

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, August 23, 1973

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

PETITION: TERINGIE HEIGHTS

Mr. DEAN BROWN presented a petition signed by 71 persons stating that the residents of Teringie Heights did not have a continuous supply of high quality water and requesting the Minister of Works to take action to ensure that the Engineering and Water Supply Department take over the responsibility of supplying water to the Teringie Heights area.

Petition received and read.

QUESTIONS

DARTMOUTH DAM

Dr. EASTICK: In the absence of the Premier, will the Deputy Premier assure the House that the Government will not seek to amend the current Dartmouth dam agreement or agree to any alteration of the construction time schedule? Further, will he urgently inquire of the Commonwealth Government why it has apparently reduced its contribution towards this project in the financial year 1973-74 from the originally estimated \$4,800,000 to an estimated \$1,100,000? I ask this question because of the serious concern that has arisen that the Dartmouth dam project may be in jeopardy and that, at the very least, its construction may be deferred or slowed down. This, of course, could have a serious effect on the date by which South Australia might expect to receive its increased water entitlement. We are all aware that, in compiling its Budget document, the Commonwealth Government was largely guided by a report from the task force headed by the former Governor of the Reserve Bank (Dr. Coombs). Indeed, more than 25 of the 141 money-raising or money-saving suggestions contained in that report have been incorporated in the Budget.

The SPEAKER: Order! I think the Leader is getting away from the question he has asked.

Dr. EASTICK: I am referring to the reduction from \$4,800,000 to \$1,100,000, as indicated by the Commonwealth Treasurer. It is likely that the Commonwealth Government will further consider many of the other suggestions put forward. One area investigated by the task force that is of special concern to South Australia relates to the Government's involvement in the construction of the Dartmouth dam. At pages 207 and 208, under the heading "Review of the continuing expenditure policies of the previous Government", the task force report, in item 69, lists the nature of expenditure, the cost, the date of introduction, the nature of the Commonwealth's commitment (that is, its commitment to pay one-quarter of the cost, plus loan, and the States to pay one-half of their own share of the cost), and the purpose of the programme (this is listed as "to expand storage capacity in the Murray River system, to allow increased irrigation, to reduce salinity, and to increase the supply of water in South Australia). It also lists the operation of the programme and states:

The present estimated total cost of the dam is \$64,000,000. Work commenced in April, 1972, with construction of an access road, work camps and clearing of the dam site. A contract has been let for construction of the diversion tunnel, intake shaft, valve chamber and access tunnel; the contract for the dam itself is presently planned to be let in May, 1974.

The most important section is that listed as "No. 7, Comment", because this section appears to be paving the way for Commonwealth Government intervention in the present programme of construction of the dam. It states:

Since the decision was taken on this project, significant changes have occurred in the position of irrigation industries drawing water from the Murray. Sectors of those industries are experiencing difficulties, with Australian Government assistance in a number of forms being provided. Further difficulties are likely with Britain's entry into the European Economic Community. It is understood that South Australia has curtailed irrigation development along the Murray while in New South Wales with further development of the Coleambally temporarily halted, large volumes of water presently being stored in Blowering Dam are unused and could technically be released into the Murray system.

The Deputy Premier has clearly stated on earlier occasions that the commitment of Murray water is already in excess of our entitlement, and the assumption made here must surely fail on that ground. Item 7 continues:

The additional Blowering water would not be adequate to overcome the problem of salinity. A recent meeting of the Premiers of the three States and the Prime Minister agreed to "examine and recommend . . . urgent interim measures . . . to deal with the salinity problems of the Murray River water and the means by which those measures might be financed and operated." The long-term salinity problem was also to be put under review.

The Deputy Premier stated that in this House on an earlier occasion. This item continues:

This review could suggest ways of handling the salinity problem in the short run so that any urgency for the construction of the Dartmouth Dam is reduced. In the light of this review and the changed irrigation situation these could be grounds for deferring any decision to proceed with the main dam pending a full economic evaluation.

The report then lists the possibilities for the Government as either to proceed with the construction of the dam as planned or (very seriously for South Australia) to defer the letting of further contracts. Under "Possibilities" the report states:

- (a) proceed with construction of the dam as planned,
- (b) defer the letting of any further contracts pending the outcome of the review of salinity control needs and measures with the aim of seeing whether the construction of the main dam could be slowed.

The task force has by this submission put into the Government's head a suggestion that action be taken which would be detrimental to the best interests of the people of South Australia and which would hold back the availability of the increased water entitlement that was fought for over a long period. I am particularly worried about the inference that can be drawn from section 9, the last paragraph of this report, which under the heading "Legislation" states:

The unanimous agreement of the three States would be required.

It is on this basis that I ask the Deputy Premier for an assurance that there will be no negotiations on this point. This section of the report concludes as follows:

If obtained, no legislative changes would be necessary.

That is obviously so, but the inference that can be drawn is that legislation may be changed at the Commonwealth level, and this would have a serious effect, in the short term and the long term, on the building of the Dartmouth dam. I believe every person in this State will want these assurances from the Government.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I appreciate the Leader's question, and I think I should make clear at the outset that the report made to the Commonwealth Government by Dr. Coombs contained 141 recommendations, and this

is only one of them. It is obvious that the Commonwealth Government has not accepted many of the recommendations made by Dr. Coombs and his task force.

Dr. Eastick: It has so far accepted 25.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: As the Leader says, it has accepted 25 out of 141.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The Leader, quite correctly, expresses great concern about the requirements in South Australia. However, as I have pointed out many times in the past and as I will do again, even with the present commitments we have regarding those people licensed to divert water from the Murray River and the requirements we have with the Renmark Irrigation Trust area and in Government irrigated areas, we are severely over-committed in the worst possible circumstances, and, even with Dartmouth in operation, we would still be over-committed. With that situation in mind, the South Australian Government certainly would not tolerate any deferment of the Dartmouth project.

Mr. Gunn: You deferred it long enough.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: That is not a very intelligent interjection.

The SPEAKER: The interjection is out of order. The honourable Minister.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The Commonwealth Government has indicated in its Budget that it is to proceed with the programme regarding Dartmouth. The Leader may point out that in each State involved the sum of, I think, \$380,000 was provided in the Budget; at least, a total of \$1,700,000 was to be spent in the current year. Already \$7,000,000 has been spent on the Dartmouth project. It is estimated that the amount to be spent on Dartmouth in this financial year is about \$6,800,000. I refer the Leader to Treasury documents and Budgets in past years in similar circumstances, from which he will find that traditionally the method used by the Treasury is to put in only part of that cost, because it always plans for a supplementary Budget. Because constructing authorities can have difficulties, the Treasury follows this practice and evidently picks up the rest in supplementary Budgets. I can assure the Leader that I have had this matter thoroughly examined. I also assure him that the Commonwealth Government does not intend to delay work on the Dartmouth dam and, as the Leader has pointed out, any alteration to the agreement would need the unanimous agreement of the three States. Certainly, I can assure him that the South Australian Government would not agree to any deferment of the Dartmouth dam so far as any alteration to the legislation was concerned. The Leader need have no fear.

Dr. Eastick: You would resist Commonwealth intervention?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: We would resist any Commonwealth intervention, although I point out again (and I emphasize this to the Leader) that we have never expected any interference. Despite what the Leader has said about the Budget documents, intervention is not really foreshadowed or forecast in those documents, for the reasons I have given. I am sure that, as soon as we can contact the appropriate Commonwealth Government authorities, we will be able to get the assurance that I have given the Leader and, clearly, he need have no doubt about the Dartmouth dam, which I agree is of vital importance to this State.

Later:

The Hon. I. D. CORCORAN: I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Earlier this afternoon the Leader asked me a question about the Dartmouth dam. I have just received a letter from the Prime Minister addressed to the Premier, which states:

My dear Premier,

As you will know, the Government has sought advice from a task force under Dr. H. C. Coombs, on ways in which expenditure on existing projects or programmes might be curtailed, in order to enable the Government's new initiatives to proceed more rapidly. One of the recommendations of the task force which has been endorsed by the Government is that, if possible, the rate of construction of the Dartmouth dam might be slowed down. We have in mind that water requirements might be affected by the results of the current study of measures to mitigate salinity in the Murray River. Depending on short-term projections of needs, there might also be some scope for a temporary allocation of water from the Blowering storage to assist in meeting requirements in the Lower Murray. On the other hand, the growth centre at Albury-Wodonga might also need to be considered.

It would not be our wish to jeopardize necessary supplies in the Murray River system, and we have budgeted for expenditure as planned by the River Murray Commission in the current year, but if some reduction in expenditure could be achieved in the next few years without any harmful effects, I believe it would be to the advantage of the four Governments concerned. This is obviously a complex question, involving consideration of water availability and demand, as well as construction and financial planning. Since the project is under the control of the River Murray Commission, I would propose that the four Ministers responsible for River Murray Commission matters be asked, as a matter of urgency, to consider whether, having regard to all the circumstances, it would be feasible to defer the letting of any further contracts, or to reduce or delay expenditure by other means. It is evident that action would have to be taken quickly if it is to have any chance of success, and I would therefore appreciate your earliest possible advice as to whether you agree that this matter should be studied as suggested.

I repeat the assurance I gave the Leader earlier today that the Government will oppose any slowing down or any deferment of work in connection with Dartmouth, and a case will be prepared accordingly and placed before the Commonwealth Government.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE RENOVATIONS

Mr. HARRISON: Will the Minister of Works say whether the renovations to Parliament House are on schedule and when they are likely to be completed?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The latest report I have is on the programme of works for the fortnight ending August 24, and I trust that that report will be sufficiently up to date for the honourable member. The programme is as follows:

SOUTHERN LIGHT WELL: Demolishing for and forming door openings for the new lift doors on the second floor. Cutting of splayed pockets, dovetailing the new concrete walls of lift shaft into existing brick walls. Erection of form-work, reinforcement and pouring the new concrete lift shaft walls. It is hoped that three 10ft. (3 m) high sections of these walls will be formed during this period. Piping for the concrete pump will be erected from the north end of the House, over the roofs into the light well. This piping is planned to remain in position until the concrete works for the lift shaft and lift motor room are completed.

PLANT ROOM, FIRST FLOOR: Demolishing of walls and ceiling in the billiard room area. Bricking up clear-storey lights on the south wall. Cutting of pockets in brickwork on the south and north walls to provide seating for the steel beams supporting the new plant room floor. Preparatory works for erection of the above beams (erection of steel monorail, fixed to underside of existing roof trusses to serve as hoisting facility). Erection of the floor beams

will be followed by the erection of "lost formwork" for the concrete floor. Also the scaffold will be erected in the northern light well for the removal of the roof and for bricking up windows.

HANDLING PLATFORM: Completion of supporting brickwork, erection of soffit formwork and reinforcement and pouring of the concrete slab forming the handling platform. After completion of the concrete works a new roof flashing will be installed.

Progress on lift shaft was delayed by about two weeks owing to flooding (inclement weather) and collapsing of the wall of excavation. The construction of the plant room floor was also delayed by 14 days. This was caused by various construction problems such as unforeseen presence of ventilation ducts and poor quality of brickwork in some parts. These problems became obvious after the pockets for the floor beams were opened. The progress on both items is planned to be brought in line with the construction schedule within three to four weeks. Overtime will be worked.

The honourable member will realize that progress has been made, and I hope that the work will continue on schedule. It may be necessary for some people in Parliament House to be moved to other accommodation soon so that we can carry out the reconstruction programme. That matter is now being examined and I hope to be able, in the next week or so and after discussion with you, Sir, to tell those people who are required to be moved to other accommodation. Certainly, that accommodation will not be far from Parliament House.

RAILWAY FREIGHT RATES

Mr. CUMBE: In view of the report which was released with the Commonwealth Budget papers and which recommended that freight rates on coal railed from Leigh Creek to Port Augusta be increased, will the Minister of Works say whether he agrees that, if this action was taken, it could have a disastrous effect on the Port Augusta power station and lead to increased electricity charges being levied on the people of South Australia? Will the Minister give an assurance that he will oppose, in the interests of the people of South Australia, any such move by the Commonwealth Labor Government?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I do not expect any action by the Commonwealth Government to increase freight rates on cartage of coal from Leigh Creek to the Port Augusta power station. This was another of the 141 recommendations made by Dr. Coombs to the Government that were not accepted, otherwise [expect that mention of it would have been made in the Budget documents and an approach made to the South Australian Government. The honourable member may not know that an agreement exists between the Commonwealth Government and the State of South Australia that would have to be altered if freight rates were to be increased. The question the honourable member asked is hypothetical. We would not know what effect increased freight rates would have on the economic operation of the Port Augusta power station until we knew the extent of the increase. The headlines in this morning's press are misleading, to say the least. If freight rates were increased, the electricity charges made to consumers throughout the State would have to be looked at but we do not expect that to happen. I have had no indication from the Commonwealth Government about it, nor do I expect any.

In 1969, which is not all that long ago, the then Commonwealth Minister for National Development said in Parliament, in reply to a question, that the operation (the railway from Leigh Creek to Port Augusta) was an efficient one, that many thousands of tons of coal was shifted each year, and that the freight then being paid was covering the costs of operation. It seems to me that the Coombs report might have been made after looking quickly at the

present situation in relation to the fact that the present charges were levied in 1956. Certainly, to my knowledge, and to the knowledge of the Electricity Trust, no investigation has been carried out, since 1969 when the statement was made by the then Minister for National Development that it was satisfactory, to ascertain whether or not there is any need for an adjustment in the freight rate. If the Commonwealth Government does make a belated approach to the South Australian Government about this, I will do everything in my power to resist any change and I am sure the Government would back me in that matter.

Dr. Eastick: And the Opposition.

The Hon. I. D. CORCORAN: Naturally, the Opposition would attempt to get on the bandwagon.

SECONDHAND CAR DEALERS

Mr. SLATER: Can the Attorney-General say whether he will consider amending the regulations under the Second-hand Motor Vehicles Act in view of the claim made by the South Australian Automobile Chamber of Commerce that persons are operating as used car dealers from private premises without a proper dealer's licence?

The Hon. L. J. KING: It is not intended to amend the regulations or the Act for that purpose because, if the dealers are operating in those premises without a licence, they are acting illegally and it is simply a matter of detection and enforcement of the law, so an amendment of the law would not improve that situation. It has, however, been suggested that holders of secondhand motor vehicle dealers' licences are nevertheless operating, at least to some extent, from private premises or from premises that appear to be private homes, thereby deceiving their customers into believing that they are dealing with a private owner, not with a secondhand motor vehicle dealer. At present, I have no concrete evidence that this is so, although it was a possibility that was foreseen and discussed when the original Bill was being formulated; indeed, it was the subject of some discussion in this House when the Bill was before it.

It is not easy to see what can be done by way of legislation to solve this problem. It is, of course, unlawful for a dealer to mislead a customer into the belief that he is not a dealer, and where that is detected there can be a prosecution and the dealer may place his licence in jeopardy. The Automobile Chamber of Commerce has, however, proposed that certain changes in the law relating to the type of premises from which a secondhand motor vehicle dealer might operate would have the effect of inhibiting this type of operation. I am having that proposal investigated and, if it is thought to be useful, a change may be made along those lines. That matter is being considered at present.

TUMBY BAY ROAD

Mr. BLACKER: Has the Minister of Environment and Conservation, in the absence of the Minister of Transport, a reply to the question I asked on August 7 about the Tumby Bay road?

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: Construction to sub-base standard has been completed over the 27-mile (43.46 km) section of the Bratten Way from Tumby Bay to Cummins. The Highways Department's advanced programmes provide for the sealing of this section in 1974-75 and 1975-76, provided funds are made available under the new Commonwealth Aid Roads Act, which is to come into effect on July 1, 1974. The department will continue to make financial assistance available for the maintenance of this road until it is sealed. Traffic volumes on the

Cummins to Mount Hope section of Bratten Way are considerably less than on the Tumby Bay to Cummins section, and consequently no work on the 24-mile (38.63 km) section is planned in the foreseeable future.

APPRENTICE TRAINING

Mr. MAX BROWN: Will the Minister of Labour and Industry ascertain for me whether any consideration is being given to the possibility of altering the training curricula for apprentices, especially those in the fitting and turning, boilermaking, and sheet metal trades, in 1974? I am especially interested in these three trades because of the amalgamation of the unions involved. It seems to me that the time is ripe for serious and constructive ideas to be formulated with a view gradually to having apprentices within these three trades trained in such a way that, as tradesmen, they can interchange to some degree.

The Hon. D. H. McKEE: I shall be pleased to obtain a report for the honourable member.

ELECTRICITY TRUST

Mr. HALL: Can the Minister of Works say whether the Electricity Trust has any long-range planning in hand concerning the site and development of any undertaking it may commence when the Torrens Island power station is completed? I ask this question, bearing in mind the position concerning rail freights in connection with transporting brown coal to Port Augusta, the more important recent announcement of the Government's upgraded policy in respect of brown coal deposits on the Adelaide Plains, and the obvious need for the trust to plan soon a new stage in its development, following construction of the Torrens Island power station. As I believe that this involves an enormously expensive plan, Parliament should know about it, and I therefore ask the Minister whether the trust has such a plan and whether he can tell us about it.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The Electricity Trust is currently working on this matter. The honourable member refers to brown coal deposits on the Adelaide Plains; actually these deposits are near Balaklava, and deposits have also been discovered at Lake Phillipson. Both these fields are being evaluated at present and feasibility studies will be carried out to assess their potential worth. If these deposits can be effectively and economically used, the necessary planning will follow. The honourable member talks about the long term: all these factors are being considered, but I will discuss his question with the General Manager and officers of the trust to see what further information we can give him. The honourable member will be aware that the current undertakings of the Electricity Trust will meet South Australia's needs for a long time hence, and this year we shall be involved in large expenditure on machinery that will meet the State's needs for some time. However, I will ascertain for him whether any other information that will help him is available. Certainly, when the final plans are known I see absolutely no objection at all to informing Parliament of them.

UNIONISM

Mr. WRIGHT: Further to a question I asked the Minister of Labour and Industry last Thursday about improper attitudes of farmers in the Ardrossan area and the infringing of the South Australian Pastoral Industry Award, I ask the Minister whether he can now say whether employers and employer organizations have accepted their responsibilities by supporting the education programme outlined to the House by the Minister last Thursday.

The Hon. D. H. McKEE: I have received a letter from the General Secretary of United Farmers and Graziers of South Australia (Mr. G. E. Andrews), who states:

On behalf of the President of the organization, Mr. J. M. Kerin, I wish to advise that in recognizing our responsibilities as an organization representing the largest number of employers of farm labour in this State and, as respondents to the award, we will co-operate on all necessary occasions to ensure the State Pastoral Award is observed in South Australia.

I have also received a similar letter from Mr. D. H. Kelly of the Stockowners Association of South Australia.

FRUIT JUICE

Mr. ARNOLD: Can the Minister of Works say what action the Government will take to find a market for the 7 000 tons (7 112 tonnes) of navel oranges processed annually by Berri Fruit Juices Co-operative Limited and \$500,000 worth of stock held by the company for use in the soft drink trade because, as a result of the Commonwealth Government's Budget, there would not now appear to be a market for these oranges? Before this Budget was introduced, soft drink manufacturers did not have to pay the 15 per cent sales tax on any of their products that contain 5 per cent of fruit juice. Now that this exemption has been removed, it is unlikely that soft drink manufacturers will continue to use fruit juice in their product, the result being once again a surplus of citrus fruit. What action can be taken to solve this problem?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: We have had plenty of time to look at the matter! I am afraid that it has not been drawn to my attention by the company to which the honourable member has referred, although I am certainly aware of the problem.

Mr. Dean Brown: The same applies to the dairying industry.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Minister of Works.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will examine the honourable member's question and have the officers of the Industrial Development Branch of the Department of the Premier and of Development inquire to see whether something cannot be done to help those affected. As I was made aware of this problem only yesterday, I have not had time to see what help the State Government can give.

Later:

Mr. NANKIVELL: Is the Minister of Education, temporarily representing the Minister of Agriculture, aware that the problem referred to by the member for Chaffey relates primarily to navel oranges, the variety used as fresh fruit, and consequently the one that has been difficult to sell on the home market? Is the Minister aware also that the past sales tax concessions were, in part, approved in order to help solve the problem involved in marketing fruit that was not readily saleable? Further, does the Minister realize that the only alternative outlet for this fruit, if it is not to be made into a fruit concentrate, such as that being made by the Berri Fruit Juices organization, which was referred to by my colleague, will be the fresh fruit market? This, of course, must cause chaotic marketing conditions, and it must undoubtedly depress the price of this fruit by from 30c to \$1 a case. Consequently, as a result of the decision made concerning milk supplied to schoolchildren, will the Minister ask his colleague to approach the Commonwealth Minister to see whether a fresh orange a day, or possibly fresh orange juice made from navel oranges, might be supplied to children as an alternative to milk, so that the problem of marketing these oranges might be temporarily solved until alternative outlets are found?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: First, I quote the relevant part of the Budget speech, as follows:

I turn now to the area of sales tax. The exemption from sales tax on non-alcoholic carbonated beverages containing not less than 5 per cent of Australian fruit juice will be abolished, with effect from tomorrow. The ostensible purpose of the exemption is to enlarge the market for fruit grown in Australia. As such, it is a classic case of using the wrong instruments to achieve an objective. Of the \$25,000,000 a year which the exemption costs, only a fraction finds its way to the fruitgrowers. In abolishing the exemption the Government stands ready to provide such funds as may be necessary to assist with the reconstruction of any sectors of the fruitgrowing industry that may be affected.

I think that is the general background. I do not know what immediate conclusions are possible concerning the effect on the demand for navel oranges, and I do not think that a comment off the top of one's head, such as the comment the honourable member has made, will be accurate.

Mr. Nankivell: Why wasn't the industry informed?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: That is a further question, and the honourable member knows he is not allowed to ask one at this stage.

The SPEAKER: Order! That is out of order, and the Minister cannot answer it.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: No, Mr. Speaker, I would not dare. The demand for non-alcoholic beverages may be such as to produce a relatively small effect on the demand for oranges. However, I will certainly raise the whole matter with the Minister of Agriculture and ensure that, in any discussions that take place with the Commonwealth Government, the possibility of substituting, in schools, orange juice for milk, which will no longer be supplied, will be actively canvassed. The cost of effecting this may well be less than the cost of the possible reconstruction of the sectors of the fruitgrowing industry that may be affected by the change in the sales tax provisions.

UNLEY INTERSECTIONS

Mr. LANGLEY: Has the Minister of Environment and Conservation a reply to my recent question about a "turn left with care" sign at the intersection of Unley Road and Greenhill Road?

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: The "turn left with care" lane at the intersection of Greenhill Road and Unley Road will be completed during the current financial year. An exact date of commencement cannot be given at this time, as this depends on the progress of other works now in hand.

Mr. LANGLEY: When is it intended to install traffic lights at the junction of Unley Road and Wattle Street? At the intersection of Greenhill Road and King William Road a new building was erected before the decision was made to have a "turn left with care" lane provided, but this plan was squashed because of cost. At the intersection of Unley Road and Greenhill Road land was compulsorily acquired. Regarding the intersection to which I refer, an early report and consideration of acquisition, especially in respect of one property, could save the Government money, as reconstruction plans are already in progress.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: Having passed this area last Saturday (after watching Sturts being humbled again), I shall be pleased to get a report for the honourable member.

FREE MILK

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Can the Minister of Education say what action, if any, the Government intends to take to continue the free milk scheme for schoolchildren? A report on the front page of this morning's *Advertiser* canvasses the Commonwealth Government's decision to cut out the free milk scheme for children. The report, which is headed "Tragedy to Stop Milk", refers to children at the Gilles Street Primary School. That is only one school; all schoolchildren in South Australia get this milk. As a parent, I know that it is a greatly appreciated benefit. I remind the Minister that originally this was a State Government scheme which was initiated many years ago by the Playford Government and which was taken over by the Commonwealth Government because of the undoubted benefits to children from its doing so. Now the scheme is to be cut out; there is some talk in the report of replacing it with biscuits. As I do not know what the Minister has in mind, I put the question to him so that he can let us know what action, if any, it is intended to take.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: At this stage it is not possible to say what action will be taken, because it is not possible now to say precisely what will be the details of the modifications proposed by the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. Jennings: Will the scheme be watered down?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The fact is that the information we have is not that the scheme is to be cut out but that it is to be modified, and that free milk is to be provided only in relation to so-called disadvantaged schools. The letter received by the Premier from the Prime Minister indicates that discussions will take place at officer level. It will not be until after those discussions have taken place that we shall be able to make any kind of assessment of the consequences of the Commonwealth Government's decision.

Mr. Millhouse: You are unhappy about this?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The honourable member is trying to ask more than one question, as is his custom. Normally you, Mr. Speaker, would have warned him by this stage.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Minister may not reflect on the Chair.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I am replying to the honourable member's first question: what action does the State Government or the department intend to take? The answer to that is simply that it will not be possible to determine any action that can be taken until discussions have taken place between officers of the Commonwealth and the State to ascertain precisely the nature of the scheme to be implemented.

TRAFFIC REGULATIONS

Mr. PAYNE: Can the Minister of Environment and Conservation say whether it is intended to undertake a consolidation of regulations issued by the Road Traffic Board? I understand that it is about 10 years since the last consolidation took place, numerous amendments and amendments to amendments having been made since then. In addition, I have observed that a decimal numbering system has been introduced that intermingles with the previous numbering system used with regard to the paragraphs in the regulations. This makes it difficult indeed to understand the meaning of the regulations.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I shall be pleased to examine the matter raised by the honourable member, and I will tell him whether the department has any work under way to consolidate the regulations.

PENSIONERS' FLATS

Dr. TONKIN: In the absence of the Premier, who is the Minister in charge of housing, can the Minister of Works say whether any sociological report has been made on the intended construction of a multi-storey block of flats for pensioners in River Street, Marden, and, if it has been, what recommendations have been made? Local residents and social workers have expressed concern at the proposed high-rise development to be occupied by elderly people. In the surrounding area Housing Trust flat development has been on a single-storey level. Other high-rise flat developments that have been proposed for Hackney and Kent Town have not yet been proceeded with. Concern has been expressed that high-rise development is not the best type of accommodation for elderly people.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will have the matter examined and ascertain whether the circumstances are as stated by the honourable member.

KINDERGARTENS

Mr. KENEALLY: As a result of the great involvement of both the State Government and the Australian Government in the provision of kindergartens, can the Minister of Education say what priorities will obtain in selecting sites for kindergartens? The provision of kindergartens in my district is a matter of great concern to both my constituents and me. Accordingly, I should be pleased to know what priorities the department will have in providing kindergartens.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I cannot give a precise answer to the honourable member, because only two days ago we sent off our submission to the interim committee of the pre-schools commission established by the Commonwealth Government. That submission sets out certain propositions as to the priorities that should apply. In general our submission is that we should give the highest priority to those areas of the State which are underprovided for in terms of pre-school facilities and which are relatively more underprivileged than are other areas of the State. Whether or not that kind of submission is accepted remains to be seen. The way the commission approaches the submissions that have been made by the Education Department and by the Kindergarten Union will also undoubtedly affect the outcome. The short reply to the honourable member's question is that, if the Commonwealth pre-schools commission makes funds available in terms that are in broad agreement with the submission of the Education Department to the committee, the provision of pre-schools on a priority basis will be for those areas that are underprovided for and relatively underprivileged, and therefore less able to establish a kindergarten in normal circumstances.

Mr. RODDA: Will the Minister of Education say what criteria, other than need, will be used for the allocation of subsidies to kindergartens? I think that on September 12 last year the Minister announced that 22 schools in this State would qualify for subsidies under his Government's policy. There are many kindergartens in my area (Bordertown is one of them) that are anxiously awaiting recognition from the Minister and his department. I realize that Bordertown may not be classed as an underprivileged area.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I think the question of State subsidies on a \$1 for \$1 basis for the building of kindergartens is something separate from the broader question of the provision of a pre-school system throughout Australia within a period of six years, which is the commitment entered into by the Commonwealth Government.

My understanding is that that system will be a free system: that is, free in the sense that the State system of primary and secondary education is free. When the capital subsidies were introduced last year at a State level they were seen as a means of encouraging the establishment of kindergartens where the State Government could not provide the massive financial support that the Commonwealth Government can provide. I do not know whether the Bordertown kindergarten is affiliated to the kindergarten Union. If it is affiliated, I am not aware of an application having been made to me in relation to the matter. I will certainly check, but I would want to see fully audited statements of accounts from the kindergarten indicating just how much money had been raised and when it was intended to commence building.

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

Mr. DEAN BROWN: In the statement with which the Treasurer explained the 1973-74 Loan Estimates reference is made to the Australian Government. Can the Minister of Works, as Deputy Premier, say whether the Premier or any of his Ministers have communicated directly or indirectly with the Prime Minister, his Ministers, or his staff, regarding the use of the phrase "Australian Government"? If such communication has been made, has the Premier used the phrase as a result of those discussions? To which Government does the phrase refer? There is no mention anywhere in the Commonwealth Constitution of any Government with the name "Australian Government".

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Davenport.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: It has been widely speculated that this phrase is used by persons who wish to see all government centralized in Canberra. Because of the confusion caused by the use of this phrase, members of this Government should refer only to those Governments mentioned in the Commonwealth Constitution.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: This is a question of very great moment!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister of Works.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: To the best of my knowledge, the Prime Minister and his Ministers refer to the Government of which they are members as the Australian Government. Moreover, I recently heard on the grapevine that a circular had been issued to all Commonwealth Government departments instructing departmental officers that they were in future to refer to what we used to know as the Federal Government or the national Government as the Australian Government. That is a big decision, I know, but that is as I understand the position: in future they must refer to the national Government as the Australian Government, and that is exactly what they will do.

Mr. Nankivell: It is the Commonwealth Government.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: When we go overseas and refer to the Federal Government, everyone knows what we are talking about, don't they! We do not mention the Australian Government: that would be rather foolish! So (and may I speak for the Premier in his absence) the policy of the State Government is, unless we forget, to refer to the national Government as the Australian Government, because that is what it is.

SCHOOL EFFLUENT

Mr. HOPGOOD: Has the Minister of Education had an opportunity to have investigated the condition of the girls' toilet block at Christies Beach High School and can he report to the House on that subject? I refer to a report on page 3 of this morning's *Advertiser* emanating, I believe, from the Miscellaneous Workers Union, which made allegations about effluent bubbling up through drinking fountains in that toilet block.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: An investigation took place first thing this morning, following telegrams sent by Mr. Cavanagh (Secretary of the Miscellaneous Workers Union) to me as Minister and also, I believe, to the member for Mawson. At the same time as Mr. Cavanagh sent those telegrams, he apparently informed the *Advertiser*, so that that newspaper could undoubtedly keep a check on what, I, as Minister, and the honourable member were doing. Apparently, Mr. Cavanagh did not trust us to do the job. I have the following report:

At 9.00 a.m. this morning the Headmaster of Christies Beach High School (Mr. C. R. Bruce) reported to me—this is a report to the Director-General of Education— that before 8.30 this morning, three Public Buildings Department officers and the mechanical cleaning unit of the Engineering and Water Supply Department were in attendance at the school. The Engineering and Water Supply unit was sent away as being unnecessary. The blockage was in a goose-neck in the floor of the girls' toilet block and was caused by a small piece of concrete and an accumulation of hair from the hand basins. The blockage caused water to rise in the overflow basin of the drinking fountain outside the toilet. This overflow was water only. The Public Buildings Department reported that it was impossible for any lavatory effluent to get to the fountain area. The matter was completely rectified by 9.15 a.m. Mr. Bruce stated that the blockage was not reported to him.

The first he knew about it was the contact made with him by the *Advertiser* last night. The report continues:

If it had been, from past experience, the matter would have been fixed by the Public Buildings Department within the hour. He was particularly annoyed, as were others at the school, that there should be such a waste of public money in involving officers of the Public Buildings Department and the Engineering and Water Supply Department over a routine matter which would have been attended to very quickly and simply if it had been reported.

Generally, I support that report. It seems to me that in these situations people who have this sort of complaint made to them should contact directly the people on the spot, make the report to them, and give them the opportunity to remedy the defect quickly. We would be involved in a much more economical and effective operation if that were done.

STUDENT ALLOWANCES

Mr. CHAPMAN: Can the Minister of Education say what progress, if any, has been made regarding increases of student teachers' living allowances following recent appeals by those involved? Several student teachers have brought this matter to my notice, seeking not only an increase in the allowance but the introduction of machinery whereby the allowance will be automatically adjusted in line with national or State wage increases.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: It has never been the practice to adjust student teachers' living allowances in line with wage increases, because the living allowance has never been regarded as a wage. It is equivalent to a scholarship payment; therefore, it is adjusted in the way scholarship payments in general are adjusted. In no sense is the student teacher engaged in providing services of a kind that would be involved if that student teacher was employed.

The position that has been taken, as I have explained, is that we do not intend to review the basic allowance. The Barnes committee, comprising the Assistant Under Treasurer (Mr. Barnes), the Auditor-General (Mr. Byrne), and the Director of the Salisbury College of Advanced Education (Mr. Coggins), will review the other special allowances, including the living allowance.

Mr. Chapman: When will that happen?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I have only recently announced that the Barnes committee will be called together for that purpose. I may add that the special allowance (not the basic allowance) was reviewed towards the end of last year and an increase of about 10 per cent made from the beginning of this year. The general position is complicated by the fact that we intend to phase out bonded scholarships over a period of years. Because of this, we do not want to move significantly away from the maximum rates that are paid under the Commonwealth allowances. I have asked the committee to keep that in mind. I have also given an assurance that, although we do not intend to review the basic allowance at this stage, it will not be allowed to fall below the maximum allowance paid under the Commonwealth scholarship arrangements, so if the review of the Commonwealth allowances that is now taking place leads to an increase in the maximum allowance under that scheme, making it greater than any allowance we pay, our allowances will be adjusted accordingly. Apart from that, the special allowances for hardship, living away from home, marriage, and dependent children are being reviewed at present and I think this review will take some time to complete. I am asking the committee to try to submit a proposal to introduce some generalized means-testing arrangements with respect to the allowances paid to students who experience some kind of hardship or who are married with dependent children.

SEWERAGE WORKS

Mr. EVANS: As the Commonwealth Budget unfortunately does not include \$2,000,000 for South Australia for sewerage work, will the Minister of Works say whether a reduction will be made in the original Engineering and Water Supply Department sewerage work proposals for 1973-74? On page 13 of the Treasurer's explanation of the Loan Estimates, there is the following statement:

The Government—

that is, the South Australian Government—

is proceeding on the assumption that a grant of at least \$2,000,000 will be received from the Australian Government in 1973-74 towards a speeding up of the sewerage programme. If that amount is not forthcoming, it will be necessary to revise the departmental programme.

The amount made available for South Australia in the Commonwealth Budget is only \$1,600,000, whilst \$11,200,000 is made available for New South Wales, \$9,300,000 for Victoria, \$3,800,000 for Western Australia, \$3,100,000 for Queensland, and \$1,000,000 for Tasmania. It seems from this that the Minister of Works faces the situation of having to revise his programme and I should like an assurance that in any revised programme the established areas lacking sewerage will not be deprived of the work that originally was expected to be carried out this financial year. That is the reason for the question, there being a reduction of 20 per cent in the amount that we originally expected to receive from the Commonwealth Government.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The minimum amount that the honourable member has mentioned is \$1,600,000 more than we have received from any previous Australian Government, but the honourable member speaks as though

it is a reduction. The reason why Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane are to get more than we get is that in the past all South Australian Governments have been assiduous in implementing a progressive plan of sewerage in the metropolitan area of Adelaide, so much so that in this case we have suffered.

Dr. Eastick: Will we benefit somewhere else?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Yes. I thank the Leader for that interjection. We have in South Australia a specific problem that does not exist in the other capital cities, namely, the quality of our water. The Australian Government has promised to treat that problem in South Australia as it is treating the problems of the backlog of sewerage works in the other States, so we are looking forward to receiving financial assistance from the Australian Government next year to get on with our programme of water treatment.

Dr. Eastick: In 1974-75?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I will get back to the question, after being side-tracked by the penetrating interjection by the Leader!

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: There will be no need to alter our sewerage programme for this financial year. We pointed out in connection with the Loan Estimates that, if we thought the amount was not forthcoming, we would adjust not the programme but the Loan funds. That is what we will do. There will be no change in our plans for sewerage this year, and I give that assurance to the honourable member. Is he absolutely sure he has heard it?

Mr. Evans: Yes.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The assurance is there. There will be no change in the plans.

PENSIONERS' TRANSPORT

Mr. RUSSACK: In the absence of the Minister of Transport, has the Minister of Environment and Conservation a reply to my question about bus transport between Kadina and Wallaroo on week days?

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: Until late last year there were two bus operators at Kadina who ran local passenger services, which included a service between Kadina and Wallaroo. However, these services have been allowed to lapse, apparently because of lack of patronage. This unfortunately follows the trend in other country centres where similar type services have been forced to cease operating also. An added difficulty in providing buses to supply a local service to and from the Wallaroo Hospital on week days would be that buses are required to transport children home from school in the afternoon. To supply an extra bus to transport visitors and outpatients to and from the hospital would not be an economically viable proposition for bus operators. It is therefore unlikely that a better service can be provided to or from the Wallaroo Hospital. It is pointed out that the operator of the passenger service between Moonta Bay and Kadina and between Moonta Bay and Adelaide has been giving concessions to pensioners since the inception of the road service. As a result of the Government's decision to include country operators in the scheme for the reimbursement of up to 80 per cent of the loss they incur in granting concessions to pensioners, this operator will be reimbursed on concession fares granted from July 1, 1973.

GRAZING RIGHTS

Mr. McANANEY: Will the Minister of Works ask the Minister of Forests to have investigated the practice of the Woods and Forests Department issuing grazing rights in their forests, particularly in the Kuitpo area? When these grazing rights are leased out for sheep and cattle grazing in the forest, kangaroos and other wildlife start feeding on the properties of neighbouring farmers. I think it would be a good thing if these grazing rights were not issued.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: Yes, I will take the matter up with my colleague.

ODNADATTA ROAD

Mr. ALLEN: Will the Minister of Environment and Conservation, in the absence of the Minister of Transport, ascertain what is the condition of the road between Marree and Oodnadatta and what steps are being taken to upgrade it? Yesterday's *Advertiser* contains an article under the heading "Tourists ignore warnings". It states:

Police and Royal Automobile Association officials are concerned about tourists and tourist buses which are ignoring warning signs about road conditions in the outback. A photograph of a warning sign appears with the article. The article continues:

On Monday a Darwin-bound Geelong bus with 33 school-children was bogged for about seven hours until late in the night on the Oodnadatta road about 16 miles northwest of Marree. Police at Marree said the bus driver had ignored a Highways Department road sign which warned that it was impassable to all but light four-wheel-drive vehicles.

The article concludes by saying that the Oodnadatta road has been impassable to all but light four-wheel-drive vehicles for about two months. Recently, in this House I drew attention to the condition of this road, pointing out that since last January it had been out of service to everything but four-wheel-drive vehicles for over half of the time. On November 2, 1971, I asked the then Minister of Roads and Transport to apply for a beef roads grant from the Commonwealth Government in respect of this road when the Marree to Alice Springs narrow gauge railway line was closed. The Minister replied at length, concluding by saying:

However, the proposed construction of the Commonwealth railway between Tarcoola and Alice Springs, and the closure of the existing narrow gauge railway between Marree and Alice Springs, will have some effect on road-usage patterns in the northern pastoral areas. For this reason, the Highways Department will carry out an investigation into the effects of the changed pattern to determine whether any approach to the Commonwealth for assistance for certain roads can be justified.

Up to the present, however, we have seen no results of that investigation.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I have seen the report in yesterday's *Advertiser* and I will ask the department to see what progress has been made since the report referred to was submitted.

ALICE SPRINGS RAILWAY

Mr. GUNN: Will the Minister of Environment and Conservation assure the House that the Government will do everything possible to ensure that the proposed railway line from Tarcoola to Alice Springs will be completed as soon as possible? As I understand that problems have arisen in the negotiations between the South Australian Government and the Commonwealth Government, and in view of the recommendation of the Coombs committee that this matter should be considered further, will the Minister say what is the attitude of the South Australian Government?

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: The attitude of the South Australian Government is that this work will proceed and I have been told that an announcement has been made recently to this effect by the Commonwealth Minister for Transport (Mr. Jones). In fact, the report of his remarks appears in today's *Advertiser*. As the honourable member is so interested in this matter, I will read that report. It states:

Agreement has been reached about the proposed standard gauge railway between Tarcoola and Alice Springs.

Mr. Jones was reported as having told Mr. L. G. Wallis, a member of the Commonwealth Parliament, that construction would start as soon as details were finalized.

ROAD TOLL

Mr. BECKER: Can the Minister of Environment and Conservation, in the absence of the Minister of Transport, say whether the Government has any new proposals that will help reduce the road toll in South Australia? I understand that so far this year there has been the same number of road deaths as there was up to this time last year. I also refer to the police surveillance on the road at Easter time this year and the success of that operation.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I am well aware that my colleague is constantly considering the problem of the road toll. I will obtain information from his department as to what new activities are being considered within that department.

SCHOOL TRANSPORT

Mr. WARDLE: Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I recently asked about school transport?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: As the honourable member would know, departmental buses are already used fairly extensively to take schoolchildren on educational excursions, particularly from country schools. Because of problems of cost and practicability, I cannot agree to an increase in the departmental fleet that would be necessary if the use of departmental buses for educational excursions was extended to all schools. Any increase in the fleet for school excursions only must result in increased costs, which would outweigh the present advantages to schools which may hire departmental vehicles.

PRICES

Dr. EASTICK: Will the Attorney-General say whether consumer protection is working? A press report today clearly indicates that there is confusion in the retail industry about cigarette prices and that, while some people know when the price increase will operate, others are not certain about it. The same can be said about the increase in the price of petrol. In fact, some petrol resellers have said that the companies will not supply further fuel (even though these supplies would normally be delivered yesterday or today) until Friday, when the increased charge will apply, affecting not only the reseller but also, as expected and announced, members of the motoring public. This appears to be an excellent example of considerable confusion being created at the expense of consumers, some being required to pay the increased price and others not having to pay it.

The Hon. L. J. KING: As I have no knowledge of the facts, or alleged facts, to which the honourable member refers, I cannot comment on them. However, if he is asking whether the consumer protection legislation that has been passed in this Parliament during the last 3½ years is working, the answer is "Yes".

Later:

Mr. BECKER: Can the Minister assisting the Premier say whether the Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs has sufficient inspectors to check on the prices charged by retailers for cigarettes? Last evening, on being charged 55c for a packet of cigarettes, I challenged the proprietor, who informed me that this was the new price. I have also received complaints from service station proprietors that petrol was to be delivered to them yesterday but that it will now not be delivered until after midnight—

The SPEAKER: Order! The latter part of the question is out of order, because it has already been asked and answered.

SCHOOL CLEANERS

Mr. HARRISON: Can the Minister of Education say whether the proposed new award covering school cleaners provides for individual contracts or weekly employment as employees of the Education Department?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The proposed new agreement that I think has virtually been completed involves a continuation of cleaning on a contract basis, as has been the case in the past. In future, we may have to consider a partial, or even perhaps a complete, change to daily-paid or weekly-paid employees, but that is not intended at present.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT

Mr. COUMBE: As certain financial grants have been made to South Australia for transport purposes, and as these appear to be mainly for railway works, plus new Municipal Tramways Trust buses, can the Minister of Environment and Conservation, on behalf of the Minister of Transport, at last tell the House what plans, if any, the Government has for upgrading the metropolitan road system to provide for an improvement in public road transport? If the Minister cannot reply to that question, which has been asked several times, I ask whether he appreciates that, quite apart from the monetary grants to which I have referred, I have been waiting in vain, for at least one month, for a reply from the Minister of Transport regarding the overall plan. Therefore, I now request at least common courtesy with regard to my getting a reply. I ask whether that reply can be given at the latest by next week.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I shall be pleased to find out what has happened with regard to the question asked by the honourable member, and I will get a reply as quickly as I can.

PATENTS

Mr. DUNCAN: Did the Minister of Environment and Conservation see in yesterday's *Advertiser* a report concerning the electric car being developed at Flinders University? Can he say whether the Government will own the patents with regard to this development and what steps the Government will take to ensure that this vehicle, which is being developed in South Australia, will be produced here?

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I read the article with great interest, both as Minister of Environment and Conservation and also as Minister representing the Minister of Transport. I am aware that, through the Minister of Transport, the Government has supplied funds towards research work being undertaken on this project. Although the details of the assistance to and the requirements of the people developing this car are not known to me at

this stage, I shall be pleased to find out the position and let the honourable member know.

Later:

Mr. EVANS: I ask my question of the Minister of Education, as the Minister next in line, other Ministers being busy. Will the Minister obtain for me a report on whether Government departments and semi-government authorities such as the Electricity Trust recognize patent rights? In the past, when there have been disputes over patent rights, Governments have told the companies or persons concerned, "We will fight you right through to the High Court." I am referring here not only to the present Government but also to previous Governments. There is one notable instance about a chair that was used in a display overseas, I think in Japan. That incident involved a Belair resident who held the patent. Another instance has been brought to my notice, involving patent rights to a light, and the person concerned did not think that he would be able to fight the matter through to the High Court. The member for Elizabeth has asked a question today about whether the Government or the inventor would hold the patent rights to an electric motor car. However, it appears that who holds the rights does not matter; Governments do not recognize patent rights.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I think that the safest thing to do in all the circumstances is ask the Premier, when he returns, to examine the honourable member's question and provide a reply in due course.

QUEENSTOWN SHOPPING CENTRE

Mr. MILLHOUSE: In the absence of the Premier, will the Minister of Works give an undertaking that no action will be attempted by legislation or otherwise to prevent issues arising out of the Queenstown shopping centre controversy from being litigated? As the Minister may remember, there is much controversy about the Queenstown shopping centre, and there is a rumour (and it is no more than a rumour, but it is either to scotch it, as I hope the Minister will do, or to prove that it is more than a rumour that I ask the question) that not only does the Government propose, if the litigation goes in favour of Myers, to introduce legislation to nullify the effect of the decision (that is a threat the Premier has already made) but that the Government proposes to introduce legislation immediately to take away from the courts the jurisdiction they have in the matter. I therefore seek an assurance from the Minister.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The answer is "No".

Later:

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I must direct this question to the senior Minister remaining on the front bench, in the absence of the Premier and the Deputy Premier, and I presume that is the Minister of Education.

Members interjecting:

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Ministers have an obligation to be here during Question Time. I ask the Minister whether the Government intends to introduce, next week, legislation to prevent issues arising out of the Queenstown shopping centre controversy from being litigated.

The SPEAKER: Order! I take it that that question is similar in substance to one asked previously.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: No, Sir, with respect, it is not. May I explain the question, to satisfy you?

The SPEAKER: It must be a definite explanation to show that it is not the same question.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I have the question that I asked previously, and I will read it for you. I asked for an undertaking that no action would be attempted by legisla-

tion or otherwise to prevent the issues arising out of the Queenstown shopping centre controversy from being litigated. The answer was in a word, and I cannot complain about that: it was one word, "No", that no undertaking would be given that there would be no action taken. The question I ask now is whether the Government intends, in view of the fact that there is no undertaking that it will not do it—

The Hon. L. J. King: You read your question and the reply in relation to it.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I have my question.

The Hon. L. J. King: I noted the question, too.

The SPEAKER: Order! I will have to rule that the question asked now is similar in substance to the question asked previously.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Do you rule it out of order?

The SPEAKER: I rule it out of order.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Well, I hope we get the answer somehow.

The SPEAKER: Order!

SOUTH ROAD CROSSING

Mr. WRIGHT: Will the Minister of Environment and Conservation have investigated the St. Joseph's school crossing on South Road near Kintore Avenue to ascertain whether or not the installation of indicators of the press-button type would improve the chaotic position that now exists during the period when children are arriving at or leaving the school? The Principal of the school tells me that in the morning particularly there is chaos because the crossing is used not only by children attending the St. Joseph's school but also by girls from the girls technical high school, boys from the Marist Brothers school, and children from the primary school. The principal points out that, when there are many children (some big, some small) at the crossing at this time, incidents have occurred when school monitors have been abused, punched and kicked by bigger children. Moreover, the principal states that at 8.30 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. the traffic along this road is very heavy. I should appreciate the Minister's help in regard to this difficult and dangerous situation.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I will certainly have the matter examined and let the honourable member know what can be done.

DISQUALIFIED DRIVERS

Dr. TONKIN: Has the Minister of Environment and Conservation a reply to my recent question about the present intention of the Government with regard to disqualified drivers?

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I understand that the honourable member asked whether legislation relating to disqualified drivers would be introduced this session. There is no proposal to introduce legislation this session for that purpose.

WHYALLA COURTHOUSE

Mr. MAX BROWN: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question about the Whyalla courthouse?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The contract for alterations and extensions at the Whyalla courthouse and police accommodation is proceeding satisfactorily. It is expected that all building work will be completed in the latter part of September, 1973. Furnishing and equipment of the building will be commenced immediately thereafter and should be completed in about two weeks.

UPPER STURT WATER SUPPLY

Mr. EVANS: Can the Minister of Works say whether the application for reticulated water to be supplied to the people of Upper Sturt and Manoah has been finalized?

People in the Upper Sturt community, mainly through the Emergency Fire Services branch, have approached the Premier for water to be made available to the area. On March 15 this year, I wrote a letter to the Minister, through the Premier. As Minister assisting the Premier, the Minister of Environment and Conservation replied to me on April 9, saying that the matter was being investigated. As people in this community are concerned, because summer is not far away, they have asked me to ascertain from the Minister whether their application for water has been finalized.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: As I am unable to reply off the cuff, I will get a report.

CHRISTIE DOWNS INTERSECTION

Mr. HOPGOOD: Will the Minister of Environment and Conservation obtain a report on the redesigning of the intersection of Brodie Road and Beach Road at Christie Downs? Because oncoming traffic from the right is shielded by a hill from the view of drivers whose cars are emerging from Brodie Road, some redesign of the intersection is needed. I understand that both the Housing Trust and the Highways Department have been involved in this redesign. However, negotiations have been protracted and are allegedly delaying a most important project that involves a private organization in my district, hence my concern that something be done quickly.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I will look into the matter and obtain a reply for the honourable member.

WHEAT SILOS

Mr. GUNN: Can the Minister of Environment and Conservation say why the Government intends to introduce legislation to provide for the zoning of silos? It has been brought to my attention that Ministers are negotiating with rural organizations in relation to introducing legislation that will zone farmers to the silo closest to which they live. What advantages will this have for rural industry?

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: If negotiations were proceeding at this level, I would not be able to comment until such negotiations were completed. At this stage I have nothing further to add.

WHEAT QUOTAS

Mr. ALLEN: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my question concerning the transfer of wheat quotas to an annual basis to provide for the acceptance of non-quota wheat?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: In accordance with the Government's programme as indicated in the policy speech, legislation is being drafted to provide for the transfer of wheat quotas on an annual basis and for the acceptance of non-quota wheat; that is, wheat which has been produced by traditional wheatgrowers who are not quota-holders. When the legislation is presented to Parliament, I hope the measure will receive the support of the honourable member and his colleagues in the interests of the wheat farming community.

BRUCellosIS

Mr. McANANEY: Will the Minister of Works ask the Minister of Agriculture to obtain a report on the progress of the brucellosis and tuberculosis eradication schemes? When is it likely that these schemes will be completed? Are they likely to be hindered in any way by the Commonwealth Government's action in ceasing to participate?

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

MODBURY CORRIDOR

Mrs. BYRNE: Will the Minister of Environment and Conservation obtain a report on the proposed Modbury corridor near the Hope Valley reservoir, Willowbrook oval, at Holden Hill, and Salisbury Heights? I last referred to this matter on July 29, 1971, when I was informed that the route of the Modbury corridor had been reviewed in detail and a revised alignment determined. Details of the new alignment were supplied to me. However, there is currently a rumour in the district that the route has again been slightly changed and will cause additional disturbance to some properties. I seek a report on whether this rumour is correct.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I shall be pleased to obtain that report and to inform the honourable member.

FRUITGROWERS' FINANCES

Mr. ARNOLD: Has the Attorney-General a reply to my recent question about grower finances in regard to Brookers (Australia) Limited?

The Hon. L. J. KING: Proceedings have been commenced in the Supreme Court by the two major unsecured creditors, J. Gadsden Proprietary Limited and Simpson Pope Limited, for an order that the liquidator of Brookers (Australia) Limited (in liquidation) admit their claims in the winding up. The result will be of interest to all other unsecured creditors. In the meantime the Crown Solicitor has prepared a detailed report, which can be studied at the Attorney-General's office by the fruitgrowers or their representatives. I will provide a copy of the Crown Solicitor's report for the honourable member's information.

ZONE 5 SETTLERS

Mr. CHAPMAN: Has the Minister of Education, in the temporary absence from the Chamber of the Minister of Works, a reply to my recent question concerning soldier settlement rentals in zone 5?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The rentals for the war service land settlement leases in zone 5 were arrived at by negotiation between the Commonwealth, the State and the settlers.

TORRENS BRIDGE

Mr. COUMBE: Can the Minister assisting the Premier say whether the Government has received any approaches from parties interested in the construction of a footbridge across the Torrens River to provide access to the festival centre? Does the Minister appreciate that, whilst there are eight bridges in my district that cross the river, requests have been made for such a footbridge? Further, can the Minister say whether the Government, perhaps in conjunction with the Adelaide City Council, has been approached on this matter, and, if it has been, what has been the result of those approaches?

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I know no more than I have read in recent weeks about interest in the possibility of having some form of crossing of the river in connection with parking for the Adelaide Festival Centre patrons. I do not know what approaches have been made to the Premier and I shall be pleased to check the matter and let the honourable member know.

ADDITIONAL RESERVOIRS

Mr. McANANEY: In the temporary absence of the Minister of Works, can the Minister of Education say whether the Government has plans to build a reservoir on either Bremer River or Mount Barker Creek? Further, can he say what the Government intends regarding the disposal of effluent from Monarto and whether it will be diverted into Bremer River or Mount Barker Creek?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: In the absence of the Leader of the Liberal Movement—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I intended to say that I was pleased to receive a question from the member for Heysen.

The SPEAKER: The Minister shall reply to the question asked by the member for Heysen.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that that is exactly what I intend to do. I shall be pleased to consult my colleague to find out what plans, if any, there are to construct dams in the two places the honourable member has mentioned.

NARACOORTE HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. RODDA: Can the Minister of Education now say when the assembly-shelter area at Naracoorte High School is likely to be completed?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The latest school construction lists indicate that the assembly-shelter area at Naracoorte High School will be completed in October this year and that the boys' craft centre will be completed in November. A dual wooden classroom at Penola Primary School has been inspected and is considered suitable for transfer to Naracoorte. This will be used to ease staff accommodation problems. It is expected that transfer of the building will be made within the next three weeks, depending upon the weather. That is better service than the honourable member would have got from the Leader of the Liberal Movement when he was Premier of the State.

DRUGS

Dr. TONKIN: Has the Attorney-General, representing the Minister of Health, a reply to my question about drug abuse and criminal activity?

The Hon. L. J. KING: Although it is the intention of the Police Department in the near future to extend the analysis and assessment of crime statistics, it is not intended to include research into the effect of drug abuse as a motivating factor in criminal activity.

COMPANY INVESTIGATION

Mr. BECKER: Has the Attorney-General a reply to my question of August 8 about Co-operative Travel Society Limited?

The Hon. L. J. KING: Co-operative Travel Society Limited is a society registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act, 1923-1971. In September, 1972, the Registrar of Companies informally investigated the circumstances of this society, basing the investigation upon an inspection of documents lodged in his office by the society and other societies and companies associated with it, and upon information obtained from directors of the society who were interviewed by the Senior Inspector of Companies. The Crown Solicitor has expressed the view that the information available does not disclose the commission of any criminal offence by any officer of the society. He considers, however, that further investigation is desirable with a view to ascertaining whether moneys invested by members of the public are endangered, but that the present legislation does not authorize a formal investigation. It does not appear that the matter can be taken any further at the present time. Consideration is being given to an amendment to the law which would enable investigations, of the type authorized under the Companies Act, to be conducted into societies registered

under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act. A final decision cannot usefully be made until the contents of the proposed national Companies Bill are revealed.

PINNAROO ROAD

Mr. RODDA: Has the Minister of Environment and Conservation, in the absence of the Minister of Transport, a reply to my question concerning work on the Pinnaroo-Portland road?

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: The Highways Department has provided for an expenditure of \$60,000 on the Bordertown-Frances section during the present financial year and it is hoped to complete the work in 1974-75, subject to the availability of funds. It is considered that this priority is reasonable.

ONKAPARINGA MAIN

Mr. WARDLE: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question about the Onkaparinga main?

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The likely cost of undergrounding the section of the Murray Bridge to Onkaparinga trunk main where it passes through the designated city of Monarto would be \$2,218,000. This cost has been included as part of the total cost of providing a water supply to Monarto and has been taken into consideration by the consultants who were engaged by the National Urban and Regional Development Authority to report on the feasibility of the proposed city.

SCHOOL TERM DATES

Mr. MILLHOUSE: The Minister of Education will no doubt welcome the question which I desire to put to him. Will the Minister tell the House the dates of school terms for 1974? I understand there has been some confusion and hesitation about the dates of school terms for next year and that they have not yet been announced. As we are approaching the final quarter of 1973, I ask the question to give the Minister an opportunity to announce those dates now.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: No. The dates for next year, under the system of determining dates which normally operates, have already been announced. What is in doubt at present is whether or not we shall shorten the second term by one week and lengthen the first term by one week, and no decision has yet been made on that point. The method of determining the date for the commencement day of the first term is now being considered. I intend to make a submission to Cabinet on Monday and some time after that an announcement should be available.

Mr. Millhouse: Perhaps in the House on Tuesday?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: It may be of sufficient interest to justify the announcement the day before to the general public at large.

Mr. Millhouse: I see.

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

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I know that the honourable, learned, gallant, but interjecting member for Mitcham would like everyone to know on Monday.

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order and the honourable Minister must not reply to them.

Mr. Millhouse: That is why I asked the question today.

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the honourable member for Mitcham.

MULTIPLICATION

Mr. BECKER: Has the Minister of Education a reply to my recent question on the teaching of multiplication tables?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The course of instruction does require the teaching of number facts up to 12 times 12, but in most schools the tables are not extended beyond 10 times 10. Courses of instruction are presently under review and this matter is being looked at. May I also say that we are concerned with the reading and number achievement in the primary schools and these matters are kept constantly under review. Indeed, it is intended to institute a system whereby we can get regular information as to the achievement levels in both of these areas.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: PEDESTRIAN SUBWAY

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL (Minister of Environment and Conservation): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: During the Address in Reply debate on Tuesday, August 7, 1973, the member for Hanson criticized the construction of a pedestrian subway under the Glenelg tramway tracks at South Plympton. He indicated that the cost was \$120,000 and that the gradient was very steep. To establish the facts, I discussed this matter with the General Manager of the Municipal Tramways Trust, who has informed me that the subway, including all ancillary work such as protective fences and the preparation of the approaches, cost a total of \$31,000, which is nowhere near the \$120,000 referred to by the honourable member. The subway gradient is one in 12. At a maximum of 30ft. (9.14 m) spacings there is a rest slab, which is flat. These standards conform to the recommended code for paraplegics which is designed to allow subways to be negotiated by a person in a wheelchair. A hand rail has also been installed to assist persons using the subway. People do leave rubbish and other deposits in the subway and it is not possible to prevent this. The trust's permanent way employees clean out the subway each week.

At 4 o'clock, the bells having been rung:

The SPEAKER: Call on the business of the day.

LAND COMMISSION BILL

The Hon. G. R. BROOM HILL (Minister of Environment and Conservation) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to establish the South Australian Land Commission; to prescribe its powers and functions; and for purposes incidental thereto. Read a first time.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It deals with an important aspect of the Government's policy of arresting spiralling land prices, and of promoting orderly and efficient urban expansion and development. The establishment of a Land Commission to acquire and release land on a large scale reflects the principal recommendation of the Government's Working Party on the Stabilization of Land Prices. The basic object of the South Australian Land Commission will be to ensure that residential land is freely available at fair prices. In pursuance of that object, the commission will attempt to promote integration and economy in the development of land for urban expansion in both the public and private sector. The commission will have power to provide, or to arrange for the provision of, community services, facilities and amenities so that urban expansion and development can take place with proper regard to those human values that are involved, but unfortunately are so often neglected, in the implementation of urban development programmes.

The commission will assemble, hold and manage large parcels of land that is presently, or potentially, required for urban expansion. It will have power to develop and improve land for that purpose, ensuring that the land is properly serviced before being made available for its planned purpose. The South Australian Government will co-operate with the commission in the performance of its functions. To this end, the activities of various State public utilities will be co-ordinated to provide an integrated development programme. In particular, the State Planning Authority will co-operate closely with the commission to ensure that the planning of the commission's projects will be of a very high order. The development of land acquired by the commission will be undertaken in various ways. The work will be allocated both to public utilities and private contractors with a view to achieving maximum efficiency in the commission's operations. Serviced home sites will be made available to the public on a leasehold basis, the fee simple of the land remaining in the commission. Care will be taken to ensure that the value of the land, as a security, will not be impaired.

These policies which the commission is to implement are based on the belief that the only effective way to stabilize land prices over an extended period is to ensure that the supply of serviced blocks matches the demand. An analysis of the land market over the past few decades discloses a cyclical fluctuation in the supply of new allotments. In these existing conditions, one cannot rely on a constant equalization of production with demand for any lengthy period. At times there are periods of intense activity, resulting in a glut of land flooding the market, and a consequent waste of community resources in servicing allotments for which there is no immediate demand. At other times (and this has been the position in recent times), production of new allotments falls far short of demand. In these circumstances some land speculators have been deliberately withholding land from the market with the intention of creating an artificially intense demand for land. This position cannot be allowed to continue, and the commission is accordingly invested with powers for compulsory acquisition where that course is necessary.

In addition to the problems to which I have already referred, it is clear that where the development of land is left entirely in the hands of private operators, development occurs sporadically and in scattered areas. This leads to inefficiency in the provision of public resources. It is obvious that there must be some central authority with power to initiate and carry through developmental projects. The existence and proper operation of such an authority should ensure that urban expansion occurs in the most economic manner possible. Only with substantial direct Government involvement in the land market can orderly and efficient development be achieved. The Commonwealth Government and all State Governments have agreed that this is the most effective way to solve the land price problem. The Commonwealth Government has made undertakings to assist the establishment and development of land commissions in all States.

In particular, technical assistance and substantial financial assistance will be made available to the South Australian Government to ensure that the vitally important aims of the Land Commission are realized. Already, as a result of prompt action, the price of broad acres in the Adelaide Metropolitan Planning Area has fallen below the high speculative levels existing early in the year. When the Land Commission has acquired sufficient land to enable

it to ensure that the supply of serviced allotments will continuously meet demand, speculative booms will be a thing of the past. This can only result in general benefit to home buyers and to the public as a whole.

Clauses 1, 2, and 3 are formal. Clause 4 sets out a number of definitions required for the purposes of the new Act. Clause 5 establishes and incorporates the commission and deals with its legal capacity. Clause 6 sets out the membership of the commission. Two of the members are to be appointed upon the nomination of the Premier after consultation with the Prime Minister. The remaining member of the commission is to be appointed upon the nomination of the Prime Minister made after consultation with the Premier.

Clause 7 deals with the terms and conditions upon which the members of the commission hold office. The clause is framed to permit the appointment of a full-time Chairman. Clause 8 deals with the salary of the Chairman and the allowances and expenses that are to be paid to the other members. Clause 9 deals with the procedures of the commission. Clause 10 provides that the commission may act notwithstanding a vacancy in its membership.

Clause 11 provides that a member of the commission who is in any way interested in a contract or proposed contract made by the commission, or in contemplation of the commission, shall disclose the nature of his interest to the commission. Such a person is not entitled to take part in the deliberations of the commission in relation to that contract. Clause 12 deals with the powers and functions of the commission. The commission is to acquire land required for present or future urban expansion or development, for the establishment of new urban areas, or for other public purposes. The commission is empowered to develop or redevelop land so acquired. From time to time, as prevailing circumstances require, the commission is to release land for the purpose of orderly urban expansion or development. In exercising its powers the commission is required to promote as far as possible integration and economy in the development of land for urban purposes. The commission is empowered to provide, or arrange for the provision of, services and amenities for the use or benefit of the community in new urban areas. The commission is required to conduct its business in accordance with established principles of sound financial management and economy.

Clause 13 empowers the commission to delegate its powers to any member, officer or employee of the commission. Clause 14 deals with the appointment of staff to the commission. These may be appointed either pursuant to the Public Service Act or, with the approval of the Minister, by the commission itself. Clause 15 sets out the borrowing powers of the commission. Clause 16 provides for the establishment and administration of the South Australian Land Commission Fund. Clause 17 empowers the commission to invest moneys that are not immediately required for its purposes. Clause 18 deals with the keeping of proper accounts and the auditing of those accounts. Clause 19 provides for the commission to report to the Minister and requires the Minister to lay copies of the report together with audited accounts before each House of Parliament. Clause 20 empowers an authorized officer of the commission to enter land for the purpose of conducting surveys, tests or examinations that may be necessary to determine whether that land is suitable for the purpose of urban development. Clause 21 empowers the Governor to make regulations for the purposes of the new Act.

Mr. EVANS secured the adjournment of the debate.

URBAN LAND (PRICE CONTROL) BILL

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL (Minister of Environment and Conservation) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to provide for price control upon certain land; to amend the Prices Act, 1948-1972; and for other purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It is designed to introduce price control on certain land. It complements the operation of the Land Commission Bill. While the purpose of that Bill is to ensure that there is a regular supply of allotments on the market which will continuously meet demand, the present Bill is designed to moderate demand for allotments by ensuring as far as possible that those who purchase building allotments do so for the purpose of home building and not for speculative gain. The Government intends to introduce controls of a selective nature which will not disrupt plans of subdividers to produce new allotments. The principal control imposed by the Bill relates to those who have since May 16, 1973, purchased residential allotments of less than one-fifth of a hectare in area. Blocks purchased before that date are not subject to control. There is no control imposed upon newly-subdivided blocks. The advantage of this form of control is that it will not deter those who plan to develop or use land from entering the market. The buyers whom it will deter are those who purchase merely for the purpose of obtaining speculative profits.

As a necessary corollary of the imposition of price control upon residential allotments, control has also been placed upon the price at which new houses may be sold. This control is necessary to ensure that speculative buyers do not have the means of escaping the provisions of the new Act. If the control were to relate only to vacant allotments, it is obvious that speculators could purchase allotments, enter into some arrangement with a builder for placing houses on the allotments and then sell the improved allotments without the form of restraint that is envisaged by this Bill. To permit that kind of practice would be to allow a serious anomaly to develop in the operation of the Bill.

The Bill therefore provides that a person who sells a new house (that is, a house that has not been previously occupied as such, or a house that has been occupied for less than 12 months) must sell at a price approved by the Commissioner of Land Price Control. The Commissioner is required by the Bill to examine the costs incurred in acquiring, holding and maintaining the land and in improving it, and fix a reasonable level of profit for the vendor. The Commissioner of Land Price Control will have heavy responsibilities both in regard to the provisions of the Bill dealing with vacant land, and those dealing with the price of new houses. The Government proposes therefore to set up an expert advisory committee to assist him in the performance of his important functions. This committee will be formed of experts drawn both from the public sector and from private enterprise. The controls imposed by this Bill will continue until the Government is satisfied that the supply of building allotments is in balance with demand and the Government's object of stabilizing land prices has been achieved.

Clauses 1, 2 and 3 are formal. Clause 4 removes from the Prices Act the provisions relating to the control of land prices. Clause 5 contains a number of definitions required for the purposes of the new Act. The Act is to operate within a controlled area, which consists primarily of the Metropolitan Planning Area and additionally of any other area declared by proclamation to constitute a controlled

area. Clause 6 provides for the appointment of a Commissioner of Land Price Control. Clauses 7 to 13 deal with the establishment of the Land Price Tribunal. The tribunal is to consist of a Chairman who is a local court judge and two other persons with appropriate expertise nominated by the Minister.

Clause 14 provides that the new price control provisions will apply to any vacant allotment of residential land within a controlled area where the holder of a proprietary interest in the land acquired his interest during the control period, that is, the period commencing on May 16, 1973. Clause 15 provides that a person shall not enter into certain transactions in relation to land to which the new Part applies without the consent of the Commissioner. However, subclause (3) exempts certain transactions from the operation of subclause (1). No consent is required for the sale of newly subdivided blocks. No consent is required where the consideration for the sale does not exceed an amount calculated by adding 7 per cent compound interest to the amount for which the allotment was bought and other outgoings incurred in the acquisition of the land.

This formula will ensure a fair return in many instances. Of course, the Government realizes that the formula will not invariably produce a just result. There may, for example, be cases where a prospective vendor has incurred expenditure in improving his allotment which he can properly expect to recoup on sale. In such cases an application can be made for the consent of the Commissioner, and he will determine the matter in a manner that will do justice in the special circumstances of the applicant's case.

Clause 16 provides for the manner in which an application for the consent of the Commissioner is to be made. Clause 17 deals with the granting of consent by the Commissioner. Clause 18 provides that, where a transaction contravenes the new Act, it is not thereby invalidated. However, where a consideration has been paid in excess of that permitted by the new Act, the purchaser may recover the amount of the excess. Clause 19 provides that a person shall not sell or demise any allotment within a controlled area on which a new house is erected, except for a consideration approved by the Commissioner.

Clause 20 deals with the manner in which an application for the Commissioner's approval is to be made. Clause 21 deals with the matters to which the Commissioner is required to pay regard in determining an application for his approval. The Commissioner is required to allow a reasonable margin of profit to the applicant when considering the amount for which he will permit the new house to be sold or leased.

Clause 22 provides that where a transaction contravenes Part IV of the Act it is not invalidated, but under the provisions of clause 22 a purchaser or lessee could obtain a certificate from the Commissioner as to the amount for which he would have permitted the new house to be sold or let if due application had been made for his approval. Where it appears that the amount for which the house is actually being sold or let is excessive, the purchaser or lessee may recover the amount of the excess.

Clause 23 enables any person aggrieved by a decision of the Commissioner to appeal to the tribunal against that decision. Clauses 24 to 26 set out the procedures to be adopted by the tribunal in hearing and determining any such appeal. Clause 27 empowers the Governor to exempt from the application of the new Act any transaction or class of transaction, or any land or class of land, or any person or class of persons. Clause 28 provides that, where a consent or exemption is granted under the new Act subject to conditions, the person in favour of whom the consent or

exemption has been granted must comply with all conditions that are applicable to him.

Clause 29 provides that any instrument of transfer relating to land within a controlled area and submitted to the Registrar-General for registration must be endorsed with a certificate signed by a legal practitioner or land broker certifying that the transaction does not contravene any provision of the new Act. Clause 30 provides that any person who is a party to a transaction prohibited by the Act or who counsels or abets any person in entering into any such transaction is guilty of an offence against the Act. It also creates certain ancillary offences.

Clause 31 provides that, where a person who is a legal practitioner or land broker, or is licensed or registered under the Land Agents Act, 1955-1964, is guilty of an offence against the new Act or aids, abets, counsels or procures any such offence, there shall be proper cause for his disbarment or the revocation of his licence or registration. Clause 32 provides for offences against the new Act (except offences punishable by imprisonment) to be disposed of summarily. Clause 33 enables the Governor to make regulations for the purposes of the new Act.

Dr. EASTICK secured the adjournment of the debate.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL (Minister of Environment and Conservation) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Constitution Act, 1934, as amended. Read a first time.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This short Bill has the effect of increasing the number of Ministers of the Crown provided for by the principal Act, the Constitution Act, 1934, as amended, from 10 to 11. It also continues in operation the provisions that of the whole number of the Ministers of the Crown at least three shall be members of the Legislative Council. This result is achieved by providing that not more than eight of the enlarged Ministry may be members of the House of Assembly.

Honourable members will no doubt appreciate that with the growing complexity of administration the burdens cast on a Ministry of the present size are becoming increasingly heavy. The Government feels that, following the creation of the additional Ministerial office, a redistribution and rationalization of Ministerial duties and functions can be effected that will be of benefit not only to this Parliament but also to the people of the State generally.

Mr. COUMBE secured the adjournment of the debate.

REGISTRATION OF DEEDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. L. J. KING (Attorney-General) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Registration of Deeds Act, 1935-1962. Read a first time.

The Hon. L. J. KING: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This short Bill is mainly intended to deal with a situation that has been brought to the attention of the Government by the Registrar-General of Deeds. In 1961, section 20 of the Real Property Act was repealed. This section provided that, before entering the duties of his office, the Registrar-General, an Acting Registrar-General, or a Deputy Registrar-General shall make a declaration in the form set in that section before a judge of the Supreme Court. Since that repeal, declarations under that Act have, of course, not been necessary.

However, at and since that time, the fact that an oath of office in somewhat similar terms was required to be sworn under the Registration of Deeds Act was overlooked.

As a result, since 1961 such oaths have not in fact been sworn. There appears little doubt that declarations and oaths of this nature are really not necessary, and it is desirable that the provisions in the Registration of Deeds Act relating to the swearing of an oath should be repealed, and to deal with the situation as it has existed since 1961 appropriate validating legislation should be enacted.

Clause 1 of the Bill is formal. Clause 2 repeals section 7 of the principal Act that provided for the taking of an oath of office and replaces it with an appropriate validating provision to cover cases where officers have not sworn such an oath. Clauses 3, 4 and 5 make appropriate amendments to quantities expressed in English units of measurement to convert those units to metric units.

Mr. BECKER secured the adjournment of the debate.

FAIR PRICES ACT REPEAL BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 2. Page 175.)

Mr. CUMBE (Torrens): This is certainly a short Bill, and I support it. It is one of several Bills now being introduced as a result of the work of the Commissioner of Statute Revision. In other words, we are cutting out several Acts that are now defunct, a practice with which I fully agree. It will certainly make this year's volume larger. The Fair Prices Act has been on the Statute Book since 1924, but it has hardly ever been used. It was applied in one instance, but that was not successful. This Act related to the old Board of Industry, but this board has not sat for many years; indeed, I cannot remember its meeting at all. As the subject that the principal Act covers is now covered by the Prices Act, it is now defunct. Its purpose in 1924 was to control some matters subsequently dealt with by the Prices Act—to prevent agreements by trusts or monopolies and between different sections of industry and commerce. As that is all covered by up-to-date legislation, I support the repeal of the principal Act.

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

UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF COUNCIL ACT REPEAL BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 2. Page 175.)

Mr. CUMBE (Torrens): I support the Bill, which, like the Bill we have just dealt with, removes unnecessary legislation from the Statute Book. The principal Act was passed in 1930, at the time of the depression, to advise the Government about unemployment relief. The Unemployment Relief Council was established to administer the legislation. That council has not met since 1942 at the latest, and it has, in effect, ceased to work. It could not previously be removed from the Statute Book, because of provisions which are now handled by the Community Welfare Department, and, as legislation covering this is now in operation, this Act is redundant.

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

ART GALLERY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 2. Page 175.)

Mr. EVANS (Fisher): I support the Bill. Its major purpose is to give the board power to dispose of paintings which have been left after exhibitions have been completed or sent to the gallery for valuation but which, because the owner found the painting to be of no real value, were

left at the gallery. The gallery must now be cluttered up with many unclaimed goods and until now there has been no way for the board to dispose of them. The Bill also provides the board with the opportunity to lend any items under its control, and I agree to that provision, too. Reference is made to "certain arrangements" which the board must lay down regarding articles on loan. One consideration here must involve insurance. Indeed, if paintings are taken into private homes and damage occurs to them, the gallery must be protected, because public moneys are involved.

As I know the board will take a responsible approach to this matter, I commend the Bill, as there is much merit in the lending of paintings to people who take an interest in them. Regarding the walking sticks and umbrellas that the Minister has said are left behind, perhaps it would be better if they were let out on hire rather than being otherwise disposed of. However, that is a minor consideration only, because the Bill gives the board total control over any article left behind.

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

PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 15. Page 357.)

Dr. EASTICK (Leader of the Opposition): I ask myself whether this is a totally desirable Bill, because it will release material beyond the State's boundaries. I particularly wonder whether the Bill is desirable, because it will allow information to go beyond the State boundaries (where it has always been available) and include the Commonwealth, and more particularly the territories under Commonwealth control. Many people in the community have a growing fear that Big Brother is looking on, and I suspect that making available the type of information covered by the Bill could conceivably be disadvantageous to people of the State in certain circumstances. This is a difficult argument to develop, because I realize that, when we make information available to State Governments, there is nothing to stop any one of those Governments or one of their officers from making it available to the Commonwealth or to one of its territories, notwithstanding that Public Service Acts and the various controls on confidentiality are in force.

The wider the information is distributed the greater the possibility of a leak, and the more difficult it will be to determine the source of the leak. That being the case, and as the Commonwealth Prices Justification Tribunal is empowered to undertake an examination or seek information in its own right from the same source as the State authority seeks the information, the decision becomes even more difficult. From a practical point of view, and recognizing that eventually it may be to the advantage of the Australian consumer and that the Bill will reduce the duplication of effort in obtaining the same information, I accept the reality of the proposal. However, I want to know from the Minister in charge of the Bill (I presume it is the Minister of Labour and Industry) that the release of information will be on the highest confidential basis, with no opportunity of the material subsequently appearing in a Commonwealth document or that its source of origin is shown as the South Australian Prices Branch. I doubt whether the Minister will be able to give me that assurance, and I know how difficult it would be for him to give it to me in the full knowledge that it would not be—

The Hon. D. H. McKee: Carried out.

Dr. EASTICK: Yes. The Minister recognizes and understands the difficulties as well as Opposition members

do. It may well require a concise statement by the Minister responsible, namely, the Premier, or the Minister Assisting the Premier, by way of a Ministerial statement before this matter can be decided in another place, but this is an area of real concern. The other provision in the Bill seeks to give the continuation of prices administration a permanency, as opposed to what has been an annual pilgrimage to the House to obtain permission for the legislation to continue on an annual basis. In the changed circumstances, and as a result of the experiences we have had over a long time, that is a practical suggestion. I know that what I have said will not be accepted by every Opposition member, because this is an issue on which every member must come to grips with his own conscience. Having studied the matter in its totality, and recognizing that, since 1962, we have religiously passed a Bill each year to permit the continuation of this legislation, I accept the responsibility for approving the Bill. As I have referred to the grave doubt in my mind, I hope that the Minister in charge of the Bill will give me the assurance I seek before we are asked to vote on the second reading.

Mr. McANANEY (Heysen): I oppose the Bill and the general principle of price control. I have always been consistent on this matter in the years I have been a member, and I have not seen any effective result from price control in this State. I remember a time when housewives said that grocery prices were too high. I asked the Prices Commissioner (now the Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs), through the Premier, for his views on whether the prices were reasonable. The Commissioner's reply was that reasonable competition existed in the industry and that grocery prices had not increased to anywhere near the same degree as had the average wage or the living wage at that time. The Commissioner said that, as there was good competition in the industry, the prices were reasonable. I support restrictive trade practices legislation, which prohibits groups of people from combining to fix prices or restrict supplies, and that is the legislation we should be using.

The SPEAKER: Order! I point out to the honourable member that we are dealing not with the Prices Act as a whole but with certain amendments to it, and I will not allow a full debate on that Act as it now stands.

Mr. McANANEY: As I understand the Bill, it will make the legislation permanent. If I cannot speak on the rights and wrongs of an Act in those circumstances, I think it is time that we closed Parliament and placed the State under a dictatorship. I support strong restrictive trade practices legislation, because I believe in healthy competition. Legislation regarding restrictive trade practices has been before the House previously, but it was rejected in another place, whose members believed that it should not be passed until every other Australian State had passed similar legislation. However, I still maintain that one State can do it, without harming industry because of competition coming in from outside. Tasmania handed over these powers to the Commonwealth, and there was litigation over a brewery in Tasmania. The brewery lost the case, and competition had to be introduced in Tasmania. Beer prices there have not risen and the Swan brewery was not hindered in its activities: it still made the same amount of profit it had made hitherto. So one State can still do this and still not upset its industry.

Unless a State has restrictive trade practices legislation, it cannot accomplish anything with price control. Price control at present would be a disaster, with the Commonwealth Government budgeting for a bigger deficit this year than was budgeted for 12 months ago in entirely

different circumstances, when there was some unemployment, but it was not to the same degree as it was in 95 per cent of the world. There was a lack of confidence among people, who were unwilling to spend their money, and it was necessary to inject purchasing power into the community. That had good results. It brought people into employment again (we need not deal with the change of Government now), and that action by the former Commonwealth Government got things moving again; but it is not possible to inject a further amount of credit into the community. This would create pressure on the goods available. Over-award payments will be made and additional money put into circulation in this way. If we have price control on just a few items, those items will not be produced. If price control is imposed on essentials, there will be a repetition of what happened with the Commonwealth Labor Government in the middle 1940's, when people could not buy the essentials of life but in Adelaide people could go down Rundle Street and buy non-essential goods.

If we try to control the price of every item, many people will be engaged in inspecting and policing the controls, and costs will increase. When the Government, either Liberal or Labor, Commonwealth or State, increases taxation by 5c on this and 5c on that, prices will have to rise, and then price control will have no effect whatsoever. If we have an efficient Commonwealth Government to maintain a proper balance and control the issue of credit and the amount of money available, the pressures are not on and we do not need price control. So there may be a good argument for saying that we need strong price control in that situation. However, whatever we do, there will always be bulges if price control is introduced and there is an excessive demand for goods; it will be aggravated over the following few months.

I have always been opposed to price control, but, even if I had not previously been opposed to it, I certainly would oppose it now that price control has been imposed on doctors' fees in this State. Here, I am arguing a little against myself but, if the Australian Medical Association or any association gets together and fixes its prices, that association should be tested to see whether those prices are reasonable. When the Government tries to control individual doctors, however, as has happened here, when at the very same time over-award payments are being made, contrary to the laws of the land (it is a fact of life), that is wrong.

Mr. Max Brown: How do you work that out?

Mr. McANANEY: The Minister of Labour and Industry sent his inspectors around South Australia this week or last week to see that the Act was being observed. Did his inspectors check to see whether—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! This has nothing to do with the Bill under discussion. The Bill concerns an extension of the Prices Act for a period, and I ask the honourable member to stick to that.

Mr. McANANEY: My interpretation of the Bill is that it is for a continuation of the Act indefinitely.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I agree that it is for a continuation of the Act indefinitely, but the honourable member cannot wander all over the paddock. I ask him to stick to the Bill under discussion.

Mr. McANANEY: If I am not allowed to make comparisons with something else when I am trying to elucidate a point—and this has not been a precedent in the House so far, other than one night when I was unlawfully ejected from the Chamber—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the honourable member to confine his remarks to the Bill.

Mr. McANANEY: I am opposed to the action taken about doctors' fees. I have raised a similar point about the control of wages and what price control in this State has done to some services, that, with the acquiescence of the Minister of Labour and Industry, over-award payments are being made by owners of sheep to shearers.

The Hon. D. H. McKee: That is not unlawful.

Mr. McANANEY: If the Government imposes price control on one section of the community, it must impose it on the other sections if, as in this case, the law has decided what is a reasonable and adequate payment to be made. We cannot have one law for one group and another law for another group. For this reason, even if I had believed in price control, I would now oppose this Bill because it dishonestly discriminates against sections of the community. No price control will work effectively. The Premier next week will no doubt talk about the millions of dollars he has saved the people by price control on petrol, but in Victoria I can buy petrol for 4c or 5c a gallon (4.57 l) cheaper than I can buy it in South Australia. If we had restrictive trade practices legislation in South Australia and the petrol companies got together and fixed a price, we would—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. McANANEY: Are you talking to me, Sir?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, but I will do more than talk to the honourable member if he does not abide by the rulings of the Chair. I am asking him to stick to the Bill under discussion. This Bill is for an extension of the Prices Act. I have allowed him a fair amount of latitude, but I ask the honourable member to be reasonable.

Mr. McANANEY: I was saying that, if we did not have price control on petrol and there was competition between the petrol sellers, a reasonable and fair price would be arrived at. However, if the companies got together and determined a price amongst themselves, proper legislation would provide for the matter to be investigated. Experience in other States in the past year or two has shown that we could have bought petrol more cheaply in South Australia, but it has cost us more.

Price control has affected the superphosphate industry in this State. The Commissioner has said that the price fixed is reasonable, but it does not allow for the purchase and replacement of machinery. Because industries did not have sufficient reserves, the cost of production was increased and the Commissioner had to agree to a higher price. If Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited does not allow a sufficient sum to obtain new modern machinery, as is obtained in other places, ultimately the price of steel will increase.

Further, plumbing services in South Australia have been controlled for many years, but the plumbers charge more than the doctors and they do not need a higher price. I have seen in the newspapers more complaints about plumbing charges than about charges in any other industry or profession, yet plumbing services are under price control. I oppose the extension of the operation of the legislation. South Australia has not been in a better position than other States have in terms of the consumer price index over the years. True, some items can be bought more cheaply here, but overall we have no advantage.

If honourable members opposite were reasonably intelligent and were not carried away by emotion, thinking they might gain some votes for price control, this Bill would be defeated. I would change my views about price control only if members opposite could cite a competitive

industry, without restrictive trade practices, in which the profits were excessive. How can one in my profession accept that a fair prices tribunal established by the Commonwealth Government will accomplish anything? Price control is not effective without wage control and it has caused dissension in other countries. I also oppose the Bill strongly because price control adversely affects one section of the community while other sections escape scot-free.

Mr. DEAN BROWN (Davenport): This Bill provides for permanent price control in South Australia and, before the House proceeds with the measure, members should carefully assess the deficiencies in the present legislation. The whole purpose of price control is to hold the price of food and other consumer items at a reasonable level and the second important aspect of it is that it is designed to reduce the rate of inflation in the State.

We can compare South Australia with the other States to try to find out whether price control here has done this. The Premier told me, in reply to a question last week, that since 1964-65 the consumer price index for the Adelaide area had increased by 40.1 per cent and, for the whole of Australia, by 43.3 per cent. Therefore, price control in this State has had little, if any, significant effect on reducing the inflationary rate of increase in the price of consumer items. Recent reports show that in the past 12 months food prices in this State have increased more steeply than in any other capital city.

Mr. Gunn: That's the effect of a Socialist Government.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: The *News* of August 17 contains a report which is headed "South Australia Tops Food Prices Jump" and which states:

Food prices have risen faster in Adelaide than in any other State capital during the past 12 months. Prices spiralled by 17.3 per cent to July. The figure was only 0.2 per cent lower than Australia's highest—in Canberra. Last month they rose by 1.6 per cent. The figures were released today in the Commonwealth Statistician's monthly consumer price index for food groups.

Obviously, price control in South Australia has failed to hold down the rate of inflation and the price of consumer items. The July figures show that food prices in Adelaide have increased by 1.6 per cent. That is an astronomical increase and certainly shows that the position is not helped by present legislation. We should consider the causes of inflation. First, there is the supply and demand inflation, the older type of inflation. With price control, on the short-term basis it is possible to hold down the price of items when demand increases. In other circumstances, price control may have only a marginal effect, but the inflation in Australia now is cost-push inflation or wage-price inflation and, in such circumstances, price control has no effect unless we have wage control at the same time.

The reason for this is obvious: as wages increase, companies can apply to the prices tribunal for increases in the allowed selling price of their commodities and it is obvious that, when the companies submit a justifiable case, the price of the item can increase. Therefore, price control has no effect in stopping the inflationary rate.

Mr. Wright: Where do you think we would be without price control?

Mr. DEAN BROWN: If the honourable member listens, I am pointing out some of the deficiencies in our current price control legislation. It particularly concerns me, because we are now placing this on a permanent basis in South Australia without having carefully examined the full consequences of it. I am not against the principle of price control: I favour it, but I only hope that we have a

policy that is effective in holding down prices and inflation. In the present circumstances the policy will not be effective unless at the same time we have a wage control policy.

Mr. Max Brown: We have got that.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Of course we have not such a policy. So, we can see a major deficiency. The whole purpose of introducing price control in this State has basically failed. Initially, it lowered the prices of commodities in South Australia, compared to those in other States, since then it has not done so. There are, however, other deficiencies in current price control legislation, the most significant deficiency being the one that has already been raised; that is, the large sum it has cost the Australian consumer in connection with the price of petrol. Under price control in South Australia, the price of petrol is set for the whole of Australia. Unfortunately, the Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs has no control whatever over the price of crude oil landed in South Australia; I wish he did have such control, because it is that lack of control that is costing the Australian public so much. Companies are able to sell Australian-refined petrol in New Zealand at a lower price than the price we are paying for it here in South Australia. The obvious reason is that the international parent bodies of the oil companies are landing crude oil on South Australian shores at a highly inflated rate, which cannot be controlled. By doing that, the parent bodies are getting the profit on the crude oil and forcing South Australians to pay a much higher price for petrol.

The second deficiency in the current price control legislation is that it is very selective in regard to the items under control: until it covers a broad spectrum of commodities, it will fail to hold down prices and the inflation rate in this State. The third major deficiency in current price control legislation is that it leads to profit control rather than price control. Members opposite may believe that this is justified but, if we look at it realistically, by acting as a profit control rather than a price control it tends to bleed the general consumer to a rather greater extent than straight price control would.

Let me give an example. In a small country town there were two shoe stores. One storekeeper was particularly lazy and did not go out and seek reductions from the shoe manufacturers; he simply accepted the shoes from the salesmen who came to his store. He was charged \$10 for each pair of shoes, he was allowed his fixed mark-up from the Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs, and he sold the shoes at \$12 a pair. The second storekeeper was a vigorous business man who went to the manufacturer and said, "I will buy greater quantities of shoes in the off-peak season if you will sell them to me at a lower price." That storekeeper could then sell some shoes in his store at \$10 a pair and he could afford to hold a grand sale several times a year and, in so doing, sell a greater number of shoes at a lower price to the consumer. What happened was that the Commissioner stepped in and decided that there should be profit control in this situation and that, because the second storekeeper had received his shoes at a lower price from the manufacturer, he should sell them at a lower price. Automatically, he stopped holding a grand sale and the losers in the long term were the consumers. I hope the Government will take further measures to introduce effective wage-price control in this State; until it does, it will not hold down the inflation rate.

Mr. Wright: It's there already.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Members opposite claim that wage control exists at present, but we know that it does not exist. Only 63 per cent of the people in the State come under State awards or no awards.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member should be dealing with price control, not the Industrial Court.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I was saying that we should implement a wage control policy at the same time as we implement a price control policy.

The SPEAKER: I cannot allow a debate on wage control policy under this Bill.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: I related my remarks to industrial matters because price control legislation has failed to hold commodity prices in South Australia at a significantly lower level than those in other States. Further, it has failed to hold the inflation rate in this State at a lower level than that in other States, and it has cost the South Australian consumer a great deal in various selected areas. It is unfortunate that we are proceeding with legislation which, on the surface and to the public, appears to be protecting the consumer, whereas in fact it is harming him and costing him a great deal, and simply helping large monopolies or oversea cartels that are operating in Australia.

Mr. EVANS (Fisher): I will support the second reading of this Bill, subject to assurances that we may be able to obtain from the Minister that the material made available to the Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs will remain confidential to his department. I must agree in the main with the previous two speakers that price control, as we legislate for it, is not an effective way of containing prices at a satisfactory level. It has not slowed down the inflationary rate to any degree, and all members know that that statement is true. Price control is to be extended indefinitely, but in the past it has been introduced annually. Now, this legislation will be continued until it is eventually repealed.

That aspect does not please me, because, unless there is greater control over wage and price inflation, there will never be effective price control. When one sets out to restrict the price a person may obtain for an article, the cost of producing the article must be considered and a profit margin allowed. If an industry decides that it can gain 10 per cent on money being spent to produce the article, there is no incentive for it to keep the price of the article down. If a profit margin is allowed on the cost of production, the manufacturer benefits from any increase in the cost of the article, and that is what has happened. For the Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs to stop this practice, he would need a mammoth team of experts, economists, and investigators to go through the process of a manufacturer's business.

Mr. Jennings: Would you support that?

Mr. EVANS: No, I would not, unless at the same time we had the control in other areas.

Mr. Jennings: You have got it.

Mr. EVANS: I do not believe that eventually the commodity would be cheaper to the community, because much higher tax would have to be paid to enable the bureaucracy to police the legislation. One of the difficulties and problems of the inflationary trend is caused by the increase in the number of public servants. The member for Davenport suggested that it is the cost price that we should be trying to control. We must offer an incentive to producers and manufacturers to keep their costs down, but this legislation does not do that. South Australia is the only State (and this goes back to Liberal and Country League Governments) that generally has continued some

form of price control, yet we are no better off than are other States at present. Before 1965 this State might have had some cost advantage: our wages were lower than those in the major States—

Mr. Max Brown: They still are.

Mr. EVANS:—and our prices were lower than those in other States. Government members suggest that wages are still lower than they are in the major States: to a minor degree they are, but the gap is closing rapidly, and the cost of goods to the householder is rapidly overtaking the cost of the same goods in the Eastern States.

Mr. Jennings: Hear, hear!

Mr. EVANS: Why does this happen? The member for Ross Smith admits that the cost of our consumer goods is rising more rapidly than costs in the Eastern States. Why cannot we keep them down if we have price control? We have a Labor Government here, and the honourable member knows that its policy is to extend price control indefinitely. He openly admits that it has not been possible to contain prices to the same degree as they have been contained in other States. If ever there is an argument to suggest that the present legislation will not be effective and not a practical way of solving the problem, the honourable member has just presented it.

Mr. Jennings: I have not admitted that at all.

Mr. Hopgood: What about section 92?

Mr. EVANS: The honourable member knows that this section affects all States in the same way as it affects South Australia, and he knows that the opportunity exists for manufacturers or producers to move to any State in order to sell their goods. It does not allow the present Government to get off the hook or mean that this legislation will alter past practices. What the honourable member is saying is that he knows it is not effective because of section 92 of the Constitution, but he still wants to put it into practice.

Mr. Hopgood: It is not as effective as it should be.

Mr. EVANS: I suppose no legislation is as effective as it should be in the eyes of some people, because there will always be someone who finds loopholes in it. I support the legislation, but in Committee will want more clarification of one or two matters. I support the measure reluctantly, because it is one of two measures that should be introduced concurrently. To introduce this legislation but to make no attempt to stabilize wages at the same time is stupid and ineffective, either in the long term or in the short term.

Mr. BECKER (Hanson): One often wonders what the price of some food items would be if we did not have price control. A report in the *Advertiser* of August 18 states:

The cost of food in Australia rose by a further 1.7 per cent in July. In Adelaide, the increase was 1.6 per cent. Figures issued by the Bureau of Census and Statistics yesterday show that food price increases in other cities were: Canberra, 3 per cent; Sydney, 2.8 per cent; Brisbane, 2.3 per cent; Hobart, 1.9 per cent; Melbourne .8 per cent; and Perth, .2 per cent. Increases in the price of meat, potatoes, and onions were again the major contributors to the rises.

The national increase in meat prices was 1.9 per cent. In Adelaide it was only .5 per cent. Potatoes and onions rose nationally by 15.4 per cent, .2 per cent more than the rise in Adelaide. Adelaide's next highest price hike was 6.1 per cent for cereal products, which included a rise in bread prices. The only category to fall in price in Adelaide was soft drinks, ice cream and confectionery, which dropped by .6 per cent.

It is interesting to note that there was a 6.1 per cent increase in Adelaide for cereal products, but I doubt whether many members are aware of the items now under price control.

The list originally contained 386 items, but many have been removed. Perhaps we have not gone far enough, and there should be more items on that list. The list of groceries and foodstuffs under price control includes the following items: bran and pollard and sharps, and stock foods containing bran, pollard, or sharps; bread and bread rolls; breakfast foods; Hour; wheat; infants and invalid foods; milk; prepared stock and poultry foods; soap, toilet or laundry; and wheatmeal (for stock food). Bread, bread rolls, and breakfast foods are under price control, but in the last quarter their price increased by 6.1 per cent. Overall, the increase in South Australia was not as great as the increase in the rest of the Commonwealth, so that we have to be honest about that.

Item 99 deals with clothing, garments and apparel of all descriptions other than handkerchiefs; bathing costumes, trunks and caps; furs and articles of apparel made from furred skins; garters, arm bands, braces, suspenders and belts; hair nets; millinery; and so on. Just about all our everyday clothing is excluded from this cover. Item 101 deals with footwear and parts for the manufacture of footwear: soles, heels, boot and shoe uppers, and all component parts, materials and aids to manufacture, etc. Item 105 deals with nursery squares, and item 108 deals with infants' and babies' shawls. Division 9 relates to timber, bricks, and other building materials, but asbestos is the only item included under that division. Therefore, what benefit is price control in that area?

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: You realize that the Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs has voluntary arrangements in several areas whereby the manufacturers notify him of any proposed increases and it is understood that, if the increases are excessive, price control will be reinstated?

Mr. BECKER: This is why I often wonder whether the Commissioner is more or less an arbitrary authority who listens to these proposals. If we are to be genuine and sincere with regard to consumer protection, I think that the list of items under price control should be extended and the Commissioner should have greater power than he has at present. Members opposite know that when union members want wage or salary increases an application must be made to the court. Why should not all manufacturers have to apply to a similar court to justify their prices and their profit margin?

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: Do you agree with doctors having to do the same thing?

Mr. BECKER: Yes, why not? Each year on January 1 dentists increase their fees. The Australian Medical Association has only itself to blame because it did not increase fees for some time. I would like to see the Government really take action with regard to consumer protection, extending the powers of the Commissioner and adding to the list of items under price control. Now that this legislation is to operate permanently, I believe that the Commissioner needs more investigators and a larger organization to handle the inquiries that he receives. To do the job properly, the Commissioner should have more experts to help him.

Although it is recognized that information obtained by the Commissioner is confidential, there should be an interchange of information among the State Governments. We must accept the fact, whether or not we like it, that information should be interchangeable also between the States and the Commonwealth. I cannot believe that the Commonwealth Government committee, headed by Mr. Hurford, will be very successful until the Commonwealth has prices legislation of its own.

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: It can't do that.

Mr. BECKER: I know that the Constitution must be changed before that can be done. However, although I think that the Hurford committee will find out many things, its considerations will be lengthy and it will not be as successful as we might hope. It all comes back to the consumer affairs authority in South Australia. Recently I received from a constituent a letter about petrol prices. There was an announcement in the Commonwealth Budget of a 5c increase a gallon in the price of petrol, but I cannot see why all of the 5c should be passed on to the motorist. I believe the Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs should have tried to have the oil companies absorb some, if not all, of this amount. I shall cite what a constituent wrote to me on this matter, because I believe it is a matter that concerns us all. He states:

Recently I have been visiting a number of the Melbourne suburbs and, as in many previous visits to such areas, it was very evident that almost all of the petrol retailers or what we describe as service stations were retailing super petrol at a discount of up to and including 10c a gallon. As this discount is in excess of the amount as given by the major oil companies to the retailers, it is very evident that such retailers must be subsidized by the oil companies with the amounts of discounts. It is my understanding that our Prices Commissioner here in South Australia has, for some considerable time now, had the responsibility of setting the retail price of petrol for all retail outlets throughout Australia. If this is so, one cannot but surmise that the present situation of fixing retail petrol prices needs revising or altering very considerably. In other words we, the

general public, are being hoodwinked in having to pay the full set retail prices.

I should like to see a more detailed report on why the 5c increase has been passed on to the motorist. My constituent suggests that major oil companies should be made to reduce the price of petrol rather than subsidize service stations in isolated cases. It has been proved that this can be done, so why cannot we have such a situation instituted in South Australia?

Like all other members I have received many complaints concerning exorbitant prices charged by electrical repairers and by so-called television servicing experts. All members can do is refer constituents to the Prices Commissioner for their complaints to be investigated and, after protracted negotiations, they often succeed in having either part or all of the bill waived. However, I do not believe we should have to go through this: people should not have to be continually running to the Commissioner to check up on these repair men. We need more investigators and inspectors to inquire into the activities of these companies. If we put this Act permanently on the Statute Book the Commissioner will have the opportunity to extend his department and give the people of South Australia the consumer protection they deserve. I support the Bill.

Mr. GUNN secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.34 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, August 28, at 2 p.m.