

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Thursday, July 23, 1959.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir Walter Duncan) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.**APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY POLICE COMMISSIONER.**

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—In the previous session Parliament passed an amendment to enable the appointment of a Deputy Police Commissioner. Will the Chief Secretary say what steps have been taken in that direction?

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN—As the honourable member is no doubt aware, when that legislation was passed (it was not last year or the previous year, but possibly two or three years ago) the then Commissioner of Police was in poor health and I was anxious about what could happen. Legislation was introduced for the appointment of a deputy; it was passed and a deputy was appointed, who is now Commissioner of Police. There is nothing arbitrary, as far as I know, about the Act which was passed to enable that appointment to be made. I have discussed with the Commissioner the appointment of a Deputy Commissioner and, when he feels it is necessary and the time is appropriate, an appointment will be made.

LINCOLN HIGHWAY.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON—I ask the Minister of Roads the following questions: (1) Is the Minister in a position to state the relative merits of the two methods used in the reconstruction of the Lincoln Highway between Whyalla and Cowell, and the comparative costs? (2) Is it intended to use the stabilizing method on the uncompleted portion of the highway between Cowell and Port Neill?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—The value of the stabilization of road surfaces compared with the normal practice of metalling is not known yet, because the stabilization process is comparatively new; but, as far as the relative costs are concerned, there is very little difference between the cost of stabilizing either the sub-base or the surface of a highway and normal methods of construction. Stabilization is used primarily where the haulage of metal is over such a distance that it costs up to 1s. per ton mile (or per yard mile if the honourable member likes it that way); and when that cartage rate becomes excessive it is desirable to see whether stabilization is cheaper. That has been done on the

Lincoln Highway on a certain portion where no good stone was handy and cartage costs therefore had to be considered. The answer to the second part of the question is "No," because road metal is available at convenient distances from the highway on the remaining stretches.

CLOSING OF COUNTRY RAILWAY LINES.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Can the Minister of Roads say whether the Transport Control Board is considering the closing of country railway lines and, if so, in what locality?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—I am prepared to give the honourable member a further detailed answer but, shortly, I understand that conversations are going on with regard to an inquiry about the closing of the Monarto-Sedan line.

MARION HIGHWAY.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—Can the Minister of Roads say whether, in view of the continually increasing traffic on the South Road between Anzac Highway and Darlington, it is the intention of the Government in effect to duplicate that highway by a utilization and improvement of the Marion Road between Anzac Highway and Darlington?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—Since a refinery is to be established in the Hallett's Cove district, it has obviously become necessary, and more urgently necessary, to find other outlets for traffic from the city. I should not like to say to the honourable member that there was an intention to duplicate the Marion Highway. Rather would I say that the moment the south-western drainage operations in that district are completed, the possibility of considerably enlarging the Marion Highway will be considered, and, in addition, other avenues will be exploited for, I will not say duplicating, but enlarging the traffic outlets of that portion of the State.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—The most contentious legislation introduced into Parliament are amendments to the Local Government Act. I understand it is the Government's intention to introduce such legislation this year. Will the Minister personally introduce the Bill into this House, and in the early part of the session?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—That is the intention of the Government.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from July 22. Page 122.)

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH (Central No. 1)—I support the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply. In doing so I want, as was done yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition, to welcome the new members to this Chamber. I am convinced that they will uphold the dignity which has been characteristic of this Parliament ever since we have had representative government, and bring to the councils of this Chamber a display of ability which will be welcomed on behalf of the people of this State.

I particularly want to compliment the mover of the motion, the Hon. Mrs. Cooper, and the seconder, the Hon. Mr. Hookings. The Hon. Mrs. Cooper's advent reminds me of the old adage that "men build houses and women make homes." This might be called the women's twentieth century because in every walk of life—in academic training, in the professions of law and medicine—they have played their part and shown that they are quite as capable and competent as men in upholding the traditions of those professions. It is interesting to recall that South Australia was the first part of the British Commonwealth to give women the right to vote, but unfortunately, it was one of the last parts to have a woman member of Parliament. We are now fortunate to have Mrs. Cooper, and Mrs. Steele in another place, as members of the legislature. The first woman elected to the Commonwealth Parliament was Senator Dorothy Tangney, a member of the Party to which I and my colleagues have the honour to belong. She was from Western Australia. After her election various women were elected to Parliament, both in the Commonwealth and in other States. Last year for the first time a woman—Mrs. Hutchison—was elected to the Western Australian Parliament, which indicates that the twentieth century is truly a woman's century.

I join with the expressions of loyalty voiced by the mover and the seconder of the motion. Particularly do I associate myself with those expressed towards Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and to her Vice-regal representatives here—Sir Robert and Lady George. They symbolize the Monarchy in this State and the British system of government which has lasted for well over 300 years. This system has consisted of the Monarchy limited by the authority of the States of the Realm which, under the title of the Queen, the Lords and the Commons,

have contributed so greatly to the prosperity of the British Commonwealth of Nations. We believe the continued maintenance of that prosperity is interwoven with the activities of Parliament. My colleague and I represent the Australian Labor Party and consequently are Party men. I look upon Parliamentary government as the noblest form of government, but in this State a form of government has developed which my Party and I agree is a complete negation of democracy. It is a complete negation of the fundamental principles upon which the British system of government was established.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—Where has that taken place?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—In this State. In another place we have 26 country seats and 13 metropolitan seats whereas three-quarters of the State's population resides in the city and metropolitan area. This position denies the great majority of South Australians an opportunity of expressing their views through their representatives or of sending representatives to Parliament to carry out their accepted policy. I do not desire to bring any rancour into this debate except to say that this Government is a minority Government. The Australian Labor Party, at the last elections, polled over 60,000 more votes than were polled in favour of the present Government.

The Hon. N. L. Jude—How did you poll?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—The electors in my district were very charitably disposed towards my colleague and me, and we were elected unopposed. I believe that these things should be discussed in this place where there is a possibility of some amendment being made to the Electoral Act whereby the electors can be heard through a majority Government comprised of the Party they desire to hold office. If that is possible it is the responsibility of this Parliament to amend the law accordingly.

Mr. Hookings, the seconder of the motion, acquitted himself well. He displayed a flair concerning rural problems which will be useful when we discuss legislation to be brought down from time to time affecting the interests of men on the land. I have, from time to time, been twitted in this place when I have had the temerity to support or express a view on rural matters, but now in addition to Mr. Hookings we have Mr. Giles who will be able to express an authoritative view to satisfy any misgivings members may have about the problems of the man on the land.

In 1954 a daughter of a former illustrious Prime Minister of Great Britain—Lord Lloyd George—embraced the policy which my colleagues and I embrace today. I refer to the last British elections in 1954, and members are elected for five years in that country. Some honourable members do not like to see what they call a defection whereby a person leaves the Conservative Party to embrace the Party of my colleagues and myself.

The Hon. N. L. Jude—You do not like to see that either.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—We do not have many either. Lloyd George's daughter was responsible for having returned to the British Parliament 14 Labor women at that election, and I believe that augers well for the Mother Country, where politics are taken more seriously than they are in Australia. Those who control the home and have the responsibility of rearing a family should have an opportunity to take part in politics and Parliament where they can express their views on the legislation introduced and the conditions under which their children live.

I come now to education, which was discussed by the Honourable Mrs. Cooper. I compliment her on the lucid manner in which she expressed her views. I think—and I think every honourable member will agree with me—that the educated person of today is the good citizen of tomorrow, assuming of course that education combines spiritual education. I shall refer now to the university. I am one who champions the cause of higher education because I believe much of the discontent in the economic field and between nations is due to lack of understanding. I believe it may be possible to have understanding at the higher levels, and also possible to have it in the general community. It was through the efforts of the Chifley Federal Government that it was possible for many, who are now leading professional men in medicine, dentistry, arts and law, to get their education. Those without the means to give their children a higher education have been assisted by the granting of Commonwealth scholarships to their children. Because of the post-war rehabilitation scheme for returned men and the increased population, the number of students at Australian universities has increased considerably, and the position today is that they are not in a financial position to provide the necessary accommodation, lecturers and teachers.

It is well-known that the Adelaide University is one of the most richly-endowed universities in the British Commonwealth. It is a great

tribute to many of our pioneers that they left endowments to the Adelaide University. They appreciated the fact that this State had supplied them with many of the benefits of worldly goods. Whereas the university is rich in endowments, it is actually poor in returns from the endowments because, I understand, these moneys have been invested on long term and in many instances are returning only a low rate of interest. Those good people endowed the university thinking that it would be richly benefited by the returns from investment. Metaphorically, it represents an atmosphere of penury. I am not suggesting that the university has become a mendicant, but the responsibility is on the Government to assist, although over the years it has provided the university with large amounts. I understand that last year its grant amounted to £800,000, but that does not meet the university's demands. There are about 5,650 students attending this year, and of this number nearly 5,000 are proceeding to bachelor degrees and diplomas. Of the others about 200 are proceeding to higher degrees and about 400 are studying at the Elder Conservatorium of Music without intending to proceed to a degree or diploma. There are also a few score students taking miscellaneous subjects in the arts and sciences.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill—You can be a top concert musician without taking a degree.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I agree. I recall that recently there retired from the Adelaide Hospital a leading expert in X-ray who did not have a degree, but had great natural aptitude. The total enrolment at the university for 1959 is more than 400 greater than for 1958. In the latter year 2,800 of the students held scholarships or other awards which exempted them from the payment of university fees. There is no reason to suspect that there is any significant change in the proportion of students receiving assistance this year. If anything, there has been a slight increase. It can safely be assumed that rather more than 3,000 students this year are not paying fees, and consequently the university is faced with financial stringency. I understand that Sir Frank Perry is on the university finance committee and therefore appreciates the difficulty confronting the university authorities to make ends meet.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—The Government is very good to the university.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I appreciate that. I am not attempting to malign the Government in any way, but unless these matters are ventilated in this place we are

inclined to adopt a happy-go-lucky attitude and drift along with the stream. Some of the students receive assistance in the form of living allowances in addition to their scholarships and bursaries.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—There are State school teachers who also study at the university.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—That is so. They start on the first rung of their academic career at the Teachers' College and then take courses later at the university. Some employers send their promising employees to the university to extend their education, and this also applies to many Government departments. If an employee desires to enter a higher realm of education the department pays his fees and gives him time off, but signs him up to serve for a period of two years after the completion of the course which, I think, is fair. The full-time academic staff at the university in 1958 numbered 262, including about 40 at the Waite Agricultural Research Institute. The university undertook a recruiting campaign last year and again this year, and because of the additional finance that has become available as a result of the Murray report it hopes to increase the full-time academic staff to 330 by the end of the year. As Mrs. Cooper said, unless the teaching staff can be increased the standard of academic education will be lowered. I submit that 330 will not be sufficient in view of the way in which the general population has increased over the last five years or so and the consequent number of students likely to attend the University in the next few years.

It is expected that the number of students during the next six years will increase at the rate of about 9 per cent each year. The staff-to-student ratio is low by British, Canadian and American standards, and if this ratio is to be improved it is clear that the universities must be able to undertake the recruitment of greater numbers of staff. Doubtless this matter will be one to which the new Universities Commission, recently announced by the Prime Minister, will give its early attention, but whatever the commission may propose it is clear that it will be necessary for the State to play its part in financing the University.

I mention that because I look upon three institutions in this country as being of paramount and equal importance, namely, our universities, our Parliaments, and our judiciary, and it is essential to maintain in our universities that high standard that we expect in the other two institutions. I am not suggesting that our Government has been parsimonious

towards the university, but that much more still has to be done to enable it to expand and retain that high standard for which it has become renowned throughout the world. I now turn to the question of denominational schools. I know that this may be looked upon as an inappropriate question.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—Why?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I mean by people outside. They may feel that to mention it may raise some religious issues, but I submit that the independent denominational schools are playing a most important part in the education of our young people. For this year alone 33,693 scholars have been enrolled in these schools, and assuming that it costs £5 a scholar—which is a very conservative estimate—to place each one at a desk it represents a cash saving to the Government of £168,465. Admittedly, in some of these schools salaries are not paid because the good people who do the teaching have entered a religious life in which they do not look for remuneration, but if the State had to provide the accommodation, the equipment and the teaching staff it would have to find over £1,000,000 a year.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—That is a very low figure.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I have purposely made it low. The actual cost of the buildings runs into many thousands of pounds, as some of my friends here who are members of the councils of such schools well know.

The Hon. C. R. Story—It would run into millions.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I am putting it at thousands. Some of the buildings erected in the past would cost infinitely more if they had to be erected today. I put this proposition to the Government: everyone knows the difficulty that these schools are experiencing in securing finance for the building of further accommodation. I know that private banks, the State Bank, and savings banks have been very helpful in this matter, but it is not their responsibility, and I submit that the Government should adopt a policy of subsidizing, on a pound for pound basis, the capital expended on the erection of school buildings. This has been done, for instance, in the provision of homes for the care of the aged, and it is just as important to have our young people cared for—because they are the citizens of tomorrow—as it is to care for our aged folk. It could be done in the same way as assistance is given to industry,

where the Government guarantees a loan for the sustenance of an industry, or for its expansion and development. If it can be done in this field I believe it could be done in regard to denominational schools.

I now come to the question of service stations. Throughout the whole State I understand that there are some 1,350 such stations. I make it clear that I have no antipathy to the oil companies; they are entitled to make their profits and to continue their business, but they are undoubtedly creating inflated values in some areas by the very high prices they are paying for properties or sites on which to erect new stations. In some cases they are buying and demolishing homes that are immediately opposite existing stations quite capable of supplying the needs of the community. A move is on foot in New South Wales to prevent inflated prices being paid for properties by the oil companies and to license them in much the same way as hotels are licensed. I am of the opinion—I do not know whether other members will agree with me—that we have too many service stations. It seems that a cut-throat war is being waged by the oil companies. I hope the Government will consider curbing the spiral of inflationary land values being created by those companies.

I come now to the Tramways Trust. I am of the opinion, as are my colleagues, that the time has arrived when the trust should be taken over by the Government and placed under one transport control, under one Minister responsible to Parliament. I know that the Minister of Railways is over-burdened—like Atlas carrying the world on his shoulders—with his various portfolios, but the transport system in South Australia should be co-ordinated in the interests of the people. It is interesting to recall the last report, the only printed one available, of the Tramways Trust, which shows that up to June of last year there was a total deficiency of £685,957. The grant by the South Australian Government amounted to £490,000, making a net deficiency of £195,957. I understand the trust has paid some of that money back, but in such a way as to increase fares, and it has restricted some of the transport sections. The policy seems to be one of cheeseparing and cutting down instead of providing the community with the originally intended service.

On the other hand, the railways are competing with the buses. We see the anomaly of a bus route operating within 10 yards or so of a railway station, but the bus runs at times different from those at which the trains

depart. There should be some method of co-ordination of the whole of the transport system in this State, particularly in the metropolitan area, in the interests of the community.

I want to turn now to housing. The time has arrived when this Government should join hands with the New South Wales Government and ask the Commonwealth Government to set up a housing finance authority. This was suggested at the last Premiers' Conference by the Premier of New South Wales, Mr. Cahill. He said that money for housing was allocated from Loan funds or under Premiers' Conference agreement plans, yet the great demand for houses remains in all States because only a limited amount is granted by the Commonwealth Government to the States for housing. In South Australia, as members know, the Housing Trust gets practically all the money. The amount provided to the State Bank is being used by the Housing Trust; the Savings Bank money also goes to the Housing Trust. I am not attempting to belittle the activities of the trust. I pay it a great compliment, particularly its manager, Mr. Ramsay, and other officers too, who are doing an excellent job in housing the people of this State. The Housing Trust compares most favourably with the Housing Commissions in some other States. Although prices are kept low, the housing accommodation and plans are excellent. In my trip to New South Wales recently I heard the highest praise for the South Australian Housing Trust, the manner in which it was constructing homes for the people, and the class of work that was being done by it.

If a housing finance authority were set up, as suggested by Mr. Cahill, the Housing Trust would not be at the mercy of the Premiers' Conference or the Loan Council. Its programme or budget would be submitted to the Commonwealth housing authority, which in turn could release the necessary credit through the Commonwealth Bank. I know, as I think others in this Chamber know, that there is not sufficient liquid capital for the private banks to carry on a housing programme or to provide all the money necessary for housing, because they provide money for industry and they have other financial obligations. The Commonwealth Government is today the only income taxation authority, and surplus money collected through taxation is lent to the States at interest. Something should be done about this and it can only be done by the leaders of the respective State Governments.

A lead has already been given by the Premier of New South Wales and, irrespective of his political complexion or any Party considerations, on this question and on other principal questions, in practically all instances we march along as one united army in the interests of the people of Australia. One of the most important barriers that can be raised against Communism is a contented community properly housed and provided with full employment, and that is something to which the Commonwealth Government's attention should be drawn. I compliment the Honourable Mr. Potter on his contribution to the debate. In doing so I want also to disabuse him of the idea that he is like Daniel in the lion's den. About 18 years ago I came here filled with the fire and zeal of having all my ideals established, but over the years I have come to realize that they are tame lions here, particularly on the Liberal and Country League basis.

The Hon. Sir Frank Perry—The honourable member is speaking for himself now.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I say it applies to every L.C.L. member. I come now to price control, which was raised by the Honourable Mr. Potter. This has been a hardy annual since price control was introduced during the war. I say without equivocation that the present Government is today only tinkering with the symptoms. Either we should have effective price control on all consumer goods—bread, butter, meat, etc., the commodities considered by the Arbitration Court in fixing the basic wage—or, as the Leader of the Opposition said, we should abolish price control. It cannot work disjointedly. It must be effective price control, or we should abolish it. I think the Government is keeping the present price control atmosphere in South Australia for the purpose of appeasing the minds of people who, in some cases, are being exploited.

I and others here know that the fear created by saying to people, "If you do not keep your prices down I shall reintroduce price control" has become a wornout bogey, because in a number of instances raw materials are not under control; yet, when they become a finished article and manpower and labour has been applied to them and they are sold to the public retail, in a few instances they come under effective price control. It may be argued that the retailer and the manufacturer have the right to a profit and have a reasonable price fixed by the Prices Commissioner—and I express my appreciation of the valuable work done by Mr. Murphy, the Prices Commissioner, who acts fairly and justly

—but it does not alter the fact that at the source of supply of raw materials there is no effective price control. Therefore, I submit that it has to be one thing or the other.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill—The honourable member will not vote against price control?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—My honourable friend will be surprised at what I am going to vote against, and support. I come now to the question of hire-purchase.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—Is the honourable member in hire-purchase?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—No. I think my honourable friend will agree with what I shall say about this. We have read in the Governor's Speech that the Government proposes to bring down legislation to deal with hire-purchase. I think I am supported by my colleagues when I say that hire-purchase has made it possible for some home amenities, such as washing machines, refrigerators, television sets, radiograms, to be installed in the most humble homes. Many years ago they were only for the wealthy, but today, through hire-purchase, these things are readily available to anyone.

The Hon. W. W. Robinson—People can get them more cheaply under hire-purchase.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I know that my friend is most impetuous. If he will only wait until I have finished and hear the whole story I think he will support me. Perhaps he may not like what I am going to say but, irrespective of that, I will say it. We had a great barrage of propaganda and a great flourish of trumpets from the Government that succeeded the Chifley Government, which said that it would curb inflation, that inflation had got out of hand, and that the spiral of inflation was being just tampered with. I have in my hand a publication called "An Anti-Depression Policy for a Free Economy," not by a Labor Party economist but containing a report by the Sub-Committee on Post-War Reconstruction set up by the Institute of Public Affairs (New South Wales). It is an organization of able people.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—What date is this?

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—1945. It is a little over 14 years ago since this was said, but it is still applicable today. We find that hire-purchase organizations are now offering to take short-term deposits at the rate of 8 to 10 per cent interest, and under our existing law they have every right to do that. Prior to the great flood of hire-purchase sales the savings of the people were mostly divided between

fixed deposits or Savings Bank accounts. We find today, however, that the cash position of these institutions is not so fluid because the hire-purchase firms are securing money on no security at all.

In South Australia from 1953 to 1959 retail operations of finance organizations, including hire-purchase and insurance, amounted to £31,861,000. This business has drawn off the surplus savings of the people and placed them with hire-purchase companies, which charge interest at a flat rate of 8 to 10 per cent—which is the equivalent of 20 per cent a year. This is in turn increasing that inflationary trend which the Menzies Government said it was going to retard. The Institute of Public Affairs (New South Wales), in its publication "Stability and Progress," said:—

As a rule, variations in credit policy should be selective rather than general. General restriction in a period of upswing may check a boom but precipitate a crisis. All parts of an economy seldom manifest boom conditions at the one time. Restriction will probably be most effective and least harmful if it can be applied selectively to those parts of the economy which are most conspicuously developing boom tendencies.

I do not think that any honourable member would deny that boom tendencies are being manifested and perpetuated by the hire-purchase companies offering such a high interest rate on deposits. I am reminded of the fact that one American President said that every crisis brought progress. I believe the inflationary spiral has reached dangerous proportions.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan—The Government's intended legislation will not interfere with interest charges.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—No, but I have not seen the legislation. High interest charges are drawing off the surplus savings of the people and consequently money is being diverted away from home building. The Premier is a good South Australian, but all progressive legislation that has been submitted to Parliament conforms to the principles of the Labor Party, and some has been taken from that Party's platform. When the Premier came back from the Premiers' Conference

recently the press blazoned forth what he had achieved by having South Australia declared no longer a mendicant State. I do not desire to take any of the glamour of that from the Premier, but the taxation reimbursement formula was achieved as a result of the suggestion made by Mr. Reece, the Labor Premier of Tasmania, that the formula grant and supplementary grants should be amalgamated and incorporated in the Commonwealth scheme. In the following five years it is proposed that the grant should be on a *per capita* basis arrived at by dividing each State's 1959-60 quota by its estimated population at June 30, 1959, and by multiplying the result of each year by that year's estimated population as at June 30. The aggregate figure will be varied to meet changes in the average Australian wages in the previous year and it will be finally rounded off with an allowance of 10 per cent wage variation as a betterment factor. That resulted from a suggestion made by the Premier of Tasmania, who was ably supported by Mr. Cahill, Premier of New South Wales. I point out that 30 years ago it was said that South Australia would always remain an agrarian State.

The Hon. C. R. Story—They were the words of John Curtin.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I think it was a statement by Mr. Menzies. However, the point is that the Premiers' Conference gave Sir Thomas Playford the honour of moving the formula. Much credit has been given to him and his Government for housing, mining development, the Leigh Creek coalfield, the Electricity Trust, and major construction works in this State, but the credit should be given to Parliament because it was Parliament that took the responsibility for those projects and voted accordingly. This point is exemplified in the opening prayer which you, Mr. President, read at the commencement of each sitting.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.21 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, July 28, at 2.15 p.m.