

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, August 22, 1973

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

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT: COMMONWEALTH BUDGET

The SPEAKER: Today I have received from the Leader of the Opposition the following intimation:

I wish to inform you that it is my intention to move this day that the House at its rising this day adjourn until tomorrow at 1 o'clock for the purpose of discussing a matter of urgency, namely, that the House condemn the Commonwealth Government for its failure, in the Budget presented last evening, to take positive action to arrest the inflationary spiral, which is having an adverse effect on South Australia.

I call on those members who approve of the proposed discussion to rise in their places.

Several members having risen:

Dr. EASTICK (Leader of the Opposition): I move:

That the House at its rising do adjourn until tomorrow at 1 o'clock,

for the purpose of discussing a matter of urgency, namely, that the House condemn the Commonwealth Government for its failure, in the Budget presented last evening, to take positive action to arrest the inflationary spiral, which is having an adverse effect on South Australia. No member can justly say that he is proud of the effort of the Commonwealth Treasurer last evening in his announcements on the Budget—

Members interjecting:

Dr. EASTICK: —nor can any member say that the measures taken by the Commonwealth Treasurer will help to arrest the inflationary spiral, the effect of which has increased markedly since his Party took office on December 2 last year. In presenting the Budget last evening, the Commonwealth Treasurer stated:

Inflation has been and remains our major economic problem. Like other countries, Australia will be grappling with it in the year ahead.

Not now, but in the year ahead! The Treasurer continued:

I do not suggest that we can aim through the Budget to do the whole job of curbing inflation.

What an admission of defeat right from the word “go”: that we are going to grapple with the problem in the year ahead. The Treasurer continued:

Rather, we aim to attack rising prices by a series of inter-related measures.

There is no indication anywhere by the Commonwealth Treasurer how he will come face to face with the problem of inflation. What has the Premier had to say about this matter? On the front page of this afternoon's newspaper he clearly says that there are two hard blows. By way of an attack on the Commonwealth Government, he describes its decision to increase the motor spirit excise by 5c a gallon (4.55l) as “directly inflationary and quite undesirable”. Will any member opposite deny that assessment by his own Leader that the measures taken by the Commonwealth Treasurer are “directly inflationary and quite undesirable”? There is not too much comment at this stage.

Mr. Jennings: Are you going to read all he said?

Dr. EASTICK: Yes, I will read it, by all means. Obviously, this motion will have the support of every member of the Chamber; otherwise, members opposite will be out of step with the Premier. Every member opposite, if he follows the lead given by his own Leader, will support this motion. According to the newspaper report, the

Premier went on to say, referring more specifically to the increase in the price of petrol:

I think it would have been better to pick up additional revenue in direct tax increases.

That is immediately at variance with the attitude of the Premier's Commonwealth colleagues. The Premier would rather have had direct tax increases, and I think it is important that we heed his statement that I have just quoted. The Premier clearly indicates that he appreciates, as does anyone else who faces reality, that the measures brought down by the Commonwealth Treasurer last evening will markedly increase indirect taxation and that this will have an adverse effect on every person in the community. The Commonwealth Government is giving with one hand and taking with the other, saying to pensioners and many other people in the community, “This is the advantage we give you”, and then quietly and surreptitiously in the background introducing measures that will indirectly erode everything that has been given to people; in fact, it will take away more than has been given.

Clearly, the Commonwealth Treasurer has been unable to come face to face with the inflationary spiral. It was all very well for the present Prime Minister, as the then Commonwealth Leader of the Opposition, to say to the people of Australia in his policy speech prior to the last Commonwealth election, “. . . or to the same men who have presided over the worst inflation for 20 years”. That statement appears on the first page of the Prime Minister's policy speech. What has been said about the situation by the former Commonwealth Treasurer cannot be denied by the present Treasurer or, indeed, by any member opposite: that in March-April, 1972, the then Administration recognized that there was an inflationary trend of 7 per cent, which was far greater than it liked to see and which was not, in its opinion, in the best interests of the people of Australia. That Administration therefore instituted certain measures and, when the Liberal Party and Country Party coalition in Canberra was defeated on December 2 last, the former Government left the Treasury benches, after having arrested the inflationary trend to the extent of reducing it from 7 per cent in March-April to 41 per cent.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: That is not correct.

Dr. EASTICK: It is correct, and the Minister knows that full well.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: Rubbish.

Dr. EASTICK: It has been documented, and it has not been denied with any success. What is the position now applying? Certainly, we have an acknowledgment by the Canberra colleagues of members opposite that we have a current inflationary trend of more than 13 per cent. What was meant by the Prime Minister before December 2 when he said “. . . or to the same men who have presided over the worst inflation for 20 years”? Obviously, the whole management and administration of Australia has escaped from the control of those who are currently in charge of it. Indeed, there is no better example than that outlined last evening when the Commonwealth Treasurer said, “The measures are not aimed at controlling the inflationary trend.”

Mr. Wells: There are other measures that can and will be used.

Dr. EASTICK: When it is too late? From the admission of the Premier and of members opposite, the current inflation rate in the building trade in South Australia is 18 per cent. Indeed, the Minister of Education said yesterday that he would seek information on whether he was obtaining as many pupil places in the

education system as he would like, because of the adverse effect of—

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: I didn't put it that way.

Dr. EASTICK: —the great increase in the costs of production.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: They are your words, not mine.

Dr. EASTICK: The Minister will have his opportunity to make a contribution later and he can refer back to an answer he has given. Late last evening the Premier indicated that a situation was arising in South Australia (indeed, as it was throughout Australia and, to a degree, throughout the world) concerning the problem of finding sufficient materials and labour resources. Any measure that will rapidly increase costs in the building trade, or other costs affecting the community, as outlined by the Commonwealth Treasurer, will clearly increase inflationary pressures and will cause greater harm and greater concern than has previously occurred.

I believe it would be the desire of every member of this House to associate himself with this motion and accept the lead that has been given by the Premier, when he said:

The move is directly inflationary and quite undesirable. I disapprove of this move.

I refer to the situation specifically reported on by the Premier—the increased cost of petrol. The Premier said that this would adversely affect everyone in the community by increasing the cost of manufacture and by increasing the cost of wholesaling and retailing, because of the petrol component in practically every area of production. We have the acceptance and acknowledgment this afternoon by the Premier that this is more than likely to have such an effect. A press report of the Premier's comments states:

The increase in fuel costs would mean considerably higher cost to the Government. Calculations were being made today. Costs of running public transport will increase, but Mr. Dunstan made no predictions about possible fare or freight rises.

If the effect of the Commonwealth Budget on the transport industry (including the Government transport industry) is as the Premier has said, how will the industry be able to proceed without increasing fares and transport costs? Will not those very costs be loaded on to the public as a whole? Will they not be in the indirect taxation measures that will affect adversely the future of the Australian community? Of course that will happen, as every honourable member realizes. One can pick up virtually any newspaper and find in it indications of inflationary pressures and inflationary cost increases that are occurring. The *Advertiser* of June 4 contains a report about people's incomes. That report states:

Their \$85.50 weekly income after tax seems to be gone before they get it. What has inflation done to them? On average, consumer prices have gone up 5.7 per cent in Adelaide over the past 12 months. In other words, they could have bought everything they are now buying for \$85.50 for only \$80.90, \$4.60 less. Five years ago that same collection of goods and services would have cost them only \$69.10, or \$16.40 less.

I make the point that my colleagues in the Commonwealth Parliament who occupied the Treasury benches until December last year clearly admitted that they were not happy about the increasing annual rate of inflation. They said that, at 7 per cent in March and April last year, it was too high, and they undertook action to ensure that it was reduced. Even though the annual rate of 7 per cent was as high as inflation had reached during the whole period of their occupancy of the Treasury benches, and

having regard to the figures I have given the House this afternoon covering the five-year period, the inflation in that period was such that \$85.50 earlier this year had the equivalent real value five years ago of \$69.10, or \$16.40 less.

What is the prediction for the next six or 12 months, with a present acknowledged annual inflationary spiral of 13 per cent? One does not need to be a mathematician or economist to work out that the effect will be markedly greater in the immediate future, yet the Commonwealth Treasurer has not seen fit to face reality, and I say that on the basis of his own statement last evening. One can go on to deal with eggs, rentals and transportation. I have already mentioned building costs. The *Advertiser* of June 19 contains a warning by industry of critical inflation. The press report states:

The Associated Chambers of Manufactures told the Federal Government yesterday that there was a real danger of the rate of inflation rising above 12 per cent a year.

We have been told in pre-Budget discussions with the Government, as well as in June, 1973, and this month, that inflation will not be curbed and that we will have a series of inter-related actions. In conclusion, I refer to the statement made by the present Prime Minister, which is contained on page 1 of the Labor policy speech delivered in November last year. The Prime Minister said:

Do you believe that Australia can afford another three years like the last 20 months?

Whom is he trying to fool now, when we have the facts about the increase in the inflationary trend? The Prime Minister also said:

Are you prepared to maintain at the head of your affairs a coalition which has lurched into crisis after crisis, embarrassment piled on embarrassment week after week?

Mr. Gunn: What about Senator Murphy?

Dr. EASTICK: What a comment that was for the Prime Minister to make, having regard to the Australian Security Intelligence Organization incidents earlier this year, the pronouncements by a series of Ministers on matters affecting the Prime Minister's policy area, and the differences that have occurred between Mr. Enderby and Mr. Beazley! What of the many crises that occur week by week? The next sentence in the policy speech is as follows:

Will you accept another three years of waiting for next week's crisis, next week's blunder?

The people of Australia will be able to say what they think in the Parramatta by-election in a few weeks time. They went very close to saying it in the Balcatta by-election in Western Australia only two weeks ago. That was only a State by-election but it reflected directly on the mismanagement of the Commonwealth Government. The policy speech continues:

Will you again entrust the nation's economy to the men who deliberately, but needlessly, created Australia's worst unemployment for 10 years?

What about the scare tactics that were put forward by members opposite and their colleagues in the Commonwealth Government that 150 000 (and even 200 000) people would be unemployed by the middle of this year? The people of Australia are a wake-up to the many tactics that have been used by members opposite and their Commonwealth colleagues. They are fully aware of the fact that dictation comes from Surfers Paradise and not from the elected members of Parliament. The policy speech continues:

Or to the same men who have presided over the worst inflation for twenty years?

What have they done about it? They have walked away from it, the same as the Premier has walked away from his responsibility to the people of this State. On July 19,

I sent a letter by hand delivery to the Premier's office with the suggestion that we sit around the conference table with people who could contribute to an overall discussion.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: What were you going to contribute?

Dr. EASTICK: That is all very well. If the Minister of Education goes back and reads the letter he will know what was suggested in it.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: You were only grandstanding, and everyone knows it.

Dr. EASTICK: I was not grandstanding. If I was grandstanding, I would have released the contents of the letter on the day that I had it hand delivered to the Premier, but it remained my property until I received a reply, and that was not until August 9. It says a lot for the Premier's interest in the State and the community when he takes from July 19 to August 9 to send even an acknowledgment of a letter on a subject of extreme importance to the people of this State. A reply could have been sent in either the negative or affirmative by a simple acknowledgment to the Leader of the Opposition by the Premier. I look forward to the support of every member of this House in the passage of this motion.

Mr. COUMBE seconded the motion *pro forma*.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Works): I would have thought that, in moving this motion this afternoon, the Leader of the Opposition would set about telling the Commonwealth Government exactly what he thought would cure the inflationary situation that exists in this nation today.

Dr. Eastick: And the document is not yet available in Adelaide!

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: If that is the case, and the document is not yet available to the Leader of the Opposition, how on earth can he get up here and criticize it intelligently?

Dr. Eastick: By listening.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: That is an astounding admission. I would have thought that the Leader would put forward alternative propositions, but not even one did we hear. He admits the document is not available, yet he stands up here and criticizes everything Mr. Crean has done as Commonwealth Treasurer. He said that no-one in this Chamber could be proud of the fact that Mr. Crean had introduced this shocking Budget last night. No-one in this Chamber! Let me tell him and other members opposite that I am very proud, and I bet everyone behind me is too. It is significant, in the context of this debate, that last evening Mr. Crean introduced the first Labor Budget in 24 years, and I should like to describe for the benefit of Opposition members some of the history of this matter. Let us go back no further than 1961: what happened then?

The Hon. G. R. Broomhill: The horror Budget!

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: We called it the credit squeeze, but call it what you will it was a deliberate policy by the Liberal and Country Party coalition in power in Canberra at that time to create a pool of unemployment, the worst ever in the history of this country, in order to cure the inflationary trend that that Government had started. In 1965 the same thing occurred again, perhaps not to the same extent, but it seems that every five years since then this sort of thing has happened. It happened in 1970-71, and that Budget was introduced by Mr. Snedden. It is amazing that the Leader can criticize Mr. Crean when it is realized that Mr. Snedden in 1971-72 introduced a Budget that put the brakes on hard. He said at the time that there was an inflationary tendency in

this country: he put the brakes on hard, and created a pool of unemployment. That was his method and, whilst the Leader criticizes us and says we are producing a serious level of unemployment, he must admit that there was a high level of unemployment that was directly caused as a result of the 1971-72 Budget introduced by Mr. Snedden. In 1972-73 there was an election in the offing. What happened then? Either Mr. Snedden was wrong then or he had been wrong in 1971-72, because the Budget he introduced in 1972-73 was entirely different from the one he had introduced in 1971-72. Let the Leader reply to that statement. Also, I emphasize to the Leader and to Opposition members that this Government does not pursue policies that are cruel and heartless in order to cure inflation. We do not create (and we will not create) pools of unemployment and a lack of confidence in the community in order to curb spending. If my Party did that I would not want to belong to it, but it does not do it, and the Leader knows that. I believe that, in introducing the Budget last evening, Mr. Crean placed a slight dampener on the position but in such a way that it would not operate all at once. How can members expect him, as Treasurer of this nation, to undo in one year the financial mismanagement of the past 24 years? That would be impossible.

Mr. Gunn: That's nonsense.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: It is not, and the honourable member knows that it is not. Mr. Crean could not do it, nor did he try to do it. I believe that he tried to strike a balance, and in that opinion I am supported by informed comment not only from economists but also from articles in newspapers throughout Australia. No Opposition member can say that the Commonwealth Treasurer has been castigated for his Budget by any national newspaper.

The Hon. G. R. Broomhill: Quite the reverse.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Of course: many compliments have been paid to Mr. Crean for the careful workmanship of the Budget. The Leader had the temerity to say that the Premier had said that it was an inflationary Budget, although the Premier had commented on only one part of it. I do not disagree with what he said. I and other members of my Party do not believe in indirect taxation if it can be avoided, because it smacks hardest those who can least bear it, but it was inevitable that such taxation had to be introduced in this Budget. The Premier, in the press report, was referring to the sum of \$157,000,000 in a total receipt of \$11,481,000,000, so that it is obvious that the reference was to an amount that was not particularly inflationary when considering the total amount. I do not agree with indirect taxation and, if it had been possible to avoid imposing it, it should not have been imposed. The Leader, when referring to pensioners, tried to imply that Mr. Crean had taken more from them than he had given to them, and said that the Government would do this by taxing pensioners.

Dr. Eastick: I did not say taxing: I said by indirect taxation.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Many people are saying that pensioners will be taxed on their pensions. I make clear to members the exact situation, because much misrepresentation is occurring outside on this matter. I do not blame the Opposition for this, but the matter should be clarified. In his speech Mr. Crean said:

Abolition of the means test does, however, give rise to problems of equity. Unless age pensions are taxable, aged persons on higher incomes would be put in a privileged position by comparison not only with pensioners on lower incomes but also with people below pensionable age on

equivalent or smaller incomes and paying tax on all their income. It is necessary, however, in introducing taxation of age pensions, to ensure that pensioners in the lower ranges are not disadvantaged. The Government proposes therefore that age pensions should become taxable, but that special steps be taken to protect those wholly or largely dependent on pensions from detriment.

The existing age allowance cannot do this. Indeed, the age allowance has been anomalous ever since the introduction of the tapered means test, and we propose to abolish it with effect from the beginning of this income year. The Government proposes that all pensions, excluding supplementary payments, paid under the social security legislation to people of pensionable age, including wives of age pensioners, will be taxable. Equivalent pensions paid under the repatriation legislation to people of age pension age, but not war pensions, will also be subject to tax. A basic tax rebate of \$156 will be given in 1973-74 to aged people. This will ensure that persons wholly or largely dependent on pensions will not have to pay any tax. The rebate will reduce by 25c in the dollar for each dollar of taxable income in excess of \$2,236, and will be limited to the amount of tax otherwise payable. The rebate will be phased out as it serves its purpose.

I wanted to make that matter clear, because it is obvious to me that some people in the community are doing their damndest to mislead others on this issue. If the Leader is so concerned about the inflationary trend (which we do not deny exists) why do not other States under the control of Liberal Governments hand over their powers so that there could be national price control? That is one effective method to control inflation, but these Governments will not do it.

Dr. Eastick: A prices-incomes policy is needed.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: In our arbitration system and the various tribunals, we already have effective means of controlling the national wage structure, and the Leader knows that.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The States could do many things, if they were all willing to consider the Australian Constitution (and they will have the chance to do this), in order to give the Commonwealth Government the necessary powers to control more effectively the situation that the Commonwealth Government now finds itself in.

Dr. Eastick: It is a furtherance of centralism.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: If the Leader blames the Commonwealth Government for not taking certain actions, he should admit that that Government should have the powers necessary to control inflation. If he is not willing to allow the Government to have those powers, he should not criticize it. The Commonwealth Government should have its powers extended to enable it to combat the present inflationary trend in Australia. That trend has not been caused by the present Commonwealth Government. What was evident from the Budget presented last evening by Mr. Crean was the extreme difference in the policies that exists between the Australian Labor Party and the Liberal and Country Parties in Canberra. I think this can best be demonstrated by referring to the sums which have been spent in this State on education, for example, but which were not available under previous Governments, and I refer also to the sums spent on community welfare, health, sewerage, urban public transport and other things for which money was never forthcoming previously.

Although I will not go into the details of that spending, I point out that the emphasis in the Budget presented last evening shifted towards providing a better quality of life and improving education, health and community welfare facilities, etc. Members opposite ought to be congratulating the Labor Party and Mr. Crean on this shift in emphasis, which they should be the first to admit

is long overdue in this country. They should admit that more attention should be paid to affording a better quality of life than has been paid to it in the past. I think the motion is a complete and utter fallacy and that the Leader thought he saw an opportunity to make a bit of political mileage out of something on which he admitted himself he was not sufficiently well informed to make a good contribution to the debate. In those circumstances, I suggest that the Leader would have been better off if he had never moved the motion.

Mr. CUMBE (Torrens): The Minister certainly tried valiantly to justify the actions taken last evening by his Commonwealth colleagues, but he merely skirted around the whole core of the motion and said little about inflation. All we heard was a tirade of abuse, shouting and politicking, yet the Commonwealth Treasurer (Mr. Crean himself) has admitted that this Budget will not contain inflation. I think it is a most lamentable performance by the Minister of Works, who conveniently avoided the subject of this motion and referred to other aspects of the Budget. Surely as a responsible Minister of the Crown and as the Deputy Premier of this State, he should be concerned about inflation and about its effect not only on his Government but especially on the people of this State. Inflation, and the rate at which it is at present increasing, will affect not only this Government but also every man, woman and child in this State for many years to come.

The sentiments of this motion are really echoed by the Premier in his statement reported in the press today to which the Leader has alluded. Although the Commonwealth Budget contains some good things that we support, such as welfare measures, etc., it does nothing to stem this inflationary growth; in fact, it accelerates it. I have looked in vain through the documents produced and at the reports of statements made by various people on this matter to find evidence of positive and active steps taken by the Commonwealth Government, through the Treasurer, to halt inflation. Although I think inflation is one of the most serious problems facing Australia today, there was no evidence of such steps being taken, and even Mr. Crean had to admit this, whereas a brave and bold move in this direction would certainly have received the support of the community. Although I note that some have called this a "cool" Budget, I regard it as a pretty hot one that is definitely inflationary.

As members know, one method of overcoming inflation is greater deficit budgeting, but I will not become involved in that argument now, because in the past it has been the subject of much debate in the House. Although the Commonwealth Government has now been in office for about nine months, so far it has ignored inflation. The 25 per cent tariff cut did not help. Last evening the Commonwealth Government had its first major chance at least to take some positive action in this regard, yet it failed miserably, and one infers that it is leaving the matter to be dealt with in the coming year. I say that that will be too late and that action is required now, not in the coming year. The 25 per cent tariff cuts will not help the average housewife. The Budget is an example of financial irresponsibility, because unquestionably it will stimulate inflation.

Those hardest hit will be the low-income earners (the family man and those on fixed incomes who have no opportunity to pass on increased costs or wages). These people will find that their earnings and the savings that they have been putting away will be greatly eroded away and their ability to make ends meet made all the more difficult. Undoubtedly, the Budget will add to the problems that already exist, and the social benefits being provided,

which I applaud, will unfortunately disappear. That is one of the tragedies of the Commonwealth Government's approach to the Budget. New demands will be created and there will be greater competition between Government and the private sectors for the available resources in this country.

Dr. Eastick: Labour and materials.

Mr. CUMBE: Yes, and some of these commodities are becoming extremely scarce now. This Budget will deliberately stimulate an increase in competition, and I fear that we shall reach the stage where it will be extremely difficult to reverse the adverse position that has been created. What is the merit of these worthwhile improvements in social welfare if they are to be destroyed by a Government policy of not checking inflation? No significant measure is adopted in the Budget, either by greater deficit budgeting or by any other means, to correct the position, and nothing positive emerges from the documents presented, the comments made, or the various points of view expressed.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: Do you correct inflation by running a bigger deficit?

Mr. CUMBE: I did not say that. I think the Minister should go back to school. There is no doubt that cost-push inflation will increase as a result of this Budget. In looking at the effect of this Budget on the transport industry as a whole (and not the man who runs only a private car), I point out that all members use goods produced and transported in this State, and other goods are shipped interstate. As a result of the 5c a gallon increase in petrol to be applied from Friday next, that industry will be affected immediately. This is yet another example where the costs of all goods carried by the transport industry will increase. Indeed, I am referring not especially to the larger products but to consumer durables. We can see how the cost of household goods will increase. Another example concerns the price of cool drinks and the application of sales tax to that commodity. Now we are taxing the kids, so I suppose that icecreams will be next, and then pies and pasties. I remember the outcry in this House when the Premier moved a motion regarding the wine tax, but what about the excise that is to be applied to certain liquors now?

Dr. Tonkin: He screamed then.

Mr. CUMBE: The Government moved the motion on that matter so, if it is to be consistent, it must support this motion. I now refer to the home savings grants and the substitution of those grants by a mortgage payment rebate in respect of personal income tax. However, members opposite should not get too carried away about this measure, because the mortgage interest rebate will apply only on taxable incomes, so the benefit will not be so great as would at first appear possible. Further, the phasing out of these grants will have a direct and damaging effect on the economy, apart altogether from the philosophy of the move. We will immediately find that young people have had their saving incentive removed and those young married couples or people saving for a home now regularly banking weekly or fortnightly sums to take advantage of this grant scheme will no longer save in this way. With the removal of this direct incentive for people to save, this money will now come into the market. Unfortunately, without the incentive to save, many people will not put that money away, and more money will come straight into the market, thereby applying additional inflationary pressures. The Opposition is willing to join in any conference, be it State or national, on a incomes-prices basis. Sooner or later

this has to come in Australia because, unless such a conference is held, moves against inflation will not succeed by attacking prices alone.

Dr. Eastick: It must start at the State level.

Mr. CUMBE: We are prepared to start such a move. Indeed, we said two months ago that we were willing to do this. We believe this matter to be above Party politics, because it is of such national importance. I now refer to the position of the South Australian Government and the position applying when the Premier of this State criticized his Commonwealth colleagues because of the paucity of grants given to South Australia. On this matter the Premier stated directly and openly, in replying to questions, that he was sold short, that he was sold down the drain to the extent of \$20,000,000.

After coming back from the June Premiers' Conference, the Premier was rather caustic about his Commonwealth colleagues. Until this time they had been all chums together, except that the Premier had requested a February meeting of Premiers. True, that was refused, but until then everything had gone along swimmingly. However, the Premier returned from the last Premiers' Conference and had many caustic things to say. His reaction to being sold short by \$20,000,000 was that he would have no alternative but to impose additional domestic taxes to bridge the gap. Immediately these taxes were announced and implemented, this once again intensified the inflationary spiral in this State. Although the Premier admitted this and said that he regretted these moves, he said he had to increase the taxes because of his Commonwealth colleagues. These increases are in electricity tariffs, water rates, pay-roll tax, harbor dues, and further increases are to be included in the forthcoming Budget.

I point out that each of these increases eventually reaches the little man. Further, each and every one of these moves intensifies the cost-push inflationary effect. This cannot be denied: the Premier has admitted it. The Government must be concerned about this and, in the Government's interest as well as the interest of all South Australians, the Government must deplore the attitude shown by the Commonwealth Government last evening.

Can this Government dare not to support this motion? I challenge it to put aside any of its Party allegiances and support the motion and the sentiments expressed by its own Premier in this regard, because it is put forward not on a political basis (it is above Party politics) but to seek the support of this House in the same terms as those the Premier put forward in a motion that he moved about 18 months ago.

Dr. Eastick: That concerned wine tax and the sales tax on electrical goods.

Mr. CUMBE: True. This motion is put forward because the Opposition genuinely believes that inflation is one of the most insidious and vital problems facing Australia today: no-one can deny that. Because of that and the effect it will have on so many people in this State, we support the motion. Surely the Government, as the Government of this State for the time being anyway, should also support it.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON (Minister of Education): Rarely have I heard Opposition members indulge in such hypocrisy as we have heard this afternoon. They have attacked the Commonwealth Government about inflation but they have suggested nothing about the appropriate methods that should be adopted to deal with it, apart from the Leader's suggested conference, from which he still hopes to get mileage but which everyone else knows would not produce any effective result.

Dr. Eastick: How do you know?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I say that because most of the people concerned with it cannot effect decisions in this area. If the Leader listens, he may find out why that is the case. The Deputy Leader followed the Leader by suggesting, quite falsely, that Mr. Crean had admitted that he had not been able to do anything in the Budget about inflation. That simply is not the case. The Leader may have quoted some impression gained by a newspaper but—

Dr. Eastick: I got it from the document.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I will quote from the document. The Leader claimed earlier that he did not have the document available, so I do not know what he quoted from.

Mr. Gunn: It was not available from the Commonwealth Sub-Treasury.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: In his Budget speech, Mr. Crean stated:

Inflation has been and remains our major economic problem.

Dr. Eastick: That's what I quoted.

Mr. Gunn: And that's what the newspaper quoted.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Mr. Crean also stated:

Like other countries, Australia will be grappling with it in the year ahead. However, there will be at least two moderating factors. The first is a high rate of importing. When the year began we expected imports to increase by some \$800,000,000, or 20 per cent, in 1973-74; the decision to cut tariffs by one-quarter will add further to that increase. We can well afford a strong expansion in imports. By taking some pressure off domestic productive capacity, that will help to ease inflationary strains. Secondly, the monetary situation will be much less expansive than last year. Particularly in the first half of 1972-73, the money supply rose very rapidly. Since then, we have acted both to diminish our current account surplus on the balance of payments and to cut off excessive capital inflow. In addition, the Reserve Bank has made calls to the Statutory Reserve Deposit Accounts to help mop up excessive bank liquidity. The very successful July loan has also contributed to this. With resources already under strain, however, we would be foolish to overload them further. In framing this Budget, that consideration has been very much to the forefront.

Later, he stated:

I do not suggest that we can aim, through the Budget, to do the whole job of curbing inflation. Rather, we aim to attack rising prices by a series of inter-related measures.

Dr. Eastick: And I quoted that.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Yes, but certainly the Leader did not bother to quote the following statement, which was made towards the conclusion of the speech:

To summarize: Budget outlays are estimated to increase by \$1,938,000,000 or 18.9 per cent, to \$12,168,000,000 in 1973-74. Budget receipts are estimated to rise by \$1,960,000,000, or 20.6 per cent, to \$11,481,000,000. The estimated deficit is thus \$687,000,000 and the estimated domestic deficit \$162,000,000. In 1972-73 the deficit, on the same basis, was \$709,000,000 and the domestic deficit \$215,000,000. By ensuring that receipts will increase faster than outlays the Government has reduced the prospective domestic deficit from that of 1972-73.

In the Commonwealth Budget introduced last year by the former Liberal Party and Country Party coalition, outlays were increased by an amount greater than receipts, and that Budget made a direct financial contribution to the rate of inflation, through demand pressures. The Budget introduced last evening does not add to the situation: in fact, it moderates it, yet the Leader has asked us to condemn the Commonwealth Government. Did he put up such a proposition last year? Of course he did not.

Let us examine some of the arguments that the Opposition has advanced this afternoon. There was hardly anything

specific, except the petrol increase. Just what does this increase mean? Certainly, no-one likes to see an increase in direct taxation, but what does the increased petrol price mean quantitatively in terms of cost of operation of, for example, the Municipal Tramways Trust and the South Australian Railways? The increased duty, will bring about an increase of about 10 per cent in the fuel and oil costs of the M.T.T. In the financial year 1972-73 the trust's total fuel cost was \$379,137, so the increased duty on petrol and diesel oil would amount to about \$38,000.

Dr. Eastick: Why was the Premier so concerned?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I am giving you the facts. If you are not interested in facts, you need not bother listening. That may well be the case, but never mind, I am telling you what the facts are.

Mr. Coumbe: Why don't you address the Chair?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I suggest you are disobeying the Chair by interjecting. The extra cost to the M.T.T. will be about \$38,000 and, as the trust's total operating expenses are about \$8,270,000, the effective increase in costs amounts to .46 per cent.

Dr. Eastick: That's only for fuel. What about the other matters?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: What other argument was the Leader putting up? He was concentrating on the fuel issue and I am dealing with that issue. If he lets me do that, I will come back to some of the other so-called matters. The fuel costs of the South Australian Railways are about \$1,000,000 a year. The increase in cost will be about \$100,000, and that is an increase of about .3 per cent in the cost of running the railways.

I shall be frank and say that I would prefer that these cost increases did not take place but, in circumstances in which the Commonwealth Government was committed to avoiding increases in direct personal taxation, that Government obviously had to give some attention to the question of indirect taxes. My preference would be for raising revenues in another way but, nevertheless, in the way in which the Commonwealth Budget was framed I do not think any criticism on this account should be excessive. After all, the total amount of excise paid on one gallon (4.5 l) of petrol is about 22c, as against 17c previously, and I ask the Leader of the Opposition who was responsible for the bulk of that 17c being imposed over the years. Doubtless, he would like to forget that point.

The impact of inflation on the cost side of the Commonwealth Budget will be virtually minimal, in my opinion. However, the main question that must be considered is not the cost side effect but, under current conditions, with high levels of employment, the effect of any Budget on the overall level of expenditure in the community. As Mr. Crean made clear in his speech last evening, the Commonwealth Budget will not add to the total demand pressures that exist in our community, because the proposed increase in receipts is greater than the proposed increase in expenditure.

Dr. Eastick: Do you think he is right in his assumption?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: It is just a straight fact in relation to the operations of the Budget. Expenditure is the source of demand, and the source of demand pressure for rising prices, and in a situation of very high levels of employment the role of demand in raising prices can be just as important as, and probably more important than, the cost side of the issue. Employers, in chasing labour and trying to produce more, can contribute to rising wage rates and salaries by offering higher wages and salaries at a rate faster than that at which the unions are actually

pushing them up. The honourable member knows that full well.

Dr. Eastick: Like the Government will have to do to fulfil its plans.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: If the Leader cannot make an intelligent interjection relative to what I am saying, I wish he would just keep quiet for a moment. I was making the point that the impact of a Budget must be looked at as to the extent to which it adds to the total expenditure throughout the economy and as to compensating withdrawals from expenditure. Even the increase in petrol tax withdraws \$157,000,000 from circulation within the community in a full year so, while the petrol tax does have an effect on costs, at the same time there is this compensating impact so that, if the total expenditure of the whole community goes up in spending on petrol, that community has less available to spend on other things. The demand side pressure on inflation is reduced by the petrol tax increase whilst at the same time it has an impact on the cost-push effect.

Dr. Eastick: But that is only in theory. What about in practice?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: That is in practice. We have suffered for a long time from inane interjections. We are used to the honourable member for Heysen, but we are embarrassed by inane interjections from the Leader of the Opposition. It is not a question of theory; it is simply common sense and what happens in practice. If the Leader cannot work that out, I am so dreadfully sorry. If he wishes to argue that a Budget should have an anti-inflationary effect, he is really trying to say that the Commonwealth Budget should have raised more revenue, or should have reduced expenditure, or should have done both. Has he said anything on that subject? Not a word. Is he prepared to suggest what revenue increases should have been implemented by the Commonwealth Government as an anti-inflationary measure? Does he support increases in personal taxation or the removal of tax deductions? Is that the kind of revenue measure he would advocate? What about his colleagues? Have they got anything to advocate in the matter of raising increased revenue so that the Commonwealth Budget could be anti-inflationary?

Mr. Chapman: Yes. Get a few to put in a day's work for a day's pay.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: We are talking about revenue in the Commonwealth Budget. If one wants a Budget to be more anti-inflationary than is the present Commonwealth Budget, one must argue for increased revenue or for reduced expenditure. Not one word have we heard either from the Leader or the Deputy Leader on either of those two topics, and I suggest that is why this motion could be described as an extreme in hypocrisy. They do not really believe what they are talking about. Will the Leader—

Dr. Eastick: You do not believe you should be opposing it.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I do believe I should be opposing the arrant hypocrisy and humbug we have heard this afternoon.

Dr. Eastick: We are talking about the motion.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: And the Leader of the Opposition himself moved it. We listened to the arguments for it, the greatest collection of nonsense I have ever heard. What reductions in expenditure does the Leader suggest? Does he want education benefits cut out? Would he not have increased social welfare payments? What expenditure proposals does he have? What proposals have any other members of the Opposition? How do any of them suggest that the Commonwealth Government should have reduced

expenditure or not increased expenditure? How do any of them suggest that the Commonwealth Government should have raised more revenue? They will not answer those questions, because they want to approach this debate with the type of political irresponsibility traditional on these matters for members of the Liberal and Country League when in Opposition. Even the member for Goyder, when he was Leader of the Liberal and Country League, on occasions said his Government would spend more, tax less, but still balance the Budget. He went on with this caper all the time, because he thought it was what the people wanted to hear.

Mr. Nankivell: Wasn't it?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: He thought it was, and the honourable member for Mallee obviously believes that is what people want to hear, but the people did not believe the former Leader could do all these things. Honourable members opposite know full well that if the Commonwealth Government, through its Budget rather than through policies on the balance of payments or monetary measures through the Reserve Bank, is to operate in an anti-inflationary way it must take action to raise additional revenue and to moderate expenditure increases, or even cut expenditure. To the extent that it is possible, it would be preferable to raise additional revenue through direct forms of taxation so as to avoid any cost effects.

Mr. Chapman: That has not happened.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The greater part of the increased revenue in the Commonwealth Budget will come from an automatic increase in direct taxation collections. If the honourable member cares to check back in the Budget papers he will find that is the case. I ask members opposite to tell us, if they really think the Commonwealth Government had a responsibility to adopt a Budget more anti-inflationary than that adopted last night, what expenditure proposals should be cut out. Do they want to cut out education, social welfare, hospitals, home care, or what? Defence? There was hardly any increase in defence; should there have been a decrease? What should have happened and what should have been done about revenue? If they are not prepared to tell us these things then they have no counter whatsoever to the charges of hypocrisy levelled against them; they are just acting in a typically irresponsible and inane fashion.

Mr. Nankivell: What about growth of the Commonwealth Public Service?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The growth of the Commonwealth Public Service, according to the paper prepared by Dr. Coombs, in recent years has been about 4 per cent.

Dr. Eastick: Is that the same document that suggested Dartmouth should be stopped?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I know the Leader is a non-listener.

Dr. Eastick: Is that the one that suggested Dartmouth should be stopped?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: If I am permitted to finish the point, then I shall answer the further inane comment, if that is really necessary.

Dr. Eastick: Look at pages 207 and 208.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The Coombs document suggested that the likely increase in employment in the Commonwealth Public Service this year was about 5 per cent, although recently it had been 4 per cent. It is worth noting that the total increase in employment over the whole of Australia in the past 12 months, through the picking up of employment and through additions to the work force, has been greater than 5 per cent.

So, it is not to be said that the Commonwealth Government is taking more than its share. Quite apart from that, we live in a community where for years Opposition members put up with and supported a situation where, to use Galbraith's words, there was private splendour and public squalor. We had plenty of capacity to produce motor cars, washing machines, refrigerators, and any private product that was wanted. We could produce all the school toilet seats required, but we did not have enough schools and hospitals, and public transport and public facilities of all kinds were inadequate. Do Opposition members wish to reverse the imbalance that exists in our economy between the public sector and the private sector? Do they really wish to see improvements in hospitals, schools and other facilities? If they do, we will need to have an increase in Government employment.

The funds made available through the Commonwealth Budget to this State for education will result in a substantial increase in Government employment in the Education Department. Does the member for Mallee or the Leader criticize that increase in employment because it is Government employment? Do members opposite criticize any increase in employment in the education field or the hospital field just because it is Government employment? If they do, what garbage are they going on with? On the one hand they say that they want more money to be spent on schools, hospitals and social welfare, but they are against employing any more people so that better services can be provided. What sort of argument are they advancing? The sooner members opposite forget the traditional myths of their Party about Government employment, the better we will all be. If the community is to secure better public facilities and services, we will have to increase Government employment. Are members opposite opposed to that?

Mr. Nankivell: You have given only two instances. What about the rest of the field?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Does the honourable member believe that there should be increased Government employment associated with water supply or sewerage? Does he believe that there should be increased Government employment associated with plans for regionalization and decentralization; for example, in relation to Albury-Wodonga and Monarto?

Dr. Eastick: \$1,420,000 instead of \$14,600,000.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: What is the Leader talking about? Does he really believe that we can wave a magic wand so that tonight when we go to sleep we can say, "Monarto is on the way" and a year later we can say, "There it is."

Dr. Eastick: The sum of \$14,600,000 was applied for.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Over a period.

Dr. Eastick: What period?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I should have thought any idiot would know it would be over a period.

Mr. Nankivell: Then why don't you know?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I cannot give the exact period. Do members opposite say that Government employment should not be increased in those areas? I challenge them to be specific about which areas of Government should not experience an increase in employment. Is the member for Davenport one of the peculiar people who believe that the only increase in Government employment should be in agriculture, or what does he believe? The honourable member asked a question, and he got dealt with yesterday. Consequently, he should be more careful in future when he makes completely inaccurate comments in asking a

question. We want facts from the Opposition. We are asked to support a motion which, on the surface, is blatantly political.

Dr. Eastick: It is very practical.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: It says, "We condemn the Commonwealth Government." A great piece of practicality! The trouble with the Opposition is that it has never understood that, when one condemns someone, one must have a legitimate case.

Dr. Eastick: It is all right if you do it but not if we do it.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Not at all. I am asking members opposite to put their case and to show us the revenue increases that should have taken place in the Budget but did not take place. Let members opposite show us the expenditure cuts that should have taken place but did not take place. I am all in favour of situations where we can condemn or criticize someone else, but I want to have a reasonable case. When I was a member of the Opposition, we did not put up something for which we did not have a reasonable case.

Members interjecting:

Mr. Chapman: Even the Minister is laughing.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I am laughing because members opposite realize that what they are really indulging in is a bit of political horseplay—a nice way of occupying a couple of hours on a Wednesday afternoon. That is all they are out for.

Dr. Eastick: What about—

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I said earlier that I preferred direct taxation to indirect taxation, and I am sorry that that did not register with the Leader. I ask members opposite to think more carefully about the whole question of inflation and about the various methods that can be used to control it. The traditional methods of budgetary control at the Commonwealth level have been, in a moderate Budget, to prevent an increase in the deficit, to reduce it somewhat, or to alter the size of the surplus. A really savage anti-inflation Budget, operating through the Budget purely and simply, would be one that switched from a substantial deficit to a substantial surplus. However, to make that switch, one has to make a whole series of decisions about revenue and expenditure. Unfortunately, no Opposition member has yet suggested how those changes should be made.

Mr. Venning: Change the Government!

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: If the Commonwealth Government were changed, we would go back to the bad old days of a Commonwealth Government that did not care about what happened in the education sphere and in many other areas of public responsibility. The Commonwealth Budget involves an increase in expenditure on education of 92 per cent. For the first time in this country we have a national Government willing to give real priority in the field of education—not just to pay lip service to that priority, but to do something about it.

Mr. Mathwin: And to have the power to say exactly how it will be spent.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The honourable member is talking off the top of his head again. General recurrent grants and general capital grants are made available through the Commonwealth Budget and will be included in our Budget, and we have complete discretion in the way in which we spend them. If the honourable member is not aware of that, perhaps he should be made aware of it. Certainly, so far as expenditure undertaken by the Commonwealth through the universities or colleges of advanced education is concerned, while the overall

Budget funds that are made available are set down, there is no direct day-to-day control on how those education moneys are spent, and the authorities concerned are given a wide degree of discretion on how the money will be spent.

I do not think it is necessary to go into any further detail in regard to this motion. The Leader of the Opposition has said that this House should condemn the Commonwealth Government for its failure in the Budget presented last evening to take positive steps to arrest the inflationary spiral. The only thing he will not do is provide us with information on what these positive steps should be. He does not intend to do that. He does not intend to tell us what expenditure should be cut down and what revenues should be raised, so we should dismiss this motion as a sign of that basic inner irresponsibility that is a feature of the Liberal and Country League. Members opposite probably moved the motion because they were worried lest the Liberal Movement, or even the Country Party, might get in first, and they thought they should hop in even if they did not know what they were talking about. The motion should be rejected out of hand.

Dr. TONKIN (Bragg): I have been listening with great interest for the last 30 minutes to a series of rhetorical questions that has sent members on the Minister's side to sleep. The only time he got back to discussing anything like the motion was when he referred to the motion at the end of his speech. He has been going through, quite deliberately, a process of switching from close detail to broad aspects of economics. He has given us a lecture. I suppose he is trying to get back into practice for taking up his old job after the next election—that is, if they will have him.

Mr. Coumbe: On the chalk board.

Dr. TONKIN: Yes, on the chalk board. He has been through all these gimmicks and he still has not got down to the basics of the situation, which are that the Commonwealth Budget presented last evening has not taken any positive steps to arrest the inflationary spiral. It is as simple as that and, no matter what the Minister says or how much he theorizes or tries to equate his theory with practice, he cannot get away from that one fact: that the Commonwealth Government has done nothing whatever, and will do nothing whatever, to arrest the inflationary spiral that every person in this country is now feeling.

He accuses the Opposition of hypocrisy. He says the motion is blatantly political. Inasmuch as it is concerned with people and the effects of Government policy on people, it is political. That is what politics is all about, and perhaps the Minister of Education should try to find out a bit more about that. Perhaps he should talk to more people. I suppose we must regard this attitude of his as natural for somebody whose intentions from now on, with a Labor Government in Canberra, are to act purely as an agent for that Government, because that is exactly what he is going to do. He will say, "Yes, Sir" and "No, Sir" and all the other things to the Commonwealth Minister and will do exactly what he is told, because that is the new Labor Party policy. The Minister made great play, and so did the Minister of Works, on the fact that we did not make any suggestions about how the situation could have been bettered in that Budget. It is not our place to make these suggestions. The people of Australia, misguided as they were last December, have elected a Labor Government to office for the first time for many years. From what has been said one would expect great things to be the outcome, and that the people of Australia had put someone in office with a reasonable policy who would introduce a reasonable Budget, be able to assess the present situation applying to

this country, and take the necessary action to overcome any problems. The Labor Government is now in the box seat for better or worse (and I believe it is for worse), but many Australians are realizing that it is indeed for the worst, and I hope they will do something about it at the first opportunity. We are criticizing the performance of the Commonwealth Government because the actions of that Government will affect the future of people in this country. This Budget will do nothing for the people: it is a non-event.

Mr. Duncan: What about education?

Dr. TONKIN: I will refer to that point shortly, if I am uninterrupted for sufficient time. The impact of this Budget on the economy was an issue about which the Minister of Education made great play. Our complaint, and a complaint that should be shared by all members regardless of their political affiliation, is that the impact of this Budget on the economy is nil. It will have no impact at all, except to maintain the present rate of inflation. I believe that it pretty well balances out: it offers increased spending for education, transport, and health services, but the details are still being planned. I understand that millions of dollars will be spent towards purchasing a large computer to be installed in Canberra into which will be fed everyone's national health service number so that tabs can be kept on everyone.

I believe that more than \$12,000,000 will be spent in this way and that this is a matter that is not in the best interests of the people of this country. In addition, the home savings scheme will be phased out and home ownership is to be discouraged, regardless of the effect on inflation. The Leader and Deputy Leader have referred to these details, but I am concerned because the Commonwealth Treasurer obviously does not care what happens about inflation. He is so wrapped up in his present activities of structuring the Australian finance in such a way that gradually the States' responsibilities will be taken over by these financial methods.

Mr. Duncan: What does that mean?

Dr. TONKIN: It means a great deal, because it is part of the same thing. The Budget should indicate measures to be taken in this country to overcome inflation. The Premier has referred often to the vulnerability of South Australia, a matter that he has not hesitated to scream about when referring to other Budgets. This State Labor Government has done nothing to lessen that degree of vulnerability: in fact, South Australia is more vulnerable now than it has been for many years, but that is how the Labor Party wants it to be. The Commonwealth Treasurer must be aware of the present situation in this country. It is a dangerous situation that must cause great concern to everyone who has to earn his living, buy food, and use transport, and these factors are all tied up with the most galloping rate of inflation that we have had for years. The rate has accelerated since the Commonwealth Labor Government came to office, but the Commonwealth Treasurer must be aware that the rate of inflation is now more than 13 per cent a year. As the Leader has pointed out, this is a tremendous difference from the 4.5 per cent that obtained when the Liberal Government went out of office. The inflationary spiral is speedily whittling away the purchasing power of the Australian dollar. The State Premiers have made various suggestions: a special conference was called to discuss inflation, and the Premiers have offered co-operation in every way. The Leader of my Party in South Australia has offered every co-operation.

Mr. Keneally: What a contribution! What power has he?

Dr. TONKIN: I do not think the question of his power matters, because people from every walk of life and with every political shade of thinking are concerned about inflation and want action taken. However, the few people not concerned about it are Labor Party politicians, and in particular the Treasurer of the Australian (so-called) Government. The Commonwealth Treasurer obviously could not care less. The people of Australia were rapidly becoming disillusioned, and this Budget will put the seal on it. The only way to deal with the present Commonwealth Government is to get it out of office as quickly as possible. I have referred to the vulnerability of South Australia, and the increase of 5c in the price of petrol will have a significant effect on costs in this State. I understand that stocks of over \$500,000 worth of fruit juice are being held, and the contents of this Budget will greatly concern fruitgrowers in the River area. Duty on brandy has been increased, and this is a significant item in South Australia's economy. One thing that worries me more than anything else is the levity with which this motion is being regarded by Government members.

Members interjecting:

Dr. TONKIN: The Deputy Premier said that definite suggestions should have been made as to how the Budget should deal with inflation. I have covered that point: it is not our place to make definite suggestions, because there must be experts advising the Commonwealth Treasurer and we would expect that he would listen to their advice. However, we suspect that he has not listened to them, so we should not have to do the job for him. We are told that one of the excuses here is that this is the first Labor Budget to be brought down for many years, but I should have thought that, if this was the first opportunity that the present Commonwealth Government had to do something positive about inflation, it would take that opportunity, yet we have seen nothing whatever. In 1961 (and the Deputy Premier referred to the credit squeeze) measures were taken that were undeniably unpopular, but they had to be taken. The then Liberal Government was not afraid to take unpopular steps and I believe that, in doing so, it showed a responsibility towards the people of Australia and that overall the economy has remained as stable as one could expect in the circumstances.

The Hon. L. J. King: Do you recommend unemployment again?

Dr. TONKIN: The bogey of unemployment was referred to by the Deputy Premier, and it has now been referred to by the Attorney-General. However, in the long term there will be more unemployment following this galloping inflation and present inactivity than there will ever be as a result of any other situation.

The Hon. L. J. King: Do you know anything about economics?

Dr. TONKIN: I have not heard anything yet from the Attorney-General, and I do not know whether or not he intends to say anything; apparently he does not wish to. However, I believe that we are about to undo the good financial management of 24 years and that we will initiate a period of mismanagement which I sincerely hope will not last more than three years. The Deputy Premier says that there has been no criticism of this Budget in the press or by members of the public, but there has been criticism. To use the Attorney-General's adjective, it has been faint (I never think of the Attorney-General without thinking of him as being faint); there has been little criticism, because the public was well and truly conditioned. I

believe (and I think many other people in Australia have come to believe now) that the so-called leak of the horror Budget was deliberately designed to pre-condition the people of Australia. People thought all sorts of restriction would be introduced and that taxation concessions would be taken away.

Mr. Simmons: Are you speaking for the North Terrace farmer?

Dr. TONKIN: Not especially, but I suggest that the honourable member examine the so-called leaks. I think people have been so relieved that the pseudo horror Budget was not true that they have been thoroughly happy to accept what is happening now. The Deputy Premier gave the game away to some extent when he said, "Why don't the Liberal States hand over their power to the Commonwealth?" Admittedly, he was speaking in the heat of the moment, but that is what he said. He did not say, "Why don't the Labor States hand over their powers?", because he knows jolly well that the Labor States are only too anxious to hand over their powers, and that is exactly how it is working.

The Commonwealth Treasurer is far more concerned with taking over control of the States' responsibilities than he is with inflation and with taking measures to control it. I believe that he is more concerned with the long-term taking over of States' responsibilities than he is with the welfare of the people living in those States. The Minister of Education said that the Premier received \$20,000,000 less than he asked for when he went to Canberra, but the Deputy Premier gave the game away when he said softly by way of interjection, "He got it back again". We have not heard about this. Why should we not be told if we have been successful in getting this money back again?

Mr. Nankivell: It could be used to help the citrus industry.

Dr. TONKIN: Yes: All the money coming back from the Commonwealth Government has strings attached to it, and we have seen constant examples of this in the House recently. This inexcusable inactivity in the matter of inflation is simply in furtherance of the Labor Party's policy of intruding further and further into the area of the States' responsibilities. I believe that this State, more than any other State, is being seriously disadvantaged by inflation. Most members are already well aware that during the past 12 months food prices have risen faster in Adelaide than in any other capital city.

Mr. Wells: And so have doctors' bills.

Dr. TONKIN: I dispute that. I point out to the honourable member that—

Mr. Nankivell: He doesn't know.

Dr. TONKIN: —first, he does not know anything about it; and, secondly, my fees have certainly not been raised since 1969. Also, I might know a bit more about it than he knows. A recent press report states that food prices have spiralled by 17.3 per cent to July, and this is a pretty miserable state of affairs. South Australia does not have the advantages of the Eastern States; we are rapidly pricing ourselves out of industrial development, and I do not care what the Premier has announced in the last few days. He was only too happy to announce something, because we have not had too much announced in the past 12 months. I think this is a totally irresponsible Budget, because it does nothing to alleviate the distress of people in the community. I admit that more money will be spent on education and on transport systems, and it is about time something was done about the latter, but I do not intend to develop that theme.

Mr. Wells: What was done for over 20 years under your Government?

Dr. TONKIN: I point out to the honourable member that his colleague the member for Unley is often saying, "What did your Government do about it?" What does it matter? I am concerned not with what went on in the past but with what is happening now and will happen in future. Having kept things as they ought to be kept, we now find that the future is threatened, simply because the Australian Labor Government is not willing to take a responsible attitude; indeed, it will not dare take any action that might be at all unpopular. We talk about Government employment; I have nothing against a responsible increase in Government employment, but in the last seven months since the Commonwealth Labor Party came into office I understand that 10 new Government departments have been established; 47 new boards and committees have been set up; and there have been about 18 000 new public servants.

In Britain, public servants are employed in a ratio of one to 74 members of the population; in Canada, one to 33; and in Australia, one to 11. In comparing the cost with what it used to be, I point out that the cost to the taxpayer today is about \$2,000,000,000. This Commonwealth Government is totally irresponsible as is the South Australian Government totally irresponsible, and I say this because both Governments are not taking the action they should be taking.

Mr. Jennings: And what they are doing, you don't know.

Dr. TONKIN: The Governments are afraid of taking any action that could reduce their popularity.

The Hon. L. J. King: What should they be doing?

Dr. TONKIN: If the Attorney-General wants to ask a sensible question I will answer him: they should get out as fast as they can and leave the running of the country to those who can run it properly. I regard this motion as one of the most serious ever moved in this Parliament. I hope that the people of South Australia and the people of Australia generally also take this matter seriously. Indeed, they must, because it affects their pockets, although members opposite obviously could not care less about the well-being of people in South Australia. I condemn the Budget introduced last night because it is irresponsible and further intrudes into the sphere of taking over the States' responsibilities by a centralist Government. That is the way it has been designed: the well-being of people in South Australia and Australia has reached an all-time low in the concern of Australian Labor Party politicians.

Mr. CRIMES (Spence): I believe I express the opinions of all members on this side when I say that the motion before us is one of the most disgraceful and hypocritical motions that has ever been moved. What is the Opposition trying to do? It is trying to destroy the confidence of the Australian people in the finest Government it has had for 23 years, a Government that has introduced the Budget which should be acclaimed by the people of Australia, including members opposite. Indeed, were members opposite truly patriotic citizens of this nation, instead of condemning the Budget they would applaud it.

True, we have inflation, but inflation exists in other countries of the world which are dominated by people of the same political philosophies as those of members opposite. Why cannot the oversea colleagues of members opposite resolve the inflationary situation in the United Kingdom and the United States of America? Have members opposite some special secret which they are retaining in their own breasts and which they will not extend to

their oversea colleagues? This is a decidedly strange situation. However, we can say of the Budget that the only criticism of any extent voiced against it has been Party political. Such other criticism (and there has been some) can be described only as muted criticism. Members opposite cannot turn to even one of the newspapers to which they usually offer their allegiance and say that in its editorial there is criticism that can aid their cause in supporting their hypocritical and ridiculous motion. We know what the Opposition does. We know what those of conservative bearing do when they are bereft of any policy or argument, and we know what they have done for countless years past, when they looked for a red herring. The Opposition has sought a bogey and it has sought to inculcate fear in the minds of the people of this land.

The Opposition knows that kicking the Communist can will not work any more, although it used that method to plenteous extent in the past. Instead, the Opposition poses one word to the people to terrify them, to have them draw their sheets over their heads when they go to their rest in fear and trembling of this terrible bogey: inflation. Inflation there is, but it also exists in every other country in the Western world. Moreover, inflation is not as bad here as it is in other countries, and members opposite are merely trying to exaggerate and to build up a terrifying monster where none genuinely exists. In screaming about inflation, the Opposition aims to turn the people's eyes away from the great benefits included in the Commonwealth Budget.

I refer to the remarks of the Minister of Education, because the sphere in which he operates is doing so well. I am not referring to it because I want to pay special respect to him: I am referring to it because of the great benefits it will bring to the children and the young people of this nation. If members opposite are keen to find a remedy to inflation they should encourage the spending of many more millions of dollars on education, because it is as a result of better education and better understanding and tolerance that we will get people who will find a remedy for inflation. We have heard the Leader and his supporting speakers, but all they have been able to offer to solve this great monstrous bogey they have been trying to build up is a conference: they suggest a conference with people who cannot find dialogue amongst themselves. How can it be expected that they would have anything constructive to contribute in uniting this country against inflation when they cannot find unity among themselves?

I believe that members opposite are in love with fragmentation. Time after time they emphasize the need to regard State rights; indeed, they are almost colonialists in this respect, and it is almost as if they want to divide up Australia and have no relationship between the States and the Commonwealth Government. So keen are members opposite on fragmentation that the disease of fragmentation has affected their own ranks and they, too, are fragmented. I am aware, as are all Government members, that, were there to be a conference (and I am sure there will not be a conference) with people who have not the remedies to the situation about which they complain, no good would result. I oppose the motion.

At 4 o'clock, the bells having been rung, the motion was withdrawn.

COMMONWEALTH POWERS

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham): I move:

That this House, while acknowledging that the Commonwealth Constitution should be reviewed and amended to suit contemporary conditions, support the federal system of Government and oppose any action to clothe the Commonwealth Parliament with unlimited powers, to invest the

High Court of Australia with final jurisdiction by abolition of appeals to the Privy Council, and in particular action by the Commonwealth Government or Parliament to weaken the sovereignty of the States.

Now that the matter of representation of members of this House at the Constitution Convention has been settled satisfactorily, it is time we, as a House, defined our attitude to the various issues that will arise at that convention, and the objective of my moving this motion is to give us a chance, as members of the House of Assembly, to examine the fundamental questions that must come up and be before us at the convention. Do we want the federal system of government to continue, or not? My answer is "Yes". I consider that the federal system of government is the system that is still best suited to the needs of Australia.

I acknowledge freely that, in the 70 or more years since the Constitution was framed, there has been an enormous change in this country. With the coming of Federation, there was the strengthening of a national spirit and that process, as one would expect, has gone on ever since. Therefore, there is a need to amend substantially the present Australian Constitution so that it conforms to our outlook now, and we hope that it will conform to the outlook in the next few decades. It is one thing to say that but another thing to advocate that the Constitution should be altered fundamentally by the abolition of the federal element in it. I oppose a central form of government in Australia, because I consider that, if centralism prevails in this country, we in the smaller States will be absolutely dominated by the Melbourne-Sydney axis, as I have said many times previously. In a national Assembly, such as the Labor Party wants (that is, one House of a national Parliament), obviously the preponderance of members would come from the capital cities of Melbourne and Sydney and they would swamp the remainder of the membership of that Assembly put together.

I do not consider that the time has come in Australia (if ever it comes) for that to happen. I have given the warning many times previously that that would be the immediate effect on South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia, and even Queensland. The platform of the Australian Labor Party can mean all or nothing on this matter. At the risk of wearying members opposite, who doubtless know that platform by heart, I shall quote the relevant clause in it. Clause 2 in Part IV deals with constitutional matters and sets out what the A.L.P. wants to do. It provides:

Amendment of the Commonwealth Constitution:

- (a) (i) to clothe the Parliament of Australia with such plenary powers as are necessary and desirable to achieve international co-operation, national planning and the Party's economic and social objectives.

As I have said, that can mean anything or nothing. It means what the Party wants it to mean at the time, because no-one can define in advance "international co-operation", "national planning", or what the Party's economic and social objectives may be at any time. We can read anything we like into that part of the A.L.P. platform. It also provides:

- (ii) to ensure that the House of Representatives and each State House of Parliament is composed of members directly elected from electorates in each of which the number of people is as nearly as practicable the same.

I certainly do not quarrel with that, as a principle. It continues:

- (iii) to abolish the Senate.

I certainly quarrel with that and I wonder whether the Labor Party delegates at the convention will put it forward seriously. The platform continues:

- (iv) to synchronize elections for the House of Representatives and the Senate.

I certainly support that one. It goes on:

- (b) Alteration of administrative arrangements:

- (i) to balance the functions and finances of the Commonwealth, State and local government to ensure adequate services and development of resources.

Paragraph (b) (ii) provides that it shall be the objective of the Party to entrust to several commissions various tasks. I need not read that. The platform continues:

- (iii) to include on the Loan Council a representative chosen by local government and semi-government authorities in each State.

I wonder how that could work or be achieved, but it is there. The platform continues:

(c) Constitution of the High Court as the final court of appeal for all Australian cases, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council to be constituted by its Australian members sitting in Australia until appeals to it from State courts are abolished.

I oppose that. Those are the relevant parts of the policy of the A.L.P. One thing about them is that they are comparatively specific, except for the part I have mentioned previously, which could mean all or nothing, and that is in stark contrast to the policies of some other Parties in Australian politics. It is, frankly, a centralist policy and the philosophy of the A.L.P. is a centralist philosophy. I do not think anyone would deny that. I do not think members opposite would, except for electoral purposes in their districts.

The present Prime Minister, since he came to office, has been open and frank in his advocacy of centralism. His whole attitude to the States has been one of arrogance, and obviously he regards the States as subordinate to the power of his Government. The Premier of this State, for the past 20 years or more to my knowledge, has been entirely consistent. He has advocated the abolition of State Parliaments. He considers that there should be a national Parliament, and, under that national Parliament, regional authorities should be created, with subordinate law-making powers. He makes no secret of that, so there is no doubt that the Labor Party is a centralist Party.

The actions of the present Commonwealth Government in the past six months have all been shaped towards centralism. One can think of many examples of that and I shall refer to a few. First, Ministers, including Ministers in this place, are careful to use the term "Australian Government" rather than "Federal Government", although the latter term has been the traditional one. Further, the offshore legislation has been introduced in the Commonwealth Parliament, and I have already spoken on that matter in another debate. Grants to the States have been made much more conditional than they were in the past. There is a specific proposal to enable the Commonwealth Government to control the spending of money by the States. The Commonwealth Government is going into new fields. There is the current controversy whether the Prime Minister said or did not say that the Premiers' Conferences should be abandoned. It was interesting that yesterday the Premier of this State in his defence of his partner in Canberra denied that he had been able to track down any such statement, and he said blandly, "Well, of course it is not in the policy of the Australian Labor Party to abolish Premiers' Conferences." However, it would be one further step on the way to a supremely central Government in Australia and the weakening of the States still further. I said last week, and I say

again, that it is impossible for a man to be both a good member of the Australian Labor Party and a good South Australian at the same time because the two are entirely incompatible. I say those things—

Mr. Wright: For something to say.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Not for something to say, but because I fear the attitude at the Constitution Convention. I believe that, if that attitude is taken, it will mean that the Constitution Convention is a complete waste of time and, indeed, a farce. It would never be possible in my belief to persuade the people of Australia at a referendum to abolish the federal element of our Constitution. If there is an insistence on that by a majority or a very large minority of the delegates present, we will get nowhere and we will be left with the shell of the present system but all power, because of the financial predominance of the Commonwealth Government, will go to Canberra. That will be the worst possible result of the present constitutional problem in Australia. I must say that, in spite of that, I am looking forward to the Constitution Convention and I thank those members who supported the motion yesterday, especially the members for Glenelg and Alexandra, who supported it by not voting against it. I am grateful for the support and for the confidence which has been shown in me by a majority of the members of this House as one of the delegates.

I certainly do not want to go to the convention and see that it is a waste of time, as it would be if we are to have centralism advocated by most of the delegates. There are even wider implications than the Constitution behind this motion. Earlier this year both Mr. Whitlam and Senator Murphy visited the United Kingdom but little has been said about the objective of their visit. It was said that Senator Murphy went to England to clear up "colonial relics" but there is a very great suspicion that one of the aims of the visit was to circumvent the Constitution altogether, so that it would not be necessary to alter it and so that the final power would be here in Australia and would rest, I think, with the High Court of Australia, which could be packed in the course of time, or with the Commonwealth Parliament. It is funny, when we remember the talk in the policy speech about open government, that we have had no frankness in respect of this matter on the part of the Commonwealth Government. The Prime Minister, in that policy speech, said:

We want the Australian people to know the facts, to know the needs, to know the choices before them. We want them always to help us as a Government to make the decisions and to make the right decisions. Australia has suffered heavily from the demeaning idea given that the Government always knows best with the unspoken assumption always in the background that only the Government knows or should know anything.

In the light of that it is rather strange that the Commonwealth Government has acted as it has. Mr. Whitlam said:

The Australian Labor Party will build into the administration of the affairs of this nation machinery that will prevent any government, Labor or Liberal, from ever again cloaking your affairs under excessive and needless secrecy.

This is but one example of just that sort of thing. These are two fundamental issues and until they are settled it is useless getting on to the details of the Constitution. I have moved this motion today, and I appreciate the courtesy of the House in allowing the suspension of Standing Orders so that I could move it, in the light of the urgency motion which occupied the first two hours of the sitting today. It was necessary to move it today,

if we were to have a reply from the Government either today or next Wednesday at the latest before we all go off to the Constitution Convention, because even if there is no vote on this motion I hope that before we go the attitudes of the Parties in this place will be expressed so that we shall know where we stand and so that the people of this State will know where their delegates stand (and I include in that not only the A.L.P. but the L.C.L. as well). I hope that someone from the L.C.L., either today or next Wednesday, will state what is the attitude of its delegates to my motion. If not, the motion will not be of much value. Whether one agrees with what I have said or not, I hope that it is agreed by all members that these are fundamental matters of great importance.

The Hon. L. J. KING secured the adjournment of the debate.

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham): I move:

That this House disapprove of the intention of the Commonwealth Government to reduce or cut out altogether grants to certain independent schools and is of opinion that the State Government should, by additional grants, make up to those independent schools so affected what they will lose from the Commonwealth.

The aim of the motion is to make up for what I regard as a most disgraceful breach of faith by the present Commonwealth Government: the withdrawal of Commonwealth per capita grants from some independent schools despite an undertaking that this would not be done. I do not intend to debate the merits and demerits of Government aid to independent schools except to say that I believe in it. I believe that every parent should have the opportunity of choosing between the two systems of education: the State system or the independent system. I was a member of the first Government in South Australia to make grants to independent schools in this State and I am very glad that we did that and that it has been continued. I am a member of a Party which has in its policy the following:

Government financial responsibility to private schools: Government grants for recurrent payments should be given to all accredited schools on a per capita basis entitlement to grants but capital facilities should be determined according to objective standards whilst preserving adequate incentives for self-help.

That is the Liberal Movement policy on this matter. It is short, but I hope that at our next convention, if not before then by the standing committee, the policy will be amplified in view of the present controversy. I believe that on paper anyway all the major Parties in this State support Government aid to independent schools. Although it is obvious that many (and maybe most) of the individuals in the A.L.P. do not support that policy, that Party is for the time using that policy for the political purpose of obtaining the Roman Catholic vote. After all, it is contrary to what I interpret as the overriding aim of the A.L.P.—that is, mediocrity. They want to cut down what the Premier in his letter to trade unionists called the tall poppies in Australian society for two reasons; first, because they want an egalitarian society in which there are no leaders and, secondly, because they believe the tall poppies are their political enemies.

I remember vividly the interjection of the member for Adelaide when this matter was raised by question a few weeks ago: he said, "What are you representing—St. Peters?" He did not say it to me but to another member. It was the immediate and spontaneous reaction of one who believes that tall poppies are his political enemies. If that

is the outlook and aim of the A.L.P., in line with their Socialist platform and philosophy, obviously the best place to start by cutting down the tall poppies is with the independent schools, because if these institutions are destroyed (that is, the institutions in which tall poppies are educated), eventually the tall poppies will disappear themselves. One wonders whether the mood at the Federal Convention of the A.L.P., or at the Federal Executive meeting preceding the convention, at which it was suggested that cadet units be taken out of schools and that university regiments be abolished, was part of the same trend. I do not doubt that the long-term aim of the Labor Party is to destroy the independent school system, and the attitude of the Minister of Education here (which is one of complacency to the plight of independent schools) is confirmation of that statement.

I refer briefly to some of the replies the Minister has given to questions on this matter in the past few weeks. When I asked him a question about category A schools, following the publication of the list a few weeks ago, the Minister began his reply by saying, "First, I suggest that the honourable member's forecasts of gloom are somewhat misplaced." I had suggested in my explanation that the effect on the schools would be entirely adverse. The Minister showed his complacency about the matter by saying:

The schools that are in category A are largely schools with a long history, most of which has been spent without any Commonwealth or State aid at all. I have little doubt at all in the ability of those schools to maintain their existence and level of enrolments, and that would apply to Scotch College, to whose Headmaster the honourable member apparently spoke this morning.

That was his attitude when I asked him a Question without Notice. He had the chance to give a considered reply on these matters on Tuesday, August 14, when I asked him whether the Government was satisfied with the classification of independent schools by the Cook committee. In the course of a rather long and rambling reply, typical of his replies to Questions without Notice but not to Questions on Notice, he said:

It is considered that the committee's recommendations have achieved a high degree of acceptability, and the Government is appreciative of the very valuable service rendered by the Chairman and each member of the committee.

It is rather strange, in the light of his saying that, that we read in the Cook committee's report the complete opposite of what the Minister has said in this House about the effect on independent schools of the withdrawal of their aid, because the report dated June, 1973, states:

A questionnaire (Appendix A) was sent to independent schools responsible for secondary education and the information was then processed. It was immediately apparent that the "needs" of secondary schools are predominantly financial. All schools (except 11), are budgeting for current deficits for this year of up to \$40,000. This is the case in spite of the present per capita grants which those schools are receiving both from the State and Commonwealth Governments. It is clear therefore that without this financial help from Government sources—

plural—

and the additional grants which this committee recommends to all schools—

and the word "all" is underlined—

the survival of many schools is gravely threatened. This applies especially to some of the schools which, on the basis of the criteria applied, do not seem to be in need.

That was in direct conflict with what the Minister had said in reply to my question and, despite his reply, he apparently has faith in the Cook committee from the reply

he gave to the Question on Notice. The Cook committee has gone further, its report stating:

The committee once again wishes to stress its conviction that all independent schools are finding it more and more difficult to survive in the face of ever-increasing inflationary trends. The committee also recognizes that while the needs of schools vary to a great degree, all these schools do have needs, and supports the policy of allocating additional grants to all—

and that word is underlined—

schools according to "need". We are convinced—

and let the Minister answer this if he can—

that withdrawal of grants according to need would inevitably mean a substantial increase in fees, and that this would mean a decline in the number of students in these schools. The ultimate result of this trend would be the inevitable closure of at least the smaller schools.

Yet, the Minister has said in this House that he does not believe that any school will close as a result of what has happened. I invite the State Government to disprove what I have said about its attitude, the Minister's attitude, and the general philosophy of the Party, by supporting this motion and by giving the extra financial assistance to the eight category A schools in South Australia to make up for what the Commonwealth Government is wrongfully withdrawing. I point out to members that the amount is comparatively small. I do not know precisely how much it would be, but it would be less than \$500,000 a year. I have calculated the amount in this way: I believe that in the eight category A schools there would be between 4 000 and 5 000 children. I take that figure from the article written by Stewart Cockburn, and I have no reason to doubt its accuracy.

Assume there are 5 000 children in these schools: the present per capita grants being given by the Commonwealth Government amount to \$104 a year for secondary children and \$62 a year for primary children. Even if one takes \$100 (and this would be far too high) as an average for each student each year and assumes there are 5 000 students in those schools, the amount would be only \$500,000. That is so small, compared to the vast sums being spent by the State Government and now particularly the Commonwealth Government on education, as to not count at all in total Government spending. In the Commonwealth Budget, about which we have been arguing this afternoon, \$843,000,000 is to be allotted to education, so that the \$500,000 would be swallowed up in that total. One suspects (I put it fairly, I hope) that, because of the small sum involved, there must be some reason, apart from financial consideration, behind the action of the Commonwealth Government in withdrawing these grants. Yet, although the amount of money in governmental terms is infinitesimal, it will make all the difference, as the Cook committee has said in its report, to the individual schools concerned. I believe that it will make the difference in some cases between whether they survive or do not survive.

I do not conceal the fact that I have a personal interest in this matter and, before other members mention it, I mention it myself: I have two girls, one at primary school level and one at secondary school level, at an independent school (at Walford) and the Minister was there with me only last week. But lest I be accused of any bias in this matter, I point out that I have three children at Government schools: one at Mitchell Park High School, and two at Highgate Primary School. I may say that we are very happy with all the schools that our children attend. I am one who has (and am grateful to have) contacts with both systems of education. I said

when I started to speak this afternoon that the Commonwealth Government is guilty of a breach of faith: I should support that, because that is a serious accusation to make. There is no doubt whatever, though, that before the last election Mr. Whitlam, and I believe Mr. Beazley as well, undertook that no independent school would be worse off under a Labor Government than under a Liberal and Country Party Government. This claim has been made many times, and I have not found it easy to get the authority for the claims made that these things have been said by both Mr. Whitlam and Mr. Beazley. However, I have been able to track down the authority. I have permission of the person concerned to use her name. Mrs. Margaret Slattery, of Sydney, who is the Secretary of the Australian Parents Council, told me when I spoke to her by telephone last night that she herself heard Mr. Whitlam address a meeting of some thousands of parents in the Melbourne Festival Hall on May 2, 1972, a meeting convened by the Victorian Parents and Friends Association in conjunction with the Victorian Catholic Mothers Club, and he said:

We will not repeal or reduce any educational benefit which is already being paid; we will confirm any which are there already.

Mrs. Slattery tells me that she heard this said at the meeting, and as recently as last weekend she was at the annual meeting of the Australian Parents Council in Hobart when a tape recording of Mr. Whitlam's Melbourne speech was played, and she heard it said again. At the meeting last weekend, the Australian Parents Council passed the following resolution:

Conference calls on the Commonwealth Government to honour the pledge and undertaking given by Mr. Whitlam on May 2, 1972, namely, that "we will not repeal or reduce any educational benefit which is already being paid; we will confirm any which are there already".

I am content to rest my case on that; I invite the Minister of Education or any other member of the A.L.P. to deny that that was said; and I invite Mr. Whitlam himself, if he cares, to deny that he said that. The evidence is still in existence, namely, a tape recording of what he said at that meeting, and I am sure all members will agree that that was a straight-out undertaking that could not in any way be misunderstood. That is not the only undertaking that I believe has been given. A letter was written on December 13, 1972, to the Chairman of the Association of Independent Schools by Mr. Whitlam a day or so after he came into office, when I believe he was acting as Commonwealth Minister for Education.

I have not seen that letter but Mrs. Slattery has, and she says (these are the words she used on the telephone last night) that "it does not give an undertaking as clearly as had been given at the meeting but any reasonable person would assume from the terms of that letter that no aid already existing was to be withdrawn". Although I have not been able to find an independent report, I believe that the present Commonwealth Minister for Education (Mr. Beazley) said in Launceston in November that "no non-Government school would be worse off under a Labor Government". While I have not been able to find any authority to that effect, we certainly know what are Mr. Beazley's own views on this matter, because he set them out in Parliament on May 30, 1973, when the Karmel report was tabled. At page 2844 of *Hansard*, he said:

My view was that every school in the country, including the Geelong Grammar School, should receive a basic grant from the Commonwealth and that the Commonwealth should have an identity with the education of every child.

How can members opposite or anywhere else get over that statement, which is a straight-out statement of the belief of the Commonwealth Minister for Education? There it is in *Hansard* in black and white: that everyone, including Geelong Grammar School (I suppose he took that as being the wealthiest school in Australia), should receive a grant. In the light of that, I have no doubt at all that before the election Mr. Beazley said that no school would be worse off. We had no hint whatever in the Prime Minister's policy speech that these grants were to be cut out. I am indebted to one of my friends on the other side for a copy of Mr. Whitlam's policy speech. I have found it a most useful document. This is the closest to this matter that Mr. Whitlam came in his policy speech:

The Labor Party believes that the Commonwealth should give most—

not all—

assistance to those schools, primary and secondary, whose pupils need most assistance . . . We reject the argument that well-endowed schools should get as much help—

no suggestion that they would not get any help—

from the Commonwealth as the poorest State or parish school just because it is easier to count heads than to measure needs.

Those are the only references to this matter in the policy speech of the A.L.P. What do we find when we look at the terms of reference of the Karmel committee itself? Paragraph 3(b) is as follows:

in addition to existing Commonwealth commitments;

Having set out the terms of reference, the committee later states:

The terms of reference specified that the grants recommended by the committee were to be "in addition to existing Commonwealth commitments". The Minister for Education has informed the committee that all grants being made to schools under Commonwealth legislation which was operative when the present Australian Government came to office would be continued during 1973. However, beyond 1973 some of these programmes are to be phased out. The Australian Government's decisions as conveyed to the committee by the Minister for Education are set out in the following paragraphs.

So it was obvious from that, after the terms of reference were set down, that the Australian Government circumscribed those terms of reference by the decisions set out there. The report then goes on to deal with science facilities, secondary school libraries, capital grants and recurrent grants and, under the heading "Recurrent grants", provides:

Under the States Grants (Schools) Act 1972, recurrent grants are being paid to non-government schools in the States on a per capita basis. The rates for 1973, determined before the present Australian Government took office, were \$62 per primary pupil and \$104 per secondary pupil. The Government has indicated to the committee that, although grants are being made at these rates during 1973, after that year the basic level of support for non-government schools will not be pre-determined, and the nature and level of support for recurrent expenditure during 1974 and 1975 will be recommended by the committee, having regard to the overall assessment of needs and priorities and to the pre-existing situation. In subsequent years, the nature and level of support for non-government schools will be a matter for consideration by the Schools Commission. The committee believes that there are some non-government schools for which no case can be made on an overall relative needs basis for this type of Commonwealth support. However, abrupt termination of support may well place these schools in some difficulty. Accordingly, the committee proposes a phasing out of recurrent grants for them.

The Commonwealth Government laid down what are called the guidelines in this matter after the terms of reference were drafted and the committee was formed. I refer to the report at page 87, paragraph 6.50, which provides:

Category A schools already use a volume of resources that well exceeds the 1979 targets; and the committee believes that Government assistance to these schools cannot be justified. However, all schools are presently receiving \$62 per annum per primary pupil and \$104 per annum per secondary pupil.

Let the Minister answer this one:

The committee feels that the sudden termination of financial aid on six months notice could place some schools within category A in temporary difficulties. Hence the gradual phasing out of assistance over 1974 and 1975 is recommended; this implies that in 1976 schools whose resource use falls in category A should receive no general recurrent assistance. Category B schools are those with resource use at about the 1979 target. The committee recommends that these continue to receive financial help but of smaller magnitude than the 1973 per capita grants provided.

That is the committee's recommendation, and I believe that is in conflict with the undertaking given by the A.L.P. before the election. Whether it was or not, the Government is not even prepared to accept that recommendation of the Karmel committee. Instead, what do we find? I refer to the *Australian* of June 13, reported under the name of Alan Ramsay as follows:

Cabinet yesterday endorsed the committee's—
that is, the Karmel committee—

total fund allocations, but unanimously decided to cut off assistance to the top private schools immediately.

Not only is that in conflict with the undertaking given by Mr. Whitlam in May and never withdrawn: it is in conflict with the recommendations of the Karmel committee itself. I have already referred to what the Cook committee here said about the matter, and I believe that what happened is this: that Mr. Beazley and maybe (but I am not sure about him) Mr. Whitlam as well were simply overruled by the predominance of left-wing members of the Commonwealth Cabinet who are against the independent schools and who therefore took this opportunity to deal a blow at what they regard as the tallest of the tall poppies. I believe that is what happened. I have heard gossip to that effect and, if any member opposite can contradict me, I shall be pleased if he will do so and I shall accept his contradiction if he can bring forward evidence on the matter. It is my belief that Mr. Whitlam and Mr. Beazley were overruled by a Cabinet majority on this matter.

I know Mr. Beazley slightly (I have known him for many years) and he is a keen member of Moral Re-armament. This situation puts him in a most difficult position, because one of his tenets in living is absolute honesty. I can only believe that a Minister who said in the House what I quoted him as saying and who found himself in this situation after he had given an undertaking should have resigned his position. I know that is asking much of a man who has waited 20 years to get into the Commonwealth Cabinet, but I believe that that is the proper course he should have taken in the circumstances.

Further, not only are category A schools in jeopardy but every independent school is robbed of security, because no independent school will know, from year to year, what funds it will get. This is the way the Schools Commission is to work. I hope those schools that have done well this year from the recommendations of the Karmel committee will be able to see further than their noses and will realize the jeopardy in which they are all placed. By making the independent schools dependent financially, and manipulating from year to year the finances to be paid to them, the Commonwealth Government has the power to break those schools at will. That, as I have said, applies to all independent schools, not only to the eight category A schools affected this year in South Australia.

It is extraordinary that at a time when means tests elsewhere are being abandoned (and it was announced in the Commonwealth Budget that the means test for age pensions is to be abolished for those pensioners over 75) in education a means test is being reintroduced. I am not the only one to criticize the report of the Karmel committee, because it has been widely criticized, and I now refer to some of the criticisms that have been made. I think I can do better by referring to the editorial in the *Australian* (I will not refer to that in the *Advertiser*), because it gives a wider view. The editorial under the heading "Karmel's damaging anomalies" in the *Australian* of August 8 states:

What certainly can be argued is that the Karmel committee's method of dividing the private school share of Government aid seems to be arbitrary, full of anomalies and potentially damaging to the whole structure of Australian education. All that the Karmel committee appears to have done is to have written to 734 private schools inquiring how much they spent on staff wages, equipment and other items, compared these figures with the average in Government schools and graded the needs of the private schools on the comparison. The committee did not take into consideration the schools' capital backing or fee structures, nor did it visit school premises. As a result, its school grading list is full of curiously contradictory placings.

One private school in Sydney, which has 100 acres of land and copious facilities, is to receive \$100 a pupil under the committee's recommendations; others in Sydney and Melbourne, possessing swimming pools and every other outward sign of affluence, are to get increased aid. Schools sitting on the security of munificent endowments are to receive only slightly reduced amounts of aid. Meanwhile a weatherboard country high school in the Blue Mountains is to lose every cent the Government has been giving it and others, which are in reality no better off than their more favoured fellows, will have reduced grants. If there is to be any intelligent reallocation of resources it ought to be done on the basis of a much deeper, more realistic appraisal of respective needs.

I believe that the proper policy is one of per capita grants for all schools, plus increments for special needs. I consider that that is the only proper way to do it and, in conformity with the undertakings given by the Labor Party before the election, it is the only way to honour those undertakings. I ask that the motion be supported. I consider that we in South Australia could easily afford up to \$500,000 (the Minister may like to put a precise figure on it) to honour, on behalf of the Commonwealth Government, the promise that that Government has made and has cynically broken.

I consider that that should be done in the interests of education in this State, because I repeat that I believe in the independent schools, as I hope at least a majority of members in this place do. We should encourage the two systems side by side in the community so that parents will have freedom of choice for their children. Unless we act to remedy this breach of faith by the Commonwealth Government, we will be in great danger of jeopardizing the independent school system.

Mr. DEAN BROWN (Davenport): I support the motion.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: Are you seconding it?

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I second it and I therefore support it. It is pleasing to see another political Party taking up the cause that the L.C.L. took up on the opening day of this session of Parliament, when the member for Kavel tried to move:

That in the opinion of this House the recent decision of the Commonwealth Government to withdraw aid from some independent schools should be revoked.

It is well known that the L.C.L. believes that all independent schools should have State aid, on a per capita basis, to help the education of the students. The member for

Mitcham has said that he was proud to be a member of a Government that first introduced aid to independent schools on a per capita basis and that he was proud to be a member of a Party that had that policy as part of its platform. I, too, am proud to be a member of a similar Party, from the point of view that, in the Commonwealth sphere, my Party was the first to introduce per capita grants to independent schools. In this State, we have a similar policy. The Leader of the Opposition, in his policy speech delivered before the State election in March last, stated:

Aid for independent schools will be increased. Our aim is to achieve progressively a minimum grant equivalent to 40 per cent of the cost of educating a child at a Government school. This amount will include Commonwealth contributions.

The L.C.L. and the Liberal Party of Australia for some time have been concerned about education at independent schools and have supported that education. In the Address in Reply debate I made a long speech on grants to independent schools and I do not intend to repeat what I said then. However, I wish to add some matters that I did not mention then. First, the report of the Cook committee (published in June, 1973), which was appointed by the present Government and which dealt with aid to independent schools, states:

The committee once again wishes to stress its conviction that all independent schools are finding it more and more difficult to survive in the face of ever-increasing inflationary trends. The committee also recognizes that, while the needs of schools vary to a great degree, all these schools do have needs, and supports the policy of allocating additional grants to all schools according to "need".

I put forward a similar sort of policy in the Address in Reply debate. The Cook report also states:

We are convinced that withdrawal of grants according to need would inevitably mean a substantial increase in fees and that this would mean a decline in the number of students in these schools. The ultimate result of this trend would be the inevitable closure of at least the smaller schools.

The closure of those schools is of great concern to me, because many students attend independent schools in my district. Although the Minister of Education tends to minimize the problems facing parents of children at these schools, the threat to the continued education of those children is real. If many children are forced to leave independent schools in the District of Davenport, the Government will not be able to cope with the problem.

An expert committee appointed by the State Government has recommended that all schools should receive both State and Commonwealth Government per capita grants. Therefore, if the Minister and the other members who comprise the Government accept the advice of that committee, they will accept the proposals in this motion. I refer also to a report in the *Advertiser* of August 9 of a conversation Mr. Stewart Cockburn had with Rev. R. A. Cook (Headmaster of Kings College). That report states:

To measure the needs and qualities of a good school by some sort of dry standardized economic index is like trying to measure the qualities of a good parent with a mathematical formula and a slide rule.

Of course, Rev. Mr. Cook was referring to the methods used to assess how the independent schools should be categorized and how the aid should be given. In that report, Stewart Cockburn also states:

So says the Headmaster of Kings College (the Rev. R. A. Cook), the man responsible for advising the South Australian Government on State aid to independent schools over the past four years. Mr. Cook has headed a committee of 10 educators who have reported on the needs of South Australia's 134 independent primary and 50 secondary schools . . . Mr. Cook has no doubt that the

Karmel formula for Commonwealth aid "has gone wrong somewhere". He believes the Federal Government did not give it either the time or the resources to assess school needs accurately, especially in South Australia. "Professor Karmel and his colleagues are therefore not necessarily to blame for what has happened," he says. "They had to work within the terms of reference given them. These terms explicitly excluded any consideration of the financial situation of parents, for example. The Karmel committee's work demonstrates the danger of any formula which does not take into sufficiently careful account the almost infinite diversity of independent schools. This diversity, of course, is based on values which are at the root of the whole independent system."

That points to the great failing of the Karmel report; that is, that system of how schools should be classified. The criterion used in the report (although not fully explained) seems to be one of making a Judgment on the staff-student ratio, and any school with a high staff-student ratio was automatically included in category A and excluded from further per capita grants. Obviously, this is an unrealistic basis on which to class a school.

Many schools may have ordinary classrooms, inadequate science laboratories, libraries absent, and inadequate sports grounds, yet that school has been concerned to ensure that the students have the use of as many teachers as possible. Therefore, the basis of classing schools has been a false one, and in using it unfair damnation has been brought on the heads of many children at independent schools. An article in the *Financial Review* aptly describes the Commonwealth Government's policy as being the great leveller. The writer is referring to the fact not that the Karmel report was trying to level the standard of education but that it was trying to level independent schools. If statements made by members of the Commonwealth Government, especially Dr. Moss Cass, are examined, it will be realized that the ultimate object of the Commonwealth Government is to abolish independent schools.

Mr. Hopgood: Oh, no! It does not look like it in the printed policy.

Dr. Tonkin: Do you deny it?

Mr. Hopgood: Of course I do.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: The fact that aid to some independent schools has been abolished imposes a threat to those schools. An article, written by Chris Milne (education writer for the *Advertiser*) under the heading "South Australian schools threatened without aid", states:

A State Government advisory committee says the survival of many South Australian independent schools is "gravely threatened" without Government aid. The Cook committee, appointed to make recommendations on State grants to private schools, says this applies especially to some schools which do not appear to be in need. The comments are contained in the committee's report recommending how \$550,000 should be distributed among 50 South Australian independent secondary schools this year. An editorial that appears in the *Advertiser* of August 8, 1973, entitled "Private Schools", states:

The dismay expressed on behalf of independent schools which will next year lose their per capita Commonwealth grants or have them reduced is understandable. Many parents who send their children to these schools are already battling to meet ever-increasing fees. The schools themselves can justifiably feel that they are now being discriminated against. They are being penalized for having built up the very teaching "resources" on which the Karmel committee lays such stress.

A disturbing aspect of the classification of some individual South Australian schools by the Karmel committee is the extraordinary variation in assessment of their need compared with that of the Cook committee. It is not easy to ascertain precisely the criteria adopted, although considerations of staff-student ratios and per capita running costs have clearly weighed heavily. In general it may be said that Roman Catholic schools have tended to benefit more than others from the Commonwealth allocations.

This is no doubt the true result of the application of an agreed formula, but it is the sort of result that can give rise to some ill feeling.

A further danger in attaching such importance to staff-student ratios is that those schools which offer the widest range of educational facilities, through the use of part-time teachers, may suffer most in the reallocation of funds. The value of independent schools as an important part of the country's overall education system is beyond doubt. In fact it is acknowledged in the acceptance by all major political Parties, after years of controversy, of the justice of Government aid to such schools. Most private schools will now receive more help to enable them to raise their educational standards. Their continued growth will benefit the community generally, as well as reducing Government expenditure on education. Because of this nothing should now be done to threaten the future of any of them, "wealthy" or not.

The fitting conclusion reached by that editorial is that independent schools in this State have contributed much to the State and are continuing to contribute, and that no action by the State Government or the Commonwealth Government should threaten the excellent work done by these schools and the benefits received from them. In these matters it is important to ascertain the views of people who are conducting independent schools. I should like to read the views of the Headmasters or Headmistresses of independent schools as expressed in a letter to the *Advertiser* of July 8, 1973. The letter, signed by the Headmistresses of Woodlands Church of England Girls Grammar School, St. Peters Collegiate Girls School, Wilderness School, and Walford Church of England Girls Grammar School, and the Headmasters of St. Peters College, Prince Alfred College, and Kings College, states:

It is important when the question of Commonwealth per capita grants to independent schools is receiving so much publicity that there should be a correct understanding of the basis on which the Commonwealth assessment of the categories A-H has been made. The main assessment has been on a staff-pupil basis, together with expenditures on teaching equipment, ancillary staff and other items.

It was specifically stated that fees charged were not taken into account, nor were debt charges or the value of assets, whether buildings and equipment, or investments. In other words, the schools in the top categories A and B are so placed, not because of wealth, not because of assistance from organizations and churches, not because of fees charged, but because of their teaching resources.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: What is this from?

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I am reading a letter sent to the *Advertiser* and signed by the Headmistresses or Headmasters of seven schools. I am expressing their views, not mine. The letter continues:

They have lost their former Commonwealth grants because they are among the best schools academically, placing emphasis on the personal elements in education. Some of them do not have many assets in buildings and equipment, especially when compared to schools that have been placed below the top two categories.

In our opinion the way in which schools have been assessed by our own State needs committee is on a sounder and fairer basis. It certainly has not caused the concern and sense of injustice aroused by the Commonwealth Government's over-hurried assessment of the needs of independent schools.

I suppose that, in condemning the Commonwealth Labor Government, we should at least pay some respect to our State Government for appointing such a capable committee, which obviously has earned the respect of independent schools and the South Australian public. The whole purpose of the motion is to use that committee to allocate additional funds to those poor and disadvantaged schools that have had their Commonwealth Government funds discontinued. If one studies the Commonwealth Government's

attitude to this matter, one sees that both the Prime Minister and the Minister for Education, both before and after the last Commonwealth election, made certain promises to grant aid to independent schools in the form of per capita grants. In case there is any doubt in this matter, I will read, as the member for Mitcham has already done, the statement of the Commonwealth Minister (Mr. Beazley) in the House of Representatives on May 30, as follows:

My view is that every school in the country, including Geelong Grammar School, should receive a basic grant from the Commonwealth and that the Commonwealth should have an identity with the education of every child.

Article 26 (3) of the Declaration of Human Rights in the United Nations Charter states:

Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that should be given to their children.

I have heard many A.L.P. members say that we should support the Declaration of Human Rights, but why is the Commonwealth Government not supporting it? There is admission in every person's mind (if he is honest with himself, as unfortunately the Commonwealth Government is not) that every student in the country should receive Government assistance in his education.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: That does not follow from the United Nations declaration.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: There may be different needs according to the child's position. Allocating funds on a needs basis does not mean that we should cease to grant funds to certain children. All children have a need for education, and anyone who does not acknowledge that fact is being dishonest with himself. If all children have such a need (and we have already ascertained that the Government should allocate funds to all students), why has the Commonwealth Government ceased to provide funds? As the Commonwealth Government has ceased to provide funds, it is time that our State Government considered the need of these poor students and allocated extra funds to them.

Mr. Venning: That's what it said, isn't it?

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Therefore, I fully support the motion. I have already pointed out that that is my Party's policy and the policy and honest thinking of many people in the State. I am sure that parents and most people in the State would applaud the State Government if it supported the motion. The member for Mitcham outlined the small sum it would cost the Government (apparently about \$500,000), although in realistic terms I believe it would be even less than that, because with the cessation of Commonwealth Government aid certain students must move out of independent schools into Government schools, although such a move will cost the Government more, anyway. I am sure that the member for Mitcham would agree with my contention, but I doubt whether he took that factor into his calculations. It has been claimed that the cessation of aid will save the Commonwealth Government only \$5,000,000 throughout the country. Calculated on the basis that about 20 per cent of students may leave independent schools, the Commonwealth Government would save only about \$1,500,000. I believe that the sum of \$500,000 quoted by the member for Mitcham is somewhat exaggerated but that he had to give the highest possible sum when putting his case forward. Let us not get lost in false economies but be honest with ourselves about the kinds of promise the Commonwealth Government made to the Australian people before the last election. Surely, even though our Government's Commonwealth colleagues will not keep their promises, I hope that our Government will at least have the backbone to back up those promises

and keep them. Therefore, I look forward to Government members supporting the motion.

Mr. MATHWIN: I support the motion.

The Hon. G.R. Broomhill: Why didn't you move it yourself?

Mr. MATHWIN: If I had had the opportunity, I probably would have done so. I was ready to speak some time ago on a similar motion to be moved by the member for Kavel, but his motion to suspend Standing Orders was defeated.

Mr. Langley: That's unusual! Numbers count.

Mr. MATHWIN: Yes, and sometimes size counts, too. I protest at the Commonwealth Government's phasing out assistance to independent schools, because I, too, believe that parents have the right to choose the kind of education they wish their children to have. The Commonwealth Government is carrying out the policy of Socialism as it was tried in the United Kingdom by the Wilson Labour Government, which was subsequently removed from office. In case Government members do not realize what their Socialist brothers in the U.K. were doing, the British Labour Party conference passed a resolution for the complete abolition of public schools on the grounds that they were bastions of privilege and snobbery. It was this Government's Socialist brothers who passed the resolution.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I rise on a point of order. The honourable member is reflecting on the parentage of members on this side of the House, and I ask him to withdraw that implication.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The honourable member for Glenelg.

Mr. MATHWIN: A Socialist Government is in office in Sweden merely by the grace of six Communist members, yet this Government is so happy to take every leaf it can from the book of the Swedish Government. That Government introduced a needs formula and removed the per capita grants that existed. Per capita grants existed throughout Europe, but it removed them only on the basis that this type of grant leaves the independent school too independent. In Australia we can now see the Commonwealth Government doing exactly the same thing and for exactly the same reason. The needs formula is created, yet we all know it is a means test, but now it has a new name. I again refer to part of the reported statement of a Swedish lawyer, Mr. Pahlman. I have previously referred to this report in another debate and it is fitting that I should refer to it now, because it is so relevant to this matter. The report states:

Applying the needs formula, the Government has attached strings to the aid, with the subsidy conditional on the schools satisfying all sorts of near-impossible requirements. Frequently, according to Mr. Pahlman, the aid has been delayed and arrived after the school has had to close down. One way or the other, the State has reduced the number of independent schools from 50 to 20 in the past three years. Meanwhile within the Government education system, shortly to be the only system, the Minister of Education has stated: "The school is no longer there to teach how to read and write but to teach equality." Or as another commentator put it: "The school shall be the arrow to form and shape the socialistic human being." The teachers as well as the textbooks and curricula must all have political rather than academic approval, just as the journalists must have political rather than professional approval. "Can there be," asks Mr. Pahlman, "a more effective and speedy brainwashing technique than that which takes place in Sweden ..."

This is what we in Australia are following and, if this is to be the method adopted by the Commonwealth Government, heaven help us. Further, it would virtually be the end of Christian education, because it could be obtained only by the very rich, not by others; it could not be

obtained by the intermediates or the people who struggle to send their children to these schools. Those to be really punished by this type of legislation are the people who send their children to these schools at great personal sacrifice, and this situation applies to many people.

Mr. Duncan: They are all two bob snobs.

Mr. MATHWIN: That is a nice thing coming from the member for Elizabeth. How was the member for Elizabeth taken through university?

Mr. Millhouse: That is the best interjection we have had so far!

Mr. MATHWIN: The problem is that that is how many of the honourable member's colleagues (or comrades) look at that matter. These people are not two bob snobs, and I would stand up for them whenever I could. Indeed, these people suffer much to keep their children at independent schools. I am sure the member for Mawson would agree with me about this, because he has been connected with Westminster school, as I have been, and I expect that he was allowed much latitude when he was at that school. Fees at such schools are continually increasing and it is becoming harder and harder for parents to meet them. I believe that the system of classifying these independent schools leaves an uncertainty hanging over them as to who is to be next. This is a method of bringing the schools down to a level; certainly, it is not bringing them up to a level, and no school will escape.

At this stage the Catholic independent schools are practically untouched in South Australia, but they should not think for one minute that they will get away scot-free; indeed, they are in the second barrel to be fired and will be dealt with next. As Mr. Beazley has told us that no schools will be worse off, it behoves this Government to see that these schools are not worse off and to support this motion, as I do.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

INFLAMMABLE CLOTHING (LABELLING) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 15. Page 353.)

The Hon. D. H. McKEE (Minister of Labour and Industry): I do not oppose this Bill in principle but the member for Glenelg will recall that some time ago I told him that the State Ministers at a meeting held here in Adelaide last month agreed upon the uniform legislation to be introduced throughout the country to overcome this nation-wide problem. However, he decided he would go on with the introduction of this Bill. For some reason he wanted to go through the exercise, and it could well be that he wished to beat the Liberal Movement by being the first member opposite to introduce a private member's Bill this session. Nevertheless, I know he was sincere in doing so but, having told him that the Government had intended, and intends, to introduce legislation this session, I should have thought that that would convince him that his Bill would be merely a formal exercise that he was going through and would never come to fruition.

The uniform legislation intended to be introduced by the Government is based on a scientific approach by the Standards Association of Australia. The Bill to be introduced by the Government this session to deal with flammable clothing will better satisfy the need for uniformity, and of course, as I said before, it will be based on a scientific approach by the Standards Association of Australia, which incorporates the results of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization's studies, which have been going on for several years. The

member for Torrens will agree with me when I say that he, too, was involved in research in respect of this legislation, but it took some time for a decision to be reached that could be brought down as uniform legislation. It must be uniform legislation, for the simple reason that clothing is manufactured more or less on a national basis and, if it was not uniform legislation, it would place local manufacturers at a disadvantage—and not only local manufacturers but also importers, whose products must be cleared through customs. That is another reason why it must be uniform legislation through the Commonwealth. For these reasons, I am afraid I must oppose the Bill, although I agree with it in principle, but the proposed legislation by the honourable member would be out of step with that of the other States. Therefore, I oppose the Bill.

Dr. TONKIN (Bragg): I am indeed disappointed to hear the Minister's statement, but I will return to that later. First, I congratulate the member for Glenelg on his foresight and great interest in this matter, which he has shown clearly ever since he entered this House in 1970. He has always been interested in the dangers presented by flammable clothing, and it is to his great credit that he should have gone to the trouble of doing all the research he has done and having a Bill drawn up to deal with this matter. I hasten to add that I know the Minister is well aware of the problem. When I say "I am disappointed", I mean I am disappointed that this situation has come about; I am not necessarily saying that the Minister is not agreeing that it is necessary legislation. It is a pity, because the name of the member for Glenelg could be associated with the legislation in this House, but the honourable member will be associated with it in the future, once the legislation goes through, regardless of what the Bill is and who introduces it. I think all honourable members will join with me in congratulating the honourable member.

There is a great need for the labelling of all clothing, and especially night attire. There are many items that we wear, and not the least of them is flammable spectacle frames, which I am sure people tend to forget, especially the imported variety, which can cause serious injury, particularly if inadvertently they are incorporated in safety wear. There have been some cases of this kind. We tend to be not aware of the dangers that exist. I think the member for Glenelg has covered the situation very well indeed. He has drawn my attention to a question asked in 1972, when the Minister said that the matter was being looked at by the Standards Association but in the meantime not very much was happening. The Minister also said:

One way in which woolgrowers can help the sale of their product is by publicizing the fire-resisting qualities of wool.

I could not agree with him more: wool is one of the fabrics that is most valuable from that point of view—it is safe.

The Hon. D. H. McKee: The member for Rocky River will agree with you.

Dr. TONKIN: I am sure that the member for Rocky River and other honourable members will agree that this is one of wool's advantages. However, there is always the problem that even woollen garments have some proportion of other fibre in them: whether it is artificial or animal fibre does not matter very much, but it is in the processing. Pure wool can contain 10 per cent, 15 per cent or a significant proportion (I am not sure of the figure) of other fibre. Normally, this other fibre does not burn because the wool acts as an insulating material, but there is a great need for an examination of the whole matter of labelling

products, not only as to their flammability but also as to details of the constitution of the fabric—the fibre content and the type of fibre, whether it be artificial or natural.

I speak feelingly on this matter because anyone who has been into the wards of the Children's Hospital and seen the victims of this type of accident could not help noticing the large areas of burnt skin and the shocking appearance of those injuries. He would be conscious of the appalling suffering caused by those injuries and anyone who has seen that type of thing cannot possibly remain unaffected by it. The staff at the Children's Hospital and the Royal Adelaide Hospital, where we hope the burns unit is now operating, do a remarkable job, particularly that at the Children's Hospital. I pay a tribute to the work done there and I am sure honourable members will join with me when I say that. The development of new techniques and particularly the use of the air bed, where a severely burnt patient with a large area of burnt skin can be supported on a hover-type air cushion, has greatly helped the recovery of those people.

It is undeniable that long periods of nursing are necessary and that extreme pain is involved; one has only to burn one's finger to realize how painful a burn can be. The surface of the skin is well supplied with pain fibres, and burning involves many such fibres. So, a burn is the most painful injury there can be. Skin grafting can produce wonderful results in young children who have been burnt, but it is a matter of time. Children can spend years undergoing one operation after another before there is any acceptable cosmetic result. In spite of the skill of surgeons, inevitably there will be scarring and permanent disfigurement in many cases.

The obvious answer is that prevention is much better than cure. If we can prevent these accidents we will not only save the community much money but also save much suffering in respect of the patient and his family. I again commend the Minister for supporting the circulation throughout the community of the pamphlet *Safe Nightclothes for Children*. I commend him for his foresight in issuing the pamphlet not only in English but also in Greek and Italian. There has been a great demand for the pamphlet in the Bragg District. I have been happy to obtain copies for schools and parents in my district, and they have been grateful for those copies. I am well aware that the Minister is sympathetic to the problems involved. Nevertheless, I am disappointed that the present situation has arisen. I would have thought it would be possible for the Minister to amend this Bill if necessary. I do not know the terms of the legislation that the Minister will introduce; possibly it will cover areas not covered by this Bill, and I recognize the need for uniform legislation. Regretting that it is not yet possible to implement uniform legislation, I support the Bill.

Mr. WRIGHT (Adelaide): I oppose the Bill in its present form, but I make clear that I do not oppose the principles in the Bill, and I give some credit to the member for Glenelg for introducing it. As the Minister has pointed out, it is very important to have uniform legislation throughout Australia. The Labor Party, like every other Party, has an inherent right to protect all people from flammable items, whether they be clothing, including overalls, or spectacles, etc. It is a pity that the Government has to provide this sort of protection. If the manufacturers were doing their job properly and conducting proper laboratory research (instead of merely aiming for profits) they would be supplying articles that would be non-flammable in the first place. Companies producing flammable goods are responsible for all the burnt children in Australia.

The member for Glenelg supplied detailed information about accidents involving burns, and the extorting manufacturers of flammable clothing are responsible for that horrifying record. Those manufacturers should supply clothing that is safe in the first place. The member for Rocky River can grin as much as he likes, but when he goes home tonight his conscience will surely tell him that what I am saying is correct. The Minister has explained why it is important not to pass the Bill in its present form. We need a Government Bill that will make possible uniform legislation throughout Australia.

Mr. RODDA (Victoria): The tragedy is that we are being asked to wait while people, who may be wearing a certain type of garment for which a manufacturer is responsible, are exposed to danger that has caused much sadness in many homes. The Labor Party has recently made some proud announcements about so-called "firsts". The Minister has said that the legislation must be uniform throughout Australia. Why can we not have another "first" here? Let the Minister move amendments if necessary. I am sure he has some ideas on what he wants for South Australia. Let him amend the Bill so that we will have something on the Statute Book that will prevent the scorching of children who are unaware of the dangers involved in wearing flammable clothing. I commend the member for Glenelg for his research and study. For how long will we have to wait before the uniform legislation is introduced?

The Hon. D. H. McKee: It will come into force throughout Australia in January, 1974.

Mr. RODDA: That is too long.

The Hon. D. H. McKee: You will upset the whole industry if this Bill is passed.

Mr. RODDA: I do not mind upsetting the industry if it is producing an article that is dangerous to children. Articles imported into this country must have a warning label. Perhaps the Minister can at some stage make clear the situation regarding imported garments. Two weeks ago I attended a safety seminar where we saw a demonstration of materials that were freely on sale throughout Australia. If they are touched with a lighted match, they burn to ash within minutes, and the damage that could arise from burning garments, including the plastics, was self-evident. Such damage has arisen. The member for Glenelg has given us the figures, and the Bill has not been introduced for political reasons. As much as I appreciate the Minister's dilemma about the legislation, it seems a pity that the Bill must be defeated and the publicity that it has received must be lost. I repeat my concern that, when we have had so many "firsts", this is a pity, because we know that a tragedy could occur at any time.

Mr. VENNING (Rocky River): I support the Bill and I congratulate the member for Glenelg on introducing it and moving the Minister to try to get legislation operating throughout Australia. I was amazed at the Minister's interjection (made quietly) to the member for Victoria that the Government's legislation will not come into operation for about four months. Even with that legislation and the branding of clothing, tragedies will still occur, and it will be necessary to educate people about the danger. The human element comes into the situation, irrespective of how a garment is branded, but education will minimize the number of such tragedies. I hope that the Bill that the Minister introduces will be wide, because much funny business is going on about the branding of garments. The position regarding the Bill has been covered well by various speakers, and I support the measure.

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens): I have pleasure in supporting the Bill and I commend the member for Glenelg for his persistence, culminating in the introduction of the measure. I know the honourable member's interest in this matter, and in industrial safety generally, which he showed when he was a member of a Select Committee that inquired into industrial safety, health and welfare when the old Industrial Code was in operation. That committee worked for about 12 months.

The matters covered by this Bill can apply to industry as well as to the home. Although most of the emphasis has been on clothing worn in the home, this matter applies also to industry and commerce. When one sees some of the clothing worn by some females in banks, one realizes how a person who gets too close to an electric radiator, for example, could be injured. A similar position could apply in industry, especially where welding equipment was used.

The Bill has excellent motives and I have listened with interest to the Minister's acceptance of the principle and his claim that action must be taken on a national basis. As the Minister has said, I have been involved in this matter and I attended at least two conferences at which it was discussed. I tried unsuccessfully, as I know the Minister has done, to have the matter brought to a head, but the Standards Association of Australia could not determine a code on which we could classify certain types of garment. I attended, in another State, a demonstration of the burning of clothing and that demonstration really shocked me. About 12 different types of material were displayed and then burnt. Some hardly burnt at all, some went up with a "whoosh", and others melted. I suppose that the ones that melted were the most dangerous, because of the type of material involved.

I realize that it is necessary to deal with this matter on a national basis, and other organizations must be consulted. For example, the dry cleaners are involved, because many clothes and other garments are sent to the dry cleaner without adequate labelling and they can be ruined completely. Further, I understand that the Textile Union of Australia also has been consulted. There is a need for the trade and for the garment manufacturers to have time up their sleeve (and I am not making a pun) to bring provisions into operation. I suggest to the Minister that one way to solve the problem and to satisfy the member for Glenelg is to accept a simple amendment. However, before such an amendment is introduced, I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF PORT PIRIE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

[Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.]

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN (Minister of Works): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This short Bill, which is of a somewhat urgent nature, is intended to deal with a problem that has arisen in

connection with a decision of the National Standards Commission of the Commonwealth to reject an application for the approval of patterns of "dipsticks" used in certain tankers. While it is neither appropriate nor proper that the decision of the National Standards Commission to reject the pattern should be traversed here, the decision has given rise to a situation of concern to the users of this instrument in this State. Put shortly, this situation arises from the fact that instruments of this design have in fact been verified and stamped under section 25 of the Weights and Measures Act of this State and the corresponding previous enactment, notwithstanding that they have not been approved by the Commonwealth authorities as required by those Acts.

Now some doubt has been thrown on the technical validity of this verification and stamping. I make no apology for the existence of this situation, which arose from a belief, held in good faith, on the part of the authorities here that the pattern would in fact be approved by the Commonwealth authorities. To keep faith with the users of the instruments who have assumed that the instruments were verified and stamped in accordance with the Act, it has been decided that this matter should be made clear in legislative terms, and that any technical defect relating to verification and stamping should be covered by validating legislation. At the same time opportunity has been taken to make certain other amendments to the principal Act of a rather less important nature.

To consider the Bill in detail, clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 makes a drafting amendment to section 5 of the principal Act by substituting the word "implied" for the word "employed". Clause 3 amends section 15 of the principal Act which deals with casual vacancies on the advisory council. It is provided, at present, that a member of the council representing local government interests may continue to be a member for one month, notwithstanding that he has ceased to be a member of a local government council. This grace period was intended to enable the member to seek re-election. It has been suggested to the Government that this period should be extended to three months, as it is not always possible to arrange an election entirely within one month. With this contention the Government agrees, and this clause is proposed accordingly.

Clause 4 validates the verification and stamping of measuring instruments in the circumstances set out above and is, in its terms, not confined to the particular instrument there mentioned, since it is considered that any other situations of a similar nature, if they in fact exist, should also be covered. Clauses 5 and 6 together remove from the principal Act some now redundant provisions relating to bushel weights. These have become redundant for two reasons: first, most trading in grain is done by weights in the metric system and, secondly, the weights set out in the third schedule are, because of varying water contents and other circumstances, not generally followed in the trade.

Mr. WARDLE secured the adjournment of the debate.

LOTTERY AND GAMING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 15. Page 360.)

Mr. RODDA (Victoria): This Bill refers to that Part of the Act concerned with racing and, as the Minister said, it falls into several groups. The first group deals with the transfer of the control of granting totalizator licences from the Commissioner of Police to the Chief Secretary. People in my district and in other districts to whom I have spoken have no quarrel with this provision.

The second group is concerned with increasing the permitted flexibility in granting licences for meetings at the various racecourses throughout the State. At least two grounds may be given for a transfer and the Opposition agrees with both of them.

The Hon. D. H. McKee: Are you a betting man?

Mr. RODDA: It is obvious from what I have said that I am not, but I cannot see the point of the interjection. All members know what usually takes place when a race meeting is cancelled because of bad weather, and this flexibility must help the sport. This amending Bill also refers to trotting meetings and, although there has been unanimity in racing circles about these amendments, they have not been so well received by the trotting fraternity. I have been told that the Bill should not be proceeded with whilst an investigating committee is receiving submissions about the industry. However, the Bill provides for an increase in the number of trotting meetings in the metropolitan area from 35 to 53; in the South-East there will be 26 meetings; and in other parts of the State the number of meetings will be increased to 70. In his second reading explanation, the Minister said that provision will be made for the transfer of trotting meetings between country areas but not between country and metropolitan areas. This ambiguity has caused some concern, particularly because of the investigation that is proceeding.

The fourth group of amendments is concerned with extending the reduction of the additional 1 per cent of the amount wagered for double, treble, and jackpot betting to all contingencies, whether or not the Totalizator Agency Board is involved in the transaction. An amount represented by this 1 per cent will, as the Minister said, be paid to the Racecourse Development Fund, and its deduction will ultimately benefit the clubs concerned. Having spoken to representatives of the racing industry in the South-East, I understand that there has been general approval of the Bill, but some of the people to whom I spoke said that the transfer of meetings from provincial areas to the city on days of feature meetings in other States (that is, the Melbourne Cup and the Invitation Stakes) was considered to be advisable because a more convenient venue would mean bigger attendances and turnover. This would mean that more money would be injected into the T.A.B. distribution pool. I think the people with whom I spoke were referring to the Balaklava meeting which, I think, is held on Melbourne Cup day and on the Murray Bridge Invitation Stakes day.

It was also thought advisable to be able to transfer totalizator licences and meetings from one course to another in cases of inclement weather, but the Chief Secretary must sanction such a transfer. It seems appropriate that totalizator licences should be granted through the Chief Secretary's Department. At present, all money distributed through the Racecourse Development Fund must be spent on public facilities. The South-Eastern District Racing Association thought that the improvement of racecourse facilities, because of lack of finance in the past, had been shelved. Improvements to public facilities should be given priority. Although these matters are not subject to the Bill, they are part and parcel of racing and should be put before the committee of inquiry under the chairmanship of Professor Hancock.

The South-East, which is situated about 280 miles (450 km) from Adelaide, is at a disadvantage regarding the holding of T.A.B. meetings. At present, only four meetings have the benefit of T.A.B., namely, two feature meetings at Mount Gambier and two feature meetings at Naracoorte. These meetings, which are most successful,

are the only meetings that return a profit to the clubs throughout the year. Most of the remaining meetings, which are held on Saturdays, result in a loss of about \$600 a meeting. There are about 46 owner-trainers in the Lower South-East and, as a measuring stick of the quality of horse that races there, 28 were able to win in Adelaide, 50 ran placings and 80 ran unplaced. Some of the horses have been successful on Melbourne courses. With the loss of about \$600 a meeting, these clubs are being kept going by livestock schemes, as a result of which about \$15,000 has been raised. Although country racing clubs are in a parlous situation, the Bill goes only part of the way in overcoming their difficulties. Country racing clubs will be at a distinct disadvantage, even after benefiting from the 1 per cent that will be used by the Race-course Development Fund. The South-Eastern District Racing Association is against Government control of racing. From my experience, I have found that racing club committees in general are made up of astute businessmen, whose voluntary work keeps the clubs alive. I hope that when the Hancock committee's report is presented to Parliament, the Government will not lose any time in implementing its findings by introducing further amending legislation to exercise control over this industry.

Mr. CHAPMAN (Alexandra): I support the Bill. From what I understand of it, the Attorney-General has presented several amendments that can only help the racing fraternity. Group (a) of the Attorney-General's second reading explanation refers to the transfer of control from the Commissioner of Police to the Chief Secretary. I fully appreciate the need to speed up decisions made on behalf of racing clubs and the importance of removing the need to seek permission from the Commissioner of Police. Regarding group (b) and the flexibility sought, I agree with the principle behind what the Government has provided in the legislation, particularly that the initiative to change the venue of a race meeting is to be decided by those directly concerned, not by any other party. Regarding group (c) and the inter-club transfer or the transfer of venue within country areas, I appreciate that South Australia's trotting clubs are not the same as its racing clubs, because from my observations trotting clubs do not enjoy the same appreciation of one another between country and metropolitan areas as I have witnessed with respect to the racing clubs. Therefore, I understand the element of competition between country and metropolitan trotting clubs, and that country people do not desire in any circumstances to change the venue from the country to the metropolitan area. Regarding group (d) and the reference to the additional 1 per cent of the amount wagered for double, treble and jackpot betting, my understanding of the position on racecourses is that the Attorney-General's amendment will only legalize what is already happening and what has been happening for some time.

The effect of the Attorney-General's amendments is directed to a sport with which I have been closely associated for a long time. As the amendments are designed to act in the interests of those involved in the sport of racing, I am happy to support the Bill. May I say here that I freely and fully accept the gambling involved in the racing and trotting fields. Gambling is a matter of investing in that field. However, I point out that this Bill is different from another Bill which I understand will come before this House soon concerning outright gambling, which I will not support in any regard.

Dr. EASTICK (Leader of the Opposition): I support the Bill, the first part of which effects certain administrative adjustments that make it much more simple for the

Chief Secretary in future to have total control of the racing industry. As has been pointed out in the second reading explanation, this is a worthwhile measure, because it takes from the Commissioner of Police or his designated officer the responsibility of having to go to another authority which will make the final decision. There can be no argument about that whatsoever. I support also the increase in the number of trotting meetings: this will enable trotting to become an all-year-round industry. Will the Attorney-General, when replying, say whether the Chief Secretary or Cabinet intends that trotting meetings will not be held during the week in conflict with race meetings or dog-racing meetings? This procedure was followed during the office of the former Chief Secretary (Hon. A. J. Shard), who religiously resisted any suggestion that there should be a conflict of interest on the one day, his purpose being that each of the industries (trotting, horse-racing and dog-racing) would have a virtual monopoly, especially in the metropolitan area and near-metropolitan area, to gain the maximum benefit for the clubs involved. A flexibility is written into this legislation whereby trotting meetings can be held during the day or at night, and it becomes more important that we have some indication from the Minister that the past procedure will continue. Otherwise I can see major conflict within the sub-industries of the major racing industry if on the same day a major horse-racing event is conducted and a trotting event is also conducted, thereby causing a conflict, be it in the afternoon or at night. I believe that that is the only area not clearly referred to in the explanation. While this point may not be within the knowledge of the Attorney-General as the Minister in charge of the Bill (the final responsibility being that of the Chief Secretary), I suspect that this matter was considered and discussed by Cabinet.

The Hon. L. J. KING (Attorney-General): It is the intention of the Chief Secretary, in giving permission for trotting meetings to be held, that there shall be no clash between trotting meetings and race meetings or between trotting meetings and dog-racing meetings. That was the policy pursued by the former Chief Secretary and it is the policy now pursued by the present Chief Secretary.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 7 passed.

Clause 8—"Use of totalizator at trotting races."

Mr. RODDA: In his second reading explanation the Attorney-General said:

The third group provides for an increase in the permitted number of trotting meetings in the metropolitan area and certain country areas and also provides for the transfer of meetings between country areas but not between the country and metropolitan areas. The reasons for providing for these transfers are much the same as those mentioned in connection with the transfers of horse-racing meetings.

There seems to be a certain ambiguity there: that metropolitan meetings could be transferred to the country, whereas country meetings cannot be transferred to the city.

The Hon. L. J. KING (Attorney-General): That is so.

Clause passed.

Clauses 9 to 14 passed.

Clause 15—"Restrictions on licences in respect of dog-racing."

Mr. RODDA: New paragraph (c) provides:

No more than fifty meetings are conducted by the South-Eastern Greyhound Racing Club Incorporated on any racecourse within a radius of ten kilometres from the post office at Mount Gambier.

Some people are interested in coursing beyond the 10 km limit and look at their Victorian cousins across

the border who use the drag lure. Of course, the live hare is in the news at the moment. Some people are interested in seeking a licence to use a straight drag lure. Will this provision preclude them from applying for such a licence?

The Hon. L. J. KING: The Act, as amended, will provide that there shall be no more than 50 meetings conducted by the South-Eastern Greyhound Racing Club Incorporated on any racecourse within a radius of 10 km from the post office at Mount Gambier. This Bill does not deal with the type of hare to be used—whether live or artificial or whether some other means is used. It is entirely a different matter, which we may have to face soon, because personally I share the distaste of the member for Victoria for live hare coursing. However, I understand it is a practice that is not used to any extent in South Australia. If the use of the live hare was to become prevalent, we would have to face up to the issue and consider whether or not it should be prohibited.

Mr. RODDA: There is much interest in dog-racing in the South-East, and the Chief Secretary will be receiving applications for use of the straight lure, which will do away with the live hare.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (16 and 17) and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ABORIGINAL LANDS TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 2. Page 174.)

Dr. EASTICK (Leader of the Opposition): This Bill has the support of the Opposition. The Minister of Community Welfare clearly explained its purposes when he introduced it. It effects an administrative change having regard to the Minister's representative at the Aboriginal Lands Trust meetings. It is provided that the Minister's deputy shall attend meetings of the Aboriginal Lands Trust in the absence of the Minister's representative. The deputy will be permitted to attend and carry out the functions of the Minister's representative, particularly in reporting back to the Minister the results of the meetings, which used to be the duty of the former Director of Aboriginal Affairs. Other points in the Bill have been satisfactorily explained and therefore, recognizing the value of this measure, the Opposition does not object to it.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Interpretation."

Dr. EASTICK (Leader of the Opposition): Will the report that the Minister's representative supplies to the Minister be verbal or written? I want to know not only whether the physical presence of the Minister's representative will be required but also what his functions will be at meetings of the Aboriginal Lands Trust. Will his report be written and documented for future use?

The Hon. L. J. KING (Minister of Community Welfare): The Minister's representative will, of course, report to the Minister, but it is not the practice to have a written report on the proceedings of the Aboriginal Lands Trust. The trust itself records its own proceedings in its minutes. My view is that the Minister should not intervene more than is absolutely necessary in the internal affairs of the trust, which was established to administer the property of the Aboriginal people on their behalf. It is not the practice to have a formal written report from the Minister's representative unless the Minister requires one for a particular purpose.

Dr. EASTICK: Replies to questions indicate that there will be a considerable expenditure of money, particularly for Wardang Island. I do not imply any impropriety or that there is any suggestion that the Minister is not given direct knowledge of the trust's activities. However, I consider that having a report made to the Minister would be a better proposition than having to call subsequently for minutes from the trust, as the trust may not wish to make them available. This is hypothetical, and I am not suggesting that this position will arise, but it would be better to have the situation covered.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (4 to 9) and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

PAWNBROKERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

(Second reading debate adjourned on August 2. Page 175.)

The Hon. L. J. KING (Attorney-General) moved:

That this Bill be read and discharged.

Bill read and discharged.

AGED AND INFIRM PERSONS' PROPERTY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 15. Page 359.)

Dr. TONKIN (Bragg): I support the Bill. I think, if I may use a kind of Stephen Potterism, I may describe it as a form of "plonking" to introduce a second reading speech by saying that the matter has been brought to the attention of the Government by Their Honours the judges of the Supreme Court, because Their Honours have the highest reputation and far be it from me to question their judgment, particularly in this matter. The Bill is simple and the Attorney-General has outlined the position clearly. At times persons who have been awarded damages as a result of personal injury experience a period when they cannot control their money through their agents for the damages awarded to them.

This Bill will streamline the procedure and, more particularly, it will protect these people and, if they are incapable of managing their affairs and this becomes apparent during the action for damages, it will be open to the court (with the necessary allowances made for representation by other interested parties) to make the orders that at present require a separate application. I think the move is sensible and one that will protect people who are incapable of managing their affairs after damages have been awarded to them.

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

POLICE ACT REPEAL BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 15. Page 360.)

Mr. GUNN (Eyre): The members of my Party do not oppose this Bill. We are pleased to support it, as it will speed up the consolidation of the Statutes of South Australia. It has the wholehearted support of members on this side, and we do not wish to delay the measure.

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

POLICE PENSIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 15. Page 361.)

Dr. EASTICK (Leader of the Opposition): This Bill is supported by the Opposition, which does not desire any delay in its passing.

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

PROHIBITED AREAS (APPLICATION OF STATE LAWS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 15. Page 361.)

Dr. EASTICK (Leader of the Opposition): This Bill, supported by the Opposition, clarifies several points that were clearly defined by the Attorney-General in his second reading explanation. It will facilitate the consolidation of the Statutes that is being undertaken. We have no questions about the Attorney-General's explanation of the Bill and suggest that it be passed without delay.

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

FIRE BRIGADES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 15. Page 356.)

Dr. EASTICK (Leader of the Opposition): The Opposition supports this Bill. In his second reading explanation the Attorney-General stated:

Both to the Fire Brigade and to the general public, the making of false alarms of fire is a common nuisance.

As a result of an unfortunate incident in this State not long ago, it is clear that it can also lead to the death of a person. It is tragic that such a situation should occur, and that there are people in the community with attitudes so irresponsible that they conduct themselves in such a way that a mother was killed whilst driving a motor vehicle along a road causing harm and concern to no-one. One suspects that, although penalties have been markedly increased (as they need to be since the 1942 amendments), they may not have been increased as much as they should be. Perhaps the Attorney may indicate that in some circumstances there may be other provisions that allow for a charge of manslaughter as a result of such an incident. I am sure that Fire Brigade personnel always fulfil a responsible role to the community and that no-one would support action being taken against them. Although we support the Bill, Opposition members are concerned at this sort of incident, and hope that it will never be repeated.

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

POLICE REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 15. Page 357).

Dr. TONKIN (Bragg): I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill. The Attorney-General once again gave a masterly second reading explanation that was comprehensive and covered the situation in great detail. I believe that the principle involved in the Bill is an important one. The Police Inquiry Committee, as previously constituted, had as its Chairman an officer of the Crown Law Department. The committee is now to be reorganized, the details of which will be covered by regulation. Suffice to say that the changes have been discussed in full by the Police Association of South Australia and the Commissioner of Police. I have been asked to express the association's appreciation for the great interest the Commissioner has shown in this matter and for the co-operation he has extended to the association, for which it is most grateful. The association believes that the Bill will be a step forward both in police relations and in public relations. Under the new arrangement the Chairman will be a special magistrate, and appeals from the inquiry committee will be made to the Police Appeal Board which, in the past, has been chaired by a special magistrate.

As a special magistrate will now chair the Police Inquiry Committee, it is appropriate that a local court judge should preside over the Police Appeal Board. I do not hesitate to support this move, and I pay a great tribute to the high standard of our Police Force. The inquiry committee meets relatively infrequently and the appeal board very infrequently. Rarely are inquiries held into the activities of members of the force. I believe we are particularly fortunate in the training the police cadets receive, which is of the highest standard and which reflects great credit on those police officers who instituted the course. We have the very finest examples of young manhood (I suppose I had better not discriminate, so I say young womanhood also) in the force, which enjoys the highest reputation in our community.

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

ADJOURNMENT

At 8.36 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, August 23, at 2 p.m.