

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, August 15, 1956.

The SPEAKER (Hon. B. H. Teusner) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

QUORN COAL DISCOVERY.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Mines details of an analysis, which I understand was recently made, of coal samples found near Quorn?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The Chief Analyst (Mr. T. R. Frost) reports:—

Samples marked as under yielded on analysis:—

Mark.	Moisture.	Volatile Matter.	Fixed Carbon.	Ash.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Q1 . . .	7.41	14.64	9.28	68.67
Q2 . . .	14.88	30.21	23.68	31.22
Q4 . . .	24.96	42.29	25.96	6.79

Mr. JENKINS—As I am a layman I do not know whether that report means that the coal is of good quality or otherwise. I should imagine, from the report, that the mine has a poor future, but I ask the Minister whether that is so?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I think perhaps the honourable member's guess may be just as good as mine, but I will advise him later.

RIVER MURRAY FLOOD.

Mr. KING—Before asking the Minister of Irrigation a question concerning the flood position on the River Murray, I take this opportunity of expressing to him my own thanks and those of the people on the river for the wonderful assistance and co-operation given them during the present crisis. I have been in constant communication with members of Cabinet, heads of departments, and people along the whole line of communication dealing with the problems arising from the floods, and South Australians have every right to be proud of their public servants and the way they administer their departments. I also commend the Minister of Irrigation, who has been on tap 24 hours a day and who organized the appeal for sandbags, which were very welcome and without which our resistance would not have lasted as long as it has. I particularly commend the Flood Liaison Officer (Mr. A. C. Gordon) who has also been available 24 hours a day and has done great work in co-ordinating all the services required.

The SPEAKER—I take it the honourable member will conclude this statement with a question?

Mr. KING—Yes, Mr. Speaker. In this very difficult situation the people themselves have risen nobly to meet the emergency. As this is a rather critical stage, can the Minister give details of the present position?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yesterday I informed the House of the very critical position, particularly at Renmark, and unfortunately, reports today indicate that the position is perhaps more critical than yesterday. One of the main banks near the bridge burst this morning and until an hour before lunch a large number of people were fighting desperately to close the breach. If the position got out of hand it would be serious for Renmark, but the officer in charge there said it was hoped the men would succeed in closing the breach.

Mr. BYWATERS—Can the Minister of Irrigation say what provision is being made for the use of volunteer labour at Murray Bridge during the coming weekend?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—No, although I am aware that a tremendous amount of heavy equipment is available to deal with the remaining areas. Details concerning personnel will have to be obtained from the local district officer.

SCHOOL ENROLMENTS.

Mr. HUTCHENS—I have heard that some school enrolments have been declined this year owing to the shortage of teachers and the inability to supply accommodation. Can the Minister of Education say how many (if any) such enrolments of children of compulsory school age were declined for the reasons given?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—As far as I am aware, none of compulsory age—between 6 and 14 years—were declined, but at the beginning of the second term it was found necessary to defer the enrolment of some young children who had just turned five and were not in the compulsory age group. That was brought about by the general shortage of teachers, more particularly in a few areas where married women teachers were not available because of their lack of mobility owing to the need to employ them near their homes.

Mr. HUTCHENS—There are a number of schools at which the classes are exceptionally large. Some applications for enrolment of children under six have been accepted but others declined. Where accepted an additional burden has been placed on the teachers. In order not to disappoint some parents and in fairness to teachers will the Minister prohibit

the enrolment of children under the compulsory school-going age of six years until the schools can accommodate them all?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I have already considered this matter and there are points for and against it. There is the difficulty of teachers being obliged to handle classes larger than they should be called upon to instruct; on the other hand there is the disappointment to parents of young children if their admission to school is postponed. We have endeavoured to limit rejection to those schools where, for a variety of reasons, the classes are far too large for the teachers. I will consider the honourable member's request to regard the whole matter as one problem.

PARINGA BRIDGE.

Mr. STOTT—The Minister of Roads has announced that the concrete decking on the Paringa Bridge is to be repaired by the Highways Department and I have been asked by district councils to inquire whether the work can be done during the flood while the bridge is out of action so that it can be used immediately the flood has subsided. Will the Minister of Irrigation take up this matter with his colleague, the Minister of Roads?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yes, and I will bring down a report, tomorrow if possible.

ROAD DAMAGE ON RELIABILITY TRIALS.

Mr. LAUCKE—During this winter extensive damage has been done to country roads by vehicles participating in reliability trials. Can the Minister representing the Minister of Local Government say whether councils have a legal claim on promoters of road trials for compensation for damage done to roads by such trials?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—This matter has been considered recently by Cabinet, but I will take it up with the Minister concerned and bring down a report.

MYPOLONGA PUMPING STATION.

Mr. BYWATERS—Can the Minister of Irrigation state the cost of the new Mypolonga pumping house and the equipment therein?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have received a report which states:—

This pumping station is surrounded by flood waters and has been protected with an island embankment. A break occurred in this bank several days ago adjacent to the delivery pipe, but this break has been repaired and the situation is now under control. The water has been pumped out and it is expected that the small leak still taking place can be stopped. This is the only pumping station in the

reclaimed areas serving high level fruit growing properties, and it is therefore important to keep the station in operation.

I assure the honourable member that everything possible is being done and that, in the event of efforts completely breaking down, emergency pumps will be brought into operation.

Mr. Bywaters—I asked whether the Minister could state the cost of the new pumping house and equipment.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I will get that information for the honourable member.

HOOLIGANISM IN RUNDLE STREET.

Mr. LAWN—I refer to the recent actions of certain hooligans in Rundle Street (though one might use a stronger term), who staged what might be termed a "mock gangster murder." I ask the Minister in charge of the House whether proceedings are being taken against them, and, if not, why not?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—If the honourable member is referring to the incident in which a dark car dashed up and a few shots, or imitation shots, were fired, I can state that I read in this morning's press that the Deputy Commissioner of Police had investigated the matter and decided to take no further action.

Mr. LAWN—Will the Minister of Lands make available the reasons for the Deputy Police Commissioner deciding not to take any action in the matter?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I am not in a position to make the statement available.

Mr. Lawn—Will you ascertain the reason?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I shall take up the question with the Chief Secretary.

DELAYS IN ISSUING LAND TITLES.

Mr. FLETCHER—I have been inundated with complaints, both personally and by letter, about the long delays in issuing titles to those who have purchased homes from the Housing Trust. In some cases the delays have been as long as two years. A two years' delay in connection with a lease may not matter much, but those who have purchased homes are afraid that they may not be able to meet their commitments because their lease commences only from the time they secure their titles. The titles have been promised and it has been stated that there is a hold-up somewhere, but will the Minister of Lands have the position investigated?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—It might be generally thought that the Lands Titles Office is under the control of the Lands Department,

but that is not so. I will take up the question with the Minister concerned—I think the Attorney-General—and ascertain the cause of the delays. Perhaps in country areas there has been delay because of the shortage of surveyors, but I will bring down a report for the honourable member.

DAMAGE TO COUNCIL ROADS BY HAULIERS.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—In many council areas, particularly non-commercial areas, the roads were not made for use by heavy vehicles. I believe the Minister of Local Government is very concerned about the abuse of roads by hauliers, which could affect the finances of certain councils. Will the Minister representing the Minister of Local Government consider the position under section 667, sub-paragraph v of paragraph (47), of the Local Government Act, which enables a council to nominate a series of roads that must be used. If this were done the matter would come before the Joint Committee on Subordinate Legislation and Parliament, and I point out that I do not desire to take away any of the privileges of Parliament. I think this question could be confined to those non-commercial areas where a tonnage limit might be imposed. I am opposed to hauliers carting 15 or 20 tons over roads that were not constructed for the purpose of carrying such heavy traffic.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I entirely agree with the honourable member's remarks about heavy vehicles using roads not constructed to carry them. This matter has had considerable attention from the Minister concerned. I have not heard of his final decision, but I will take up the question about the section quoted and bring down a report for the honourable member.

ROAD FENCING.

Mr. QUIRKE—When a deviation is made from an existing surveyed road which is fenced on one side, both sides of the fence belonging to the one owner, who is responsible for fencing the deviation? Is the Highways Department responsible for fencing one side, or is the owner responsible for fencing both sides?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I cannot say off-hand, but I think that where land has been purchased for rounding off roads and so forth the price paid is considered when the question of fencing arises. I will get a reply and bring it down.

LAND PURCHASES FOR SCHOOLS.

Mr. SHANNON—An amount of £70,000 is provided in the Loan Estimates for acquiring land for schools. I compliment the Education Department on its foresight in securing land in areas where development is taking place and it will be necessary to provide new schools. That policy has been pursued since the Minister has been in office and I commend him for taking that wise step. I point out, however, that as soon as it becomes known that the department is interested in any land it becomes more costly. I am somewhat perturbed as to whether the amount provided in the Loan Estimates will be sufficient to cover all required purchases. Will the department be in a position to acquire the necessary land without undue delay?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—I agree that the purchases should not be unnecessarily delayed. Almost every week in Cabinet I make requests for the purchase of land in advance of requirements. During the last 10 years the Education Department has purchased over 1,500 acres of land for future school requirements—500 in the metropolitan area and over 1,000 in country districts. I hope that the £70,000 will be sufficient, but if not I am confident I can prevail on the Treasurer to supply me with necessary funds for the additions.

RENTAL HOUSE AGREEMENTS.

Mr. TAPPING—Last year the Landlord and Tenant Act was amended to enable landlords and tenants to enter into agreements by which any control over rents by the Housing Trust was avoided. I believe that a number of persons have entered into agreements because of the shortage of houses and because they feared eviction. It has been brought to my notice that in a number of instances the increase on the former rent fixed by the Housing Trust has been as much as 125 per cent. Will the Minister of Lands ascertain whether the provision enabling agreements to be made is being abused?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I will certainly get the required information.

PARINGA SCHOOL RE-OPENING.

Mr. STOTT—Children from Paringa and Lyrup are attending school at Renmark. It has become apparent that that school may soon be put out of action because of the flood.

The Hon. B. Pattinson—It is out of action.

Mr. STOTT—Has the Minister any emergency plan to meet the position? Does he propose re-opening the Paringa school?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—In view of the rather alarming news yesterday concerning the state of the flood at Renmark it was decided, as a precautionary measure, to close the large infant and primary school at Renmark until further notice. It was also decided to re-open the Paringa school and dual classrooms will be provided there immediately. I have consulted Mr. King, the member for Chaffey, and we have had the transport officer, Mr. Harris, and other officers of the department in the district, and a large and comprehensive plan is ready to be put into operation for the use of some of the schools that have been closed and of halls. It may also be necessary to use some church halls. Large numbers of children and teachers will be transferred to other schools and halls. The honourable member for the district is concerned in this matter and I have provided him with a long statement.

Mr. Stott—I am seriously concerned, too.

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—Yes, but the member for Chaffey is concerned about Renmark. If the honourable member desires me to do so I shall give him a considered reply tomorrow.

RIVER MURRAY PUMPING STATIONS.

Mr. KING—Will the Minister of Lands give a resume of the present position of the pumping stations along the River Murray?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I have obtained a report from the Engineer-in-Chief regarding the pumping stations. I have already given some information to the member for Murray. Pumping stations in the areas represented by Mr. King, Mr. Stott and Mr. Hambour are concerned. The following is the information supplied:—

Chaffey.—The pump chamber and delivery chase have been shored up with timber by a gang of expert timber men from the Sewers Branch of this department. The floor of the chamber has been weighted down with sandbags to prevent floating.

Berri.—The pumping station is protected by an embankment. The pump chambers at both the gas and steam plants are being shored up with timber and the floors have been loaded with sandbags to prevent floating.

Cobdogla.—This station has been protected with embankments, sandbags and concrete retaining walls. The old "Humphrey" pump station has been filled with water to prevent floating, but the new electrical station was designed to withstand a flood of this magnitude, although it has been necessary to block all doorways with concrete. It is expected that this station will withstand the flood.

Loveday.—A protecting bank has been built all around the station and the floor weighted down with sandbags. The position should be satisfactory.

Moorook.—This station has been isolated by floodwaters. It is protected by an island embankment and the pump chamber has been shored up with timber and weighted down with sandbags to prevent floating.

Kingston.—This station has been protected with an embankment and shored up where necessary.

Waikerie.—The pump well and chases have been loaded with sandbags and shored up with timber. It has also been necessary to weight down the engine room floor with sandbags. The pumps cannot be operated with the sandbags in the driving rope chases and these are therefore being replaced with 60 tons of pig lead. The pumping station is protected by an embankment, which is 12ft. high in places, and this embankment is being strengthened.

Cadell.—This station is protected by an embankment and has been shored up and weighted down where necessary.

A general comment is as follows:—

Waikerie is considered the most critical of all stations and plans have been prepared for the installation of emergency pumps in the event of the station being flooded. Emergency measures have also been planned in respect to other areas, but if it is necessary to implement these measures it is certain that there would be some inconvenience to irrigators as it would be impossible to maintain normal watering schedules.

INSURANCE OF FLOOD WORKERS.

Mr. STOTT—The Minister of Lands is aware that a decision was made to insure voluntary workers in the flooded areas. It has been brought to my notice from the Lyrup and Moorook areas that hernia is excluded from the agreement. Can the Minister say why this is so, because the trouble is likely to happen to a man of about 45 years of age when he lifts a heavy weight suddenly? Will the Minister take up the matter to see if hernia can be included?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yes.

TRAFFIC HOLD UP ON PORT ROAD.

Mr. STEPHENS—Will the Minister of Lands ascertain why so many buses on the road to Port Adelaide were held up for a period last Friday? It was about 2.30 p.m. when they reached Port Adelaide. There were about five or six buses on the road. When they got to Queenstown the "Full" sign was on some of them. When the conductor on one bus was asked the reason for the delay, and whether there had been a breakdown, he said it was not the fault of the trust or of the employees. People had to

wait about half an hour for the buses and it was said afterwards that the group responsible for the hold-up comprised "respectable" bodgies. Had the other bodgies been responsible for the delay they would have been gaoled, but as the trouble was caused by another lot of bodgies, who are allowed to override the laws, will the Minister ascertain the reason for the hold-up?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yes.

COUNTRY ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.

Mr. RICHES—Will the acting Leader of the Government ascertain the tariff to be charged residents of Stirling North by the Electricity Trust and when the Umeewarra Aboriginal Mission is likely to be connected to the supply?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yes.

WHEAT RESEARCH LEVY.

Mr. STOTT—Has the Minister of Agriculture any information on the decision of the Agricultural Council concerning a levy for research into wheat production?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—Although I do not desire to go into this question in detail until I have had an opportunity to discuss the council's decisions with my colleagues, I can say that the council approved a levy on the wheat produced, varying between $\frac{1}{2}$ d. and 1d., for general investigation into wheat-growing problems. Further, the accounts of the Australian Wheat Board contain residual amounts comprising the total of fractions that cannot be distributed from year to year because of the minute amounts involved, and it was suggested that these amounts be added to the general fund for expenditure on investigation. Further information will be available later.

URANIUM FIELD DISCOVERER.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Will the Acting Leader of the Government take up with the Minister of Mines the question of commemorating the discovery of radium at Radium Hill by naming either some street or area of the field after a Mr. Smith who discovered the original deposits there early this century? These have been valuable to the State but neither he nor his family has got anything from them. His widow—a constituent of mine—feels that some action could be taken by the State to commemorate the find.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yes.

DANGEROUS PARKING.

Mr. LAUCKE—Many drivers of heavy transports on country highways are guilty of the dangerous practice, which is becoming increasingly prevalent, of parking their vehicles near the brow of a hill during rest periods, thereby creating a major hazard to oncoming traffic. Will the Chairman of the State Traffic Committee have his committee investigate this matter with a view to prohibiting the parking of vehicles within a prescribed distance from the brows of hills in country districts?

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE (Chairman of State Traffic Committee)—I should think the practice referred to could be a breach of the Road Traffic Act, but in order to have the matter examined by my committee I would be obliged if the honourable member would give me the question in writing.

BRIDGE AT BLANCHETOWN.

Mr. STOTT—Can the Chairman of the Public Works Committee inform the House when his committee will take evidence on the building of the bridge across the Murray River at Blanchetown? The Loxton and Waikerie district councils have informed me that they are ready to give evidence.

Mr. SHANNON (Chairman, Public Works Committee)—This matter is of some concern to people in the river areas. We had planned to take evidence in the river areas in July, but Mr. Condon and I were laid aside for some time with sickness. In the meantime the unfortunate occurrences on the river have completely altered the picture. Had we been unlucky enough to have started the construction of a bridge over the Murray in preference to one over the Port River, the approaches would have been hazardous in view of the heavy floods and the Government may have been blamed; therefore we have had some luck in having the delay forced on us. My committee can now inspect the river in its peak flood condition and, as laymen, we will be as well informed as possible on conditions likely to be encountered on the river and, if and when the project is recommended, it should satisfactorily meet all conditions possible. My committee does not intend to visit the Murray areas to take evidence while the unfortunate settlers are fighting day and night to save their properties; we would not embarrass them by asking them to give valuable time in appearing before the committee until conditions there have improved. We do not propose to delay the inquiry but will proceed with it as expeditiously as possible.

LOTTERIES BILL.

Mr. STOTT—Today I received a document from the South Australian Olympic Council signed by the secretary and stating that the council unanimously supported a Bill to legalize lotteries and to be introduced by the member for Edwardstown. As the President of the council is stated to be the Premier of South Australia, can the Acting Leader of the Government say whether Mr. Playford is unanimously in favour of the Bill and whether he can be expected to support it?

The SPEAKER—The honourable member's question is out of order.

METROPOLITAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION.

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—I move—

That in view of—

- (a) the great and increasing problems associated with the construction and maintenance of roads, the provision of drainage, the control of transport and other functions of local government in the metropolitan area;
- (b) the financial difficulties encountered by the metropolitan councils in their attempts to solve those problems; and
- (c) the untoward consequences of the existing system of local government now obtaining in the metropolitan area—

His Excellency the Governor be requested to appoint a committee consisting of four members of the House of Assembly and three members of the Legislative Council for the purpose of investigating these matters and recommending such amendments of the Local Government Act as it may deem desirable for the better administration of the affairs of the metropolitan area.

In proposing that a Parliamentary Committee should be set up to inquire into the existing constitution and functions of our metropolitan corporations, I am fortified by the views expressed by a number of eminent local government authorities, especially on the question of the administration of metropolitan cities.

In particular, I wish to acknowledge the value of Professor W. A. Robson's work entitled *Great Cities of the World, Their Government, Politics and Planning*. Professor Robson is Professor of Public Administration in the London School of Economics and Politics, and the work mentioned contains a very comprehensive review of present-day problems facing local government institutions

in the big cities of the world. The professor himself has contributed a solid analysis of the whole subject and, in addition, a special review of the position in the London metropolitan area. Other contributors have dealt with different cities of the world of which they have special knowledge. One of the cities so dealt with is Sydney. I would strongly recommend all those interested in this subject to study the principles enunciated by Professor Robson in the introductory part of this work.

In addition to benefiting from what might be called the theoretical side of the subject of metropolitan local government, I have also studied the practical side of it, as expressed in the attempts that have been made to reform the local government systems of some of our own Australian cities, notably Brisbane, which, as members probably know, became one local government area as far back as 1925, and also Sydney. One of the features of the negotiations and discussions involved in these attempts has been the opposition presented by persons or organizations interested in the perpetuation of the existing system. As a matter of fact, this opposition has been so effective that in very few places has anything like true reform been achieved. I mention this fact not because it is an argument against reform but to emphasize the fact that if anything is to be done in the interests of progress, it must be done at the Parliamentary level and that if the reform achieved is to be worthwhile, Parliament must rise above the petty prejudices and motives that have been allowed to stand in the way of progress for so long and in so many other parts of the world.

I suggest that a Parliamentary Committee should be appointed to investigate the matter thoroughly, with a view to recommending, without fear or favour, what reform would be appropriate in the case of our own metropolitan area, and that it should be representative of the Opposition and the Government. I am prepared to concede that the Government—because for the time being it is the Government, irrespective of how it became the Government—should have the right of representation on this committee, but I feel that the representatives of both Houses of Parliament should be of both the Government and the Opposition.

Certain reforms have been achieved in a few metropolitan cities in different parts of the world—and I will discuss some of these in a moment—but I would point out that no two cities have grown up in exactly the same manner insofar as governmental institutions are

concerned, so that what might be an appropriate reform in one instance would not necessarily be appropriate in another. For example, it might not be possible or desirable to substitute one council for the twenty-one separate local government authorities now operating in our metropolitan area—at any rate, immediately; or, if such a change were possible and desirable, it might not be desirable to confer upon a single council precisely the same powers and functions as for example, were conferred upon the Greater Brisbane Council. We are, of course, to some extent the victims of the system, or lack of system, in the existing scheme of things, which would inevitably influence the nature of any reform that might be found to be desirable and which could delay the full realization of such reform. The motion which I have introduced implies that we should at least try to find some better method or system of metropolitan local government for Adelaide and its suburbs within the limits of the metropolitan area. The mere existence of twenty-one separate and mutually independent local government authorities in that area is in itself a *prima facie* case for an investigation.

In 1924, speaking in support of the Greater Brisbane Bill in the Queensland Parliament, Mr. McLachlan, a Labor member, said:—

Anybody who has read the history of local government work throughout the British dominions can see that there is a movement in favour of larger areas in connection with local government.

The *Daily Standard*, a Brisbane newspaper of the day, had this to say on the subject of amalgamation of council areas:—

“No reasonable intelligent citizen can cavil at the proposal to incorporate in one authority the divers shire, town and city councils operating in the metropolitan area. It has been proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that the present division of authority has acted in many ways as a curb upon development on modern lines and has caused waste of effort and needless expenditure of public funds. We believe that any indifference as to the city’s progress or lack of it in the past has been due to the very thing which will cease to exist on the creation of a Greater Brisbane. Parochialism, arising from the narrowing of municipal activity has been a distinct drawback to the advancement of the city. Remove that parochialism and you get a broader outlook and a healthier municipal sentiment.

Another Brisbane newspaper of the time, the *Brisbane Telegraph*, commenting on the Bill, said:—

Most people are agreed upon the central principle of the Greater Brisbane Bill now before Parliament. Broadly speaking, the 240,000 people occupying the metropolitan area

are one people, having community of interest, and they should not require a multiplicity of bodies for purposes of local government. Indeed, where numerous authorities exist, as at present, there must be overlapping and clashing in various directions, which will be avoided under the Greater Brisbane scheme. Uniformity of policy, of by-laws and so forth are desirable things attainable only by amalgamation, while economy in administration should also result.

The most notable feature of the debate on the Greater Brisbane Bill in 1924 was the agreement of both parties as to the desirability of amalgamation, the only point of difference being, in effect, how far amalgamation should go at the time. The Government of the day was faced with two alternatives to provide for the immediate aggregation of all local government authorities in the metropolitan area or to provide for the immediate aggregation of the inner areas only and the inclusion of the outer areas later. The Government decided to make one bite at the cherry and provided for the immediate creation of one local government authority for the whole metropolitan area. Most of the members representing districts comprising the outer local government areas opposed this, mainly on the ground that such areas would be prejudiced by the proposed pooling of loan indebtedness and other financial provisions included in the Bill. However, I repeat, there was no—or practically no—opposition to the principle of amalgamation itself; but I mention the suggestion that only the inner councils should be amalgamated, representing an inner nucleus of similar population density, etc., as one of the possible reforms that might be found to be appropriate here in our own metropolitan area, although, personally, I do not think that would be a solution of the problems of that area.

The Greater Brisbane Bill was the result of an exhaustive inquiry and was critically investigated by numerous interested bodies, including the Town Planning Association and the City Surveyors’ Association, both of which passed resolutions approving of the area proposed to be incorporated under the jurisdiction of the one great municipal council functioning for the metropolitan area as a whole. It is interesting to note, also, the remarks made by Mr. H. E. Morton, then Engineer of the Melbourne City Council, on the proposals contained in the Bill. His statement was published in the *Daily Mail* on September 26, 1924:—

The trouble hitherto has been that each municipality has looked at things from its own point of view and did not consider what assistance could be rendered to its neighbours. Naturally, the people who provided the money wanted it

spent there and not to the advantage of people adjoining. As a matter of fact, Australian capital cities have too many suburban or shire areas. Up to a point, this is a good thing in the early stages because local matters probably receive more attention than they would get with a bigger council. But there comes a time when the city reaches a certain stage of growth that it cannot be kept individually but must be kept collectively. . . . Brisbane has reached that stage when individual control is no longer needed and the greater council should at once consider traffic and other problems with the aid of a town-planning scheme. If something is not done quickly, there will be tremendous congestion.

One of the Opposition speakers (Mr. King) expressed the general view in support of the principle of the Bill. He said:—

The best method of attaining that object (the good government of the metropolitan area of Brisbane) is to centre in a single body all the functions of local government, the elimination of all other authorities exercising control of what are really local functions and to formulate a scheme defining or establishing the power and functions of that body when constituted and making provision for the financing of the scheme With such a multiplicity of local authorities as are found in the metropolitan area, it is obvious that it is impossible to give effect to a single co-ordinated policy in connection with roads, bridges, sewers, drains, parks, reserves, town planning, housing, transit, light, water, public health, and all the other functions of local government.

It is also interesting to note that in 1916 the Bureau of Public Efficiency of Chicago, U.S.A., reported on this subject in the following terms:—

It is customary to think of consolidation of governing bodies primarily in terms of money savings However, even if there were no money savings to be realized by consolidation or even if re-organization on lines of unity were to call for larger expenditure instead of a decrease, the benefits of the re-organization in the way of improved services would justify the carrying out of the programme of unification. The community is poorly served by this hodge-podge of irresponsible governing agencies not only independent of one another but often pulling and hauling at cross purposes.

For many years—practically from the beginning of the present century—the question of a greater Sydney has been debated. A Royal Commission appointed for the purpose issued a report on the subject in 1913. In general, this commission favoured the establishment of a local government body having authority over matters of metropolitan importance and significance. Among other things, it said:—

To prevent future evils a single authority must plan ahead for the metropolitan area, but for this purpose it is not necessary to abolish the outer municipalities or to take

from them the approval of road construction in conformity with the general plan. These and other considerations point to a new organization, which in metropolitan matters will embrace the metropolitan area, but in local matters will differentiate between an inner and an outer zone The endeavour should be to get a scheme which provides for gradual development, and does not involve an administrative upheaval or impose an excessive burden on the new organization. The scheme should certainly be thought out for the whole metropolitan area and from the outset the Greater Sydney should for broad purposes be the metropolitan area. . . . It is essential that the inner and the outer zones should from the first be regarded as parts of one whole, but practical considerations require that the inner zone should be at the first of comparatively modest dimensions—about 40 square miles of the total of 350 square miles.

The New South Wales commission was apparently so convinced of the desirability of establishing a Greater Sydney Council that it included in its report considerable detail as to the constitution and powers of such a council. "The Greater Sydney Council," the commission advised, "should replace the existing municipalities in the inner zone and should not displace the existing municipalities in the outer zone. It should consist of representatives from the two zones elected on an equitable franchise under a scheme of proportional representation. The power to rate in the inner zone should be unlimited and the amount of rates would be measured by requirements; but in view of the fact that the Greater Sydney Council would have only certain specific functions in the outer zone, it seems to be desirable and possible to fix a limit to the power of the Greater Sydney Council to rate in the outer zone." The functions which the Greater Sydney Council, as visualized by the commission, was to take over were set out under three headings—(1) metropolitan functions, (2) inner zone functions, and (3) services outside the metropolitan area under arrangement with local councils. Metropolitan functions were to include services applicable to both the inner zone and the outer zone, namely, public health, town planning and regulation of subdivisions and buildings, and main roads—that is, those connecting the suburbs with the city proper and those connecting suburb with suburb.

A Bill apparently based on the commission's report was introduced in 1915 but was not proceeded with. However, the subject was again revived in 1930, when the New South Wales Local Government Department, in its report, made the following comment " . . .

that in view of the growth of the suburbs, etc., a federation of areas would be likely to prove more efficient than unification." However, the McKell Labor Government introduced a Bill in 1931, based on schemes previously considered and embodying the principle of unification. Among other things, the Bill provided for a Greater Sydney area to include the whole of the county of Cumberland and the part of the municipality of Camden which is outside that county. The new council, which was to be of 23 members, was to be elected on State Parliamentary franchise on a system of single electorates. Among the powers to be taken over by the Greater Sydney Council (after a period necessary for adjustment) were those relating to water, sewerage, drainage, harbors, electricity, fire services, main roads, sanitation, transport, parks, cemeteries, rivers and water-courses. Rating was to be on unimproved land values. The Bill also provided for the inclusion of some municipalities in the city of Sydney and a general re-arrangement of council areas.

The general scheme as proposed in the Bill may be called the two-tier system, under which certain functions considered too difficult or too important for the various municipal councils to perform individually were to be taken over by a superimposed authority. When this Bill reached the Legislative Council, however, it was radically amended by that House, and following disagreement between the two Houses, the Bill lapsed; and, as far as I know, nothing further has been done since to bring about the Greater Sydney which the Government of the day had visualized. In expressing a desire to bring together under a single authority such services as roads, transport, housing, water supply and fire protection, which were then, presumably, functions of local government or *ad hoc* bodies in the Sydney metropolitan area, the Bill to which I have been referring may be regarded as similar in principle, although not necessarily in detail, to legislation which the Labor Party in this State considers necessary to bring order out of chaos in our own metropolitan area.

Mr. F. A. Bland, formerly professor of Public Administration at Sydney University and now an L.C.P. member of the Federal Parliament and chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, has brought together a number of views expressed by various individuals and committees, etc., in a book entitled *Government in Australia*. His own views on such questions as the constitution and powers of a local government co-ordinating authority are well worth

quoting. Referring to the Bill which the Labor Government introduced in 1931, he said he thought that developments since the beginning of the century had greatly weakened the case for the establishment of what he called an "omnicompetent authority." He was opposed to the idea that all local government matters should be handed over to one comprehensive council, but he said:

If we accept the arguments of planning and co-ordination as genuine, the greater Sydney Council should be concerned with those functions and those alone . . . it would not absorb any of the existing *ad hoc* authorities nor would it develop into a huge administrative machine directing works such as main roads, electricity or water supply, which are now undertaken by *ad hoc* authorities. The duties of the Greater Sydney Council would be, firstly, research, secondly, planning as a result of that research and, thirdly, securing co-ordination in working out those plans by co-operation with the various *ad hoc* authorities and with the municipal and State authorities within the metropolitan area. I quote that view not because I agree with it entirely but because it is a considered opinion expressed by one who, in his capacity of Professor of Public Administration, would not have been influenced by party political considerations as he might be now; and, of course, the reform suggested could, if adopted here, contribute to the solution of some of the problems of our own metropolitan area.

The creation of a Greater Adelaide, whether it be for all purposes or for only certain specified functions, and whether the existing councils are abolished or merely amalgamated by groups, or whatever similar change may be contemplated, would involve fundamental amendments of the Local Government Act. As I have said, practically all authorities on the subject of local government are agreed that changes should be made in the administration of local government in metropolitan area. As Professor Robson aptly expresses it, "the large cities of today are 'struggling along with an out-of-date structure vainly trying to grapple with mounting difficulties and to solve problems which cannot be overcome without drastic reforms.'" He was speaking more particularly of the large cities of America, but not only in that country but elsewhere very little has been done to provide metropolitan communities with a system of government designed to satisfy their present and future needs in regard to organization, services, finance, co-ordination, planning or democratic control. Very little has been done in the cause of progress because legislators have, in general, hesitated to grasp

the nettle. As Dr. Johns, of Western Australia, has pointed out:—

Local parochialism, the refusal of the wealthier areas to share their rating resources with the poorer local authorities, and the indifference of elected councillors towards projects which may result in their loss of office are among the reasons which make amalgamation of local government areas with the central city almost impossible to achieve.

It is only natural, perhaps, that these influences should be exerted to prevent or at least postpone the adoption of some better method of providing for the needs of the large cities; but while Parliaments refuse to take the initiative and refrain from amending the legislation which enables parochialism to stand in the way of progress and efficiency, such influences will continue to prevent the reforms which practically everyone agrees should be introduced. The fault lies entirely with Parliament in not having the courage to take the necessary action. One would almost think Parliament had forgotten that it was responsible for the very institution of local government. In the Local Government Act Parliament has not only conceded the general principle of local government but also determined the form it shall take; and while the principle may be regarded as fundamental and continuing, the form is purely temporary and subject to modification according to circumstances.

Disintegrated local government in the metropolitan area might have been satisfactory when the areas controlled by the various councils were in fact separate and the population both of the separate areas and the metropolitan area as a whole was small; but such a system now results in unequalized services, in disparity between need and the financial capacity to meet that need, and the dispersion and dissipation of political control over the development of social, economic and political institutions. A medley of scattered and disintegrated local authorities cannot provide the unity required for a coherent scheme of development; and at least some of the councils charged with the administration of their respective areas cannot attain the range or standard of services which demand large-scale administration or substantial resources of money, population, specialized institutions and highly trained personnel. I have mentioned what is known as the two-tier system of local government. This system has been adopted or suggested in some places as an answer to the objections raised by those whose interests lie in the retention of a multiplicity of council areas. On this system, Professor Robson has said: "There are sub-

stantial advantages in establishing a major authority for the planning, co-ordination and administration of large-scale functions, while leaving all the purely local services to a lower tier of minor authorities."

The adoption of the two-tier system in a very large metropolitan area would, of course, be the only means of enabling suburban and outlying districts to retain their institutional identity and separate communal life, while at the same time being part of the metropolitan area for the larger governmental purposes. Whether the two-tier system would be necessary or desirable for metropolitan Adelaide would, of course, be brought out in the course of evidence submitted to the committee which we seek to have appointed.

Before concluding, I would like to refer to the system obtaining in London Metropolitan area. A large number of municipal councils function in that area, some of them having jurisdiction over very small areas and some being largely traditional and ceremonial rather than administrative. Over them all is the London County Council, which exercises certain powers and has certain obligations in matters concerning the whole area. In particular, the London County Council may be called upon to contribute to development within various municipal council areas; but, as Professor Robson points out, not much progress has been made in unifying the London metropolitan area, probably because of the influence of tradition and other forces. It is interesting to note that the only other metropolitan area in any country that has a two-tier system is Moscow.

A step in the direction of the two-tier system has recently been taken in Toronto, Canada. As from January 1, 1954, the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto came into operation, and this new council is responsible for certain services in an area comprising the city of Toronto and 12 surrounding municipalities. These services include the supply and wholesale distribution of water to the component municipalities, trunk sewers and sewage disposal plants, and major highways. Public transport and town planning, formerly conducted on a municipal basis will be dealt with on a metropolitan basis by *ad hoc* bodies. Other organizational changes have been introduced, but it will be realized from what I have mentioned that in the Toronto metropolitan area an attempt has been made to adjust local government institutions to modern conditions, and it will be interesting to see how the experiment works out. The task of

providing a large metropolitan city, surrounded as it is by densely populated suburbs, with the major services required by a civilized community has given rise to tremendous problems of a technical, administrative and financial character; and we certainly have those problems in our metropolitan area. They are problems which our existing local government machinery is incapable of solving. Members are familiar with these problems—the construction and maintenance of roads, the provision of drainage, particularly in developing areas but not, of course, confined to those areas, the zoning of industrial areas, which the expansion of population in all our municipal districts has made a metropolitan rather than a district problem, the provision of additional parks, playgrounds and other breathing spaces, also rendered necessary by the rapid growth of the metropolitan population, the control of transport, public and private, including taxi-cabs.

I have no need to deal with these problems in detail. No doubt, other members will have something to say about them, but I think I have at least shown that an inquiry into the very system of local government that we now have and have had for so many years is urgently necessary. Labor, of course, has its own ideas about what should be done to improve our local government institutions, and a Greater Adelaide has been an ideal which the Party has kept before it for many years. We do not suggest that the functions now controlled by *ad hoc* authorities, such as water, sewers and Port Adelaide harbour installations, for example, should be transferred to any new metropolitan authority that might be created as the result of an inquiry; but we do suggest that such an authority should be created to meet the problems I have mentioned and that it should be based on adult franchise, under a system of proportional representation. Labor's views on these matters would be submitted to the committee, when such is appointed.

Perhaps my reading of the many quotations may have been somewhat tedious to members, but I had assembled a great deal of information on local government generally and on methods which have been adopted, or suggested for adoption, in various parts of the world for the solution of local government problems. The works of the various authorities I have quoted are readily available to members in our Parliamentary Library, and they prove that something should be done to reform local government in our metropolitan area. I yield to

no-one in my admiration of the magnificent service which has been rendered without fee or reward by local government authorities in the metropolitan area down the years. Of course, in the old days when our metropolitan area consisted of a city surrounded by paddocks and villages there were many sound arguments for a retention of individuality in local government. People lived together, knew each other and had a community of interest and, by the very nature and circumstances of the times, their living was more or less circumscribed within that circle. Times have changed and, today, with modern transport and with the subdivision of those former farms we have suburbs linking up with the parks surrounding our city. Unfortunately, these suburbs have grown without proper regard to providing breathing space—parks and playgrounds—which should be one of the prerogatives of a greater local government body such as I have referred to in this motion.

Last evening I had the pleasure of attending a dinner which was part of the centenary celebrations of the municipality of Burnside. It was a function worthy of the great occasion it was organized to celebrate, but it brought home to me the fact that the basic principles on which local government in South Australia are based are over 100 years old. As a matter of fact, it was pointed out by several speakers—including His Worship the Mayor of Burnside—that the Burnside council was an offshot of the District Council of East Torrens which had been created at an earlier date. There was at least a district council at East Torrens prior to August 15, 1856, when the district of Burnside was constituted. Of course, at that time we did not have responsible Parliamentary Government as we know it now in South Australia. The principles of local government were established by the original Legislative Council which was a nominee body, not an elected body, and it imported the principles which had already operated for a long time in local government in Great Britain. Those fundamental principles have not changed in 100 years.

We have, of course, amended the legislation relating to local government but this Act—the most unwieldy on the Statute Books of any Parliament in the Commonwealth, if not in the world—contains a multiplicity of clauses, sub-clauses, regulations, amendments and variations. It is almost impossible for the average layman to understand it and I remind members that the average layman forms the membership of councils.

Mr. Hutchens—And to make it worse the Act has not been consolidated for many years.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—That is so. If for no reason other than that the Act should be brought up to date and shorn of all the dead wood it now contains, an inquiry into the method of local government in our metropolitan area is wise and highly desirable. However, this motion goes much further. There is the question of the control of taxicabs. About two years ago the Government introduced legislation to establish some uniformity in the control of taxicabs but, when many members disagreed with its provisions, the Premier, in a fit of pique, dropped the Bill. Subsequently, the member for Prospect, Mr. Jennings, introduced a Bill which was on all fours with the suggestions made by a number of the members who had opposed the original Government Bill, but it was defeated, the excuse for its defeat being that an advisory committee was to be constituted, representative of various organizations, to investigate the matter. That committee was constituted and has been functioning for about 12 months.

Mr. Jennings—It has been established, but it has not been functioning.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—It should have been. The result is confusion worse confounded. Nobody knows where control of taxicabs and the rights of licensees begin and end and there is no authoritative body to properly sort the matter out. This co-ordinated body, which was created for the purpose of introducing a proper method of control in taxi services in the metropolitan area, has now approached the Government and asked it to take some legislative action.

Another important question is that relating to the floods which have taken place in some of the western suburbs as the result of the abnormally high rainfall of recent months. No doubt those floodings are the result of precipitations in eastern suburbs where the land is higher and where the natural discharge of water is towards the sea. In 1924 inquiries were made into the question of the Torrens floodwaters. I was a member of the committee which inquired into the matter. A scheme had to be evolved whereby the major portion of the Torrens floodwaters were discharged through the new cut in the sandhills south of Henley Beach. The question of who should pay for it arose, and it was determined by that committee, and accepted by Parliament, that there was a responsibility on those who contributed to the floods to meet some of the cost as well as those

who suffered from the floods. The result was what is known as the River Torrens Metropolitan Drainage Scheme under which eastern and western councils contributed towards the cost of the scheme on a basis determined in the legislation. Some form of co-ordination was attempted then by Parliament and some form of co-ordination will have to be attempted by Parliament to deal with the drainage problems that have arisen and to deal not only with the question of taxicab control but the control of transport in the metropolitan area with the provision of arterial roads and trafficable roads in the growing newly-established suburbs.

With confidence I submit this proposal to members. My Party believes in the adoption of a Greater Adelaide scheme. A Greater Brisbane scheme was adopted in 1925 with almost the unanimous vote of the Queensland Parliament and with the blessing of the press and experts who advised the Government of the day. A Greater Brisbane Council has continued since then and no-one has suggested its abolition. At the time of its inception the population was 240,000. In South Australia we have a metropolitan population of 500,000. Surely such a population warrants at least an inquiry into the advisability of establishing a Greater Adelaide scheme.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS secured the adjournment of the debate.

LOTTERY AND GAMING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. FRANK WALSH, having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Lottery and Gaming Act, 1936-1955. Read a first time.

PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. B. Pattinson, for the Hon. T. PLAYFORD, having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Prices Act, 1948-1955. Read a first time.

ENFIELD GENERAL CEMETERY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. B. Pattinson, for the Hon. T. PLAYFORD, having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Enfield General Cemetery Act, 1944-1949. Read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.50 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, August 16, at 2 p.m.