

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, November 2, 1972

The SPEAKER (Hon. R. E. Hurst) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

JUSTICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

QUESTIONS

WARDANG ISLAND

Dr. EASTICK: Can the Minister of Community Welfare say what plans are in hand to use Wardang Island either as a tourist resort, as originally developed, or for any other venture for which it could be used? This question is supplementary to one I asked of the Minister on October 10, to which I am still awaiting a reply. I noticed in today's press an article written by a journalist who visited Wardang Island to investigate earlier reports that extensive damage had been caused to buildings, and that facilities on the island had deteriorated since it had been purchased by the Government for the Aboriginal Lands Trust. I understand that the amount paid by the Government was about \$115,000, and I fully approve of the purchase of the island for the purposes for which it was bought. However, I am interested to know whether the original purpose is to be pursued, or whether the Government has discussed with the trust other aspects of the conduct of the island. As the tourist season is approaching, I ask whether the facilities that have been available and used in the past to obtain income will be used this summer.

The Hon. L. J. KING: When I replied to the Leader previously, I pointed out that Wardang Island was now being managed by the Aboriginal Lands Trust and that, really, queries of this sort ought to be directed to the trust. However, I said that I would obtain the information that the Leader desired. I have now received from the trust a letter that states:

The tourist facilities of Wardang Island were not used over the Labor Day weekend. The facilities are not at present being used. The trust has fully investigated the potential use of the existing facilities and how best to make use of these facilities to ensure that something like profitable operation is achieved. As far as the trust has been able to ascertain, the use of these facilities under the management of Mr. H. G. Pryce were operated at a considerable loss. The trust is therefore anxious to ensure as far as possible that the organization and operation of the tourist facilities will enable it to form an integrated part of a

successful long-term tourist venture. After having commissioned and paid for a management programme through a firm of management consultants, the trust now understands that the matter is being considered by the resources branch of the Community Welfare Department for a recommendation to be made to the Minister that the trust's request and recommendation to the Minister be approved. Until this information is known, the trust is unable to say that it has any firm plans as to when or how the existing facilities will be utilized.

The last statement is correct: certain proposals have been made and are being examined by my department, with a view to the department's making a recommendation to me about what part the Government can play in relation to the development of Wardang Island. Until that decision has been made and communicated to the trust, I cannot say anything further.

EGGS

Mr. WELLS: Has the Minister of Works a reply from the Minister of Agriculture to my question about egg production and the disposal of eggs, which question I would have expected to be asked by a country member of the Opposition?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: My colleague states that officers of the South Australian Egg Board have investigated the alleged burying of eggs and have not been able to find any evidence to support the statement that eggs by the thousand are being buried. It would be foolish for any producer to bury eggs, because he is assured of a return, provided the eggs are of a merchantable quality. An explanation suggested by the Acting Chairman of the South Australian Egg Board is that a person not conversant with the egg industry may have seen infertile eggs and eggs containing dead embryos, which remain after the incubation and hatching process, being buried. These are unfit for human consumption, have no value, and are disposed of in this way.

Mr. McANANEY: Can the Minister say whether a second Bill relating to eggs, dealing with the control and production, will be introduced this session?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Not that I know of, but I will ask my colleague and let the honourable member know as soon as possible.

BUSH FIRES

Mr. EVANS: Has the Minister of Works a reply from the Minister of Agriculture to my question about patrols to spot bush fires?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: My colleague states that it is intended that air patrols will

be used for bush fire spotting in the Adelaide Hills again this summer. Patrols of varying lengths of time will be flown on each day on which fires in the open are banned by the Minister.

MORATORIUM MARCH

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Will the Attorney-General say whether any notification under section 4 of the Public Assemblies Act has been given to either the Chief Secretary or the Commissioner of Police by the organizers of the Vietnam march on Saturday and, if no such notification has been given, will the Attorney say what action is intended to ensure that that march does not disrupt the Christmas pageant? There is a report in the paper this morning of the intention of the Vietnam Moratorium Campaign Committee to hold a march in Rundle Street on Saturday, and the report states:

A police spokesman said last night that he was concerned that the march could clash with the Christmas pageant.

Earlier this year (I think in April) the Public Assemblies Act came into force, and that Act provides for certain machinery to regulate public assemblies but, of course, it is permissive and not mandatory. That is why I have put the question in this form. However, I express the fervent hope that every effort will be made to ensure that the traditional John Martin's Christmas pageant is not disrupted in any way at all.

The Hon. L. J. KING: No notification has been given to the authorities pursuant to the Public Assemblies Act concerning any march or demonstration to take place under the auspices of the Vietnam Moratorium Committee on Saturday. Police Superintendent Calder, who is responsible for these matters, has informed the Chief Secretary that he has been in touch with the Vietnam Moratorium Committee (or, at all events, a representative of that committee) and that he has been informed that only about 20 people will be taking part in the proposed demonstration on Saturday. It seems that the demonstrators intend to move along Grenfell Street, from the vicinity of Chesser Street, to Pulteney Street and then along Rundle Street. Superintendent Calder was informed that this movement would take place at least half an hour before the pageant, and he has informed the representatives of the Vietnam Moratorium Committee that the police will be on hand to take any action that may be needed and that, if there are any signs of a

public disturbance, he will find it necessary to direct the demonstrators to leave the streets. I think we may safely assume that the police have the matter well in hand and will ensure that there will be no disturbance either to the pageant or to the public who attend to witness it.

CUMMINS HOSPITAL

Mr. CARNIE: Will the Attorney-General ask the Chief Secretary to reconsider his decision not to subsidize the Cummins Hospital regarding the purchase of heart-monitoring equipment? Last May I supported an application from the Cummins Hospital in connection with the purchase of this equipment, and in September we were informed by the Minister that the departmental Coronary Care Advisory Committee had recommended against the purchase of this equipment, although it recommended the purchase of a defibrillator, and the Minister approved a subsidy. However, the Cummins Hospital Board considers that the full equipment is necessary and has decided to go ahead and raise the necessary money through a public appeal. The board does not agree (nor do I) with the committee's following statement:

... the size of the hospital and the number of patients admitted with acute coronary diseases does not justify the development of a coronary care unit, as it would be possible to transport the patients by ambulance to the Port Lincoln Hospital some 40 miles if necessary.

I point out that, when a patient has had or is having an acute coronary attack, 40 miles is a considerable distance. With regard to the cost in relation to the number of patients, I find it difficult to put a value on human life in this way. In an earlier letter that I received from the Minister, he stated:

The purchase of such items is not a question of funds only, as the need and the training of personnel in operation of the equipment must be considered.

The Cummins Hospital authorities are well aware of this fact and have actually already applied to the Director-General of Medical Services to send a nurse to Adelaide for training. What has prompted this new request on behalf of the Cummins Hospital is the announcement that \$90,000 is to be spent on landscaping the Port Lincoln Hospital grounds, and obviously not one cent of this expenditure will help a sick patient. Although the external appearance of the hospital is important, I believe that the people of Port Lincoln would agree to having less spent on beautifying their hospital if the money saved could be used for the purpose to which I have referred. I ask

whether the Chief Secretary will consider spending, say, only \$88,000 on landscaping the Port Lincoln Hospital grounds and subsidizing the Cummins Hospital's purchase of heart-monitoring equipment to the extent of \$2,000.

The Hon. L. J. KING: I will refer the matter to the Minister.

ABATTOIRS

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: Can the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Agriculture, say what immediate plans the Government has to alleviate the great difficulties applying at the Gepps Cross abattoir for the slaughtering of cattle? Earlier this year, when raising this matter I made two points: first, that there was an urgent need for a new export abattoir, the planning for which should be commenced immediately, so that the new abattoir could operate as soon as possible; and secondly, that there was a need to alleviate the unsatisfactory conditions applying to the slaughtering of cattle straight away. The position was bad then and it is worse today. Three companies operate boning rooms at the abattoir and, from informal inquiries I have made, I believe that those companies could handle another 1,500 to 2,000 beef bodies a week if they could get the cattle slaughtered, but they cannot. Only three weeks ago the number of cattle offered for sale at one Monday sale at Gepps Cross was over 4,700. It follows that over 50 per cent of those cattle must have been exported live from this State for slaughter in another State, because they could not have been slaughtered at Gepps Cross. The position applying at the abattoir is extremely urgent, because the number of beef cattle offering has increased rapidly in recent years and this shows the tremendous growth that has occurred in the market. Until recently, breeding stock have been accumulated, but from now onwards the actual production from those increased herds will show with startling suddenness.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will refer the matter to my colleague.

BUILDING SOCIETIES ACT

Mr. COUMBE: Can the Deputy Premier in the absence of the Premier, who is Minister in charge of housing, say when the Government intends to introduce legislation to amend the Building Societies Act? If the Government does not intend to introduce that legislation, what is the reason for the delay? Building societies have played a valuable and significant part in this State in promoting

house building and the Government has recently announced its intention to amend the Building Societies Act.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will get this information for the honourable member from the Premier on his return, and I will let the honourable member have a reply.

DRINK CANS

Mr. ALLEN: Can the Deputy Premier say whether the Government will consider prohibiting the use of metal food and drink cans in this State? Will he have an investigation made into the price paid for aluminium cans by scrap metal merchants in this State? The first part of my question is prompted by an article in this morning's *Advertiser* under the heading "Cans into cash for Red Cross". The report states:

The Red Cross Society of South Australia yesterday announced plans to raise funds through the collection of aluminium cans. The Chairman of the society in South Australia (Mr. Mervyn Smith) said more than \$5,000 a year could be raised . . . Already 23 per cent of aluminium cans discarded in South Australia were being recycled . . . Red Cross would get \$224 a ton for the cans which would go to Melbourne for recycling.

The absence of aluminium cans on vacant blocks and roads in country towns is apparent, whereas metal cans lie around in their hundreds. This proves that children do collect aluminium cans to sell them as scrap metal. In local rubbish dumps, no aluminium cans can be seen, whereas metal cans are there in their thousands. Therefore, if aluminium cans were used exclusively, I am sure it would help to solve this problem. The second part of my question is prompted by the price quoted in this article of \$224 a ton that is paid in Melbourne for aluminium cans as scrap metal. This morning, a leading Adelaide scrap merchant quoted to me the price of 4c a pound for aluminium cans as scrap metal; this works out at \$89.60 a ton, which is much different from the Melbourne price. As it takes 20 cans to weigh 1 lb., the price in Melbourne would work out at 1c for two cans, whereas in Adelaide the price would work out at 1c for five cans.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: With regard to the first part of the honourable member's question, I point out that all the Ministers in Australia who have the environment portfolio have set up a committee to investigate the matter of non-returnable containers. I think that the honourable member will appreciate that this difficult problem has caused this Government and former Governments much

concern. Regarding the second part of the honourable member's question, I will ask the Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs to report to the Premier on it and, in due course, I hope the honourable member will receive a reply. I do not know how long the investigation into non-returnable containers will take. I hope that it will not take long and, more importantly, I hope that the committee will provide a solution to the problem.

WOOL PRICES

Mr. RODDA: In the absence of the Premier, has the Deputy Premier a reply to my question of October 17 about the prices of certain woollen goods?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs reports:

The branch does not maintain records of movements in the prices of woollen goods, very few of which are subject to price control. However, a check carried out on a representative range of items, including blankets and woollen suits, has revealed that, in the past 12 months, a number of items have not been varied but others have increased by up to 14 per cent. Men's suits, for example, range from no increase up to 6 per cent. Those price increases which have taken place do not reflect the latest increase in wool prices but reflect increases earlier in the year, together with wage and other cost increases incurred by mills, knitters, clothing manufacturers, and retailers.

Generally, there appears to be adequate competition at manufacturing, wholesale, and retail levels to ensure that price increases do little more than cover cost increases incurred. In the past two years, wage and related cost increases have been substantial as evidenced by the rise in the average male earnings for all states of 22.7 per cent for the two years ending June, 1972. If present prices for wool are maintained and higher costs are incurred by Australian manufacturers, further increases in prices may occur during the early part of 1973.

ADOPTIONS

Dr. TONKIN: Has the Minister of Community Welfare a reply to my recent question about adoptions?

The Hon. L. J. KING: The effect of an adoption order is that the child becomes a child of the adopters as if he had been born to them in lawful wedlock. Where children under the care and control of the Minister are adopted, the guardianship of the child vested in the Minister ceases to have effect on the making of the adoption order, unless before the adoption order is made the Minister has at the request of the adopting parents agreed with them that his guardianship of the child

will continue after the adoption order is made. As it is generally undesirable for a child to remain under the guardianship of the Minister following adoption, it is the policy to agree to continuation of guardianship only in exceptional circumstances.

In the few cases where guardianship has been continued, the child has been suffering from some physical or mental condition which might well involve the adopters in more than normal medical or other expenses. Where the child continues under official guardianship, the Community Welfare Department is able to assist the adoptive parents to meet these special costs. Generally, I do not consider it desirable to continue guardianship after adoption merely to enable the department to contribute towards the normal costs of maintaining a child.

ABORTION CLINICS

Mr. GUNN: Will the Attorney-General, in the absence of the Premier, assure the House that neither Dr. Wainer nor any other person will be permitted to establish in South Australia an abortion clinic similar to the clinic he intends to establish in Victoria? An item in the *News* on Tuesday, October 31, states that Dr. Wainer intends to establish an abortion clinic in Melbourne. I am alarmed to read that Mr. Whitlam has committed himself to supporting abortion on demand.

The Hon. L. J. KING: I think the honourable member understands the attitude of the South Australian Government on this matter. It was explained at very great length during a protracted debate in this House only a short time ago. The only assurance I can give is that Dr. Wainer or anyone else coming to South Australia will be required to obey the laws of this State.

GREENHILL ROAD

Mr. LANGLEY: Will the Minister of Environment and Conservation ask the Minister of Roads and Transport to obtain a report on the planting of trees along the median strip on Greenhill Road? At present, a section of the road near the Electricity Trust headquarters has trees and grass planted on it and I wonder whether these could be planted along the whole length of the road from Glen Osmond Road to the Keswick bridge. Trees planted in the centre of the section of the Main North Road illustrate the effectiveness of trees in dividing traffic lanes and protecting drivers against glare from oncoming traffic.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I will refer the question to the Minister of Roads and Transport, with my support.

OVERLAND EXPRESS

Mr. MATHWIN: Will the Minister of Environment and Conservation ask the Minister of Roads and Transport how many times the Overland express from Melbourne has arrived in Adelaide late during the last three months and the reasons for the late arrivals? This train rarely arrives on time. I have been told that the steam train that operated 30 years ago kept far better time than does the present train. Would it not be better to allow a longer time for the journey so that the train could arrive on time?

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: A similar question was answered by the Minister of Roads and Transport recently, and I understand that sound reasons were given for the late arrival of the Overland from time to time. I will ask my colleague to bring down a report.

MODBURY HIGH SCHOOL

Mrs. BYRNE: Will the Minister of Education obtain a report on what is proposed to be built at Modbury High School? Modbury High School is listed under the heading "School buildings, major works for which planning and design is proposed during 1972-73" in the Loan Estimates for 1972-73.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I will get the information requested and bring down a reply as soon as possible.

TABLET CONTAINERS

Mr. BECKER: Will the Attorney-General ask the Minister of Health what the Government is doing to encourage chemists and drug manufacturers to use child-resistant containers for tablets and poisons? I understand that the National Health and Medical Research Council has recommended the use of a plastic child-resistant container for tablets to all State Governments, and that the Congress of the United States of America has legislated that all drugs are to be packed in 70 per cent to 90 per cent child-resistant containers. As 1,286 children were treated for accidental poisoning at the Adelaide Children's Hospital last year, can the Minister say what action the Government intends to take in this matter?

The Hon. L. J. KING: I will refer the matter to my colleague.

AFRICAN DAISY

Mr. McANANEY: Can the Deputy Premier say what is the Government's policy on African

daisy? In reply to an earlier question about the district councils of Burnside and Mitcham, the Minister of Agriculture said it was not the Government's policy to press for the eradication of African daisy. The Chief Weeds Officer of the department travels around the country saying that it is not a dangerous weed and that no action need be taken against it. It seems to me that there is a contradiction in terms, because the Government is providing funds to have African daisy eradicated in an area where, in the past, it has not kept the weed out of Crown land and the Minister of Agriculture has not carried out his obligations under the Weeds Act to ensure that councils abide by the provisions of that Act.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will ask my colleague for a considered reply.

FIREWORKS

Mr. SLATER: Will the Minister of Works ask the Minister of Agriculture whether he has considered prohibiting the sale of all fireworks in South Australia, except those required for organized public displays?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will discuss the matter with my colleague.

CHAIN OF PONDS HOUSES

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my question of October 26 about the acquisition by the Government of property in the Chain of Ponds area?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: As many as 22 properties in Chain of Ponds have been purchased by agreement, eight have been acquired compulsorily, and five properties remain to be purchased. Regarding the eight properties that have been acquired compulsorily, details of final settlement are still awaited for six. Of the properties acquired in Chain of Ponds, eight have been demolished and seven have been sold for removal. Outside the township itself, other property is also being purchased as additions to the Millbrook reservoir reserve, and in this category there are 14 properties to be purchased, of which eight have already been purchased, and six remain to complete negotiations.

I said the other day, when replying to the honourable member, that the Government intended to acquire properties over a 10-year period, but that is not quite correct. For the purchase of property in the Chain of Ponds township, the policy is that properties shall be purchased as soon as possible with a lease-back arrangement with the owner, if he so

desires, permitting the present owner to remain on the property under an agreed lease until 1980. That is the 10 years to which I referred.

MURRAY RIVER SALINITY

Dr. EASTICK: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question about salinity in the Murray River?

The Hon J. D. CORCORAN: Messrs. Gutteridge, Haskins and Davey in the report, Murray Valley Salinity Investigation, proposed a number of solutions to the long-term salinity problems in the Murray Valley, but stated that further investigations would be required to confirm the feasibility or otherwise of the proposals, and in addition, detailed site investigations would be required before carrying out important engineering works. Machinery has been set up at three levels to handle this preliminary work, namely;

- (1) A technical committee has been established in the Engineering and Water Supply Department with representation from the Mines Department, and is carrying out further investigations and developing schemes for mitigation works for the section of the river under the control of South Australia. (That is the area to which I referred the other day.)
- (2) The River Murray Commission has established a salinity committee to examine areas where the salinity problem could be aggravated by the construction of commission works. This body is now examining the area between Lake Victoria and lock 7, and the Chowilla and Monoman Creek area, where the differential head between the upper pool of lock 6 and the creek system is resulting in an inflow of saline groundwater.
- (3) The Governments of South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, and the Commonwealth have established a Salinity Liaison Committee to co-ordinate the investigations along the full length of the river.

Good progress has been made on the investigations at Lake Victoria, and the River Murray Commission committee should soon be able to make a recommendation on the control measures that should be adopted for this site. The problems are more complex in the irrigation areas of South Australia, and present work is directed at obtaining data to determine, with more precision than was possible with infor-

mation available to the consultants, the full extent and the mechanism of the salt inflows to the river. Although the urgency of the problem in the Berri-Barmera-Cobdogla area is recognized, long-term mitigation works are likely to be costly, and it is essential that more data is obtained before schemes are developed.

Dr. TONKIN: Has the Minister a reply to another question I asked about Murray River salinity?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The River Murray Commission has established a salinity committee to investigate and develop control schemes for sections of the Murray River where the salinity problem is considered to be aggravated by the construction of River Murray Commission works which impose an artificial gradient on the natural groundwater contours. The areas now under or planned for consideration are lock 5, near Renmark; Chowilla and Monoman Creek complex upstream of lock 6; the Rufus River, Brilka and Little Frenchman's Creek complex near Lake Victoria; and lock 11, near Mildura. The commission is also represented on the interstate Salinity Liaison Committee, which will act as a co-ordinating body for all salinity investigation work carried out in the upper States and South Australia. As most of the salt accessions to the river in the upper States arise from irrigation activities, the work concerned with the control measures is the responsibility of the respective State Governments, but the establishment of the liaison committee enables the commission to watch progress and assess the effects of any proposed works on river salinity levels.

DRUG CASE

Mr. WELLS: Has the Attorney-General a reply to my series of questions concerning the hearing of a court case involving a Mr. Cocker and his companions?

The Hon. L. J. KING: While 10 a.m. is the time for which defendants in "summons" cases are required to attend court in the first instance, defendants whose cases have been part-heard and adjourned are very commonly remanded to other times, both earlier and later than 10 a.m., depending on a variety of considerations. On the date to which Cocker and his companions were remanded, the special magistrate was already committed to sit at 10 a.m. on a very long and involved part-heard case, involving many witnesses. To avoid inconvenience to the several persons involved in the part-heard case, the magistrate suggested 9.30 a.m. as the time for resuming

the cases of Cocker and others, to which all parties agreed.

In the Adelaide Magistrates Court, bail is invariably allowed, at all stages of the proceedings, unless there is a reason to apprehend either: (i) that the defendant may abscond, or (ii) that, for some other substantial reason, it is contrary to the public interest that he should be allowed to go free. Particularly where the penalty is unlikely to be imprisonment, it is extremely rare for a defendant to be remanded in custody.

In the present case, the Assistant Police Prosecutor consented to the defendants' being released on bail, as the police had not the slightest fear that the defendants would not attend. It will be seen from the above that Cocker's prominence in his profession had not the slightest influence on the magistrate's decisions.

OMBUDSMAN

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Can the Attorney-General say whether the Government intends to provide for the payment of superannuation to the ombudsman?

The Hon. G. R. Broomhill: Are you interested in the job?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I would make an excellent ombudsman: I cannot think of a better one.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is out of order. He has not sought leave to explain his question.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I was about to do so when the Minister interrupted me, but I do so now. The Bill concerning the ombudsman is not before the House, but my attention has been drawn to the fact that it does not provide for the payment of superannuation on retirement, unless the ombudsman has been a member of the Public Service. Obviously, this limits greatly the choice of an appointee and I therefore ask the question hoping that, if this provision has been omitted by inadvertence, action will be taken to put it right, although I am a little boxed as to how that can be done in another place, because the matter involves money. If it has not been left out through inadvertence, I should be pleased to receive an explanation of why the provision was omitted from the Bill.

The Hon. L. J. KING: Under the provisions of the Judges' Pensions Act it is possible to proclaim certain persons judges for the purposes of the operation of the pension provisions of that Act, and it is intended that, when the ombudsman is appointed, such a proclamation

will be made so that he will qualify for a non-contributory judicial pension under the provisions of that Act.

SCHOOL OF ART

Mr. COURCE: In view of the Government's announced intention to resite the South Australian School of Art, now at North Adelaide, on the site of the new Torrens college, will the Minister of Education say to what use he contemplates putting the present School of Art buildings and what time lag will occur in making the transfer? Further, does the Education Department hold any vacant land in the North Adelaide district apart from land now occupied?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The honourable member will not be surprised to know that I cannot reply off the cuff to the last part of his question, and I will get the information that he has requested as soon as possible. It is intended that, when the School of Art building is vacated by the School of Art, it will be passed over to the Further Education Department, and that a technical college, probably commercially orientated, will be established there. In the Torrens building programme, the first aspects of the move to the Torrens campus at Underdale will involve Western Teachers College and the various types of design course development proposed by the School of Art that cannot be accommodated on the School of Art site. Those aspects will be part of the relatively early development of the Torrens campus. The main move of the School of Art to Torrens is not likely to take place in this triennium. It will occur during the 1976-78 period, and I expect that it will be about 1977, although I do not want to be held to that time. As the honourable member appreciates, the worst conditions being experienced are in certain parts of Western Teachers College, and the fact that that college is scattered over half a dozen sites is an added reason for our trying to get fairly rapid consolidation. On the other hand, we are concerned to establish the college on the site at Underdale as soon as possible. We think this is most important, particularly as far as the School of Art is concerned, because while the transfer is in prospect many persons associated with the school are likely to be extremely worried, and the sooner they are established on the new campus under satisfactory conditions and begin to see that the fears held by some of them

have not been realized, the sooner we will solve the small problems that have arisen so far.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

Mr. EVANS: Has the Attorney-General a reply to my question about the basis on which the number of justices of the peace is determined?

The Hon. L. J. KING: The recommended quota is one justice for each 250 residents in the metropolitan area and one for each 150 residents in the country. The quota is based on census statistics.

SCHOOL TRANSPORT

Mr. WARDLE: Has the Minister of Education a reply to my question regarding the payment of private contractors who operate school bus services?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: School bus contract rates are determined in the first instance by inviting tenders for services for which contractors are required. In accordance with normal practice, the lowest tender is usually accepted unless the bus which that tenderer proposes to use is considered to be unsuitable or the tender is for a daily rate which the Transport Officer considers is too low to be economically practicable for the tenderer; that is, he would not be able to purchase a bus, maintain and operate it, and build up a reserve for its eventual replacement. In the latter case the Transport Officer would discuss the rate with the tenderer and, if necessary, recall tenders to enable him to offer a more realistic rate, but still on a competitive basis.

As the costs of providing the contract services increase because of increases in the cost of petrol, oil, tyres, spare parts, garage repairs and wages, it is the practice for contractors to request that their contract rates be increased to cover the increased operating costs. These applications are submitted to a Transport Contract Committee, which approves or disapproves of an increase after considering the increases in costs that have occurred since the rates were last reviewed. From time to time contractors request the transfer of their contracts to other persons who wish to become school bus contractors. The transferee accepts the contract on the existing conditions, which include the contract rate being paid, presumably after satisfying himself that the purchase of the bus, as well as the operation of the service at its current rate, is a payable proposition.

In addition to having contractors provide school bus services, the department has a fleet

of its own buses which are used in localities where no people are willing to operate contract buses, or a call for tenders does not result in a tender which is considered to be reasonable in accordance with existing contract rates for similar services. South Australia is the only State which operates vehicles owned by the Education Department. An officer from the Education Department has not visited other States specifically to examine the school transport systems operating there; however, in 1955 a committee of inquiry was appointed by the then Public Service Commissioner to inquire into and report on school transport services within the Education Department. The system for the transport of schoolchildren varies from State to State, but even at that time the comment was made that interstate costs were higher than those applicable in South Australia, because of the advantages gained through the tender system. The recent Grants Commission inquiry resulted in favourable comments on South Australia's school bus system relative to systems operating in other States.

Mr. WARDLE: Will the Minister consider sending an officer of his department and an inspector of school buses to examine the situation in Victoria? I am sure that the Minister did not mean to imply that, because the lowest tender was accepted in South Australia, we therefore had the most suitable transport system that a State could have. I should hate it to be thought that, because we generally accepted the lowest tender, we had the happiest and most efficient transport system available. I feel—

The SPEAKER: Order! I think that the honourable member is starting to debate the question.

Mr. WARDLE: From the information given me, it appears that the committee (I think the Minister called it the Transport Contract Committee) does look at most situations that arise. I assume that it considers the condition of the roads over which buses travel, as it would appear to me that, in a system in which a basic rate is paid for a basic vehicle at a certain pay-load rate, this would be in the interests of the operator and the department. I think that it would possibly make bus operators more contented if a system closer to the Victorian system (although not necessarily that system in its entirety) was adopted. I have more information about the system in Victoria. As I am keenly interested in that system, I should like to see an officer of our

department examine it, so that the department would be fully acquainted with it.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I fail to see why I should send one or two officers to Victoria in order to find out ways and means of obtaining a more costly school bus transport system.

Mr. Wardle: That isn't necessarily the case.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: If the honourable member has any specific information about Victoria that he would like me to examine, I shall be pleased to examine it. However, from my knowledge of the situation and from the comments made by the Commonwealth Grants Commission, it would appear that the system operating here is certainly competitive. Therefore, possibly some bus operators have to work on a finer margin than is the case in Victoria. If this is so, I point out to the honourable member that, as we are spending public money in running a school bus system, we have an obligation to the public not to pay excessive rates. I also point out (and I think I have given this information in replying to questions asked by the member for Glenelg and the member for Heysen) that the operating cost of buses owned and run by the Education Department is on average a little lower than the operating cost a mile of contract buses. This may be a consequence of different sizes of bus, different road conditions, and so on.

Mr. Evans: They have better routes.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Mainly they are not better routes. The member for Fisher will appreciate that the department's buses tend to operate on some of the more difficult routes, where it is not possible to get a private contractor to run the system. We consider this matter carefully, and we promote competition in the submitting of tenders to the department. I am sure that members opposite, including the member for Murray, fully favour competition: they believe in free enterprise and not in private enterprise. I also point out that, if there is a significant increase in expenditure on school bus transport, in the year in which that takes place there is that much less of our Budget allocation to be spent on education. In the Budget discussions, I cannot get out of the Treasurer more funds merely because school bus costs are increasing. Therefore, any increase in school bus costs (and some increase occurs each year) has to be met out of the Education Department vote. Each year requests are made for routes to be extended and for new routes to be introduced, and each year some of these requests are

granted. This factor also increases our expenses. I think that the member for Murray should appreciate all these problems, and also that the public interest is clearly involved in this matter. If the honourable member has any specific information about the Victorian system which, on the face of it, may conceivably lead me to want to investigate the Victorian situation further, I shall be pleased to look at it.

GUMERACHA SCHOOL

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: Will the Minister of Education obtain for me a report on any progress that has been made in respect of a project involving fairly extensive siteworks at Gumeracha Primary School? Some fairly extensive works in the schoolgrounds, involving retaining walls, kerbing, paving, and so on, were approved for this school some time ago, but apparently it was not possible to obtain a successful tenderer. From the last inquiry that I made about this matter some months ago, I think an alternative scheme was being considered. As I do not think this work has yet commenced, will the Minister ascertain what progress has been made?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I will obtain a report on the latest position.

MEAT QUOTAS

Mr. CARNIE: Has the Minister of Works obtained from the Minister of Agriculture a reply to my recent question about the reduced quota of an interstate meat firm operating in Port Lincoln?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The Minister of Agriculture reports that, because of the current excessive demands on slaughtering facilities at Port Lincoln, some restriction has been necessary and, in consultation with the principal of the firm concerned, it was agreed that one load of 550 carcasses each week would be supplied until pressure on the works ceased.

PETROL PRICES

Mr. PAYNE: In the absence of the Premier, I ask the Deputy Premier whether he will have the Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs investigate whether an immediate reduction in the retail price of petrol is warranted. I am informed that a firm known as Lake City Freighters is currently offering oils and petrol in any quantity to suburban reselling outlets at prices considerably below the current wholesale prices. For example, 30-grade to 40-grade oil is available in 45gall. drums at 90c a gallon, as against \$1.20 a gallon which

is the normal wholesale price, and there is no charge for the drums, whereas the drum cost is added to the normal wholesale price. Super-grade petrol is being offered at 37c a gallon, instead of 41.6c a gallon; and standard-grade petrol is being offered at 33.8c a gallon, instead of the normal wholesale price of 38.2c a gallon. I am informed that these are Mobil products.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will certainly ask the Prices Commissioner to investigate the matter.

FOOD PRICES

Mr. WARDLE: In the absence of the Premier, I ask the Deputy Premier to ascertain whether the price of certain food items could be brought to the attention of the Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs. A constituent has telephoned me stating that she was charged 24c for two eggs recently obtained at a self-service food bar in Rundle Street. Having spoken last Thursday in this House, prior to the bomb incident, in the debate on the Marketing of Eggs Act Amendment Bill, and having observed that the export price of eggs was at least 7.4c a dozen, I thought it rather odd that this lady should be charged 24c for two eggs. In addition, she paid 9c for a quarter of a tomato and 11c for 1½ slices of bread. If these matters come within the jurisdiction of the Prices Commissioner, I ask the Deputy Premier to request the Commissioner to investigate them.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I take it that the food was not in a prepared form, that the eggs were not cooked, that the bread was not toasted, and that it was not spread with caviar.

Mr. Wardle: The eggs were cooked. I am willing to give you the details.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: From the way the honourable member asked the question, it seemed that the lady concerned had bought two individual eggs, as well as individual slices of bread and part of a tomato. Of course, this involves a service provided, and I believe that the Commissioner would have no control over the matter. However, if the honourable member will give me the name of the self-service food bar, or whatever it is, I will have the Commissioner investigate the matter.

VENUS BAY ROAD

Mr. GUNN: Will the Minister of Environment and Conservation, who I understand is representing the Minister of Roads and Transport in his absence, take up with the Highways

Department the possibility of sealing the road from Flinders Highway to Venus Bay? Work is about to start on sealing the unsealed section of Flinders Highway between Talia and Streaky Bay. As this is a tourist area of growing importance, I ask whether the Minister will consider having this five miles of road sealed.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I will refer the question to my colleague.

WATER RESEARCH

Mr. CUMBE: Can the Minister of Works, as a member of the Water Resources Council of Australia, indicate what projects are being undertaken currently in South Australia involving research into river and dam gauging and other allied matters that are considered by this council in the various States? Although the Minister may not have this information readily available, I should appreciate information on the type of work being undertaken at present in South Australia.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Work is certainly being undertaken, and I think about five projects were brought to my notice recently, one project being undertaken in the South-East and another somewhere in the Mid-North. However, I will obtain the information for the honourable member.

METRICATION

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Has the Attorney-General a reply to a question about metrication? Last week, he said by way of interjection across the House that he had, for a long time, had a reply for me to a question, but he did not give me details of the topic, and I had no recollection whatever of having asked him a question that had not been answered. Yesterday, again by way of interjection, the Attorney-General told me that the subject of the question was metrication. Although I have no recollection of ever having asked the question and certainly no recollection of ever having been informed that the Attorney-General had the reply, I am now looking forward to hearing that reply.

The Hon. L. J. KING: The honourable member raised the question during the Address in Reply debate on July 19, 1972, and he was given a note indicating that I had a reply for him on August 16, 1972. The reply is as follows:

When speaking on the Address in Reply on July 19, 1972, the member for Mitcham asked that consideration be given to showing Imperial equivalents where metric units are used in legislation. It is appreciated that there are difficulties in adjusting to the proposed change

from Imperial units to metric units. That which is tried and familiar has, to many people, a greater appeal than the new and the unknown whatever the benefits of the new system may be. However, it is considered that the honourable member's suggestion that the equivalent amount in Imperial units be inserted in legislation alongside metric expressions would not be really practicable. To aid in the general acceptance of the new system it is the policy of the Government that measurements be expressed in whole metric units as far as possible and, as a result, almost every enactment in metric terms represents a substantive change in the law. In these circumstances, to show the Imperial equivalent of metric units could well lead to confusion. For example, to insert after the expression "one metre" something like "or 1.0936 yards" would not really assist much. The Government recognizes that the difficulty in which the honourable member finds himself is by no means uncommon and, as a result, is fully supporting the plans for the education of the public on the implications of the change.

Mr. HARRISON: Will the Minister of Labour and Industry say what action the Government will take to compensate tradesmen for the change of their tools of trade that will be needed under the metric system? I understand that in various trades tradesmen could be involved in paying substantial sums to update their tools of trade, and this could cause much concern and hardship.

The Hon. D. H. McKEE: I will have the question examined and bring down a reply as soon as possible.

TRUST MONEYS

Mr. EVANS: Has the Attorney-General a reply to my question of October 26 regarding trust moneys held by the Master of the Supreme Court?

The Hon. L. J. KING: The sums held at present in the Supreme Court Suitors Fund pending the result of land acquisition proceedings, and the departments responsible for payment into court of those sums, are as follows:

	\$
Minister of Marine	28,667.95
Commissioner of Highways . .	980,362.28
Minister of Local Govern- ment	54,038.51
Minister of Works	199,193.63
Director-General of Medical Services	17,000.00
Minister of Education	306,535.89
Minister of Lands	20,998.98
	\$1,606,797.24

BRUCELLOSIS

Mr. VENNING: Will the Minister of Works report on the progress made in his consultations with the Minister of Agriculture regarding the return to the *status quo* in respect of testing for the prevention of brucellosis in this State? In three or four hours I will be rejoining the people whom the Minister saw at the Clare show. They will ask me what is the current situation regarding the Government's attitude towards returning to the *status quo*, and I should like the Minister to give me information for those people.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I should be delighted for the honourable member to convey my best wishes to those good people who looked after me extremely well. He can tell them that the Minister of Agriculture is as anxious as they are for a return to the *status quo* in regard to the prevention of brucellosis through testing. However, we have not yet heard anything from the Commonwealth Government in reply to our representations. The honourable member must realize that not only has this State made representations to the Commonwealth Government in this matter: other States have also made representations. We would much appreciate a favourable reply from the Commonwealth Minister so that we could do exactly as the honourable member suggests. I cannot give him any other information, but the matter has been taken up by my colleague at the meeting of the Agricultural Council.

BOLIVAR EFFLUENT

Dr. EASTICK: Yesterday I asked the Minister of Works whether he had been in contact with officers of his department regarding the use of effluent water from Bolivar. I supplement the information I gave in asking the question with the following facts. A steel main has been laid in an easterly direction for one mile along McEvoy Road, commencing at the sump situated on section 142. Additionally, electricity mains have been completed to the site of the sump. As this can be only for pumping purposes, I hope that this information is of value to the Minister and his officers in preparing the reply to my earlier question.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: As yet, the matter has not been considered, but the question was forwarded to the department for a reply. It seems that something is happening in the area, although there has certainly been no recent discussion of which I am aware. This

activity could have resulted from an agreement reached some time ago, but I cannot readily recall it and I shall certainly be interested to see the reply.

PORT LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. CARNIE: Can the Minister of Education say what stage has been reached in the plans and arrangements for the construction of the new Port Lincoln High School? Have tenders been called? If they have not, when does he expect them to be called? When is it expected that construction will commence, and what is the expected date of occupation of the school?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I understand that there has been no change in the arrangements applying to this project since I last informed the honourable member.

Mr. Carnie: The last information was that construction would start in early December.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The honourable member will appreciate that, when a contract is let, several preparatory moves must be made before the main contractor can get on site and become heavily involved in the project. Some of the subsidiary contracts have already been let. The matter is under way and the honourable member should not panic too much. When speaking to the Director of the Public Buildings Department yesterday, I asked him specifically to inform me on this matter. As soon as I have more information I will let the honourable member know.

SAFETY HELMETS

Mr. MATHWIN: Will the Minister of Labour and Industry have investigated the sale of inferior quality crash helmets worn by riders and passengers on motor cycles, and will he have appropriate steps taken to ensure that the proper standard of this type of protective helmet is observed? I have received a letter from the Secretary of the Auto Cycle Union of South Australia, Incorporated, as follows:

The Auto Cycle Union of South Australia Incorporated, which is the controlling body of all motor cycle sports in South Australia, has become increasingly concerned at the influx of inferior safety helmets since the introduction of compulsory wearing of helmets by motor cyclists in most States in Australia . . . We are well aware that the helmet standards for ordinary motor cycling purposes, which has been accepted generally throughout Australia by the various States, is the less stringent B.S.I. 2001 or A.S.A. E33 which is some 33½ per cent less resistant to impact tests than acknowledged racing helmets. What is becoming more prevalent is the practice

of some manufacturers to produce an obviously substandard helmet and attach paper labels to signify that the unit conforms to or exceeds one or more of the higher standards, when in fact it is doubtful whether it even complies with any accepted standard. Many helmets are purchased in boxes carrying lavish and misleading claims as to their construction, but the actual unit in some cases does not boast so much as the manufacturer's name.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is quoting rather extensively from this letter.

Mr. MATHWIN: It is only to explain the question. I have read from the letter slowly so that the Minister will understand me. However, Mr. Speaker, if you want me to stop reading from the letter, I will ask the Minister to reply to my question.

The Hon. D. H. McKEE: I believe that this matter comes under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Roads and Transport. However, I consider that, if inferior helmets are being placed on the market in this State or in other States, that is a serious matter. I believe that a standard for helmets, laying down proper requirements, would have been set by the Standards Association of Australia. If that standard is not being complied with, I consider the matter to be serious and urgent, and I will bring it to the attention of my colleague as soon as possible.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: My question is to him who is representing the Minister of Roads and Transport at the moment—I believe it is the Minister of (which way does he put this?) Environment and Conservation.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: You keep displaying your ignorance.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Well, I am a most ignorant person. Will the Government take steps actively to encourage the wearing of safety helmets by bicycle riders? During the weekend I was approached by the mother of a teenager whose son had been riding along Cross Road with a friend who was knocked off his bike by a motor car. The boy landed on his head, which was gashed seriously. The woman told me that the police officer to whom the accident was reported had said that he had had reports of 15 boys being knocked off their bikes during the weekend. I cannot vouch for those figures, but they were told to me by the boy's mother and I believe she thought them to be right. We oblige motor cyclists to wear safety helmets, and

I well remember that when that legislation was introduced there was much controversy and discussion about it, as there has been about other safety measures connected with motor vehicles. Whilst I do not suggest that it should be compulsory (certainly not at this stage) for cyclists to wear helmets, it obviously is a safety measure.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I will certainly refer the matter to the Minister of Roads and Transport and ask him to consider the proposal.

OUTBOARD MOTORS

Mr. BECKER: Can the Minister of Marine say why it has been necessary to increase by 500 per cent the licence fee of a secondhand dealer who sells used outboard motors? One of my constituents, who is a secondhand dealer selling mainly used outboard motors, has told me that his annual licence fee, which was \$4.20 when he last renewed his licence, has been increased this year to \$25. Has the Government increased any other licence fees to a similar degree; does it intend to follow the precedent set in this case; and why was it necessary to increase this licence fee to such a great extent?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I do not know the reason. I understand that there has been a review of fees charged in this area. Possibly there has been no increase in this fee for some years. In the case of these fees, this often happens. To catch up with the inflationary trend alone would probably involve an increase of the magnitude referred to by the honourable member. Although I imagine that is the reason for this increase, I will check up on the matter and see why the increase was made.

GOOLWA BARRAGE

Mr. McANANEY: Can the Minister of Works say whether an investigation has been made by the Engineering and Water Supply Department into the feasibility of temporarily raising the level of the spillway at the Goolwa barrage during years when a shortage of water is expected? The raising of the level of the spillway would enable more water to be retained in Lake Alexandrina to the benefit of all South Australian people.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I am not aware of any such investigation. I do not know whether the idea is feasible but I will ask the engineers of my department to consider the matter, and I will bring down a report.

SPELLING

Mr. BECKER: Can the Minister of Education say whether he is prepared to investigate a suggestion that spelling reform should be introduced? In today's *News* appears an article headed "Let's simplify the language". It is reported that Dr. Dennis Burke says that "English spelling stinx". He is also quoted as saying that "philosopher" should be spelt "flossifer" and as advocating a change in spelling to assist migrants and other people having difficulty in spelling. Does the Minister think there is any merit in the suggestion, and is he prepared to have the idea investigated?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I wonder whether the honourable member has heard the story of the Continental visitor to Australia who was having difficulty with the pronunciation and spelling of words (for example, the pronunciation of "bough" and "cough"). He was becoming neurotic about it and, when he saw a sign "Calvacade pronounced success", he shot himself. I do not think the suggestions made about this matter have produced any worthwhile result. A former Headmaster of Morwell High School in Victoria has advocated the use of Esperanto, but there has not been much response to such suggestions. Complete spelling reform might have consequences that the member would regard as unfortunate. For instance, Heini might be spelt "Hiney".

Mr. Millhouse: Your name might present a difficulty.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I am a little worried about "Hugh", and I am inclined to answer "No" for that very reason.

MORPHETTVILLE PARK SCHOOL

Mr. MATHWIN: Can the Minister of Education say whether the resealing of the yard at Morphettville Park Primary School has been completed satisfactorily? This resealing caused many problems, one of which was water lying in the schoolyard for some months. Last Friday I visited the school for its sports day. I inspected the yard, and the resealing was one of the worst jobs I have seen.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is commenting.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I will bring down a reply.

Mr. MATHWIN: Will the Minister inquire into the unsatisfactory compaction of areas of the playground, particularly those abutting the temporary classrooms, at Morphettville Park Primary School?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Yes.

BRAHMA LODGE WATER SUPPLY

Dr. EASTICK: Can the Minister of Works say what will be the source of the water supply for the wool-scouring works to be established in the Brahma Lodge and Parafield area? The works to be established for a well-known South Australian organization will be in an area at the end of the Barossa main and the Adelaide main coming from Para Hills. Wool scouring requires a considerable quantity of water, and I have fears about the availability of water during the summer months to household users connected to both the Adelaide and Barossa mains if, in fact, the factory is to draw large quantities of water from the mains. I am interested to know which of the two mains will supply this factory or whether an alternative water supply will be made available.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I cannot say offhand but I will let the honourable member know.

DROUGHT RELIEF

Mr. EVANS: On behalf of the member for Mallee, I ask the Minister of Works whether he has a reply to the honourable member's recent question about drought relief.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Funds under the scheme have been made available to councils, including those in the Mallee, on the basis of the proportionate unemployment in each district as related to the State as a whole. During the present grant period (July, 1972, to December, 1972) about \$250,000 has been made available to councils in the Mallee and Murray Plains by way of grant under the scheme. This is the maximum entitlement of the district, based on figures of unemployment supplied by the Commonwealth Department of Labour and National Service. No further funds are available for general allocation in the current period.

PORT KENNY POLICE STATION

Mr. GUNN: Will the Minister of Works ascertain why the Public Buildings Department is having the Port Kenny police station wired with a 240-volt system, because recently this station was closed by the Police Department against the wishes of my constituents living in this area? Will the Minister obtain a report on the future use by the Police Department or the Public Buildings Department of this building?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will obtain a report for the honourable member.

BOATS

Mr. WARDLE: Will the Minister of Marine say whether he expects to introduce this session legislation concerning the registration and licensing of small power boats, and whether the owners of small boats have objected to licensing and registration? I attended a meeting recently at which it was stated that owners of small boats had never objected to the registration of boats: I was under the impression that they had objected. The Minister told me, when I last asked this question six months ago, that the Commonwealth Government and other State Governments were considering this matter, in order to introduce uniform legislation. Perhaps this is the answer.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Objections have been made to this legislation, mainly because it was said that the Government would use it as a source of raising revenue, but this is not so. The legislation that had been drafted provided that the amount collected in fees would not have exceeded the cost of administering the scheme.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: There were other—

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Let me finish. The Yacht Squadron objected to any form of registration or licensing, because it claimed that the boats of its members were not in the true class of powered craft, although the yachts used auxiliary motors.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: There was a committee inquiring into power boats.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: That is not the committee about which I am speaking. Mr. Wight (Secretary of the Marine and Harbors Department) was Chairman of that committee, and it brought down a good report. No legislation will be introduced this session. As I have said often, the other States and the Commonwealth decided, at the instigation of the Commonwealth, that there should be uniform legislation and reciprocity between States. I agree with that, because it would be foolish for us to introduce legislation to effect these controls, only to find that some time later we would have to alter it. The legislation that I had drafted has been submitted to the working committee set up by the Commonwealth Minister for Shipping and Transport and State Ministers of Marine. At a meeting of Ministers held in Adelaide in early October the matter was discussed, and there is still a difference of opinion between the States whether there should be licensing of drivers, how the licences should

apply, and what requirements should be provided for tests for drivers. General agreement on the registration of power craft has been reached, but there is some dispute about what craft should be registered. Victoria is the only State that has this type of legislation operating at present.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: Do you think—

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The member for Alexandra seems to have a thing about this: he seems to think that we can put a drunk in a boat—

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: You won't stop a drunk.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: We can take something away from him, and prevent him from doing something in future. The honourable member seems to think that we should not be able to stop children of any age from piloting powerful craft in the water to the danger of everyone else. Undoubtedly, there is a need for some form of control, and the honourable member would be irresponsible if he disagreed with that statement.

The Hon. D. N. Brookman: I do disagree with it.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I said he would be irresponsible if he disagreed. Other States have instituted controls, but they are administered under various Acts. I hope that soon we shall be able to introduce legislation that will be more or less on a uniform basis throughout the Commonwealth, so that a person travelling to Queensland or to Victoria and towing his boat will be entitled to use it in those States, as the South Australian registration will apply because there will be reciprocity in the licensing of drivers. However, we have a long way to go yet.

SCIENTOLOGY

Mr. GUNN: Can the Attorney-General say whether the Government intends to repeal the Scientology (Prohibition) Act, in order to allow his sect to operate openly in South Australia?

The Hon. L. J. KING: Yes, it does.

DERNANCOURT LAND

Mrs. BYRNE: Will the Minister of Environment and Conservation ascertain whether there have been any further developments concerning the acquiring for public use of an area at Dernancourt bounded by Reid Road on the eastern side, Mahogany Avenue on the northern side, a small council reserve on the western side, and the Torrens River on the southern side? When I last raised this matter in October last year the Minister told me that, as the

boundary of the land along Mahogany Avenue was more than 200ft. from the river bank, the whole of the land could not be acquired under the River Torrens Acquisition Act, 1970. The possibility of the land being acquired by the Corporation of the City of Tea Tree Gully, under the Public Parks Act, was discussed with the council, which stated that, although it might be interested in acquiring the land for reserve purposes, no formal offer had been made by the owner to the council. I seek information about whether an offer has been made. Also, on May 16, 1971, the Minister told me that a substantial area of land had been acquired under the provisions of section 61 of the Planning and Development Act.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I will have the question re-examined to ascertain whether there have been further developments since I provided the previous information.

SILVER LAKE PROPERTY

Mr. EVANS: Has the Minister of Environment and Conservation further information about the future use of the Silver Lake property at Mylor for motor sports? Concern has been expressed by many people in the Hills area that this property will continue to be used on Saturdays and Sundays for motor cycle competitions. I believe that the promoters of this sport, or the owners of the property, were told that they should apply for a new classification, so that the property could be used in a different way from its original use (that is, a change of use). It has been argued that the land has been used in the past for recreation and for picnic purposes, but the motor cycle promoters argue that they are creating recreation for people. However, it is still no satisfaction to the local community to know that almost every Sunday motor cycle competitions are held in this area. The matter must also concern the Minister of Works, as the area abuts the Onkaparinga River near the Mount Bold reservoir.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: There are complications in this matter regarding the definition of the change of land use in this area, but the matter is being considered. I cannot tell the honourable member anything other than that the matter is receiving regular attention, and I hope to be able to give him a definite reply within the next week or two.

FIRE SERVICES REPORT

Mr. RODDA: Can the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Agriculture, say

when information arising from a report by a country fire services working party will be available to Parliament? In a letter, the Secretary of the Tatiara Fire Fighting Association (Mr. Dempsey) has brought to my notice the fact that on April 15, 1970, members of the association accompanied Tatiara council representatives on a deputation to the then Chief Secretary (Hon. R. C. DeGaris) to discuss alterations that they proposed to the Bush Fires Act. Since then the association and some of its officers have submitted suggestions to the working party to which I have referred. The association would appreciate assistance in obtaining information for its members, as a result of the report of the working party. Therefore, I should like to know when the report will be available and whether relevant legislation will be introduced.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: To the best of my knowledge, the report has been received, although not long ago, and I think it involves far-reaching reform of the whole system. The Chief Secretary, who is responsible for the service, is examining the report, and I think the Minister of Agriculture also has an interest in the matter. I will ask my colleague whether legislation is to be introduced to give effect to part or all of the report. Certainly, he will not be able to introduce legislation this session. We have an amendment to the Bush Fires Act before the House, but it does not deal with that subject. I shall be pleased to take up the matter for the honourable member.

HAIRCUTS

Mr. BECKER: Will the Deputy Premier say whether the Government intends to intervene regarding the possible increase in the price of mens' haircuts? I understand that the price of men's haircuts is not subject to fixed price control but that, in the past, applications for price increases have been made to the Commissioner of Prices and Consumer Affairs. A report in this afternoon's *News* states that an increase in the price of haircuts is tipped.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I should have thought the honourable member would know, as I do, that there are many long-hairs around, including him. His habit of visiting a hairdresser has changed in the last year or so, as has the habit of several other honourable members. That must indicate to the honourable member that the number of people going to the hairdresser has fallen sharply in that time. The price charged for a haircut determines

the income of the hairdresser, and the number of people visiting his shop is also important in regard to his income. Because of the change of attitude to the length of hair people have, there has been a recession in the hairdressing industry. There is no control on the price of haircuts but I think a suggestion is made, and previously agreement has been obtained by the association through the Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs. I know of no current approach having been made. I will find out what is the position, but I should think that, in general, a price increase would be justified.

OSBORNE POWER STATION

Mr. HALL: Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked recently regarding the Osborne power station and the number of staff employed?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: In fact, I put the reply away, because I did not think I would be asked to give it. I am delighted that Sir Arthur Rymill's white-haired boy is in the House today. The reply states that there are two reasons why the number of staff at Osborne power station does not change in direct relationship to the amount of power generated. First, generating plant at Osborne is now used for peak load and standby purposes. The number of staff required to operate and maintain plant for this purpose is determined more by the capacity and number of generating units that must be kept ready for use than by the actual hours of operation. Secondly, some maintenance staff and workshops at Osborne also do work for other power stations and sections of the Electricity Trust, because this is more economic than duplicating facilities at other locations.

BUSH FIRES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

In Committee.

(Continued from November 1. Page 2655.)
Clauses 4 to 34 passed.

Clause 35—"Power of council to clear roads."

Mr. RODDA: Apart from noting that this clause simply substitutes "flammable" for "inflammable", I should like the Minister to comment on the power of councils to clear roads. In the Naracoorte council area, for example, a firebreak extends across what is known as the plains area but it stops immediately where the road meets the timber country. Is it intended to remove flammable material

to enable a firebreak to continue through such an area?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Works): Section 80 of the principal Act will now provide:

A council may—

- (a) clear any roads vested in it of any material which is or may become flammable; and
- (b) subject to this Act, light ure and maintain fires for the purpose of such clearing; and
- (c) prevent the passing of vehicles, animals and persons along a road while such fires are alight.

I think that adequately spells out the powers of a council regarding that matter.

Clause passed.

Clause 36 passed.

Clause 37—"Power of the council to order the creation of firebreaks."

Mr. ALLEN: I move to insert the following new subsection:

(1a) A notice shall not be given under subsection (1) of this section otherwise than in pursuance of a resolution of the council supported by the votes of at least two-thirds, in number, of the members of the council.

A district council quorum of four councillors, plus the Chairman, could pass a resolution, two councillors having voted in favour of and two having voted against the measure, and the Chairman, who has a deliberative as well as a casting vote, also having voted in favour of it. As a result, a ratepayer could be compelled to provide a firebreak merely on the decision of two councillors out of a total of seven.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I must regretfully oppose the amendment. The honourable member may have noticed on file an amendment that I intend to move providing for an appeal. Under the honourable member's amendment, every member of the council would have to be present before a vote could be taken.

Mr. Allen: No, only five.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: It would have to be two-thirds voting in favour. However, I point out that the amendment, which, after all, relates to compelling a person to plough a firebreak, is unnecessarily inhibiting, especially compared, for example, to the provisions regarding the number of members of a council required to vote in the case of striking a differential rate or enacting a by-law. I point out that my amendment will provide for an appeal by any person who feels aggrieved as a result of a council decision.

Amendment negatived.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I move:

To strike out subsections (2) and (3) and insert the following new subsections:

(2) There shall be an appeal to the Minister against any requirement of a council under this section, and any such appeal shall be lodged in writing at the office of the Minister within seven days of the giving of the notice by the council.

(3) The Minister may hear and determine an appeal made under subsection (2) of this section or may appoint some person to do so and the Minister or person appointed by him shall make such order as to the Minister or such other person seems fair and reasonable and the order when made shall be final.

(4) Any person who, without reasonable excuse, proof of which shall lie upon him—

(a) refuses or fails to comply with any requirement under this section that has not been appealed against in the manner set out in subsection (2) of this section; or

(b) refuses or fails to comply with any order made by the Minister or person appointed by him pursuant to subsection (3) of this section, shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a penalty not exceeding two hundred dollars.

(5) Where an owner or occupier has been convicted of an offence under this section and the requirement or order has not been complied with the council which gave the notice referred to in subsection (1) of this section may do or cause to be done all acts and things that the owner or occupier was required to do pursuant to the requirement or order and may recover its costs and expenses incurred therein as a debt due to the council from the owner or occupier.

The effect of this amendment is to strike out subsections (2) and (3) of new section 81a. This section deals with the power of councils to order the creation of firebreaks. As members will be aware, there has been considerable discussion by those involved in conservation as to the value of firebreaks, particularly those created by burning. The purpose of the amendments is to give the owner or occupier the opportunity of appealing from a decision of the council to an outside body, in this case the Minister or a person appointed by him. It will be the function of this outside body to ensure that the requirement of the council is in all the circumstances reasonable. Members will note that the appeal is not to a judicial body. This course has been adopted since it is felt that the issues to be resolved here are not strictly judicial ones but concern the totality of the environment, not the least of the considerations being protection from fire. The substance of the amendment is, I feel, reasonably self-explanatory.

Mr. FERGUSON: The matter of firebreaks is important throughout the State. Under the

provisions of the Bill it is essential that a landholder be given the right of appeal. Some council by-laws make it impossible for landholders to make firebreaks. Some councillors have strong feelings about whether a landholder should be allowed or not allowed to make firebreaks. I have in mind particularly some Hills country and country so sandy that if a firebreak is made the fire will simply drift away. I support the amendment.

Mr. EVANS: I, too, support the amendment. The right of appeal should be left in legislation as often as possible, especially where there are variations in the council's powers, as in the circumstances referred to by the member for Goyder. Has a council power to issue an order to a Government department such as the Railways Department or the authority controlling our national parks? It is only natural that the Minister of Environment and Conservation would appeal against an order to put a firebreak right around Belair National Park or Cleland reserve. However, it is essential that there be firebreaks around certain Government property.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: As I understand it, the Crown will not be bound by this legislation. For the Crown to be bound, it would have to be stipulated in the Bill, and it is not. Although the honourable member may say that the Crown should be bound, I do not think it should be, because it has a responsibility to the community in this matter and would, generally speaking, comply with local council by-laws made in respect of firebreaks. The position will become apparent after a while when we see how councils make and administer their by-laws on firebreaks. The Railways Department makes firebreaks by burning off during the burning-off period, and this should continue.

Mr. EVANS: The Committee should object to this part of the Bill if that is the case. It could well be that a national park could have a large area of natural scrub adjacent to a private property, which is in the main covered with dense bush and native scrub. The private landholder might have as much interest in conservation of the natural bushland as the National Parks Authority, yet he could be forced to make a firebreak on his side of the fence along the boundary, whereas the National Parks Authority would not be so bound.

The Minister says that the Government usually accepts the responsibility, but that is not always the case. Anyone can see what is happening with regard to noxious weeds. If Government departments are bound by the

legislation, they will still have the right of appeal if they believe that a council's request is unfair. Private landholders and the Crown may virtually share land but, although the private owner is bound, the Crown is not bound. The Engineering and Water Supply Department has effective firebreaks around its properties (perhaps this helps with regard to water filtering), and this is to its credit. The Woods and Forests Department also has firebreaks around its reserves. However, as this cannot be said about all Government departments, we should bind the Crown under this legislation.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: As the Crown is not referred to in the principal Act, it is not bound by this legislation, and I do not believe it should be bound. I point out that every three years members of Parliament must answer for any failing of which they are accused by people in their districts. This is the way in which these matters are dealt with, and the Government should not be subordinate to a lower structure of Government. When dealing with another measure not long ago, members opposite suggested that the Government should be subordinate to a committee of the Adelaide City Council. I do not say that councils are barred from asking Government departments to take action, and the councils can bring all the pressure they can mount in their areas to bear on the Government to get it to comply with their requests. However, the Government should not be subordinate to local government.

Mr. EVANS: I admit that local government is a lower level of government with regard to representation, but councils are still directly responsible to people in an area. The Minister says that Government departments will accept responsibility. If that is so, why should we not bind them by this legislation? I know that the Minister would say that, if I was a member of a Government, I would not say what I am saying, but I will always maintain that departments should be bound.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The honourable member may always maintain that, but, if his Party were in Government, he would always be defeated by other members in his Party. I suppose that the honourable member would also advocate that the Commonwealth Government should be subordinate to local government in these matters. What the honourable member suggests is that, as the State Government is responsible in this area, it should be told by local councils what it should

do. I believe that the Government has a responsibility and, if it does not carry out that responsibility, it will get its just deserts. That is the method people have of dealing with Governments, and it is effective.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Remaining clauses (38 to 52) and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 26. Page 2503.)

Dr. EASTICK (Leader of the Opposition): The Opposition supports the Bill which, on this occasion, deals with virtually only one matter. Over the past two years, considerable amendments to this legislation have been made, involving the renaming of the relevant authority and the extension of its function. On this occasion, the Bill merely extends the operation of the legislation for a further 12 months. Some members have consistently claimed that price control is not in the best interests of the community, whereas other members, having regard to the statistical information available, have claimed that price control is to the positive advantage of the people of the State. The decisions of the Commissioner are heeded by persons in other States, particularly in regard to the fixing of petrol prices. The Premier indicated that the Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs had been efficient in maintaining prices at a reasonable level over a long period of time, but he conveniently by-passed the fact that the cost of living index for this State for the quarter ended September 30 was the highest in the country.

Mr. HOPGOOD: There was only one commodity responsible for that.

Dr. EASTICK: Various factors were responsible for the increase but the increased cost of mutton and lamb helped to a large extent to bring about the increase. The increase in this State was 1.6 per cent compared to the Commonwealth average of 1.4 per cent. Under the heading "C.O.L. jumps by more than \$1" the *News* on October 23 states that the cost of living in Adelaide rose by 1.6 per cent in the three months to the end of September, which was the highest rise of any capital. The report continues:

South Australia's figure was higher than the average Australian increase of 1.4 per cent. Rises in other capital cities were: Melbourne, Sydney, Perth, and Canberra, 1.4 per cent;

Hobart, 1.2 per cent; and Brisbane, 0.8 per cent.

The Socialist Labor Government of this State may have had some bearing on the fact that our increase was above the average increase for the Commonwealth. Notwithstanding the advantages of having a Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs, we have had price increases. During the six months to June 30, 1972, 1,359 complaints were deemed to warrant investigation compared to only 984 for the same period in 1971. The Premier said that legislation commencing since January 1, 1972, and being administered by the Commissioner, included the Door to Door Sales Act, the Second-hand Motor Vehicles Act, the Mock Auctions Act, the Misrepresentation Act, and the Unordered Goods and Services Act, and this may have affected the figure given by the Premier, because the Commissioner is the person who must investigate complaints under the new legislation. Perhaps there will be fewer complaints from the public and fewer investigations by the Commissioner when we have an ombudsman.

The Premier, in explaining the Bill, highlighted the fact that the wine-grape growers had had a minimum price fixed and that this had benefited the industry as a whole, and this is not denied. Probably there are other industries in the State that would benefit from similar action. Perhaps the retiring member for Chaffey will try to include the orange industry in this category. I support the Bill.

Mr. McANANEY (Heysen): Over the nine years I have been a member I have opposed this legislation. I do not intend on this occasion to give all the reasons for my opposition, because they can be seen in the *Hansard* reports of my past speeches on this subject. Prices have increased in South Australia the same as they have increased in other States over the past 10 years. Sir Thomas Playford managed to keep prices under control to a degree in this State, but this was rather the result of other acts of restraint than of efficient price control. If one goes to the Commissioner with good reasons for increasing the price, an increase will be granted.

The proper approach to this problem is through the restrictive trade practices legislation, but we did not give the Commonwealth Government this power, because, it was said, this State would, if it did so, be at a disadvantage compared to the other States that did

not do so. The Tasmanian Government transferred its powers to the Commonwealth Government and the argument was put that they would not be able to compete against Victorian industry. However, the restrictive trade practices of the brewing company were disallowed, yet the brewing company last year made record profits and made a large bonus share issue even though it had to stand up to competition from other States. Indeed, the company was more prosperous than ever before.

Some restrictive trade practices legislation helps keep industries stable. I think that the flour millers had an arrangement that worked to the benefit of all. If a firm has a restrictive trade practice, it should have to be reported to a Commissioner who could then determine whether it affected the community adversely. Some time ago there was an outcry against increased grocery prices, but the Commissioner said that there was so much competition in the grocery industry that prices were at a realistic level. He quoted what the average wage increase had been over the past five years and showed that it was very much higher than the percentage increase in grocery prices over the same period.

A reasonable price level results where there is competition. Immediately after the Second World War control was imposed on the price of essential goods, but the prices of non-essential goods were not controlled. It was almost impossible to buy essential goods in Rundle Street stores, but one could buy all sorts of junk that had been imported from overseas, because price control applied only in respect of essential goods. By employing people to police controls, the cost of the articles must increase, so that the benefit of the controls to the public more or less disappears. Controls on the price of petrol have been of great assistance, but companies have been able to sell petrol at a much lower price to some sections of the community and to selected customers. In other States the price of petrol has been greatly reduced in some cases, and this is happening in places in South Australia. Wine-grape prices have been referred to, but this procedure is contrary to price control, because it is fixing a price higher than the normal price. There should be special legislation for this industry. If the price of a commodity is guaranteed above the natural price, difficulties occur and it becomes necessary to introduce controls on production. We are getting close to this situation in Australia with the increase in plantings, and we

may have to introduce production controls soon. When it is necessary to introduce a fixed price that gives a reasonable margin of profit, that form of control should be implemented at the same time, because people who then enter that industry will know how the conditions affect them.

People with small wine-grape holdings may be in difficulty compared to those with larger plantings, because we have not introduced sensible legislation. Often the largest increase in prices is caused by the imposition of Government taxes. Almost all Bills introduced by this Government, particularly those concerned with consumer protection, mean an increase in costs. Obviously, this means an increase in the price of goods. Even with price control, a reasonable price must be allowed, but there will be price increases whether there are controls or not. It has been said that about \$70,000 has been saved because of this legislation, but I believe it would have cost more than that to operate the branch during the same period. I do not speak against the form of consumer protection on items in respect of which people are exploited. I oppose the Bill in principle and, unless logical arguments are advanced to make me change my opinion, I will continue to do so.

Mr. CURREN (Chaffey): In supporting the Bill, I commend the Government for once again re-enacting the Prices Act, which has been in force in South Australia for some years. It was introduced by the Playford Government, and I wonder why the member for Heysen, who is a member of the Party that Sir Thomas Playford led so well for so many years, now disagrees with that policy. I particularly support the provisions in the Act that enable the fixing of the minimum price of wine grapes. The member for Heysen said that this legislation had benefited the wine-grape industry and winemakers. Placing wine-grape prices under the provisions of the Prices Act saved the industry, although at that time winemakers strongly opposed this action. However, within 12 months they admitted that it was the greatest thing that had been done for the industry.

It brought a stability to grapegrowing and to the winemaking section that had not existed previously. Until about two years ago the industry had been progressing steadily, and growers were on a reasonably sound economic footing, but the Liberal and Country Party Government introduced the excise tax on wine, which caused the industry to have the severe set-back from which it has not recovered. It is unfair to compare the reduced sales figures,

following the imposition of the wine excise tax, with the sales figures at the time before the industry had to adapt to the increased prices.

Mr. Goldsworthy: What clause has anything to do with the wine excise duty?

Mr. CURREN: It has a bearing. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill, and I hope that we are here next year to re-enact the same legislation.

Mrs. BYRNE (Tea Tree Gully): I support the Bill, because it benefits the people, and I pay a tribute to the staff of the Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs. This is my only opportunity to do this, and I should like to record my appreciation in *Hansard*. Since being elected to this House I have had occasion many times to contact these officers, asking them to investigate complaints. Many of these complaints were in regard to second-hand motor car sales, and I hope that the special legislation that we have passed will reduce the number of such complaints. I have been astounded at the results that the Commissioner's officers have obtained. My constituents have benefited and have been extremely grateful for what has been done for them.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): I support the Bill. One of the tests of legislation is the success that it has had in operation, and this legislation has operated since 1948. My friend and colleague, the member for Heysen, invited members to advance any argument that they could in support of the Prices Act, and I advance the argument of its success in operation. We have heard complaints about the operation of the Prices Act and it has been said that prices could be controlled better by legislation similar to the unfair trade practices legislation.

However, those arguments are fairly theoretical. We in this country have not had much experience of trade practices legislation, but we in South Australia, since 1948, have had a Prices Act, wisely administered under a Liberal and Country League Government led by Sir Thomas Playford. No-one can say that the Act has not been successful in achieving the price stabilization that it set out to achieve. We remember the shortage of commodities of all kinds during the Second World War and after it.

The merit of the Prices Act is shown when we compare the economy of South Australia with the economies of the other States. We have stabilized prices, maintained a competitive position with the other States, and kept costs

down. I agree with the statement by the member for Chaffey that Sir Thomas Playford led this Party well: I go further and say that he led South Australia well. Of all the criticisms that have been levelled at Sir Thomas (and often levelled for selfish reasons), I have never heard him referred to publicly as being anything other than honest. Sir Thomas realized that every citizen should receive a good deal. The only disturbing feature is that the sphere of influence of the Commissioner has been widened considerably since I have been a member of this House. We were reminded of this recently when the Premier explained the Bill. The Commissioner must now administer all the consumer protection legislation that the Government has introduced and still intends to introduce. His original function was to administer, within fairly narrow confines, the control of prices in this State. Later he was given power to determine a minimum price for wine grapes, and now he has been given the administration of consumer protection legislation.

I am not entirely convinced that some of this consumer protection does not go too far. We can protect people against themselves to a certain extent, but we cannot do that in some situations. When we consider that the Commissioner administers legislation dealing with door-to-door sales, secondhand motor vehicle sales, mock auctions, and unordered goods and services, we wonder what sort of officer he is becoming.

Mr. Coumbe: Almost an ombudsman?

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: Yes. He is being given wide power and scope.

Mr. Hopgood: You're starting to sound like one of our pamphlets reads.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: That is the unkindest cut of all. I assume that the honourable member is referring to Australian Labor Party propaganda and, whilst I have a fairly thick skin, I cannot take that kind of insult. I support the Bill because it has proved useful to the economy of South Australia for many years and has contributed to our costs being lower than those elsewhere. In fact, the Prices Act has benefited the whole community. Its existence was one reason why, under Sir Thomas Playford, we attracted more migrants than our quota provided for. I merely comment that the Commissioner seems to be becoming the snooper in chief, as it were, and I wonder whether this inhibits the effectiveness of his primary function.

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

CIGARETTES (LABELLING) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 12. Page 2059.)

Mr. MATHWIN (Glenelg): Obviously, I support the Bill, because I introduced the original measure enacting the legislation. Unfortunately, the Government's attitude was that this legislation should come into force only if and when three other States had enacted similar legislation, and that attitude is contrary to the image it tries to create that it is a progressive Government. Indeed, the Government leaves no stone unturned in an endeavour to establish that this is the most progressive State. In some cases, however, the Government is over-protective towards the public. One would have thought that the Government would be first in the field in regard to ensuring the health and welfare of the people of the State by seeking to protect them from the harmful effects of cigarette smoking.

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

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (FRANCHISE)

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 18. Page 2221.)

Dr. EASTICK (Leader of the Opposition): The Opposition intends to support the second reading of this Bill so that the House will have an opportunity to consider certain amendments. Only the other day, the Government was given an opportunity to demonstrate a constructive attitude to this matter, but it did not see fit to do so. It is doubtful what the Labor Party will do with its spare time when the old chestnut of franchise is finally disposed of. Although we look forward to resolving this matter we do not wish to see one House simply functioning as a mirror image of the other. One can cite many examples of the value of another place in respect of legislation enacted in this State. Indeed, under a Labor Government it has been necessary for another place to amend much of the legislation introduced, and many of the amendments made have been accepted by the Government without dispute.

I do not think it is necessary to discuss this measure at length, because it is similar to measures introduced previously. The Attorney-General, who on each occasion has repeated almost word for word the explanation of the measure, has certainly persevered, but we cannot give him credit for achieving much in this

regard. We on this side have been denied an opportunity to have amendments considered. I point out to the Attorney that the Opposition is willing to discuss this matter, and I look forward to the support of members when I move a contingent notice of motion relating to the moving of new clauses. I support the Bill.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Alexandra): Perhaps the only surprise that will be felt by honourable members is that I do not intend to oppose the second reading. I would strongly dispute the wisdom of this Bill if it were not for the foreshadowed amendments of the Leader, which will make it more sensible and more workable. If those amendments are not incorporated in the Bill, I will not support it further. The Leader's amendments will greatly change this legislation but, if honourable members follow their recent form, which I believe they will, his amendments will not be accepted. They should be carefully considered and accepted, because in several important respects they are in line with what I think should be the policy of this Government.

The system of proportional representation, which is accepted in the Senate, was introduced, I think, by the Chifley Government. Proportional representation applying to the Senate is much more unbalanced regarding the value of votes between the various States than would be the case in the system proposed by the Leader. The Liberal and Country League has made strenuous efforts to achieve a fair and just means of altering the voting system applying to the Upper House, and the Leader's proposals are fair and just. If the amendments are accepted, they will involve the actual loss of seats by Liberal and Country Party members. That should be borne in mind, because it is easy to sneer and suggest that the amendments will give some political advantage.

The Hon. L. J. King: It ensures that you will have control of the Upper House in all circumstances.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The Attorney-General is wrong. It does not ensure that we will retain control in all circumstances. The Attorney should not have made that remark. He generally prides himself on his impeccable accuracy, but that was a political interjection. I am afraid he has descended to this arena from those lofty heights in the courts whence he came. He likes to give the impression retaining that lofty air of judgment, but in fact he does make some unfair political remarks, and that is one of them. Unfortunately, the Attorney was not in the House

when one of the greatest perpetrations involving electoral matters of which I am aware was carried out: that was the Bill introduced by the former Labor Government, since known as the Casey Protection Bill. That was carefully based on a 50-year-old definition of the metropolitan area and included remarkable exceptions in order that one of the Labor Party's members could retain his seat in all circumstances. That member has since departed from this Chamber, and I presume that the Party would like to be able to forget that that Bill was ever moved. The one thing apart from the abolition of the Upper House that we should try to avoid is to have the Upper House becoming an imitation of the Lower House. If that resulted, all the Upper House would be there to do is review legislation and see whether any errors existed in the legislation passed by the Lower House.

The Leader's foreshadowed amendments have several features that appeal to me. One is that it will make voting in relation to the Legislative Council truly voluntary, and not partly voluntary, as currently applies. I believe that a car without brakes is a danger to the community and that a Parliament without brakes is also a danger to the community. Today there is wider awareness of political matters and far greater penetration by the media into the community, especially by television. People are more interested in political matters, yet at the same time they make up their minds more quickly and more emotionally than they did in the past.

While I have nothing against a degree of emotionalism, because it is a typical feature of humanity, it often means that legislation can be introduced and passed by Parliament without much thought. Both Houses have the power to introduce and complete the passage of legislation in one day. Indeed, legislation is often passed in two or three days, before people have been given a chance to hear opposing views or to be aware of varying arguments put forward about the legislation. Therefore, by slowing down the process as it examines legislation, the Legislative Council provides a safeguard. Although it does not automatically slow down the process, it can do so, and it should be permitted to do so. The amendments foreshadowed by the Leader would lead to a vitalized Upper House, with election results much different from present results. No one Party would be sure of controlling the Council, which would work effectively in dealing with legislation that came before it.

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens): This is not the first occasion on which we have had a Bill of this type before this Parliament. I do not intend to cast a silent vote on this matter. I say straight away that I will support the foreshadowed amendments, which will improve the Bill. Therefore, I intend to support the second reading so that we can consider those amendments later.

This Bill, which contains only four short clauses, has only one clause (clause 3) that is of any significance. Clause 3 provides that people who are entitled to vote at an election for a member of the House of Assembly shall, subject to the Electoral Act, be qualified to have their name placed on the appropriate Council roll if the district in which they reside. Therefore, the roll for the Legislative Council will become more or less identical to the House of Assembly roll. Although it can be argued that this Bill does not compel anyone to enrol or vote for the Upper House, it could be the thin edge of the wedge leading to compulsory voting for the Legislative Council. I firmly believe in the bi-cameral system of Parliament, this being a fundamental tenet of my Party.

Mr. Jennings: What about Queensland?

Mr. COUMBE: I am concerned about the rights and privileges of people in South Australia. The honourable member tends to wander, as his Premier wanders instead of looking after the business of this House. The member for Alexandra dealt with the functions of the Legislative Council, pointing out the work it does. Since I have been a member, this subject has been raised in every Parliament, if not in every session, and various statistics have been given of those countries that have the bi-cameral system of Government and those that have not. I point out that some of the best speeches on democracy that have been made in any Parliament have emanated from the House of Lords.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Torrens is addressing the Chamber. There is far too much audible conversation. Honourable members who are talking are entirely out of order. The honourable member for Torrens.

Mr. COUMBE: The Legislative Council plays a most important role in the dealing with the legislative programme of the State. It plays a significant part in scrutinizing measures that are referred to it from this House, apart from initiating measures itself. Purely from the legislative aspect, South Australia would be

much poorer for the lack of the Legislative Council, which has the opportunity of taking a second look at legislation. Because there are more Ministers in this Chamber, more legislation is initiated here and, in addition, under the Constitution the Legislative Council is precluded from initiating financial measures. Labor Party members make no secret of the fact that they advocate the abolition of the Legislative Council, and this Bill could be the thin edge of the wedge towards its abolition.

I believe that the amendments to be moved later will improve the Bill greatly. Recently I listened to the rantings of the Minister of Education when a similar measure was before the House. Obviously he was grandstanding in his usual way, and he was not doing a bad job, if anyone was gullible enough to be taken in by what he was saying. I have also heard the Attorney-General say that, if the Bill were amended as we suggest it should be, it would mean that the Labor Party could never gain power, with the Liberal and Country League being forever ensured of control of the Legislative Council. That is poppycock. The position is that the Labor Party does not have the support to get sufficient members elected to give it control of that Chamber. Recently, the Government had the chance to achieve what it is setting out to do by this Bill, but the chance was not taken. I challenge the Government, and particularly the Attorney-General, to have the courage to grasp the nettle and accept the amendments to be moved by the Leader of the Opposition. No Government member has the guts to grasp the nettle and accept these amendments: they are told not to do that.

Obviously, this simple Bill of four clauses with one effective clause will completely change the whole of the constitutional structure in South Australia as we know it today. If one considers the Bill, one can read into it the intent of the Labor Party, and this means the beginning of the end of the Legislative Council. Government members admit openly that this is what they want and have wanted for years. If this is the case, why has the Government introduced such a Bill? It has introduced the Bill to provide the chance for another and subsequent Act whereby the Legislative Council can be abolished.

Several times a case has been made out by which the Legislative Council franchise can be widened, provided that there is voluntary voting, but I will never support compulsory voting for the Legislative Council. The effect

of it would be that the two Chambers would be complete mirror images of each other, and what would be the advantage? If this Bill were passed without the addition of the amendments, the Labor Party would obtain this situation. I listened with interest to the rantings of the Minister of Education last week. However, if his speech is analysed one realizes the falsity of his statements: he had a field day and received some publicity. Some gullible people in the community may have swallowed what the Minister said, but his statements are not borne out by facts. He showed clearly and blatantly his naked hatred of the other place.

Mr. Mathwin: He was angry at the time.

Mr. COUMBE: The Minister frequently becomes angry. Several times, when expressing my opinion of the Legislative Council franchise, I have said that the districts should have been changed some time ago.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: Why did you want a gerrymander?

Mr. COUMBE: I think the Minister said that it was a gerrymander of a gerrymander, but I suggest that this is not a gerrymander. If we are to have both Houses working effectively, there must be some difference in their composition, in their districts, and in the method of electing members. The amendments on file provide for these differences, and I repeat the challenge to Government members to put aside their Party rules and orders and grasp this nettle, and so improve the Bill by accepting the worthwhile amendments to be moved by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): Several similar Bills have been introduced during this Parliament, and it seems that the Government is preoccupied with the Legislative Council. I have not travelled widely outside Australia, but I have visited other Australian States and have heard occasional complaints of how members are elected to the Legislative Council in those States; for instance, in New South Wales, where members are nominated. It seems that Government members have some sort of phobia about the Legislative Council. Obviously, the Government intends to abolish the Legislative Council at the first opportunity, but, if one is to abolish one of the Houses of our Legislature, surely the first step is to discredit it, and this discrediting started some years ago. The Labor Party has been most vocal in denigrating the Legislative Council and its members. Members on this side are willing to support full adult franchise for the Legislative

Council if the Labor Party accepts sensible provisos to retain for the Council a character distinct from that of this Chamber. The Labor Party, if it wants to abolish the Legislative Council, must make that Chamber as much like the House of Assembly as it can and thus make the Council superfluous. The Government is seeking to do that.

If the Legislative Council is to have real significance, it must have a different type of representation and different districts, and the franchise must be different from that of this House. The L.C.L. has advanced sound policies regarding the Legislative Council but the Labor Party has reacted immediately to throw out the suggestions without even considering them. One part of my Party's policy that seems to frighten the Labor Party is our support for voluntary voting. The Labor Party has advanced no argument of substance to suggest that there is any inherent danger in allowing people to exercise the voluntary vote for the second Chamber. If we want a significant difference between the two Houses, our policy shows how it can be achieved.

The Hon. L. J. King: There is no provision for compulsory voting in the Bill.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: The Attorney-General knows that, if people are herded to the polls for a House of Assembly election and if the Legislative Council election is held on the same day, in effect we have compulsory attendance at the polling place. The people are given a how-to-vote card, and how to vote for the Legislative Council is usually shown on the back of the card. If this is not compulsory

voting, it is so close to it that it does not matter. In many instances, the people are herded to the polls against their will. If the Attorney is arguing that voting is voluntary, we can make sure of the position by having voting for each House on separate days.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member is out of order in anticipating amendments.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: It has been made abundantly clear to me in the past few weeks that the Labor Party is not satisfied with the Commonwealth electoral system.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is nothing about that in this Bill.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: Members of the Australian Labor Party will not accept that the Senate safeguards the rights of this State, and members of that Party would sell South Australia down the drain. This Bill is obviously the first step by the Labor Party in its plan to gain control of the Legislative Council and abolish it. I support the second reading but I will not support the Bill further if the Government does not use common sense and accept the Leader's amendments.

Mr. McANANEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

CRIMINAL LAW CONSOLIDATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (GENERAL)

Returned from the Legislative Council with an amendment.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.36 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, November 7, at 2 p.m.