

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.**

Tuesday, April 19, 1960.

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

**ADDRESS IN REPLY.**

Adjourned debate on motion for adoption.

(Continued from April 13. Page 158.)

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL (Central No. 2)—In supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address in Reply as drafted I would first like to join in the felicitations regarding two important events in the life of the Royal Family which have already been expressed by other honourable members. I would also like once again to refer to our immediately former Governor, Sir Robert George, and Lady George. I know that I have done this each year since I have been a member of this Council, and perhaps it might have been redundant on this occasion but for the fact that His Excellency retired from office not so very long ago and I think it behoves me again to say something. Sir Robert and Lady George were with us for seven years and I believe they had a most successful term of office—as successful as any in my own generation at any rate. They got to know people throughout the State, and it is no exaggeration to say that they left loved by all sections of the community. They are two very fine personalities and they have very fine human qualities which we all appreciated. They fulfilled their roles to the utmost.

I have said before, and I say again, that I believe in Governors from the United Kingdom being appointed because I feel sincerely that they make for closer ties with the Old Country, and the term just ended has made those bonds even stronger than ever. I would like to agree with what the Hon. Mr. Condon said about His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor. He is a very fine and great man. His delivery of the opening Speech this session was quite an object lesson to all of us who are interested in such things being well done.

I should like to congratulate you, Sir, if I may without presumption, on the commonsense interpretations which you have always given on Standing Orders of this Council. Your interpretations make for a smooth working in this Chamber where, from lesser people, a more literal interpretation might be frustrating and probably lead to much more prolixity in the proceedings.

In Sir Lyell McEwin we have a very fine Leader of the Government in this Council whom

I think we all much admire. He has a forceful personality and he usually contributes something solid and substantial to debates. He has an outstanding quality—that of knowing when not to speak; anyone who has that quality is very much open to admiration for I have seen in my time, in various places, so many people who were on a winning cause speaking at the wrong moment and turning it into a loser. It is certainly a very admirable quality to know when to keep quiet. I would like to congratulate our other Ministers once again, not only on their hard work, but also on their help to ordinary members like myself, for all of them are very approachable and helpful to members seeking information or trying to put their views on any subject.

I should also like to congratulate the Hon. Sir Frank Perry, who has taken over the reins of leadership of our Party. He follows in the footsteps of that great fighter for freedom, Sir Collier Cudmore, and I feel that Sir Frank has carried out his important task with great capacity and ability, and his experience has been very valuable to members of our Party, including myself. There is one person I would like to mention who has not yet been referred to in this debate, namely, Mr. Drew, the Under Treasurer, who will retire shortly. He has been a tower of strength in the finances of this State for many years and I think we shall miss his outstanding abilities very much indeed. I would like him to know that by one member at least of this place he is appreciated—and I think I could probably say that with confidence for all of us.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—We all share those views.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—I must also add my great regret at the death of Mr. George Hambour, who was member for Light in another place. He was one of those people who are really useful in Parliament because he was outspoken and forceful and told us exactly what he thought; anyone who does that must be of great value to Parliament. When one is outspoken, especially in opposing measures of one's own Government, as some of us feel to be our duty from time to time, it takes it out of one quite a lot. No-one likes doing it; but we feel it our duty when the occasion arises; and Mr. Hambour was one who fearlessly expressed his views. In addition, he was a great companion in Parliamentary social activities; and I know that I for one will miss him very much.

The debate on this motion has been, in my humble opinion, on a very high plane. It has

been thoughtful and the speeches have been well prepared. The Hon. Mr. Giles gave us a lead with a very interesting speech into which he put a great deal of thought and I am sure that we all very much appreciate people who talk about the things they know, as Mr. Giles did, for it gives us much information that helps greatly in our deliberations. There have also been fine contributions from the Hons. C. R. Story, L. H. Densley and R. R. Wilson which were well considered and prepared and, without detracting from the other two, I would like to say that I thought Mr. Wilson's speech was extremely interesting. He dealt with many topics in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech and obviously had given them much consideration.

The motion was seconded by the Hon. Mr. Potter and, in a very forthright speech which I am sure we greatly enjoyed, he gave much information about very important matters, and it seemed to me that he rather rattled the Opposition because he put them right on the defensive.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—No. In our opinion he didn't know what he was talking about.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—I regret that the Hon. Mr. Condon is not here today. He spent seventeen-twentyeighths of his speech in replying to Mr. Potter. I counted it in *Hansard* and his comments in this direction amounted to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  out of seven pages. If that means that someone has not been put on the defensive, I should like to know what it does mean. The Hon. Mr. Bardolph was also in this category. He did not spend seventeen-twentyeighths of his time on the matter, but thirteen-sixteenths, which is an even greater proportion. It amounted to  $3\frac{1}{4}$  out of four pages. Mr. Bardolph said:—

The Opposition believes in conciliation and arbitration and we (that means the Labor Party, I take it) accept the decision of the umpire.

It so happened that at the time Mr. Bardolph was making that statement I had in front of me a copy of the *News* of that afternoon, but I was so engrossed in his speech that I did not read the paper until afterwards, otherwise I might have interjected then. This is what I found in the *News* in relation to the decision of the Arbitration Commission after the Council had risen:—

In Adelaide, the Secretary of the Trades and Labor Council, Mr. R. Bishop, said the commission's refusal would come as a great shock to the trade union movement. . . . "The trade union movement," said Mr.

Bishop, "has in recent years felt more confident about applying to the commission on national issues. This decision will destroy much of that confidence. It will be resented by the whole trade union movement and no doubt will cause much unrest."

That does not line up very well with the gracious acceptance of the umpire's decision.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—Be fair. I also said that we reserved the right to criticize, but not criticize the judges.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL—I know that the honourable member made that point, but he also made the other point I mentioned. I picked up the following morning's paper and it said in a paragraph from Brisbane:—

The Federal Opposition Leader (Mr. Callwell) said today: "The decision of the Arbitration Commission to freeze the basic wage for another 12 months would not have been made, I feel sure, if the Menzies Government had not resorted to intimidatory tactics by sending counsel into the court to argue against the union's application, and if the Prime Minister had not claimed in public statements that the economy had first to absorb the last basic wage increase of 15s. and the 23 per cent margins increase."

Intimidatory tactics sending your counsel into court to argue your case for you! If ever there was a classic exaggeration that is one. That is what the court is there for—to hear counsel; but when the Government, which no doubt is more concerned with the ramifications of the Australian economy than anyone else, dares to send its counsel into court, it is intimidatory tactics! I have never heard of such a thing before. I am very glad that the Commonwealth had the courage to present its views to the Arbitration Commission on this occasion. The South Australian Government has done it many times, but I understand that the Commonwealth Government has not previously done it. I think the Government should always express its views on these matters. It probably has information which no one else possesses, and I imagine that the views it can put forward would possibly be more valuable to the court than the views of anyone else. So, let us forget intimidatory tactics of sending counsel into court, and let us do it on every occasion so that the court may have information which it should have and wants to have.

My impression of the basic wage decision is that not only was it the only possible decision in the circumstances, but that it was generally particularly well received by all sections of the community. In my opinion the man in the street has realized that though certain benefits do accrue at times from wages rises and so on,

one loses that benefit if one presses the matter too far. I think that what the Menzies Government said was absolutely right—the economy has not yet had time to digest the last 15s. basic wage rise and the 28 per cent in margins. The economy will be much healthier for all concerned, including basic wage earners, if the economy is preserved in a sensible state, rather than that we should have rabid inflation resulting from continual rises in the basic wage. We cannot ignore overseas conditions and world parity prices. It is all very well for people to say we can have elevated standards in this country, willy-nilly. That is not so. They must be attached to world standards and world conditions.

We have very high standards of living in Australia, possibly as high as anywhere in the world, and I am sure that we are all very happy about that, and we all believe that is as it should be and that we should preserve that situation. However, we are linked up with the economy of the whole world and we cannot ignore world prices and world values. For instance, there was a drop in the price of wool, I think some 18 months ago, and conditions here began to react to that situation pretty quickly. Fortunately for us the price recovered and it is now again on quite a reasonable level. It is very easy for our secondary industries to be priced out in world competition by having a standard too high, and that will not be good for anyone in the country, whether he is a manual worker or a white collar worker. I go further and say it is of paramount importance to Australia that cost of production be kept below world price parities in relation to primary industries, for if we get to the stage where our cost of production of primary products is higher than the world value of those products, then we shall be in a pretty parlous state.

In relation to the finances of the State, I should like to mention that I agree with the Government's financial policy. It was curious that in the House of Assembly a few days ago the Leader of the Opposition drew attention in a critical way, as I understand it, to the fact that the South Australian loan indebtedness is the highest in Australia. It seems most curious to me that that criticism should come from a Party which is always moaning about the fact that we have not enough schools, hospitals and so on. We cannot have these things both ways. If we are to try to get as many hospitals and schools as possible to cater for the needs of the community, we have to pay for them. The State Government's income is limited and there-

fore the bulk of our capital expenditure has to be paid for out of loan funds. It is not compatible to say, on the one hand, that the Government should not be borrowing so much and, on the other, that it should be building more schools and hospitals.

As I mentioned before in this House, we in this State are in a very happy position under the Financial Agreement, because we get a favourable share of the available loan moneys, possibly more than on most methods of assessment we are entitled to; but there is a provision under that agreement that, if we do not take advantage of the loan moneys allocated to us, not only do we lose that money for the current year but it affects our entitlement in future years. Thus, if we do not take all the money to which we are entitled, we shall not get as big a proportion made available to us the next time, the time after, and so on. It is hard to see how, from the State's point of view, we can fail to take advantage of all loan moneys offered. I feel in these days, too, it must be a sound financial policy to take advantage of loan moneys offered because, with this creeping inflation that we have and that we seem pinned to, for the time being at all events, it surely must be to our advantage to spend all the money we can get—within reason, of course—on buildings and capital improvements when present prices are prevailing because in no time the value of those buildings will be far and away above the corresponding loan entry against them. From that point of view, I feel confident that the attitude of our State Government to loan funds and finances generally is correct.

When one discusses State finances with most people—at all events, with most people outside this building—they seem always to profess an ignorance of the matter. They do not discuss them readily because they seem to feel that State finances, or indeed the finances of what is sometimes called big business, differ in some mystical way from those of the private household. That is not my opinion. All finances work on the same principle and one can apply a home-spun private household philosophy regarding finances to public moneys as well as to businesses. I think the public's confusion stems probably from the free use in public finance of technical financial terms rather than the use of ordinary everyday language, which is just as explanatory and just as brief. For instance, we hear so much talk about "fiscal policy." One may ask a number of people—I have tried it myself in the last few days—what "fiscal policy" means, and they do not

know; but, if the simple and ordinary term of "financial policy," which means exactly the same thing, were used, everybody would understand. Again, we hear talk of a "sinking fund" instead of a fund making provision for capital repayment. Anybody knows what a fund is to repay borrowed moneys, but a "sinking fund" is a mystery to most people. If only we could simplify our financial talk and the use of such phrases it would be to the advantage of the public.

The Lieutenant-Governor's Speech again mentions price control. I have said many things about price control in the comparatively short time that I have been a member of this Chamber. I do not want to say the same things all over again, but should merely like to say that my convictions against price control grow, if possible, stronger each day as it gets more and more out of date, more and more outmoded and more and more against the spirit of the times. We are living in days of great expansion, and have been for some years now. What is price control doing on the scene, and under a Liberal Government, too? There was a cartoon in the morning paper the day after it was announced that price control was to be carried on. It depicted an old, broken-down race-horse, the caption being something to this effect—"Surely you're not going to run that one again!" I believe, too, that that old horse ought to be turned out into the paddock. It looked to me as if it was a horse that ought to be destroyed at once, before it came to the notice of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. If it is not to be destroyed altogether, however, there is quite a strong section of feeling that at least it ought to be turned out into the paddock and allowed to browse away to a peaceful end. That conception is that the Prices Act could be retained, but everything ought to be de-controlled. If the Prices Act remained in existence, then it would be there to be invoked if it ever became necessary (though I do not think it would); but there is a section of public opinion that says that might be the best thing to do. I do not mind which way it is done as long as price control is dispensed with. I do appeal to honourable members this year again to open their minds on the matter, not just to think about how they voted last time and vote consistently with that, but to take a 1960 look at the matter instead of a wartime look and see whether price control should not be done away with at once. If we look at it clearly, we realize that the recent basic wage and marginal rises have put price

control completely into insignificance in one swoop. Just that one set of rises in the basic wage and margins pales the Prices Act into insignificance. Those wage rises go directly into the cost of everything and in one hit do far more to affect the price of goods than the Prices Act has succeeded in doing throughout its existence.

During this debate reference has been made to the record drought that we have just experienced. However, we have not had in the metropolitan area one water restriction of any sort. It is almost unbelievable that that should be the case, but it has been the case, even though other States have had restrictions, and they had far more rain than we had. That can only reflect the far-sightedness of the Government and also, I should like to add, of the Public Service that works with the Government. Had it not been for the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline, of course, one hesitates to think what would have been the situation in Adelaide at the moment. It is too awful to contemplate where we would have been as we had no reservoir intake during the winter and empty reservoirs in the summer. I do not know what sort of restrictions we would have had. Pumped water costs money, so again we cannot have it both ways. If we are going to have plenty of water, we have to pay for it, but water is one of the absolute bases of living. I say, "Let us pay for it and see that we have it." There is talk about the duplication of the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline. I hope that that will be done just as soon as it becomes necessary to put the work in hand.

I was also delighted to read the Premier's announcement regarding a new scheme for the storage of Murray River water. The Premier has been very far-sighted about River Murray water and he challenged the impact of the Snowy Mountains Scheme on this State's supplies long before anyone else thought about it. Members of the Opposition said he did that purely for political propaganda for the election held four years ago. He was right on this subject four years ago and the scheme that he now proposes should have the effect of assuring adequate water supplies for South Australia for many years to come.

We have not yet felt very much the effects of the drought from a financial point of view. That shows the resilience of the South Australian economy, a resilience that did not exist in previous droughts, such as that of 1914, when I believe business was badly affected long before the comparable period that we are now going through. However, we all hate to think

what the position will be if the State has another bad season, as it very well could have. I am not a pessimist and I think, on the law of averages, that we shall have a good season, but another drought on top of this one would be bad. I believe that immediately the season breaks the State will feel the full impact of the drought because there will then be a great demand on the various lending institutions for finance, particularly for finance for farmers. Having some knowledge of those institutions I believe that they will be ready to meet the occasion and that money will be reasonably freely available for those who need it to re-stock.

I wish to mention the police force. The police force is occasionally mentioned in this House and we never hear any mention of it except in a praiseful sense. We have such an excellent police force, and we have had it ever since I can remember, that we are apt to take it for granted. Not only does the police force carry out its regular duties most efficiently and not only is it so up-to-date with its wireless patrols and other modern equipment, but I think its traffic control has improved out of all knowledge in the last decade. I heard several people in the street this morning mention how really magnificent was the control of the Oakbank traffic again this year. We have come to expect that because if one sets himself a high standard he will be expected to live up to it. Our police force has set itself this very high standard and it does live up to it.

I noticed the other day a criticism of the traffic signs at the corner of South Road and Anzac Highway. That rather amazed me because in the last Address in Reply debate I said that that set of traffic lights was the most efficient I had ever seen in any country. It is a funny thing about traffic control that when you get something that works very well some people seem to think they can make it work better. I made a plea for the re-institution of the amber light at that intersection because it had been dispensed with in conjunction with the red signal. If that were done I know the traffic jams there at peak periods would be lessened and people would be able to get away more quickly without any detriment to other traffic.

I believe a large building is being contemplated in Adelaide in the comparatively near future and that it will be higher than any existing building. As honourable members know, the building height limit is 132 feet, plus the lift well. I believe that the time is

ripe for consideration to be given to the raising of the height limit. I believe there is a conception among town planners that a limit must be imposed on the height of buildings because if too many buildings are allowed to go too high the pavements will be jammed with pedestrians. In other words, the buildings will house so many people that the pavements will not be able to cope with the great increase in pedestrian traffic. However, I believe that we are nowhere near that stage in Adelaide and I think an increase in the building height would be beneficial. If a review of the Building Act is to be made in that regard there are certain other things that could very well be looked at again, such as the provision of light courts and air space. With the advent of efficient artificial lighting and air conditioning I believe that the relevant provisions in the Act are unnecessary. If a building is fully air-conditioned and equipped with good artificial light why is it necessary to have a well for light and air? I say it is not necessary and it prevents the owner from making the fullest use of his land. I think one can understand the impact of Birks' new building to be erected in Rundle Street. The design for that building is of the most modern type for a retailer's store, but it was not in accord with our Building Act and it was necessary for that case to go to the referees under the Building Act. The referees had no hesitation in saying that the design was perfectly all right because of modern techniques on light and air-conditioning. It seems curious that the Act itself should not provide for those developments and I think it is time it did so, so that it will not be necessary to invoke referees on points that should be capable of solution by the authorities administering the Building Act.

I desire now to deal with a few local matters concerning the metropolitan area. I think it behoves me to say something about the City Council park lands development schemes. The position with regard to park lands development has been brought about by the new buildings going up in Adelaide. Honourable members will recall that there were no new buildings of a ratable nature constructed in Adelaide during and just after the war because of the control over the supply of building materials. The Government said that building materials were to be used for the construction of homes, and I think that policy was reasonable. However, if it had not been for the removal of rent control on business premises I suggest that new buildings would

still not have gone up because no-one could have afforded to build them at the old rentals. It was the removal of rent control that started a spate of new buildings in the City of Adelaide, and that in turn enabled the City Council to get more rate revenue and reduce its rate to approximately the pre-war level. The council then said, and in my opinion very rightly, "Now, rather than reduce the rate further this is one of those rare times when a city has an extra bit of money to spare, so let us put it into some development that will be for the benefit of all the people." It is from those things that I believe the development of the park lands has stemmed.

I had a visitor from Sydney staying with me during the Festival of Arts and, being rather proud of the park lands development and the works that were going on, I took him right around and through the park lands surrounding the city and through the centre of the park lands along the Torrens Lake. That trip was an eye-opener even to me, though I had been fairly closely associated with that developmental work. There was hardly one part of that drive that was not a point of interest and a point of beauty, and the development that has already taken place is really to the great advantage of a city which has such beautiful parklands, but which it has never previously been able to afford to develop to this extent. I hope that our finances will be such that it will be possible to continue with this development to the stage where we have the whole parklands fully developed. Private people, too, have co-operated in this work and there are quite a number of watered sports grounds such as those of the University, Teachers College, Prince Alfred College and Pulteney Grammar School, and these developments all add to the general appearance of the city.

The Festival of Arts has been mentioned during this debate and I would like to give a little credit where credit is due on this occasion because if it had not been for two people—and I think I know the story as well as anyone, because I was closely associated with the festival in a minor capacity—that festival would not have taken place. One of those persons was Sir Lloyd Dumas, and the other Professor Bishop of the Elder Conservatorium of Music; they were the people who conceived the festival and got it working. It is one thing to have an idea, but another to be capable of bringing it into effect. A Festival of Arts, or festivals of various sorts, have been discussed for quite a number of years, so there is nothing

very novel in the idea, but it was when those two people came together that between them they were able to work it up into the wonderful success that we all feel it was. Of course, that success was not due to their efforts only; there were many other hard workers on the Festival Committee, but the point I wanted to make was that someone had to conceive and plan the festival and the nature of it, and get the necessary finance, and I think I have given credit in the right quarter. I hope that the Festival of Arts will become a biennial event. Plans are already being made for one to be held in 1962 and, from what I hear, I believe that we shall have on that occasion some very wonderful artists if everything works out according to present plans.

The Hon. Mr. Densley referred to the establishment of a national theatre and it is a matter in which I, too, am interested. He said that there were many worthy people who should be capable and willing to support such a movement as the building of a national theatre. I am not in the least socialistic minded, but I do wonder whether the general public should be called upon to provide a national theatre or whether this is not a proper role for the Government. In Australia up to date, national theatres and opera houses and so on have been discussed and planned with the idea that they should be provided by private individuals. However, elsewhere all over the world there are State opera houses—and magnificent ones—which are of great value to the community, and we have buildings like the Museum, the Art Gallery and so forth provided by the Government, although some private benefactions have helped considerably. Why should not a national theatre be provided by the Government? I notice that experts have been talking of a theatre for 1,000 people as a prelude to the later achievement of an opera house. That seems to be getting into realms which I feel are possibly not quite practical. If we get a theatre capable of accommodating 1,000 people we shall be doing very well indeed, but why not talk about a general purposes opera house and have done with it, and why should not some public revenue go towards the provision of a thing of that nature rather than that 100 per cent of it should be channelled to the purely utilitarian? It has been done in matters cultural in the past, and although our present Government does not entirely neglect that aspect I feel that some of the public revenue could well go into cultural things for the benefit of all people, for all sections of the community are interested in theatre of some sort.

Finally, I wish the State Government continued success in all its undertakings. I believe that no Government could have done more for South Australia than ours has done; indeed, I would go a good deal further and say that few if any Governments could have done as much.

The Hon. JESSIE COOPER (Central No. 2)—I rise to support the mover and seconder of the motion and would particularly like to join with them in their expressions of loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen. I share with all women in this State, as elsewhere in Australia, great joy in the birth of Her Majesty's second son Prince Andrew, and relief at Her Majesty's safe deliverance after days of anxiety. Nobody knows how important this event may yet be to the British people, for life is uncertain and one remembers that neither His Majesty King George the Fifth nor His Majesty King George the Sixth were the eldest sons of the Monarch, yet both were called upon to reign. The birth of Prince Andrew strengthens the line of the British Monarchy. We all wish Her Majesty a long life, happiness, and a peaceful reign. I rejoice, too, at the approaching marriage of Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret, and pray that she will be blessed in her married life.

I join with other members in their sincere expressions of regret at the departure of Sir Robert George and Lady George after their fine record in this State. We were, however, honoured to have His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, Sir Mellis Napier, with us to open this session of Parliament, and again I join with other members in expressing the high regard in which all South Australians hold him.

I was very much moved by the words of the Hon. Mr. Giles in connection with the sad passing of Mr. George Hambour, M.P. I too shall never forget the friendship, courtesy and great kindness given to me by him when I was a new member.

We have already heard in this debate many remarks about the poor season. I would like to add my thought on this matter, namely, that though this season is the worst on record yet we have had better yields. The difference in yields between this past year and that of 1914 and other bad years made it very clear that this has been no fortuitous circumstance but the reward of money spent during the past 30 years on technical research and education. When we consider the growth of the Waite Agricultural Institute, the thorough training given to our young men over the

years at Roseworthy, the more extensive production and availability of various fertilizing agents, the wider and better education of farmers in efficient methods of husbandry, plant research and water conservation programmes, we realize that the consistent policy of recent Governments—and none more so than that of the present Government—has borne fruit in a very real sense. Science has other victories no less renowned than Sputniks. We are now seeing, and never so clearly as in the past year, the outcome of money and thought put into technical and agricultural research and education. We must be prepared to put much more into this field with the certainty that it will pay manifold dividends. Little enough has been spent in the past, yet look at the results. We must set more aside in future. This year is our proof.

Bearing in mind South Australia's increase in population, it is most interesting to note that a large part of the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech dealt with the various and rapid actions being taken to increase the use of the State's land. We have the mention of the clearing and development of land for the settlement of farmers; the development of underground and surface water supplies, the maintenance and improvement of irrigation areas; the drainage and reclamation of wet areas; and the further increases in State forests. It is an exciting story. One is impressed with the urgency with which the Government is pursuing a very definite policy, spread over many fields, of bringing large areas of the State into more intensive production. In fact, one of the characteristics of our present Government is that it gives to all of the State a feeling of the importance of forging ahead. For the manner in which it carries out this vision of fulfilment the Government deserves our highest commendation.

With reference to the activities of the Aborigines Protection Board, I feel that the Government must be commended for what it has done so far. Remembering that it has been shown that aboriginal blood does not in itself cause lowering of standards among the white people or, indeed, any continuing colour problem, it is to be hoped that an even more vigorous policy will be adopted by the Government with a view to assimilating these early Australians into the general community as quickly as possible. It is with some misgiving that one notes that certain organizations, and most scientists and anthropologists, seem bent on segregating our aborigines and in maintaining them as museum exhibits. I consider this

to be a disastrous approach to the problem. Parliament should stand behind the Government and give wholehearted support to its work and plans for the betterment of our aborigines.

Reference is made in paragraph 23 of His Excellency's Speech to the extensive additions and alterations made to the institutions under the control of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department. If ever well-deserved praise is given to a department of this State it must surely be to this one for its work on behalf of neglected and destitute children. It is to this aspect of its work that I wish to refer. We hear from year to year of the rights of parenthood and I know that all members will agree with me when I say that this Government has always regarded those rights as sacred. However, there are cases which occur only too frequently and in which I believe the State should have more power to act. I refer specifically to those children deserted in early childhood. We had an extreme example last week of new-born twins helplessly abandoned on the verandah of a private hospital—healthy babies who could be adopted if the parents could be traced. Again and again institutions care for children for years and do all they can to find the parents who have, in the meantime, vanished. Those children are reared and educated by the State or by private institutions, whereas if the Adoption of Children Act could be modified, they could be more easily legally adopted and so be given the birthright of every child, namely, a loving family life.

I can give members only too many instances of cruel and heartless parents abandoning their children and disappearing, only to

reappear when the children have reached an age when they are an economic asset. I can tell members of a fine little blue-eyed fair-haired boy resident in a home whose mother, deserted by her husband, refuses to care for him. She visits him each Christmas, bringing an article of clothing, but no love. Hope dies hard in children, and it died in this little boy last Christmas when he was old enough to realize that his mother had no intention of taking him home, and he told the matron he no longer loved his mother. I could wring members' hearts very easily by relating the sights I have seen in little children's bedrooms—small, well-thumbed photographs of the mother or father who has forgotten them. We must be grateful for the fine men and women who devote themselves in institutions and cottage homes to the welfare of these children; we must be grateful to a department run with sympathy and humanity. If, however, the Government would consider some way in which the legal adoption of the children deserted for longer than a certain period could be expedited, then I feel that a great service could be done for those children and the State as a whole. Nothing breeds unhappiness in a human being more than frustration and disappointment in childhood, and nothing makes for delinquency and bad citizenship more than unhappiness. I congratulate the mover and the seconder of the motion and support it.

The Hon. W. W. ROBINSON secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.13 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, April 20, at 2.15 p.m.