LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, August 25, 1959.

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

QUESTIONS.

TRAFFIC ISLAND NEAR GAWLER BLOCKS.

The Hon. C. R. STORY—I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. R. STORY—Will the Minister of Roads investigate the question of widening the entrance to the traffic island on the left-hand side (viewed from the north of the river end) of the intersection of the north of the river road and the Main North Road? At this point the road has been narrowed by the erection of a row of white posts and, from the marks on the concrete around the island, it is obvious that a number of motorists have struck it. It appears to me that the road is too narrow at this point for the size of the island and that sufficient warning is not given prior to reaching the intersection. Will he ascertain whether in the opinion of the department it is dangerous and, if so, have the white posts removed or at least taken back six or eight feet?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—Is the honourable member referring to the T intersection on the Sheoak Log road two miles north of Gawler?

The Hon. C. R. Story—The Gawler Belt.

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—I will ask the honourable member to discuss the matter with me and I will endeavour to get an answer as soon as possible.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS.

The Hon. A. J. SHARD (on notice)—

(*a*) How many pedestrian crossings have been approved under section 130e of the Road Traffic Act?

(*b*) Where are such pedestrian crossings situated?

(*c*) How many of such crossings are served—

(i) with red and green traffic lights?

(ii) with other types of lights?

The Hon. N. L. JUDE—The replies are:—

(*a*) The Commissioner of Highways has approved of nine pedestrian crossings under terms of Section 130(e) of the Road Traffic Act.

(*b*) Of these, only three have been installed, and it appears unlikely that the remaining six will be installed by the Councils concerned.

Those crossings in operation are—

1. Grote Street, Adelaide.
2. Main North Road opposite Nailsworth school.
3. South Road, opposite Black Forest school.

(*c*) (i) The Commissioner is not required to approve of red and green (pedestrian actuated) lights. Four crossings with such lights have been installed and two are in course of construction.

(ii) Grote Street crossing has flashing lights (Belisha beacon type). Nailsworth crossing has amber flashing lights. Black Forest crossing has N and M lights on the approaches only.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE: HON. C. D. ROWE.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Chief Secretary) moved—

That one month's leave of absence be granted the Hon. C. D. Rowe on account of ill-health.

Motion carried.

SUPPLY BILL (No. 2).

Received from the House of Assembly and read a first time.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Chief Secretary)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This is the second Supply Bill to come before us this session and its purpose is to enable the functions of the State to be carried on pending the passing of the Appropriation Bill probably towards the end of October. The amount in these Bills increases every year and this time it is £9,000,000. The Bill follows the usual form of Supply Bills and provides that no payment shall be made in excess of last year's Estimates except that the Treasurer may authorize the payment of salary increases.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH (Acting Leader of the Opposition)—As the Chief Secretary has pointed out, this Bill follows the usual procedure to enable the Government departments to function until the passing of the Appropriation Bill. I think that the taxpayers are sufficiently protected in that the total amount is limited to £9,000,000 and no payment shall be made in excess of last year's Estimates except the payment of salary increases. The Opposition has no objection to the speedy passage of the Bill.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY (Central No. 2)—I support the second reading. This is the usual Bill that is necessary to enable the Public

Service to continue to function pending the passing of the Appropriation Bill. The amount provided by this Bill is slightly larger than usual, and I presume that has been brought about by increased costs, but even that must be taken care of by the Government. I see no objection to the Bill being passed in its present form.

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

HONEY MARKETING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 19. Page 491.)

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH (Acting Leader of the Opposition)—I support the Bill, which provides for the continued operation of the Honey Marketing Board until June 30, 1964. Members of the Party to which I have the honour to belong have always advocated orderly marketing for primary products, and I think most honourable members will agree when I say that that part of its policy was clearly amplified during and after the war years.

Originally the operation of the legislation was contingent upon the favourable support of beekeepers with 10 colonies or more, and an amendment, which was passed in another place and accepted in this House, was passed in 1953, that not less than 100 producers could petition the Minister for a poll to decide whether the board should continue to operate. It is interesting to note that a petition cannot be presented within two years after the taking of a poll, and only on one occasion has a petition been presented. That was in 1956 when honey producers practically unanimously voted for the continuation of the Act. There has been no request made since the inauguration of the Act for its repeal, and although beekeepers and the Honey Board have experienced some difficulties in recent years I understand they have very ably overcome them. The first difficulty related to the co-operative beekeepers. They had some difficulty in selling their product in another State, but I do not think this is the place to ventilate matters of that nature and all I say is that, having learnt a lesson, the Honey Board and the co-operative of the beekeepers will see in the future, as they have in the past, that their particular economic policy will be continued in the interests of the beekeeper.

Production figures are rather illuminating. In 1947-48 5,298,000 lb. of honey was produced and in 1956-57 the figure had increased to 8,169,504 lb. The output of the by-product—beeswax—increased proportionately. Although it may be considered that this industry is a very small primary industry, nevertheless it is a most important one, and the continuance of the Honey Board and its personnel will I think take good care of the economics of the industry to the benefit of beekeepers in South Australia.

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON (Northern)—The Honourable Mr. Bardolph gave the history of the introduction of the Honey Marketing Board in 1949 and told us what happened in 1956 when growers, by a majority, supported the continuance of the board. This Bill merely extends the life of the Honey Marketing Act for five years to June 30, 1964, and if any producers desire an alteration not fewer than 100 can claim a revisional ballot to decide whether the board shall continue or be abolished. I have had no experience on the production of honey, but I feel that I am justified in speaking on this debate as I have a number of beekeepers in the Penwortham, Sevenhills and Clare areas and in the Wirrabara forest, and there are a considerable number of beekeepers in the Beetaloo watershed area.

Following on a remark I heard from the other side of the House about the commercial side of the question, if I said I favoured the continuance of the Honey Marketing Act I would immediately have levelled against me the statement that we must favour that system of operation, and if we cannot operate as private enterprise we are only licensed receivers on behalf of the Honey Board. If on the other hand I said I was opposed to the Act and believed in an open market it would be levelled against me that I was out to exploit the producer. I speak as a representative of beekeepers. I noticed in a recent press report that when speaking on the Bill in the Assembly Mr. Quirke said he was opposed to the blending of honey. He thought that a good product should not be blended with one of inferior quality in order to build up a poor grade to a reasonable level. I suggest that the blending of honey has nothing to do with the lifting of quality: it is the blending of different types of honey. In the Beetaloo and Clare areas honey is produced from blue gum and red gum, and in a portion of the South-East a fine quality red gum honey is produced. Lucerne and Salvation Jane honeys are blended because of their colour. They have no particular food value, but are blended with banksia

honey from the South-East, which is a good honey containing a greater percentage of minerals than many of the other honeys. Banksia honey is very dark. The blending of lucerne and Salvation Jane honeys with it produces an attractively coloured honey that is acceptable to the public.

The blending of honey is for somewhat similar purposes to the blending of other commodities, such as wheat for flour. On a visit to Apamurra recently I noticed two separate stacks of wheat, one containing soft wheat that goes to a Mannum flour mill and the other hard (premium) wheat that is bought for use at metropolitan mills for mixing with soft wheats. The inference is that Mannum has plenty of hard wheats and needs a soft wheat to blend with them to make a good baking flour. Northern mills keep the soft and hard wheats separate so that they can mix a blend to their liking. A somewhat similar practice applies to the blending of honey whereby is produced a product having a continuity of the same quality, taste and texture. The latest report from our Trade Commissioner in London contained the following:—

The United Kingdom honey market is reported to be very inactive owing to the seasonal drop in demand and there has been virtually no inquiry for Australian. Prices of dollar honeys are forcing down values of honey from other sources.

The report stated that Australian light amber honey was quoted at 100s. to 102s. 6d. a cwt. sterling for spot delivery *ex* store and medium amber at 94s. New Zealand white clover honey was quoted at 170s., which is about 1s. 7½d. a lb. as against 11½d. for the Australian product. Extra light honey was quoted at 155s. and light amber, which is similar to the Australian article, at 125s., and medium amber at 110s. I quote those figures to indicate the prestige of the New Zealand honey compared with the Australian product. About 10 or 15 years ago Australian honey on the United Kingdom market was severely criticized for its eucalypt flavour, and since then we have found difficulty in getting purchasers there to view our honey favourably. I suggest that this was largely due to the fact that we forwarded blue gum or red gum honey that had a very pronounced eucalypt flavour. By blending the honey, the pronounced eucalypt flavour is eliminated and the product is acceptable to the public without any great prejudice. The Honey Marketing Act became law in South Australia when the return for export honey was 7¼d. a lb. Recent market reports from the United Kingdom show that the price received by the grower today is 7 3/16d. a lb., which is practically on a parity with the price when this law was passed. Therefore, if this legislation was essential then, it must be essential now.

The object of appointing the Honey Board was to stabilize the industry and provide payments to growers. On the receipt of the honey, arrangements are made for growers to receive an advance payment before the whole of the season's production is sold. Annual reports of the board show that before it came into operation the average price paid to beekeepers had fallen from 6¼d. to 5d. a lb. The average prices paid to beekeepers since the appointment of the board are as follows:—for the year 1951, 7¾d. a lb; for 1952, 9½d.; for 1953, 9¼d.; for 1954, 8⅝d.; for 1955, 9d.; for 1956, 1s. 1d.; for 1957, 1s.; and for 1958, 10¼d. So the price received by the beekeepers during that period has improved.

The variations that have taken place, I am informed, are the result of varying overseas export prices, which have ranged from 87s. 6d. to 132s. 6d. sterling a hundredweight. Under the system of regular advances based upon stocks of honey sent into the pool, beekeepers have been able to plan their expenditure ahead secure in the knowledge that advances will be paid as arranged. Beekeepers have not had to worry about when or where their honey is going to be sold and have been free to concentrate upon production. The consumer, too, has been protected in that the standard of honey placed upon the local market, though blended, is now of a high quality. It is pleasing to know that the board has accepted the view that the home market is best and has always ensured adequate supplies being available. The average cost of operating the board is less than ½d. lb., and this cost includes storage, bank interest, advertising, and administration.

Our State has always shown the way in this matter, and it is some satisfaction to read that beekeepers in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia, notwithstanding the larger population and greater home consumption in those States, are expressing a wish at this time that they should have an organized marketing system as we have in this State. I should like to draw the attention of honourable members to the fact that the beekeeping industry is essential to the welfare of this State. It provides a pollination service to orchardists, graziers and gardeners, a service that is fast becoming recognized as one that must be fostered and increased. In connection with pollination,

honourable members will have received the *Ulster Commentary* of July last, which mentions the value of bees in boosting the apple crop. It says:—

Bees were recently harnessed to the purposes of nature in the orchard country of Co. Armagh. A million of them were imported and released in order to help boost the apple crop. As they foraged for food during the pollination period they also "fertilised" the blossoms and helped to produce a larger crop. This method was introduced to counter the effects of sprays used to prevent disease in apples. The sprays, unfortunately, kill off the natural pollinating insects and the bees are used to restore nature's balance.

When I visited the Renmark district some time ago, my honourable friend, Mr. Story, showed me his orchard and I was interested to see that he had adopted that practice and was getting quite good results. I suggest that this industry is worth encouraging as it is, in a sense, an ancillary industry. It does not rob any land and the bees, in turn, have a good influence on the quantity of fruit produced. They are producing a good and valuable foodstuff. We should do well to pass this measure in order to continue the industry on a stable footing. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY (Central No. 2)—This House has criticized boards over the years both favourably and unfavourably. The Honey Board is an example of the smallest type of board that functions in primary production. It stands alone for, as I understand, it is the only Honey Board in existence in Australia, although in South Australia we produce only 8,000,000 lb. (last year's production) of honey as against 40,000,000 lb. throughout Australia. So it is perhaps an example of a small board's efforts to assist in the development of an industry, backed by certain privileges given it by Parliament.

Any board should have to justify its approval by Parliament. I was a little disappointed that the Chief Secretary did not give us some factual statement of the board's achievements, and whether or not it has helped the development of the industry. The board is established for three purposes. First, it provides a suitable channel through which producers can supply and deliver their honey. Parliament has done that inasmuch as it has made it compulsory that all honey be marketed through the one board.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin—It has provided the machinery but has not made it mandatory.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY—The board was given power to compel, if the producers accepted the proposal.

The Hon. Sir Lyell McEwin—It gave the growers power.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY—It gave the growers power to accept the board and make it compulsory themselves, which they did. Secondly, the board's responsibility is the marketing of honey. With honey, probably the main problem is marketing. The bees are busy at all times. It is surprising to note that in one year they produce 10,000,000 lb. of honey and the next year only 5,000,000 lb. That is not because the bee itself is lazy; it is because nature has not provided the blossom or flowers from which the bee extracts its honey. A producer can vary by as much as 50 per cent from year to year in his collection of and income from honey. So one of the main functions of this board should be marketing, and whether that has been done thoroughly or not I do not know. Presumably it has, although I understand that the position is not as happy financially as it might have been. However, the producers elected to bind themselves together for this purpose, so they have no-one else to blame but themselves. The only point that concerns Parliament or the public, presumably, is that this is an industry which should have developed but has not. No approach has been made to me, either favourably or unfavourably in regard to this board, so I presume that the growers are satisfied with it. The other function of the board is to see that the consumer pays a reasonable price for the product. I should say that there are many other means of satisfying people's tastes besides honey, which therefore has to take its place in competition with jams and other types of sweets. I gather from the figures quoted by Mr. Robinson that the price of honey to the producer has not risen as much as the price of other commodities.

The Hon. W. W. Robinson—Seventy-five per cent is exported at a lower price.

The Hon. Sir FRANK PERRY—I took out the export figures for Australia for last year and they were only 12,000,000 lb. for 1956-57 compared with 27,000,000 lb. for the preceding year, so it does seem that the board has something to do to satisfy its producers that the best methods are adopted in the production and sale of honey. Although I do not like boards and prefer free marketing, we have over the years established so many boards that I am afraid we are committed to them for many years to come. We have all

types of boards that have taken upon themselves the techniques of salesmanship in the marketing of the goods they control, and it appears to me that we are running the risk of sitting down on the marketing of our goods whereas a little competition would be all to the good. As I said, this is a small board and the fact that we are committed so extensively to boards, which I regret, suggests that we have to continue with them until something of a drastic nature occurs that warrants a departure from our present system. I support the second reading.

The Hon. G. O'H. GILES secured the adjournment of the debate.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 19. Page 490.)

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL (Central No. 2)—I join with Mr. Condon in complimenting the Government on the early introduction of this Bill. Local Government Act Amendment Bills, however insignificant they may be in their substance, always provoke a good deal of controversy because most members consider themselves expert in local government, and indeed many are because a number of members in both this and the other place have served in district councils and municipal corporations. Consequently I think it is wise that the Government introduced a Bill of this nature early in the session. Last year's second reading debate on a Bill practically the same as this did not take place until October 22. It did not go to another place until November 4 and the session ended on November 19, so it was of necessity rather rushed; that is why I welcome its early introduction this year.

This Bill is very similar to the last one and I will go through it and endeavour to point out the minor differences. It did not create a great deal of debate last time. I do not think any of us regarded it as containing terrifically important amendments. I remember saying that I did not consider it nation-rocking, and I still do not. Indeed, it seems to me that there is not a clause that could not be deferred for possibly a year or two without much harming anyone. I make that comment because when the two Houses of Parliament disagreed last time there was canvassing by certain sections with the inference that the attitude of this Council had frustrated certain councils in some way. I think that was entirely wrong I think the Bill is not of much significance, nevertheless I suppose it has some minor merit. I would like to leave out clause 3 from discussion for the time being because that was the bone of contention last time and may well be again.

Clause 2 is the same as was presented last year. Although the Bill was not extensively debated it was fully debated in the sense that every part of it was dealt with, and if new members are particularly interested in any aspect they will see all the detail in last year's *Hansard*. .I do not think it necessary to go into detail again on matters that Parliament as then constituted agreed to, but naturally if any new members have qualms about some of these provisions their views will be taken fully into account. Clause 4 is one which was not in the last Bill. It provides for country polling to be from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. instead of from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. I am not very familiar with country activities except in the close countryside, but I am a little dubious as to whether those hours are not too short. I will rely for guidance upon the country members who are more familiar with the circumstances arising in those places, and I hope that they will give us a little information upon this aspect. However, as a city person I feel that we should investigate the proposed shortening of hours.

Clause 5 relates to minimum rates, and this is the same as was presented last time. Clause 6 is a new one dealing with donations to life-saving clubs, but subclause (*b*) is the same as last time. I have never been very keen on local governing authorities being given power to spend money outside their own districts, although there can well be an exception in this case as the verbiage of the Bill implies, because life-saving is a matter of importance to all councils and the clause is drawn with that in view. I am therefore prepared to give that the fullest consideration when we reach the Committee stage despite the fact that it runs counter to my general concept of the Local Government Act, that is, that corporations and councils should not have very extensive powers outside their own areas. Clause 7 is the same as last time. It provides for tree-planting funds and facilitates the operation thereof. Clause 8 is not quite the same as presented last time because the House of Assembly inserted an amendment (subclause (*b*)) which was accepted by this Chamber.

Clause 9 is one to which I drew attention last time, and I still have the same qualms about it. The effect of the clause is to preserve pre-existing rights, provided the owner of the property wishes to do so, by registering

certain documents, but to take away the acquisition of rights in future. I put it to the Minister last time, and do so again, that these rights could be valuable to the owner, and if he has to pay out money in respect of adjoining public places he ought perhaps be able to acquire some rights over them, as he has in the past. I pointed out that that provision could be qualified by a requirement that he also must register the right within a given time following acquisition rather than leaving it at large. The first reason given by the Minister for this amendment was that it was difficult to ascertain whether rights existed and who had them. This provision gets over that difficulty in relation to pre-existing rights, but my suggestion would also get over it for future rights. The other reason he gave as to why rights should not be obtainable in future was that most of these places were public roads. I do not think that that is an argument as to why one should not be able to obtain such a right over something that is not a public road or for something over which one has no rights. This provision has been in force for about 50 or 100 years and I have not had much evidence of the faulty operation of it except the difficulty of chasing up rights. Therefore I again ask the Minister to consider the suggestion that owners should be able to get rights provided they register them within 12 months, or even a shorter period.

Clause 10 is new. The Minister explained that "writing" under the Acts Interpretation Act included printing or typewriting and all other forms of writing. This is a very technical amendment, but it seems necessary and therefore should have our support. Clause 11 provides for merely keeping up with the times in regard to new types of septic tanks and it deals with what the Minister describes as "sullage." I had to look up the dictionary to see what "sullage" was, and it was very aptly described and means exactly what one would think in this context, but it has none of those flavours which could be attached to a word of that nature. Clause 12 is also new and it provides for councils to be able to reimburse themselves for the removal of decrepit vehicles left in the street. It seems to be quite reasonable. Previously councils could only reimburse themselves out of the sale of vehicles, the proceeds whereof might not be adequate. Clause 13 is also new and is a consequential amendment that was previously overlooked. I would like to say at this stage that I sympathize with any draftsman drawing an amendment to the Local Government Act because it is a tremendous Act, and we have had many examples of omissions necessitating consequential amendments. I think any draftsman who could find all the consequential amendments to an amendment of the Local Government Act would be a superhuman being.

The next clause is an instance of that because, as previously submitted to us, the same clause was referred to as 755A, to be put in after section 755. This time the same clause comes along as 755B to be put in after section 755A, and it appears that in about 1951 there was an amendment inserted—755A—which was apparently overlooked last time. I think this is a proper amendment. I have already expressed my views to this House that the restrictions placed on councillors are too great. The Act provides that they can neither debate nor vote on questions in which they are interested in certain ways. I agree that they should not be able to vote if they have a personal interest, but they can often make a great contribution to the debate. It is common in other institutions to chop out the right to speak of the only person who can have any real contribution to make to the debate by revealing the facts. I think 99 per cent of councillors are decent people who would not try to use their knowledge to the detriment of others, and it does seem a pity that they are not able to give intimate knowledge to the council on matters they are concerned with so that it will be within the knowledge of other members who have to make the decision. I feel that is a pity because after all the greater the knowledge the councillors have of all matters they have to decide on the better and, after all, they know of the interests of the person revealing that knowledge and thus would surely not be led away by having regard to that personal interest.

Clauses 15, 16 and 17 are the same as previously. Clause 18 is a new one, but it is consequential to clause 4 of this Bill. Clause 19 is another example of a mishit in the Act. When we previously amended the Local Government Act in 1957 we all thought that we were adding a ratepayer witness to an application form for a postal vote in addition to the previously authorized witnesses, but it turns out that from some slip in verbiage or from some misunderstand that was not the case, and that a ratepayer was being substituted for the authorized witness, and this caused hardship in some cases. I have always been one who thought that everyone should have every facility to exercise his vote when he wanted to, and this helps that situation and I

think it is a proper provision. Clause 20 is the same as previously and I do not think there is any need to dwell on it.

If I may return to clause 3 now, I feel this is still the crucial clause of the Bill, and I would like first of all to trace its history. The clause as drawn this time was not in the Bill as originally presented to this House. The Bill presented originally provided for the election of a deputy chairman of a district council. However, it did not provide for the election of a deputy mayor of a municipal corporation, but such an amendment was moved by a member of the Opposition in another place. He is not, as I understand it, without personal interest in the matter. My own view is that if one takes on any job one should be prepared to give the proper time to it and, if that is not possible, one should not take it on but let someone else do it. Unfortunately the Bill has been presented to us by the Government with this amendment included, and all I say at this stage is that if the Government sees fit to include that amendment, which has already been refused by this House, then the Government must take any consequences that might result from that action, but I again emphasize that it was not originally in the Bill, but was a clause that was inserted by the Opposition in another place. I would like to go into the details of that a little at this stage because I think it is of some importance. I was worried about this matter during the second reading debate and I said then that I was not enthusiastic about the clause as it then stood, namely, providing for a deputy chairman of a district council, for reasons that I gave. At that stage there was no mention of a deputy mayor of a municipal corporation. Later on in the Committee stage I said:—

I pointed out in the second reading debate that I thought the appointment of a permanent deputy chairman on district councils might be undesirable. I have had a word with the Minister of Local Government and I understand that he has some very good explanation in the matter which I hope we will be able to hear. He, I think, draws a distinction between district councils and municipal councils in this regard. I bow to his superior knowledge of country local government matters, but I am afraid that if we pass the clause without challenge this practice may spread to municipal corporations and I feel that would be undesirable.

That was before we had any vestige of an idea that the other place was going to amend it in this respect. The Minister in reply said:—

I point out that it is somewhat difficult in the case of the municipal corporations, where most representatives do not have far to go to attend meetings and are able to attend regularly or find out exactly what is going on.

Later on he said:—

I appreciate the honourable member's point about municipalities, but I think that is a different matter.

My forecast came true far more quickly than I thought it would. This amendment was inserted in another place and it has resurged again. It was brought back here, but this House refused to accept it. In the debate on that amendment I made a rather lengthy speech giving the full reasons why I felt that the appointment of a deputy mayor at least was undesirable, and I still am not certain that the appointment of a deputy chairman is not undesirable as well but I, because I am most concerned with the city and am most experienced in city matters, dwelt mainly on the question of the deputy mayor. I am not going to enlarge on what I said at that stage now because I propose to move, if necessary and if no-one else does, an amendment in the Committee stage and I will debate the pros and cons of the matter further then, but there are one or two other things I would like to say now that may be of interest to honourable members.

I have taken the opportunity of reading the debate on the measure in the other place and I find that there seems to have been a great deal of confused thinking about the matter. There was no such confusion in the mind of the Minister of Local Government. I have analysed everything he said, and everything he said on that occasion was perfectly correct except that I apparently misinterpreted his remarks on deputy mayors of municipal corporations. I thought all the remarks that I quoted were susceptible to the interpretation I gave to them, but apparently that was wrong. If I thought there was any other interpretation I would have taken the matter further at that stage, but there was some doubt in the other place about the implications of the whole of this amendment and, indeed, of the clause itself, and I would like to clear that up. As the Minister has said—and he said it quite clearly—the object of the clause inserted by the Government, as originally drawn, for the purpose of appointing a deputy chairman of a district council was for the purpose of appointing a chairman to preside at meetings only. That was never made clear in the sense that the word "only" was used but that is the effect of the amendment.

The amendment was purely and simply to provide for a deputy chairman of a district

council to preside at meetings of the council only, and for no other purpose. Further, now that the amendment relating to municipal corporations has been included, the same thing applies; that is, the appointment—and this is a matter that has been overlooked so far—of a deputy mayor is for the purpose of deputizing at meetings of the council only, and for no other purpose. Other matters were canvassed in this House. The honourable Mr. Melrose said that if a person is wanted in the absence of the mayor to sign documents that should be provided for, but don't appoint a deputy mayor. The amendment as presented to us now and last time does not apply to the signing of documents but to presiding over meetings. It does not apply to section 150 of the Act where the mayor or chairman has the right to appoint someone to act in any particular matter for the clerk, any councillor, the auditor of the council, or any other person, and I may add that there is no similar right given to the deputy mayor. It conflicts with the other provisions of the Act and I suggest this is ill-considered and fallacious in many ways.

Section 70 of the Act provides for the appointment of an acting mayor or an acting chairman, and that section is left unscathed by this unless it can be said to be amended by implication, and I doubt whether it is. Section 70 says a council may appoint an acting mayor or chairman when the mayor is out of the local government area and so on, but he shall not be entitled to any allowance except on the death of the mayor or a vacancy in the office. That stands even if this Bill is passed, and if a deputy mayor or a deputy chairman is appointed the council has the power to appoint an acting mayor or an acting chairman to carry out all the other functions of the council. Consider for example section 795 relating to meetings of ratepayers. It is provided that the mayor (or the chairman) if present shall preside at meetings of ratepayers and if he is not present the ratepayers shall elect a person to preside. Section 377 provides that the mayor or the chairman shall sign documents and apply the common seal of the council. There is no mention of any deputy mayor, such as is envisaged by this Bill, to be empowered to sign documents or do anything else except preside at meetings.

I shall draw attention to something even more serious in the draftsmanship. Under section 5 of the Act—interpretation—"mayor" means "the mayor or acting mayor" and "chairman" means "the chairman or acting chairman." So, whenever the Act refers to "mayor" or "chairman" one has to read that as meaning the mayor or acting mayor or the chairman or acting chairman. Let us look at the Bill. Clause 3, subclause (2) (*d*), provides:—

> And in the case of a district council the chairman or, in his absence and if the council has elected a deputy chairman, the deputy chairman or, in the absence of both, a member chosen by the members present, shall preside.

It seems to confuse thoroughly something that has been drafted in the remainder of the Act. So, apart from one's feeling that the appointment of a deputy mayor and possibly a deputy chairman is undesirable (I gave a fundamental reason for that last time—the mayor is elected by ratepayers, but a deputy mayor, if this Bill were passed, would be elected by the corporation. That does not seem to be logical. However, that does not apply to a district council, because the council elects the chairman, and if this Bill were passed it would also elect the deputy chairman). Apart from that, as I have said, it has many implications of practical difficulty. For instance, I believe the city of Hobart has a deputy mayor. During last session the Premier said there was no intention to give deputy mayors an allowance, but I have always felt that is one of the things that would inevitably happen if there were a full-time deputy mayor. We would have a scene of rival cupboards and rival offices in separate parts of the town hall. To me, fundamentally the whole thing is wrong. If a person is to be mayor, surely he is mayor, and that is the end of it. As Sir Frank Perry pointed out last time, this Council has continued for 100 years without having a Deputy President and we have got on well; councils today get on without a deputy mayor, and this has worked well. If one takes on an onerous job like that, one does not want to be encumbered by people who are hoping one is going to depart for some reason or other and so be able to step into one's shoes. In other words, we do not want to have two competing persons in the town hall. We should do everything possible to get the best people for this job. The Adelaide City Council has been extremely fortunate in this regard, and I think this has applied elsewhere in the State. Surely we do not want to make it more difficult for a person with such a responsible job so that other people could, if they so willed, make his task the less easy to perform. In other words, we do not want a Panchen Lama as well as a Dalai Lama. Look at the mess that this has got them into in Tibet.

While a mayor is absent a council has power to appoint another person to act for him. The clause as drawn will never alter that in the sense that someone else will be appointed to act for him at meetings. If a municipal corporation is assembled for a meeting and the mayor cannot be present, the Bill in effect says, "You may be embarrassed because you cannot appoint someone, so you must have a full-time deputy mayor appointed." What absolute drivel! Members of a council would be present for the purpose of transacting business, and they could just as well elect an acting mayor. If the time-honoured practice is adopted an acting mayor can be appointed at each meeting. Therefore, the acting mayor would be present, whereas if he were appointed in advance he might well be away too, and then the meeting would have to appoint another acting mayor. I believe there is much conflict in the draftsmanship. The clause purports to provide for the appointment of a full-time deputy mayor for only one purpose—to preside over meetings. That is probably the only purpose for which he would really be appointed. As there is no other function under the clause as drawn, the meeting would still have to appoint an acting mayor. The whole thing seems to be based on a fallacious ground, and for that reason I propose to submit an amendment, unless another member submits one that is acceptable.

The only other thing I want to mention in this relationship is something mentioned in the House of Assembly relating to naturalization ceremonies. Some honourable members there do not seem to be clear about the position. Apparently a Federal ordinance provides that a deputy mayor may conduct naturalization ceremonies, and this was used as an argument in the other place why there should be deputy mayors. I cannot imagine that any mayor will arrange a naturalization ceremony when he will not be there himself. If the mayor is taken ill, then an acting mayor can easily be appointed, as has often been done. I cannot see any necessity for this provision, either in that regard or in any other regard. The local governing system has worked well for many years without it, and we have had no instances pointed out where it was necessary; and even it it were necessary, this provision would be inadequate to cure the position. For those reasons I propose to uphold the opinion I expressed last time regarding the appointment of deputy mayors. I shall certainly reconsider the position in the light of my further experience concerning the appointment of deputy chairmen of district councils, because I am not fully satisfied, in view of everything that has now transpired, that it is necessary at all; and also in view of the investigations I have recently made I am certainly not satisfied with the verbiage of the clause, as proferred to us by the Government, as being sufficient if there are to be deputy chairmen. If we are to have them, the Bill goes not nearly far enough to create any situation of very much advantage to anyone. I propose to support the second reading, and as I have foreshadowed will raise this point in Committee.

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.36 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, August 26, at 2.15 p.m.