 per cent of drivers actually wore the seat belt when it was fitted, and this percentage was decreasing as compulsory fitting of seat belts extended to a greater number of vehicles.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Did it recommend a particular type of belt?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: No; but it does give the percentage reduction in the wearing of belts depending on the type of belt, whether a sash type or not.

The Hon. M. B. Cameron: Will the type of belt be standardized under this Bill?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: No. The report continues:

In the United States of America, studies indicate a reduction of 30 per cent in serious injuries or fatalities occurring to seat belt wearers in the period when lap belts were most commonly used. In Great Britain, where the lap-sash belt is more commonly used, similar studies report a 50 per cent reduction in injuries of all degrees of severity for seat belt wearers. The benefits accruing to seat belt wearers occur only in the post-accident phase and therefore the potential benefits will decrease as successful accident measures for prevention are implemented. With present accident rates, however, the potential benefit of a 100 per cent acceptance of the wearing of seat belts in South Australia would be a reduction of about 60 fatalities and 1,600 injuries annually to drivers and front seat passengers. The proven value of seat belts in the reduction of injury severity makes their use one of the most potentially beneficial of all safety measures. It could be expected that the use of seat belts would increase, if legislation was introduced making the wearing of seat belts compulsory. However, the enforcement of such a law would appear to be difficult.

Although there may be some difficulties, as has been said in the report, in enforcing the law in this case, that is no reason to reject the Bill, as I believe there are far more people who observe the laws of the land than do not. The implementation of this law will be for the benefit of even those who are opposed to the Bill. It is interesting, too, to realize that the Royal Automobile Association, which at one time was strongly opposed to the compulsory wearing of seat belts, has now come around to supporting such compulsory wearing. This was indicated in a report headed "Compulsory belt-wearing accepted" which appeared in the September issue of *Motor*, the official organ of the organization in South Australia, part of which is as follows:

The Royal Automobile Association has withdrawn its previous opposition to the compulsory wearing of seat belts, provided there are adequate exemptions and safeguards. This has been prompted by the disappointingly small percentage of users of available belts, and the recognition that seat belts offer the best present protection against injury in motor vehicle accidents.

This is why the member for Mitcham introduced the Bill in another place. As honourable members have said before, even though many people go to the expense of fitting seat belts, only a small percentage of them bother to use the belts.

The Hon. H. K. Kemp: One in 10.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I do not know about that. However, this is what has prompted people to say that, if persons will

not protect themselves, this action must be taken for their benefit.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: Dictatorship!

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: The article continues:

However, the R.A.A. says that belts should be regarded only as an interim measure in a drive to improve all safety features in motor vehicles.

I agree with that also. The article goes on:

The Government has announced its intention of making the wearing of belts compulsory, in cars required to be fitted with them, shortly. The withdrawal of opposition to compulsory wearing was decided at a meeting of the R.A.A.'s council a few weeks ago, after a review of the association's policy on the matter in the light of progress since the compulsory fitting of belts was introduced. The full text of the new policy resolution is:

"The Royal Automobile Association of South Australia recognizes the effectiveness of seat belts as injury reducing devices and having supported the compulsory installation of such devices in new motor vehicles, recognizes the desirability of making use of seat belts compulsory, provided careful attention is given to exemptions and safeguards before legislation is introduced.

The R.A.A. also urges that great efforts be made to provide easily-operated belts and that the provision of seat belts should be regarded as merely an interim measure in an overall drive to improve all safety features in motor vehicles.

The R.A.A. is also cognizant of the material and personal cost to the community of injuries and fatalities arising out of road accidents, and urges the State Government to continue campaigns to educate the public in the protection afforded by seat belts."

An R.A.A. spokesman said that although seat belts (for new cars) had been compulsory in some form since 1967 it was evident that many people were not using them.

Their value in saving lives on the roads had been proved over and over again. It was now beginning to look as though compulsion was the only answer. Under the circumstances, the association had decided not to oppose it.

This was now the attitude of motorist organizations in all States: a national policy along the same lines as the R.A.A.'s was adopted recently at a meeting in Canberra of the Executive Committee of the Australian Automobile Association.

As has been stated already, many things have been done to stop the appalling loss of life on our roads. The Government is introducing an education scheme that will go a long way to reducing the number of accidents by teaching people how to drive properly. The Hon. Mr. Kemp said that seat belts were not really the answer because people driving cars were not using them. He said it was not right to compel people to wear seat belts. However, the only way to stop people from killing themselves is to—

The Hon. H. K. Kemp: Take their licences away.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: But before that happens they may kill someone, and that is why their licence is taken away. However, it is too late then. Had they been compelled initially to wear seat belts, this would not have happened. I support the Bill and ask honourable members to give their attention to it.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON (Southern): At present, I oppose the Bill. I assure the Minister that the best is yet to come, because those who believe in the freedom of the individual have still to speak. I recognize the proper motivation behind this Bill, and I appreciate the sincerity with which the Hon. Mr. Hill introduced it in this Council and with which the member for Mitcham introduced it in another place. However, I oppose the Bill, because I believe it is an unnecessary deprivation of the freedom of the individual. It has always been my attitude that, if Parliament interferes with the freedom of the individual, it must do so to the least possible extent. I would accept a measure if it protected the rights of another person. However, I am not convinced that this Bill will have that effect.

There are many arguments for and against the compulsory wearing of seat belts. While the majority favour compulsion in this respect, there is the other side that must be considered. Some risks are associated with the wearing of seat belts and, while these risks, however slight, remain, it should be up to the individual to decide whether he wants to take the risk involved. I do not believe Parliament should tell people to place themselves in jeopardy. Whether or not a person wants to take his own life in regard to the non-wearing of seat belts is his own decision. If we start introducing measures of compulsion because it may assist a person to save his own life, we as Parliamentarians will end up in a strange position. For instance, we may have to place a limit on the number of cigarettes that a person can smoke each day because of the possibility of lung cancer being contracted, or we may have to make people run up and down stairs when they reach a certain age because lack of exercise may lead to heart disease.

The Hon. V. G. Springett: You should do so.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: I think the honourable member has indicated that he will be introducing a measure to make people

do this. More attention should be given to the safety of motor cars. I think a previous speaker said this was necessary when he referred to the Pak Poy report, which indicated that, if certain measures were taken to promote road safety, fatality figures would not be so high. This matter should be brought into line long before any such measures are introduced. The report to which I have referred indicates that the figures in this respect have been exaggerated because other accident prevention measures have not been taken.

It has been stated that a belt, properly fitted and adjusted, will save lives. How on earth will the police ever decide whether a belt is properly adjusted? True, as has already been stated, there are many types of seat belt. I have got into car after car in which the type of catch used on belts is completely different from others I have seen. It would be interesting to see in an emergency the frame of mind into which a person could get when trying to undo a type of seat belt he had not seen before.

The Hon. V. G. Springett: Even allowing for that, there has still been a reduction in the number of fatalities.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: Be that as it may, a person is still faced with the fact that he could be killed because he is wearing a seat belt. In the early days of seat belts, I properly adjusted mine on one occasion and attached it in the manner directed in the instructions. However, when I came to open it, it would not come apart because one of my small children had placed a 5c coin in the catch. It was not a very nice feeling to think about what would have happened if a serious accident had occurred and I had wanted to get out of the car in a hurry. Since then I have never worn a seat belt.

If this Bill is passed it will be very difficult indeed for the Police Force to ensure that its provisions are carried into effect, and I am sure that the police have more important tasks. For that reason and others I oppose the Bill. I am not completely convinced that it is necessary to deprive the individual of the right to decide for himself whether he will place his own life in jeopardy. In some cases serious injuries have been caused because headrests have not been fitted to cars: families have suffered continuing hardship as a result of a whiplash injury to the breadwinner. I oppose the Bill.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE (Northern): There is no way in the world by which I could

be convinced that this Bill is necessary. I congratulate the Hon. Mr. Hill on the way in which he has acted as agent for this Bill in this Council. He gave some very pertinent facts and figures, all of which I believe. He is a very sincere honourable member and he explained the Bill very well. What I entirely disagree to is not that seat belts are good and necessary but that Parliament should decide that it knows exactly what each individual should do. Nowadays, when our nation is faced with all sorts of problems that Parliaments seem unable to solve, it is proposed that this Parliament should suddenly come up with the bright idea that it knows what is good for each individual. We are faced with increasing unemployment, the rural crisis, and inflation; not one honourable member has a solution to any of those problems, yet suddenly we are asked to divert our attention to this matter. One of the things that amazes me is the inconsistency associated with this matter, because 18 months ago the same group of people condoned a *coup de grace* for about 2,000 unborn South Australians, and now that group says that we must impinge on the civil rights of individuals by telling them that they must wear seat belts.

The Hon. M. B. Cameron: You were referring to abortions?

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: Yes. I do not wish to refer in detail to the abortion question at this time, and I am certainly not arguing about the merits of wearing seat belts. I agree that all people should wear properly fitted seat belts; indeed, we should go out of our way to inform the public of the merits of doing so. However, it would be wrong for us to say, "If you do not do what Big Brother says, you will be fined." When a motorist is stopped by a police officer, perhaps that officer should examine the motorist's fingers to see whether there is any nicotine on them! If we want to save lives by compulsion, perhaps we should go further than this Bill goes! I would have thought that the police were already fully loaded with responsibility in attempting to maintain law and order. After all, laws are made to protect one's fellow men: laws should not be made simply to allow Parliament to say what is good for an individual. We should ensure that a person's liberty is not impinged on. Once a person has been informed of the precautions he should take, the responsibility for looking after his neck rests on him, not Parliament.

The figures quoted by the Hon. Mr. Hill prove conclusively the great advantage of wearing seat belts. I suggest that a closer study should be made of the type of seat belt worn. It would be better if seat belts could be fastened more easily and if a motorist did not have to fish underneath the seat for the strap. Closer attention should be paid to the design of cars. At present too many cars are high-speed vehicles that disintegrate when involved in accidents. Accidents would be less serious if cars had greater stability and could take knocks. Because accidents often happen after a vehicle becomes uncontrollable, they should have a stabilizer from front to back.

The Hon. C. R. Story: Should that be compulsory?

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: To start with, we should inform motorists that that type of feature will save lives. We saw the resentment that was aroused as a result of the introduction of fluoride into our water supplies. Some people thought that all their teeth would drop out when they took the first draught, and many still prefer to drink rain water. This Bill will be passed regardless of what I say, because I believe that Labor Party members will vote 100 per cent for it. They can then say, "We did not introduce this legislation."

The Hon. T. M. Casey: This is a House of Review.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: I am talking about Parliaments, not Houses.

The Hon. T. M. Casey: But you mentioned the Labor Party.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: I agree with some of the amendments that have been made to this legislation since it was first mooted. Clause 3 makes the measure effective from a date to be proclaimed. This, of course, is necessary, because the necessary adjustments will have to be made. I should like some further information regarding exemptions. We know that some people cannot travel in motor cars if they are strapped in, for this creates nausea, and those people would require a medical certificate.

Exemptions will be granted to children. I should have thought that children ought to be the first group of people to be required to be strapped in. Indeed, it is always a worry to me to see a car travelling along possibly with only the driver and two or three small children, sometimes in the back seat and sometimes in the front seat, just playing around, with not a strap of any sort on them. If we are to have this degree of compulsion, I believe it is necessary for everyone in a car to be provided for.

The Hon. Mr. Hill was honest enough to say, "I submit that this measure is highly desirable, if not absolutely necessary." He did not emphasize the word "not", but I thought that that was what he meant. I go as far as to say that perhaps it is highly desirable. However, there is no way in the world that anyone can convince me that it is necessary or proper to have this infringement of civil rights.

I think it was the Hon. Mr. Kneebone who said that no-one resents having to do up a seat belt in an aircraft. The answer to that is quite simple, because that is a direction by the people who operate the aircraft. If I entered the Minister's car and he said he would like me to put on a seat belt, I would be the first to comply with his wishes; but if he got into my car, I would not demand that of him. That is the difference between the fastening of a seat belt in an aircraft and the wearing of a belt in a private car.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is not a request in the case of an aircraft: it is a demand.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: That is so. But what does the operator of the aircraft do when he gets into his own motor car?

The Hon. V. G. Springett: That is not the point.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: It is exactly the point. The aircraft operator has a regulation applying to his aircraft. This regulation was introduced not by the passengers but by the people who operate the aircraft. The passengers did not demand that they should all be belted to their seats in an aircraft.

The Hon. R. A. Geddes: People do not need to have their belts fastened when the aircraft is in flight: that is only necessary on take-off and landing.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: Yes. I believe I have indicated that I have no desire to vote in favour of legislation of this type, and I hope it is the last such legislation that we see for a long time.

The Hon. E. K. RUSSACK secured the adjournment of the debate.

LAND TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL (REASSESSMENT)

Read a third time and passed.

SWINE COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 14. Page 1365.)

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland): I support the Bill and, in doing so, I say the same thing as I said yesterday in respect of another Bill. Although the Minister must

be getting almost tired of hearing me say this, I once again compliment the Government on bringing this legislation forward, because anything that can be done at present to reduce the burden on the primary producer ought to be done.

This legislation has been introduced at the request of the pig industry, which over a long period has been a great self-help industry. I am very pleased and proud to think that when I occupied the office of Minister of Agriculture I had very close and harmonious relations with both the United Farmers and Graziers Pig Section and the Stud Pig Society of South Australia. Both these bodies, which work in very close harmony, were always willing to contribute to the Swine Compensation Fund. This fund was set up as a result, I think, of a long-sighted policy of the pig industry. I do not think it is necessary to retain the great amount of money that has been accumulated in the fund, particularly as the responsibility for swine fever will now come mainly within the province of the Commonwealth Government under the new set-up. On June 30 this year the amount standing to the credit of the fund at the Treasury was \$524,463, which is a considerable sum in anyone's language. It is very much greater than the sum standing to the credit of the Cattle Compensation Fund.

The industry made a great contribution in 1966-67 when it offered to provide about \$35,000 to establish a pig research laboratory at Northfield. Much bungling by the Public Buildings Department cost the pig producers an additional \$25,000, but they paid up cheerfully to get the research work under way. I am pleased to say that that laboratory has been opened, that the pig industry has made a contribution towards the employment of a research officer, and that some very good and useful work will come from it. The more money spent in research, the less need there will be for vast compensation funds. This seems a very sensible way to go about the matter.

The standard of the pig industry in South Australia is extremely high, and we have in this State some of Australia's leading studs. It is most important that we maintain this standard of stud within South Australia and, what is more, keep our pig population healthy. I am reminded of a visit to London last year when I inspected the Smithfield meat market, a huge meat hall by anyone's standards, which would sell as much meat in a day as would be sold in Adelaide in a month. Seeing particularly the landrace pigs from Denmark imprints

upon one's mind the need and the desirability to breed a line of pigs so that the buyer can depend upon getting the same quality and the same standard day by day. With the Danish landrace pigs, one can look along hundreds of carcasses and it would be necessary to use a set of calipers to differentiate between them. This, of course, is what we should be aiming at, and I believe that with the studs established in South Australia at present our standards are improving and will be constant and comparable with those to be found anywhere in this country.

It is also essential for us to put a stamp of quality on our pigmeats. People in countries to the north of Australia are very keen on pigmeat. In Japan and Taiwan, no doubt in mainland China, and certainly down through some parts of Malaysia, pigmeat is a very important part of the staple diet of the people. It is important for us to maintain the standard, but it is also important that we diversify as much as possible, and there is no more thrifty way for the farmer to dispose of a bag of grain than through the pig on a conversion basis. It is by far the best return the farmer can get for his money, and he will get the end result as compost as well.

This is a very good measure. The industry is entitled to all the relief it can get, and I am pleased to see that the matter is now on a Commonwealth basis. As Minister, I was asked to investigate the possibility of making available from the fund, which stood at a very high level, certain moneys for promotional purposes. While I was in complete sympathy with the proposal it was not possible to do it at that time, but, now that the industry is organized on a Commonwealth basis and a levy can be struck over the whole of the industry, this will be of extreme benefit to the industry and to the pig producers, who can levy from themselves and from these types of funds. Our fund stands at a higher level probably than any fund in the rest of Australia, and if we can put money into the Commonwealth fund and receive a subsidy, and also get our research grants in the same way, this will maintain the standard which we have reached and which I think we can retain. It gives me great pleasure to support this measure.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Duty on sales of pigs."

The Hon. C. R. STORY: At one stage trust funds with credits at the Treasury were being used (and probably are still being used) for Government finance. While they are trust

funds they do not return any loan interest. If I remember correctly, under the Cattle Compensation Fund interest was payable. This was after the matter had been raised in Parliament. Is the same thing happening with the Swine Compensation Fund?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY (Minister of Agriculture): I cannot give a direct answer. Money in these trust funds is utilized by Governments at odd times, and I think this has been the case in the life of any Government as far back as one can go. I will get the information for the honourable member.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: If the Treasury is not paying interest on this fund, I ask that consideration be given to the same interest being paid as is paid under the Cattle Compensation Fund.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I will discuss the matter with the Treasurer and see just what the situation is.

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: Where is the cross-over between this legislation and the Commonwealth legislation regarding quarantine? Much legislation of this kind, such as the Fruit and Vegetable Protection Act, actually preceded the establishment of effective Commonwealth quarantine measures. The States have looked after this matter very well and efficiently for a long time, and today the Commonwealth Government is assuming more and more responsibility in this regard. I am sure that, if a serious outbreak did occur here, the Commonwealth Government would override our State in responsibility. Does the State Government need to hold \$500,000 or more of the pig breeders' funds when, after all, the Commonwealth Government takes the ultimate responsibility? This has gone on for many years. We need to examine whether we should consolidate all the necessary defences (I am not questioning their need). The cattle and pig industries are having a large amount of money withheld from them; no other industries have to bear such a burden.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I think the whole problem revolves around research more than anything else as far as the State is concerned.

The Hon. H. K. Kemp: The money is for protection against disease.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: Well, this is protection against disease. We in Australia have not been faced with large importations of pigs over the years; we have bred most of our own pigs, although there were importations earlier. There must be more importation of pigs into this country in the future.

The Hon. H. K. Kemp: On the last occasion there was a rhinitis outbreak.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: The Hon. Mr. Story yesterday and again today spoke about a Commonwealth off-shore quarantine station, which is essential. For the purposes of research within our own State, the industry itself will decide exactly how much money it requires; it is the industry that is responsible for this fund. If it thinks it is in its interests to maintain a fund of this magnitude, it is at liberty to do so. It is better to have a nest egg, particularly in this day and age when so many problems attach to all our industries, particularly in breeding. The research station at Northfield has been operating for only a short time, and I hope the industry will derive much benefit from this station.

The Hon. Mr. Story said that, if we went to Smithfield today and saw carcasses of Danish pigmeat hanging on the hook they would be almost like peas in a pod. That is so, but I assure honourable members that even the Danish industry is going to Britain today to buy new strains of pigs, because it must maintain a certain standard in the country. The Danish people are finding that they can have too much inbreeding. It all stems from research. That is why a fund of this nature (which the honourable member thinks is too large) is a matter for the pig industry generally. It is well advised to have a buoyant fund because we never know when we may need to use it.

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: The Minister has just revealed the completely wrong thinking about this fund, which is a compensation fund. All he can talk about is the research that will be carried out as a result of the fund. It was established to compensate people overwhelmed with this disease, who needed assistance. All the Minister can talk about is spending the fund on research with the public servants at Northfield, which is not the purpose for which this legislation was passed and this fund was set up. The Government is withholding \$500,000 from the pig breeders saying it is to be spent by the Agriculture Department on research. The whole matter should be completely reconsidered.

Clause passed.

Title passed.

Bill reported without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE ERADICATION FUND ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 14. Page 1365.)

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS (Midland): Yesterday, the Hon. Mr. Story commended the Government for introducing this Bill. He made a similar statement this afternoon on the Swine Compensation Act Amendment Bill. No doubt, the Minister will be hard put to keep his feet on the ground if he is again commended on this Bill. However, this matter is apart from politics, and should be brought forward by any responsible Government. I commend the Government and the Minister for bringing it forward. Although it is completely divorced from politics, this matter is vital to the welfare of this country because it does not merely affect agriculture: it affects the wellbeing of the whole population of Australia, which could be adversely affected if we suffered a bad outbreak of this dread disease.

In his second reading explanation, the Minister said that in 1958 the Hon. David Brookman (the then Minister of Agriculture) introduced the original Bill setting up the Foot and Mouth Disease Eradication Fund, to provide a source of revenue to deal with outbreaks of that disease. Those people who have seen films of the ravages of that dreadful disease in other countries and the costly and effective measures taken to combat and contain it (and eventually in some cases to eradicate it) will realize how important it is that this Bill be introduced to widen the measures (as it does) to be taken for the prevention or eradication of this disease. The purpose of this Bill is to ensure that we will be more prepared than hitherto for any outbreak of foot and mouth disease or of the associated diseases named by the Minister to be included in the Bill as a result of provisions in clause 3 that I will mention in a moment. If we are not more

prepared than we have been, and an outbreak of this disease occurs, we will lose valuable export markets overnight and, in addition, we will have to combat the ravages of the disease. Those who have seen the films of the dreadful effects of foot and mouth disease and the costly measures that have to be taken to combat it, as I have, will not need to be told of the importance of this legislation.

The Minister has said that it is desirable to widen the definition of "foot and mouth disease" by including in clause 3 the words "and any disease for the time being declared by proclamation to be included within the definition of foot and mouth disease for the purposes of this Act". He has also told the Council that it is intended to include in the extended meaning rinderpest, swine fever, African swine fever, rabies, Newcastle disease (a disease affecting poultry), fowl plague and blue tongue.

The Hon. C. R. Story: Hence the amendment to the Swine Compensation Act.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: Yes. I said yesterday that this has a bearing on the Swine Compensation Act in that the disease swine fever is covered to some extent by this Act. These alterations are both necessary and desirable, as is the inclusion in the extended definition of a disease such as blue tongue, half the responsibility for which will fall on the shoulders of the Commonwealth Government, a percentage being met by each of the States. The inclusion of Newcastle disease, for which the Commonwealth Government will bear half the responsibility, is also desirable. The whole of this short Bill is to be commended, and I have much pleasure in supporting it.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.34 p.m. the Council adjourned until Thursday, September 16, at 2.15 p.m.