LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday, August 31, 1965.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. L. H. Densley) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS

COBDOGLA SCHOOL.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: I have received a letter from the Cobdogla school committee (and I think that all my colleagues and probably all other members have also received copies) regarding the survey of a new highway approaching the proposed Kingston bridge from Barmera. I do not wish to read the whole letter but I will make it available to the Minister. A portion is as follows:

> It is our opinion that with only a very slight deviation from the present surveyed route the new highway could be planned along the existing street north of the school grounds, passing by the schoolteacher's house, without using any of the school grounds and only a small portion of the school house grounds.

The committee sets out three reasons for asking that the school house, which has recently been partly rebuilt, be not demolished and also for asking that sacrificing some of the school grounds be avoided. Will the Minister of Roads obtain a report on this matter?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Yes, I shall be happy to obtain a report and notify the honourable member as soon as possible.

FLINDERS HIGHWAY.

The Hon. C. C. D. OCTOMAN: Has the Minister of Roads a reply to my question of August 18 regarding the sealing of the Flinders Highway?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Yes. The policy adopted for the major highways on Eyre Peninsula has been, in order of priority, as follows: (1) Lincoln Highway, (2) Eyre Highway and (3) Flinders Highway. The Lincoln Highway has been completed, whilst the Eyre Highway will be completed to Ceduna by 1968. A five-year plan construction programme envisages the construction of a sealed road from Warrow to Streaky Bay on the Flinders Highway between 1966-67 and 1969-70. Apart from general maintenance, it is proposed to spend only £35,000 on a section of the Flinders Highway south of Elliston during 1965-66. Provision has been made for this on the current Budget.

TRANSPORT CONTROL.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: Recently there have been rumours about the Government's intention to legislate for the reintroduction of transport control, and the uncertainty about this matter is causing much confusion amongst transport operators in planning the running of their businesses. Will the Minister of Transport say whether the Government still intends to re-introduce transport control, and, if it does, when?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: The Government has not changed its intention in this matter, and I assure the honourable member that soon after the show adjournment legislation to deal with it will be introduced.

TUMBY BAY TO CUMMINS ROAD.

The Hon. C. C. D. OCTOMAN: Will the Minister of Roads inform the Council of the Highways Department's plans for sealing Main Road 44 from Tumby Bay to Cummins, a distance of about 23 miles, the survey of which was completed over a year ago?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I will make the necessary inquiries and inform the honourable member as soon as possible.

LEVEL CROSSINGS.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: On August 4 I asked the Minister of Roads a question about level crossings, and I was somewhat concerned because, although £50,000 was placed on the Loan Estimates last year to be spent on as many crossings as could reasonably be dealt with last year, only £8,000 was spent. After the Minister gave his reply I queried it, and suggested that it might be possible to call for tenders for this work rather than rely on the single gang employed by the Railways Department on this work. The Minister assured me that he would look further into the matter. Has he any further information?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: The honourable member asked this question and I assured him that I would make further inquiries. I have received a report on this matter which perhaps should be given by the Minister of Transport but which was forwarded to me because of the assurance I had given. The Railways Commissioner states:

I have to report that the installation of train operated warning devices, including gates at level crossings, in most cases involves the interconnection of control circuits of the railway signalling system and the level crossing warning system. Such operation is usually carried out without interrupting the running of trains.

The responsibility for safe operation of the railway signalling system rests wholly upon departmental officers, who must, therefore, be vested with exclusive authority in respect of its construction, alteration and maintenance. Accordingly, contractors engaged for the purpose of installing level crossing warning devices could perform only part of the task entailed. The remainder would necessarily be carried out by departmental forces. Any such installation would, therefore, become a joint enterprise, and a division of responsibility would ensue.

In view of the standard of reliability properly required of level crossing warning installations, such division of responsibility would evidently constitute a retrograde step. The liability of the Railways Commissioner in the event of collision at a level crossing, whether automatic warning devices are installed or not, is such that the proposal to employ contractors on such installations cannot be entertained.

GAWLER RIVER BRIDGE.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I understand that a contract has been let for a new bridge over the Gawler River at Angle Vale. Can the Minister of Local Government inform the Council of the date of commencement and the estimated time of completion of this project?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: At the moment I do not know either the commencing or the proposed completion date. However, I will obtain the information for the honourable member and let him have it as soon as possible.

PRICE OF LAYING MASH.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: Has the Minister of Roads a reply to a question I asked on August 4 about the price of "High Energy Mash"?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Yes. The Temporary Prices Commissioner has advised that current prices of "High Energy Layers Mash" were increased in July this year by 6d. a bag for 100 lb. bags and from 9d. to 1s. a bag for 125 lb. bags. These increases, which range from 2 per cent to 2½ per cent, have been examined and are not excessive. The current prices are still lower than the maximum prices approved seven years ago. In conjunction with that, I have the following information, in the form of a table, which is as follows:

Brand.	Maximum prices fixed in 1958.	Prices before July increase.	Present prices.	Latest Increase.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Whiting & Chambers . . .	41 0 bag 125 lb.	40 0	40 9	0 9
Meggitts	42 6 bag 125 lb.	40 6	41 6	1 0
Thomas Webb	33 6 bag 100 lb.	31 6	32 0	0 6
Charlick (standard) . . .	34 3 bag 100 lb.	33 3	33 9	0 6

BOOKMAKERS' COMMISSIONS.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Last session an amendment to the Lottery and Gaming Act increased the commission payable by bookmakers from 1 per cent to 1½ per cent. In his second reading explanation the then Chief Secretary said that about £8,500 would go to metropolitan trotting clubs and £5,000 to country trotting clubs. Can the Chief Secretary say how much has been raised by this increased tax, how much has been distributed to metropolitan trotting clubs, and how much to country trotting clubs?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: Obviously I cannot answer that question without notice, but I will obtain the information and inform the honourable member.

BANK AMALGAMATION.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: Can the Chief Secretary say whether the Government intends to bring down legislation this session dealing with the amalgamation of the State Bank and the Savings Bank, as was submitted in the Premier's policy speech?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: An answer to a similar question on notice was given in another place. There has been a Cabinet decision. I have not got the answer, but I shall be pleased to give it to the honourable member tomorrow.

WIRRABARA ROAD.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: Has the Minister of Roads a reply to my question of August 11 regarding the road from Wirrabara to Wirrabara forest?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: The answer is as follows:

The Wirrabara forest main road No. 153 is scheduled in the five-year works construction programme for reconstruction and sealing, to commence in 1968-69 and be completed during 1969-70.

BULK HANDLING OF GRAIN.

The Hon. C. C. D. OCTOMAN: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. C. D. OCTOMAN: On August 18 I asked a question of the Minister of Local Government, representing the Minister of Agriculture, regarding deep-sea port facilities and the bulk handling committee set up by the Government to investigate those facilities. I was informed by the Minister that a similar question had been asked in another place and that the answer given there could possibly be an answer to my question. However, the answer in the other place on August 24 does not cover the question that I asked. Two committees on Eyre Peninsula are vitally interested in this investigation, one being at Port Neill and the other at Streaky Bay. I now ask my question again. Will this bulk handling committee take public evidence, and, if it does, will the dates and places for the taking of the evidence be advertised?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I will seek the information from my colleague and notify the honourable member as soon as possible.

GROUP LAUNDRY.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: Has the Chief Secretary a reply to the question I asked on August 17 regarding the completion of the work on the group laundry?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: Following the Leader's question regarding the completion of the work and the opening ceremony in connection with the group laundry, I asked the Director-General of Medical Services to give me a report, and it is as follows:

On August 17, 1965, the Honourable Sir Lyell McEwin asked when the group laundry and central linen service of this department would be completed and whether members of Parliament would have an opportunity to inspect it. Prior to the receipt of this question, the management committee, in conjunction with officers of the Public Buildings Department, had been giving careful attention to the achievable date of commencement of operations, and a full report dated August 25 from the chairman of the management committee now indicates that—

(1) subject to the provisos listed, the date of commencement of operations is now expected to be November 1, 1965.

(2) a suitable date for an official opening would be in early December, with an invitation list for the function being settled in consultation with the Minister and the Under Secretary.

The No. (1) contains a few provisos and they have been taken up with Dr. Rollison who said that a firm date could be fixed for early December. This morning we fixed the date for the opening ceremony and it will be Friday, December 3, 1965. All members of Parliament will receive invitations. Country members might query the reason for holding the function on a Friday, but it would be dangerous to set any other day of the week because Parliament could be still sitting.

SOLDIER SETTLEMENT.

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: On August 24 I received from the Minister representing the Minister of Agriculture a reply to my question concerning war service land settlement blocks and was told that there were 28 applicants still eligible for war service land settlement. Part of the Minister's reply was:

Such blocks will be allotted under the scheme only if the Commonwealth Government provides funds to bring the holdings back to allotment standard.

I notice in the current issue of the *Murray Pioneer*, the newspaper circulating in the Upper Murray area, that a river war service land settlement property is for sale by tender, and I understand that an extremely high reserve price has been placed on the property. I presume, therefore, that the property is not in the category mentioned by the Minister, for which further funds are needed from the Commonwealth Government. Will the Minister review the decision to sell this property on the open market, as there are 28 applicants still eligible for settlement?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I shall refer the matter to the Minister of Agriculture and obtain a report for the honourable member as soon as possible.

RAILCAR LIGHTS.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: Has the Minister of Transport a reply to my question of August 18 regarding lights on railcars?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Yes. A headlight and marker lamps must be displayed on all railcars between sunset and sunrise, on tunnel sections during daylight, and when day signals cannot be seen clearly. On August 10, 1965, the railcar from Wilmington arrived at Laura at 6.44 a.m. and departed at 6.45

a.m. The marker lamps were extinguished at this station and, immediately upon departure, the headlight was switched off. These actions were taken because it was considered there was sufficient daylight at that time to render the display of lights unnecessary. Such practice had been in operation for the fortnight immediately preceding this incident, because the daylight visibility was considered to be adequate. Earlier in the year the head and marker lights were kept alight until the railcar reached Gladstone, but in the summer months they are extinguished as far back as Booleroo Centre. From inquiries made (including those into the state of the weather on the day in question) it would appear that the crew acted in good faith in their action in extinguishing the railcar lights at Laura.

MAGILL BUS SERVICE.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: Has the Minister of Transport a reply to my recent question regarding crowding of buses?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Yes. Recent checks show the actual average load on the Magill service to be about 60 passengers in each bus during the morning peak, and about 64 passengers in each bus during the afternoon peak. There are 40 seats on each bus, so that on this service approximately two-thirds of peak hour passengers obtain seats. The above figures include any Tramways Trust employees joining the buses at Hackney Road.

SCHOOL CANTEENS.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: Has the Minister of Labour and Industry obtained a reply to my question of August 18 regarding school canteens?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Yes. The reply is that the Government will continue to pay the cost of gas and electricity used in school canteens.

NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. A. J. SHARD (Minister of Health) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Nurses Registration Act, 1920-1964. Read a first time.

TRAVELLING STOCK RESERVE: HUNDRED OF WALLOWAY.

The House of Assembly transmitted the following resolution in which it requested the concurrence of the Legislative Council:

That the resumption of the portion of the travelling stock reserve, south of section 294, hundred of Walloway, and now numbered sections 340 and 341, hundred of Walloway, shown on the plan laid before Parliament on November 12, 1963, in terms of section 136 of the Pastoral Act, 1936-1960, for the purpose of being dealt with as Crown lands, be approved.

JURIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

The Hon. A. J. SHARD (Chief Secretary): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It amends the Juries Act and has two chief purposes. First, it gives effect to representations that have been made from time to time that women should be permitted to serve on juries, and, secondly, it provides for an extension of the jury franchise to House of Assembly electors. In addition, it makes several amendments of a revisionary or machinery nature to the principal Act.

The Bill contains many consequential amendments, but clause 10, which amends section 11 of the principal Act prescribing the qualifications of jurors, may be taken as the principal amendment. Section 11 as amended will provide that every person (thus including women as well as men) who is on the House of Assembly roll and who is under the age of 65 years is qualified to serve as a juror. At present the principal Act provides that only electors of the Legislative Council are qualified to serve as jurors, and the effect of the amendment is to remove this restriction, which is not to be found in any of the other States of the Commonwealth.

It is, I think, accepted that the requirements for jury service by women should not be as stringent as in the case of men, for a woman may have domestic duties that cannot be relinquished without undue hardship to her or her family, or may be indisposed or otherwise inconvenienced for a number of reasons. The Bill, therefore, provides in new section 14a, inserted in the principal Act by clause 12, that a woman may cancel her liability to serve as a juror by notice in writing to the Sheriff (subsection (1) of the new section). Under subsection (2) any such cancellation by a woman after receipt of a jury summons must be made within six days after service of the summons. Subsection (3) provides for reinstatement at her request of a woman's liability to serve, and subsections (4) and (5) are machinery provisions. The new section is based generally on a corresponding provision

in Western Australian legislation as suggested by the women's organizations.

I shall now deal with the remaining clauses of the Bill in the order in which they occur. Clauses 1 and 2 are formal provisions. Clause 3 provides for the amendments to take effect by proclamation. This will enable the Sheriff to prepare appropriate jury lists and allow time for suitable accommodation to be made for women at the Supreme Court. Clause 4 amends section 2 of the principal Act by repealing transitional provisions which are now obsolete and replacing them with a transitional provision to have effect until the preparation of the first jury lists after the commencement of the Act.

Clause 5 deletes the definitions of "Legislative Council Subdistrict", "Subdistrict" and "subdistrict roll" in section 3 of the principal Act and substitutes two new definitions of "subdivision" and "subdivision roll". The new definitions refer to the House of Assembly roll of electors consequential upon clause 10. In keeping with the amendments to sections 9, 10 and 23 of the principal Act made by the Statute Law Revision Act, 1957, the term "subdistrict" is replaced by the term "subdivision".

Clause 6 repeals certain obsolete provisions in section 5. Clauses 7 and 8 make amendments consequential on clause 10. Clause 9 amends subsection (1) of section 9 consequentially upon the new definition of "subdivision". Clause 11 makes an amendment consequential upon clause 10. Clause 12 I have already explained. Clause 13 amends section 16 to give statutory recognition to the practice of excusing jurors who have a conscientious objection to jury service. Clauses 14 and 15 contain revisionary amendments to sections 20 and 22 respectively.

Clause 16 (*a*) inserts new paragraph (*c*1) in subsection (2) of section 23 to ensure that each jury list will contain men and women in the same proportion as that in which they appear in the subdivision roll from which the jury list is made up. The remaining paragraphs of this clause are consequential amendments. Clause 17 contains an amendment to section 24 consequential on the amendments made by the Statute Law Revision Act, 1957.

Clause 18 has a similar purpose to that of clause 16 (*a*) inasmuch as it ensures a proportionate representation of women in each jury panel. Clause 19 adds a new subsection to section 33 providing that a husband and wife may not be empanelled together and therefore will not serve together on the same jury. Clause 20 adds a new subsection to section 36 requiring the full text of new sections 14a and 60b to be included in a jury summons served on a woman in order that she may be made fully aware of the rights under the Bill. Clause 21 amends section 37 by providing that at least seven days' notice (instead of four days' notice) will be given to a person before he is required to attend for jury service. This practice is invariably adopted.

Clauses 22, 23 and 24 contain amendments consequential on clause 10. Clause 25 repeals and re-enacts section 55 to enable the court in any criminal trial to permit a jury to separate, if it thinks it fit, at any time before the jury considers its verdict. Under the present legislation the jury cannot be permitted to separate in trials for murder or treason.

Clause 26 inserts new sections 60a and 60b in the principal Act, both of which correspond with provisions in English legislation. New section 60a provides that where so indicated by the nature of the evidence to be adduced the court may order that the jury shall consist of men only or of women only, as the case may require. New section 60b enables the court, upon application by a woman, to excuse her from serving if the court thinks it desirable by reason of the evidence to be adduced. As I have explained, the full text of new section 60b will be set out in the summons which she receives. Clauses 27 and 28 contain amendments consequential on clause 10.

Fees paid to jurors are now fixed by proclamation under section 77, and there is therefore no need for the scale of fees contained in the Eighth Schedule. This schedule is therefore repealed (clause 37) and clause 29 makes a consequential amendment. Clauses 30, 31 and 32 contain amendments consequential on clause 10. Clause 33 amends section 89 by enlarging the power of the judges to make Rules of Court in order that they may have ample power to make rules carrying into effect the proposed amendments. Clause 34 contains an amendment to the Second Schedule consequential on the amendments made by the Statute Law Revision Act, 1957.

Clause 35 amends the Third Schedule, which sets out a list of persons exempt from jury service. Paragraphs (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) of this clause add to the list wives of judges and magistrates, nurses and women living in a convent or other religious community. Clause 35 (*d*) deletes a reference to the now obsolete Interstate Commission. Clause 36 contains an amendment consequential on clause 10, and clause 37 I have already referred to in dealing

with clause 29. I commend this Bill for the consideration of honourable members.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE secured the adjournment of the debate.

PETROLEUM PRODUCTS SUBSIDY BILL.

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

The Hon. A. J. SHARD (Chief Secretary): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

In pursuance of an arrangement between the Commonwealth Government and the States the Commonwealth Government recently introduced legislation [States Grants (Petroleum Products) Act, 1965] to provide for payments to be made to the States as part of a scheme to enable it to subsidize sales of certain petroleum products in country areas by oil companies and certain other distributors. This State, in pursuance of the arrangement referred to, now proposes the present Bill as a complement to the Commonwealth Act. It gives effect to the Commonwealth scheme and facilitates out of the grants made to the State the payment to distributors registered under the scheme. The subsidy scheme will, it is hoped, come into effect throughout Australia by October 1, 1965, by which time it is expected that legislation similar to this will have been passed in the other States.

The subsidy scheme will apply to motor spirit, power kerosene, automotive distillate, aviation gasoline and aviation turbine fuel, all of which are directly used in transport. The sales to be subsidized are, in general, those made at specified country locations in the State, which on June 30, 1964, were recognized distribution points at which the wholesale price was more than 4d. above the wholesale price in Adelaide—the reason for the differential in the wholesale prices being due to the additional element of transport costs being included in the price of petroleum products to users in country areas. The areas in South Australia where subsidies will be paid are the whole of Kangaroo Island, north and western Eyre Peninsula including, Kimba and Streaky Bay, all of the Far West, and Far North and North-East around to Cockburn, and the pastoral country from Cockburn down towards, but not including areas along the Murray River. A provisional schedule of towns and centres has been issued by the Department of Trade and Customs, together with the amounts of subsidies.

In South Australia, a subsidy will be paid on eligible products for sales to towns and centres as follows:

Product.	Number of Centres.	Range of Subsidy.
Motor spirit (standard and premium) ..	186	From ½d. to 24d. a gallon
Power kerosene	198	From ½d. to 25d. a gallon
Distillate	179	From ½d. to 25d. a gallon
Aviation gasoline	28	From 1d. to 31d. a gallon
Aviation turbine kerosene	6	From ½d. to 8d. a gallon

Of a total of 467 sidings, townships and pastoral properties submitted by the oil industry and not listed in the present freight differential schedule, all railway sidings and additional townships on Eyre Peninsula and Kangaroo Island have been included in the provisional schedule of subsidies issued by the Department of Customs and Excise. The balance of about 350 pastoral properties that should qualify for a subsidy have not been accepted and, at this time, it appears unlikely that they will be before the legislation is due to be introduced. The Commonwealth will accept them if the proprietor is appointed an agent by contractual agreement. There are few, if any, of these properties in South Australia where the oil industry would agree to the appointment of an agency. The oil industry is at present attempting to find ways and means to provide for this situation. The result will be that, until a solution is found, there will be many pastoral properties in South Australia's Far North where the price of motor spirit will be considerably more than 4d. a gallon above Adelaide prices. Some examples are:

	Present cost of transportation per gallon.	Cost of transportation to railhead only 4d. gallon.		Excess still over capital city price.
Clifton Hills	27½d.	Subsidy to Marree	6½d.	21d.
Mount Irwin	22½d.	Subsidy to Abminga .. .	11½d.	11d.
Everard Park	30d.	Subsidy to Oodnadatta ..	10½d.	19½d.
Commonwealth Hill	16d.	Subsidy to Malboona .. .	6½d.	9½d.

The above examples show the cost above city prices to some of the more distant stations instead of the 4d. originally promised. The Commonwealth Government does not propose to deal with the special position of excess resellers' margins in particular localities; this relates mainly to the position in Western Australia and Queensland, where some resellers in remote localities sell at a price that allows a margin considerably in excess of the normal margin allowed in the various States to compensate for small gallonage.

In South Australia there are very few of these localities (for example, Andamooka, Coober Pedy and Kingoonya) where the retail prices now charged at these centres exceed 4s. a gallon for standard grade and range up to 5s. 6d. a gallon for super grade, and provide for a reseller's margin of about 10d. a gallon, as against 5d. and 5¾d. a gallon allowed for standard and premium grades respectively.

By clause 3 (2), the Commonwealth Minister, who is the Minister of State for Customs and Excise, has power to decide whether a particular petroleum product is an eligible petroleum product or not within the definition of "eligible petroleum products" in clause 3. Clause 4 provides for the calculation of the subsidy payable to registered distributors of eligible petroleum products ascertained in accordance with the scheme. The rates of subsidy are set out in a schedule which the Commonwealth Act provides shall be gazetted. Clause 5 enables the Commonwealth Minister to make advances on account of payments made under the scheme to a registered distributor of eligible petroleum products, subject to such terms and conditions as he thinks fit. By clause 6 the Minister may appoint persons to be authorized officers for the purposes of the Act, and such officer may be an officer of the Commonwealth. It is intended that authorized officers will be officers of the Commonwealth Department of Customs and Excise.

Clauses 7 to 12 contain machinery provisions of the kind normally incorporated in a Bill of this nature. They provide for such matters as the lodging of claims by registered distributors, the issue of certificates by authorized officers and for payments thereon as well as certain safeguarding provisions dealing with overpayments, preservation of accounts, stocktaking, inspection of accounts, etc., taking of copies and extracts from such accounts, etc., and requiring production of documents. Clause 13 is a penalty provision which lays down a maximum fine of £50 for offences against the Act including offences for failing to produce any account, book or document, and obtaining a payment by fraud or falsification of accounts. Clause 14 enables the Minister to delegate all or any of his powers. Clause 15 is an appropriation provision which provides for the payment of moneys paid by the Commonwealth to be paid into a trust account at the Treasury and authorizes the Treasurer to appropriate from this account any moneys required to be paid in accordance with this Act. Clause 16 provides that all offences shall be dealt with summarily. Clause 17 provides for the making of regulations by the Governor. I commend the Bill for the consideration of honourable members and move the second reading.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE secured the adjournment of the debate.

IMPOUNDING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

PUBLIC PURPOSES LOAN BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 25. Page 1244.)

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN (Leader of the Opposition): In speaking to this Bill I wish to commend the Chief Secretary for following the more or less recent precedent of giving this Council a complete explanation of clauses dealing with different items of expenditure. This has not always been the case until recently, as I found that in 1930 the speech of the Chief Secretary in introducing the Bill to this Chamber occupied less than two full pages of *Hansard*. It is of assistance to honourable members to have information containing an explanation of the Government's expenditure and what the Bill sets out to do.

I support this Bill with mixed feelings because of omissions from the programme of urgent works that have been planned and approved by the Public Works Committee. This may be inevitable with the funds available. However, my sympathy with the Government is limited because of the many promises that were made prior to the general election regarding projects that it was suggested would be proceeded with without delay. Because they are incapable of fulfilment now, the Government has been trying to place the blame on somebody else, and in the circumstances of this Bill it is alleging that the naughty boys are the Liberal Premiers of four other States who attended the Loan Council and constituted a majority of that council.

I have had an experience of a Loan Council meeting when, as acting Premier and Treasurer

of this State, I was the only Liberal member present, five other States being represented by Labor Premiers, who in themselves constituted a majority of the Loan Council. I fortuitously came across some old newspaper cuttings the other day—and honourable members can see that they are rather worn—but I put them together and pasted them on paper. These cuttings make interesting reading in view of what has been said by the Government about the Loan Council. In the *Advertiser* of May 20, 1953, I discovered these headlines: "South Australia Opposes Labor States on Loans. 'Generous' Allocations for Local Work." The report states:

A breakaway by the Liberal Acting Premier of South Australia, Mr. McEwin, from the Premiers' block marked the meeting of the Loan Council which ended today. Mr. McEwin was the only State representative to support the Commonwealth contention that £200,000,000 was the maximum practical limit for public works. After this split with the other acting Premiers on this point Mr. McEwin took no further part in the Acting Premiers' private deliberations outside the Council. The Council rose tonight with the Acting Premier seeking to defy the Federal Government with a works programme totalling £231,000,000 but well aware that the amount they can spend will be the £200,000,000 fixed by the Federal Treasurer. The Acting Premier of Victoria, Mr. Galpin, "predicted an army of unemployed in Victoria," but Mr. McEwin said there would be no dismissals in South Australia; there would be no curtailment of S.A. works in progress, he said, and the State allocation would enable a start to be made on the more urgent new work. Federal officials in Canberra believe that the South Australian allocation, even under the £200,000,000 limit, is the most generous South Australia has received for many years.

I stood out on that occasion for the limit of £200,000,000 because it was the practical limit that could be expected to be achieved at that time. As a matter of fact, it involved some £90,000,000 contribution from Commonwealth revenue to meet the borrowing capacity that was not there at that period. In another part of the report the newspaper states:

Mr. McEwin made it clear to the Loan Council that he would not support a Loan programme which necessitated serious inflationary finance. Important and urgent as the works in the programmes were, the benefits they would confer upon the community would be more than offset if they were to be financed by methods which would give impetus to another steep spiral of inflation. "If the finance is not available I am prepared to defer some of my works," Mr. McEwen told the Council. "We must all be prepared to do this."

A few days later the following report appeared in the *News* of May 26, 1953:

Nearly Half Extra £10,000,000 to South Australia. South Australia fared better with loan funds. South Australia fared better than any other State in the distribution of Loan Funds for 1953-4. This is revealed by a close analysis of the allocations decided on at last week's Loan Council meeting. In the current financial year the six States divided £190,000,000. In 1953-54, the States will receive £200,000,000 for Loan Works. Of the £10,000,000 extra, South Australia will receive nearly half—actually, £4,675,000. The other £5,325,000 will be divided among the other States. South Australia's remarkable success followed the presentation of a strong case by the acting Premier (Mr. McEwin) which influenced the Loan Council decision.

I quote that to show that the fact that the Loan Council consists of representatives from other States does not relieve one of his own responsibility to his own State and, when the decision is made, surely we have to put up with it rather than come home and squeal that somebody prevented us from getting a fair deal. I would not have mentioned these newspaper reports had it not been for the excuses made by Government members about the lack of funds to do what they promised would be done.

I support the Government in the allocations it has made but, as I said earlier, I am disappointed that there are signs of the slowing down of urgent work, particularly in the hospital programme. It is some consolation to know that the completion of the Royal Adelaide Hospital is to proceed as planned. That is important, because it is our major teaching hospital and is an urgent necessity for the training of the maximum number of doctors and nurses if our hospital service is to be maintained at an efficient standard. Staff shortages are becoming more serious in an expanding service that must expand in order to keep up with an increasing population. The impact of that shortage is greatest on our country hospitals.

South Australia must depend on a number of smaller hospitals in the country, because of our peculiar geographical and climatic conditions. The proportion of population is low in many towns in the country and medical services would not be available were it not for the fact that hospitals, where nursing can be carried out, are located there. I do not agree with letters appearing in the press to the effect that we should shut up the country hospitals and have more big hospitals in the city. There is nowhere else to go but to the city. The closest we can get to the country areas is Elizabeth. Even hospitals in the larger towns are languishing because of lack of staff. Some people advocate a system of centralization. I disagree with them, though

not only because I represent a country district; the people of South Australia simply would not have it, and they should not be asked to have it. The country people contribute specifically to their hospitals by way of honorary management and by the payment of rates, and in so many ways they qualify for the maximum assistance and support that can be given to them.

There is a necessity to provide additional beds at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, which was looked upon as the next development in our teaching hospitals. When that hospital was erected, the theory was that 400 beds was the economic limit for one hospital and that, beyond that number, there should be two institutions.

However, those ideas have been changed and the source that thought along those lines originally now considers that the accommodation at the Royal Adelaide Hospital should be increased to 1,000 beds. The whole purpose of this was to provide sufficient beds to have Royal Adelaide as a teaching hospital for five medical schools. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital was to be extended to almost double in size to provide another four schools. In view of the shortage of doctors and nursing sisters, these are urgent proposals to enable us to cope with the problem we have in maintaining a full and effective hospital service. I understand that the ancillary services, kitchens, etc., are already adequate (although I am not sure about the nurses' accommodation) and that not much more than the additional beds for the patients would be required. Therefore, that is the most economic way of extending our training facilities and I urge upon the Government that the earliest possible priority be given to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I go further and give my opinion in relation to future needs. We cannot mark time at any stage in regard to hospitals any more than we can stop building schools and it is obvious that high priority must go to the establishment of a new teaching hospital at Bedford Park, near the site of the new university, which, I understand, will include a medical school.

The Port Augusta Hospital needs rebuilding and this work has been awaiting the completion of the Port Lincoln Hospital, which was promised previously. Much preparatory work has been done and the plans have been receiving the consideration of the board and the department, with a view to having something ready to be proceeded with when the Port Lincoln Hospital was completed. However, Port Lincoln has now been completed and I should like to have seen something on the Estimates for the commencement of work on the new Port Augusta Hospital. I urge the Minister of Health to press the claims of our hospital service, otherwise we shall have worse conditions than were brought about by the lag created in the war years. We had the reply from the Minister today regarding the completion of the group laundry and linen service. This will relieve the Government of the responsibility of repeating these services when the additional hospital facilities I have mentioned have been built, because the group laundry will provide a service for all our metropolitan hospital requirements. Having initiated the move for this establishment because of the savings in building and administration costs, I am pleased that it has been completed and will soon be functioning.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: It is only a month late, which is not bad.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: I am glad it has been completed, because it took some years to bring it to fruition.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: I think it is very good that it has been completed within a month of the estimated time.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: Yes, it is very good. If it had not been completed the Royal Adelaide Hospital project would have been delayed. The progress has been good. I have not been able to find anything in the Minister's second reading explanation of the Bill about mental hospital services. One of the Ministers in the present Government was very active when he was a member of the Opposition in criticizing this State's mental hospital services, and he completely disregarded what was being done. Considerable planning has been going on for many years, and since Dr. Cramond assumed the position of Director of Mental Services much has been done. Dr. Cramond was given almost a free hand to go ahead with whatever he considered the best thing to do in the matter. While he was comparing our conditions with recognized modern requirements, much was done by providing special psychiatric day hospitals, outpatients' clinics, rehabilitation centres, child guidance clinics, and after-care hospitals. Apart from this, Parkside was transformed from the old closed institution with high walls around it to an open hospital. The high walls have gone, and to the ordinary person it is now just a delightful park where patients are free to enjoy conditions comparable with those enjoyed by patients in other hospitals.

I pay a tribute to Dr. Cramond and his staff for the advances they have made in methods of treatment, the success of which has been of considerable benefit. These advances have meant a minimum of institutional care. He worked out what was required, and found that in a few years we would need two training centres, each of 1,000 beds. At least one of these buildings must be regarded as urgent. The Government already has the property at Hillcrest, and land has been purchased on the South Road for the second institution. These projects have been reported on by the Public Works Committee, but I cannot find any appropriation for a start to be made on them. That is unfortunate for many reasons—not because we were criticized because nothing had been done two years ago (and nothing has been done yet) but because of the urgent need for these institutions to be built. In 1955 the Commonwealth Government passed the States Grant Mental Hospitals Bill, and this State received certain assistance with capital expenditure, but it was unable to get the whole of its portion of the funds available, although two States were able to get a start in a big way and spend their money. South Australia has a credit of £170,000, subject to spending £340,000 to qualify on the 1-to-2 basis. This has been preserved in the new Commonwealth Act.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: I think this applies until December 1, 1966.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: The new Act continues until June 30, 1967, and it is definite and final. Strathmont is estimated to cost £2,851,000 and Elanora £3,186,700—a total of over £6,000,000. It is important that we take advantage of the £2,000,000 that is available until June 30, 1967. Nearly two months of the remaining two years have already elapsed, and, as it takes a long time to spend such a large sum, we are lagging behind in not providing for a start to be made. I do not know whether anything can be done after the time has expired, but it was made clear to me when I was the Minister in charge of this matter that there was no set quota for any State. I urge the Government to take quick action so that this State will benefit from the Commonwealth Act. Even though it may be thought that the subsidy should be pound for pound, the basis agreed on will mean that this State can get the £2,000,000 subsidy, which is no small amount.

For the Parkside hospital kitchen £5,000 is provided. This is a £250,000 project, and I cannot see that much will be done with this small provision. However, at least there is a line on the Loan Estimates for the project, and the Government can spend more on it if it has some funds left over from another line, and at the same time take advantage of the Commonwealth subsidy. The kitchen is not as old as the institution. Some alterations have been made to it but it is far from what it should be. I inspected it last year and noted that the condition of the refrigeration was very poor indeed. It was completely run-down, and so concerned was I about possible food poisoning from anything stored in this place, with its leaky pipes and ammonia coming through the grill chamber, that I asked the Public Buildings Department to inspect the refrigeration and do something about it. I think some repairs were made. I assure the Government of every support in pushing on with this work, because I know how urgent it is.

One item that pleases me is the allocation of £130,000 for the Police Training Academy at Fort Largs, towards a project estimated to cost £822,535. The proposal by the previous Government was an excellent one for the purpose, and I hope I shall live long enough to see its completion. Already the property and grounds have been considerably improved and South Australia can be proud of the facilities provided. We have a police force second to none, which must be maintained on the highest plane. Science and specialization have made their contribution to police activities; unfortunately, they have also assisted the criminal. It is, therefore, the more essential that our training and equipment be capable of providing the police with the latest techniques and know-how for the detection and prevention of crime.

But all this is wasteful if the police are not supported with authority to use their training in the public interest. Parliament must ensure, therefore, that there is nothing lacking in our Statutes that will in any way destroy the authority or the public confidence that the police force has earned and enjoys today. The public must be protected at all times and our cities kept free from vagrancy, plunder and violence. Almost every day one can pick up a newspaper and read items like "Police stoned in ugly scene", as has happened in London. That sort of thing is going on, and all over the world there seems to be an element that requires policing. Whether or not it has anything to do with prosperity or more money, the fact remains that the police have many difficult problems to cope with and Parliament must ensure that they are not lacking in any statutory authority so that our people can live in security.

A sum of £16,000 has been provided for fishing havens. The fishing industry needs developing, particularly in the deeper waters along our coastline. The growth of tuna fishing at Port Lincoln is an example of what can be brought about, after some research, with larger vessels and imported methods for catching tuna. We have a research vessel called the *Investigator*, which is doing good work with an energetic and keen officer in charge, but we need a larger vessel specially designed for safe working in deeper waters beyond the continental shelf. With our increasing population, the development of this industry is essential in the provision of an improved food supply; it is most important. I know that some planning was done for a new ship. The sooner we are able to provide one, the greater will be the opportunity to benefit from the advantages to be derived from the build-up of the industry.

I note that £795,000 is provided for country sewers, nearly all of which is committed towards two schemes—£330,000 for Mount Gambier (costing an estimated £2,071,000) and a similar amount for Whyalla (which is to cost £2,325,000). The balance is to complete sewer reticulation at Lobethal. While orthodox sewerage may be the only answer for the larger cities, I put forward the claim of smaller country towns for a modified system, which is less costly and which can be provided in much shorter time. It will take years to sewer all our country towns, even if capital is readily available. The system of the "common effluent drain" (which has been advocated by the Health Department), which has been successfully installed at Barmera, should be encouraged in other centres. The scheme will cost between £25,000 and £30,000 for a township of 1,800 people, so it is comparatively cheap and economic. Other towns are interested. I know of two at least—Berri and Maitland. Others should be encouraged in this satisfactory sewage disposal and treatment scheme. I hope that these requests will have the sympathetic consideration of the Government.

My final comment relates to the building of a new Government Printing Office. The congestion created by work that has outgrown the present building, and its unsuitability as a modern printery, have been apparent for some time. I was responsible for several efforts to obtain land in a suitable locality and of sufficient area before a site was obtained last year that was considered suitable for a modern building, where expensive machinery could be more safely housed. In the present building there is not only congestion but also a big fire risk and the sooner we can establish a modern printery the better it will be for all concerned. After all, we are all interested in the work of the Government Printing Office and we appreciate the quality of its work.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: We are all in it together; we all agree with the Leader.

The Hon. Sir LYELL McEWIN: I am glad to know that Government members are on my side. I hope that the Government will take an early opportunity to establish a building on the site provided. I have spoken for longer than I intended, but I assure the Government that the matters I have raised are considered by me important for the welfare of the State.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE secured the adjournment of the debate.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from Augu· 25. Page 1249.)

The Hon. L. R. HART (Midland): Practically every session of Parliament produces a Bill to amend the Local Government Act, which consists of many sections; it is not surprising that it needs amending regularly. Local government's earliest form in South Australia was the foundation of town trusts in 1838, and from this one may say that we have evolved the present system of local government by a system of trial and error. The Local Government Act, of course, is always of interest to members of this Council because so many have had practical experience of office in local government and are equipped to speak with some knowledge and authority.

Clause 3 contains a definition of "ratable property". It sets out to rectify an anomaly in relation to properties held by religious bodies that are exempted from rating under certain parts of the Act but not exempted under others. While dealing with this matter I suggest that the Minister ask the Local Government Revision Committee to examine the definition of "occupier". There seems to be some confusion amongst certain returning officers in relation to the interpretation to be placed on that word. I understand that in the Hon. Mr. Octoman's area there have been cases where a share-farmer's wife has been placed on the roll and has been entitled to a vote when, in fact, she perhaps should not have been. Legal opinions have been sought regarding the meaning of "occupier".

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: Do you think that the present interpretation is wrong?

The Hon. L. R. HART: I think so, and we should clear up the matter and have a clear interpretation.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: To make it clear so that no local government officer can make a mistake, as has happened in the past?

The Hon. L. R. HART: Exactly, and that is what has been happening. Apparently there has been some confusion as to the interpretation. While dealing with religious bodies, I would like the amendment to go a little farther, particularly in relation to section 267a of the Act, dealing with the remission of rates. I would like the section to be enlarged so as to allow the remission of rates to religious bodies in cases where in newly-developed areas land has been purchased for the erection of churches at a later date, and for the erection of ministers' residences. At present a minister's residence is not exempted from rates and, although it is not used entirely for religious purposes, it is a place that should be exempted.

Clauses 4 and 5 are consequential upon amendments in clauses 12 and 13. I will deal with the merits of the two clauses later, but, if they are not carried clauses 4 and 5 will not be required. Turning to clauses 8 and 9, I agree with Sir Norman Jude that there could be instances where it is desirable to amend sections 177 and 186, rather than have certain parts repealed. I am not in favour of clause 10 for several reasons. It deals with section 233a of the principal Act, and is related to minimum rates. The provision to be inserted states:

> Any two ratable properties outside of townships, which properties are owned by the same owner and occupied by the same occupier shall, for the purposes of this section, be deemed to be adjoining ratable properties if they are separated only by a road, railway line, waterway or easement.

In his second reading explanation the Minister said:

> Provision is not made for the case where a property has a road, railway line, waterway or easement running through it. This could happen, for example, as a result of a compulsory acquisition, and means that what was ordinarily one property would become two, and the owner liable for the minimum rate in respect of each.

That is so, but why outside a township? In many instances new roads are made inside a township and in these cases they could easily divide into two parts what was one block. I wonder where the request for this amendment originated? It has been mentioned by other speakers that there has been no indication of who requested it. There would not be many areas outside townships where this would occur. If it occurs outside a township it could also occur inside a township, where acquisition has brought it about.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: Do you think the reference to outside townships should be removed from this clause?

The Hon. L. R. HART: It is a matter that could be looked at. The question arises also in relation to the next section of the Act, section 234, which deals with differential rates. Obviously, the land in certain parts of council areas is more valuable than in other parts, and this applies particularly to town lots. A minimum rate can apply only over the whole council area and a council is not empowered to have a differential minimum rate. I consider that we should look at the question and see whether it is possible or desirable to allow councils to have power to declare a differential minimum rate within their areas. A block in a fairly large town may be worth much money.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: People in townships receive services that are not received by people in country areas.

The Hon. L. R. HART: That is right. We could have the position that a block in a sparsely populated town was not of much value and a minimum rate that would be fair so far as the block in the better township was concerned would be far too high for a block in a township in the outback areas of the district. I suggest that the Minister refer this matter to his committee, for investigation. Clause 11 gives metropolitan councils power to expend revenue to erect residential flat buildings on land owned by the councils. I have not been closely associated with metropolitan councils, but I think this type of building could well be left to housing authorities and private enterprise. I am not keen for local government bodies to be given these powers; for the present, at least. Clauses 12 and 13 deal with insuring councillors against personal accident and injury. I consider that, when a man offers himself for local government work, he is a responsible citizen at that stage and, as such, would carry or should carry personal accident insurance of his own and, although there may be some merit in insuring councillors, as the Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill said, this is perhaps the beginning of the introduction of a policy of payment for all councillors, and I do not see that there is any great need for these two amendments.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: What about provisions already in the Act for payment for meals, and that sort of thing?

The Hon. L. R. HART: They are out-of-pocket expenses.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: Don't you think that is nearer to paying a councillor than insuring him?

The Hon. L. R. HART: Well, are you suggesting that he should take along his lunch? That would be one way out of it. It appears to me that there is a drafting error in clause 14 of this Bill. Paragraph (*b*) says, "By striking out the words 'or any part of' in the said subsection (2) thereof". It appears to me that the word "of" should remain, and when we deal with this Bill in Committee I shall move in this direction. Clause 14 deals with the matter of revenue received from parking meters. When a similar Bill was before us in 1963, there was considerable debate on it and it was not considered then that it should be mandatory on a council to expend the whole or any part of its revenue for the purposes mentioned in the Bill. However, this particular amendment makes it mandatory on a council to expend money on the provision of parking facilities and, in doing so, it also widens the scope of the deduction. This may be all very well in the Adelaide City Council. However, if we followed the suggestion made by Sir Arthur Rymill that further scope still might be given in the deductions, we could well have the position in some smaller municipalities that the whole of the revenue derived from parking meters would be eaten up by the provision of the facilities named in this amending Bill. We should look closely at this. I think that the intention of the amendment introduced in 1963 was to provide parking facilities for the motorist, the person who provided the revenue by means of parking meters, and we should not lose sight of the fact that the money is, in the first instance, for that purpose. Admittedly, some facilities are required to help the traffic flow but I think the main purpose is the provision of parking facilities, and that fact should be borne in mind.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: This goes further than only providing parking facilities.

The Hon. L. R. HART: That is what I am saying. It goes further and amounts to provision, installation and maintenance of traffic lights and the works associated therewith and providing and maintaining signs and marking lines. Sir Arthur Rymill suggested that it could go further still and include traffic islands, and such things. Perhaps that has a lot of merit but only in the City Council area because provision of these facilities in smaller municipalities could well absorb the whole of the revenue obtained from parking meters. Clause 17 was ably dealt with by the Hon. Mr. Gilfillan and I do not wish to deal with it here.

Clause 15 relates to the power of councils to charge moieties for the construction of footpaths and this amendment increases the amount of moiety that a local government body can charge by no less than 230 per cent. I consider this increase unduly high and would not be prepared to support it. The history of section 328, which this clause amends, is rather interesting, because in 1954 the validity of the powers of councils to collect moieties was challenged in the Supreme Court. Section 319 was also involved, because that also deals with moieties. In that particular case, the moieties were for the construction of roadworks. The Full Court held that if a council raised money by debentures under section 424 of the Act for the purposes of constructing a road or footpath it could not recover any part of the cost of the work through moieties. Because of this situation, it was necessary to amend these two sections. I am not prepared to support the 230 per cent increase.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: Why don't you move an amendment?

The Hon. L. R. HART: I probably shall at the appropriate time, and I shall probably get a fair amount of support if I do.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: You may get a surprise. I may accept it.

The Hon. L. R. HART: That would be a change! Perhaps this has been another drafting error.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: There has been no drafting error.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: What does the Premier think about it?

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: Why do you think the Minister increased it by 230 per cent on footpaths and not on roadways?

The Hon. L. R. HART: We may get another amending Bill later to adjust this. Clause 18 is necessary to meet modern developments in water sports. This clause sets out to include in paragraph (29a) of section 667 of the principal Act the words "surf boards". Surfing, or the riding of surf boards, is a sport that is being universally indulged in now, and there are many surfing areas in South Australia. It may be of interest to honourable members to know that what are regarded as the

best surfing areas in Australia are at the bottom end of southern Yorke Peninsula. I was told this on a recent trip to Brisbane. This area is a most popular place for tourists from other States, and this trade is well worth developing.

Clause 20 deals with the power of any council officer to enter upon any building or land. I, like other members, should like to hear more reasons why this amendment is necessary. On the information supplied, I am not prepared to support the clause, and I shall be interested to hear if the Minister has anything further to say about this later.

Earlier in my speech I suggested to the Minister that we should consider further amendments to the Act. I am fortified in this belief because of a statement the Minister made at a recent local government meeting that I attended. He said that the Local Government Act was being revised and that he was not prepared to open up the Act again except for urgent amendments. I suggest to him that urgent amendments should be incorporated in this Bill while we have an opportunity to insert them. I will deal with them in their proper sequence. The first matter I wish to mention is the procedure for postal voting in council elections.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I am forced to take a point of order, Mr. Acting President. The honourable member is introducing new subject matter. This Bill does not relate to any amendments to the section the honourable member is mentioning, so the honourable member is bringing in another matter altogether.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill): I think the objection is properly taken. The honourable member must have an instruction before he can allude to other topics.

The Hon. L. R. HART: I accept your ruling, Sir, but I did not think an instruction was required at this stage. I intended to make suggestions to the Minister in the hope that he would consider them, because, as he has said, this Act will not be opened up again except in cases of emergency. I believe the matters I wish to raise are matters of some urgency, and I should like the Minister to consider them. The only alternative I have if the Minister will not agree to my continuing is to bring in a private member's Bill to deal with them, but I do not want to do that.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: I am advised —and I think it is correct—that the honourable member may make a passing reference to some desirable amendments to the Bill, but he cannot argue the case or go into any great detail on the matter.

The Hon. L. R. HART: I do not wish to argue the matter; I just wish to point out anomalies that exist in certain sections of the Act. I believe the Minister may agree when these anomalies are pointed out to him that they exist, and steps may be taken for them to be rectified. That is all I wish to do if I have your permission to proceed along those lines.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: So long as the honourable member does not go into any great detail on the matter, he can make those comments.

The Hon. L. R. HART: I should like to mention first the procedure for postal voting. We endeavour to get as many people as possible to vote in council elections, but it seems that people are always reluctant to vote, and probably there are good reasons why this is so, possibly one of which is the difficulty attached to postal voting. Under the Electoral Act it is easy for a person to record a postal vote. If he realizes that he will be out of his district on election day he merely has to go to the returning officer on the day before the election and apply for a postal vote in the presence of the returning officer. He is issued by that officer with a postal voting certificate, which he completes and hands back to the officer, the vote then being completed. However, under the Local Government Act the application must be made to the returning officer, who is required to post voting papers to the applicant. He cannot deliver them to him. When the applicant has completed his postal vote he must post it to the returning officer. The Act says that the application shall be made and sent before the day immediately preceding the polling day to the returning officer; so the voter must do this on the Thursday whereas under the Electoral Act he can do it on the Friday. I suggest that the Local Government Act could well be brought into line with the Electoral Act.

Also, there can be no secrecy in local government postal voting. Because it is voluntary voting, very few people exercise their right to a postal vote. Therefore, it is fairly easy for candidates to discover which way the electors have recorded their postal votes. I suggest we should look at the question whether the postal voting papers should be identical with ordinary voting papers and whether they should be placed into the ballot box and counted with the other voting papers.

The other important clause dealing with postal voting concerns authorized witnesses. Under the Local Government Act there are eight such witnesses who are authorized to witness an application for a postal vote. They are people who can act within this State or within any other State, but no provision is made for an authorized witness in an oversea country. In present-day conditions, particularly with people voting in places like the Weapons Research Establishment at Salisbury, we often find that people at short notice are transferred in their job to an oversea country. This could well happen in the midst of a local government election, when they would wish to record their votes. There is no provision in the Act for an authorized witness overseas. If these eight witnesses (six, if we deduct the returning officer and his assistant) are acceptable in another State, surely it could be arranged that they should be acceptable in another country. I urge the Minister to examine the present position, which is not good for public relations between the ratepayers and the councils, when electors find that their votes are not valid because they have not been witnessed.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: You are not suggesting that I should amend this Bill now, are you?

The Hon. L. R. HART: If it is going to be four years before such an amendment can be made, which the Minister did suggest at the meeting, this procedure will continue for the next three or four elections in council areas, which is not good for local government public relations. This franchise—

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: On a point of order, Mr. Acting President, about the terms that the honourable member is using, I point out that I went to that particular conference. The matter that he now desires to raise is this: if he is truthful, he will say that the resolutions carried at that conference were recommendations to the revision committee. I did say facetiously at that time that it would take up to four years to get the Act cleaned up but, seriously, I made a statement, and I should like to be quoted correctly on this. I cannot see that the honourable member is in order in discussing it. I cannot debate these things because they are not in this Bill, but he is debating them.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr. Hart.

The Hon. L. R. HART: I merely quoted the statements that were made by the Minister at that conference. I know what statements he made there. He only amended his statement that it would be two years instead of four when I directed the question to him at the conference.

In conclusion, let me turn to abandoned motor vehicles. Under the present Act, a council may remove an abandoned motor vehicle and recover from the owner of that vehicle such costs as it may incur, but it has no power to act to recover those costs. The only way in which it can do this is to offer the vehicle for auction. It can recover the costs only if there is no bid for the vehicle at auction. If it is bid for at auction, the bid may be as low as a couple of shillings or so, in which case the sale must be made, and that would in no way cover the cost of removing or disposing of the vehicle, which might be £10 or £12. Councils from now on will continually find themselves in a position where they will be out of pocket in the recovery of costs for the removal of an abandoned vehicle. This is another matter that should be looked at by the revision committee. The Minister and I have not been getting on very well in this debate but I suggest that some of these matters are of great concern in certain council areas and should be dealt with urgently. Now is the opportune time to do this, because this Bill is before us; it is open and there is no great difficulty in inserting one or two of the amendments I have suggested, which will overcome existing anomalies. It is in the interests of the ratepayers in general that these particular amendments be made. I support the second reading.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES (Northern): Dealing first with clause 3 of this amending Bill, I draw the Minister's attention to the Ligertwood report, made in 1964 and tabled in Parliament. The committee that inquired into ratable properties, particularly in relation to churches, had this to say:

> In relation to properties owned and used by churches, the general effect of the legislation is that buildings used exclusively for public worship are exempted from rates and taxes, but there is no exemption for ministers' residences or for vacant lands which are held for future erection of places of worship. In all other States both ministers' residences and vacant lands, held for the erection of future churches are exempted and it was strongly submitted that South Australia should step into line in this respect and that there should be no disability on account of State boundaries. A further argument was urged in relation to vacant lands namely that in recent years there have been a very great number of subdivisions into new townships and that the

township plan provides for allotments upon which churches can be erected in the future. The churches, it was urged, are morally bound to take the opportunity of acquiring such allotments and will have to hold them until the extended population justifies the starting of a religious cause in the township. The burden of rates and taxes on such vacant lands can become very heavy and the churches submitted that relief should be given to them. Again the question is one of policy and the committee makes no recommendation upon it, but draws attention to the arguments addressed upon the subject. The example of other States shows that relief to churches from rates and taxes can be based upon a general principle.

The evidence on which this report was based was presented on behalf of various Christian churches in the community—the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of England, the Congregational Union, the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church and the South Australian Baptist Union. The deputation to the committee was led by His Grace, Archbishop Gleeson, and all the churches united in the submissions that were made. There is an opportunity for the Minister to further consider clause 3 in relation to churches. I heard with interest Sir Norman Jude's remarks on clause 4. He said that possibly this amendment had been brought in because the wife of a foreman wishes to become a council member. As I understand the meaning of the amendment, it clearly lays down that a spouse cannot be a member of a council and be employed by the council at the same time. This is of interest in this modern world where we have emancipation of women and equal pay for equal work. These are catcheries that we have not only in our own State but throughout the world. For a person to be employed while his spouse is a councillor seems to be fair enough. I hope that when the Bill is in Committee we shall have a further explanation from the Minister about this matter.

Clause 11 deals with the subject of flats, and it is of particular interest. I read particularly the remarks by Sir Arthur Rymill. This legislation will empower metropolitan councils to erect rental flats, and is something that we must have. A veil has been drawn over many of the Government's plans to redevelop substandard inner metropolitan areas. The Premier, the Attorney-General, and the Minister of Local Government have made pronouncements on this subject in recent months. So far there seems to be no clear-cut indication to councils and the building industry as to how the money is to be raised for this important work.

I understand that in Melbourne flat building is going ahead. The Melbourne City Council is an extremely wealthy organization, yet it has to receive subsidies from the Government and the Housing Commission to help it to purchase land. The Government should get to the point where the amendment will give councils the right to build flats for rental. Much more investigation should be made into the matters of who shall direct town planning, and how much money is needed for flat building. I hope that before long a concerted plan will be drawn up on broad lines to allow progress to be achieved.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: Don't you think that in redevelopment there are problems in country towns as well as in the city?

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: Yes, and it is an important matter. At this moment the matter of city boundaries is in the melting pot. Outside the city limits we have many district councils that will have to go into the matter of flat building. It could well be that not only metropolitan councils but outside councils should be included.

Clause 12 deals with insurance for members of district councils. Under the Bush Fires Act a man attending a fire is automatically covered by insurance arranged by the district council. Whether this man knows anything about fires, or why he is there, does not matter, as he is automatically covered. To say that councillors should have themselves covered by insurance is short-sighted. We have heard a piece of doggerel to the effect that "Appeals can lie, but rats can't fly", and I would add "Surely insurance is sensible". Not everybody eligible to become a member of a district council has the financial ability to be covered to the fullest extent. He is doing voluntary work and in this modern age of fast transport and long distances it is right and proper that he should be covered by insurance arranged by the district council. The people who do this work may be referred to as top executives, such as exist in private industry. Insurance even applies to members of Parliament. Therefore, I see no reason why this amendment should be referred to as a "nigger in the woodpile".

Clause 20 is of interest, but I will want an explanation on it when the Bill is in Committee. In spite of the Minister's assurance about the retention of section 876 (2) the clause suggests more controls. It envisages an even larger number of petty officials who, filled with their own importance, may pry into the affairs of other people, despite the 24 hours' notice mentioned in the section. I do not like this amendment.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS secured the adjournment of the debate.

ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

ABORIGINAL AND HISTORIC RELICS PRESERVATION BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 25. Page 1237.)

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Midland): It is my pleasure to support the Bill, and in doing so I congratulate the Hon. Mr. Kemp, who obviously did a tremendous amount of efficient work, in arranging for the drafting and presentation to this Council of the Bill in such clear terms. It is, in most respects, similar to the Bill introduced last year, which was allowed to lapse. However, it widens the scope of the legislation so that not only relics of the Aboriginal population are covered, but also relics of the early settlement and exploration of this State. That seems to be very desirable. There must be many relics left by the early white settlers of the State that will become of increasing value as the years go by, and I commend the honourable member for widening the legislation in that respect. By so doing, he is adding to the work already being done by the National Trust, the Tourist Bureau and the National Park Commissioners, and I am sure that those organizations and institutions will be interested and will support heartily what is proposed.

I note that the Act is to be under the Ministerial direction of the Minister of Education, who seems to me to be the logical Minister to control the matter, since he is also in control of the museum and the university. People from these institutions will be among those who will be vitally interested in this matter. The Bill provides for the effective protection of rock drawings and carvings, and the important feature about this is that they are irreplaceable and, consequently, should be preserved. It is not likely that additional rock drawings or carvings of any magnitude will become available to us, and those that exist should be preserved adequately. There are, of course, a few old camp sites that have been inhabited for a long time and certain burial grounds that have historic value, and this Bill will help to protect them.

I understand that the Bill has been examined by the specialist committee that was set up to look into this matter when it was previously before the Council, and that that committee has given the Bill its blessing. In view of that, I think it would be presumptuous of me to try to criticize the relevant clauses of the Bill; I support them in general terms. However, there are two things that I think warrant consideration. First, it is unfortunate that the Government has not seen fit to introduce amendments to the Bill so that we can deal with the matter as one Bill instead of having to wait for another measure. It would have been a courtesy to members of this Council if that had been done. However, as the Government has not done it, I think that the next best thing we can reasonably ask it to do is to give members an undertaking that when the Government Bill is introduced it will be introduced in this Chamber.

We have given great consideration to this matter and one member, the Hon. Mr. Kemp, has equipped himself with the necessary knowledge to enable him thoroughly to understand the legislation. Therefore, I submit to the Minister that if and when the Government introduces a Bill (assuming it does not accede to our reasonable request to introduce amendments to this Bill) it should be introduced in this Chamber so that the standing and prestige of this place can be maintained and so that it can make a contribution to a matter to which it has given much thought.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.40 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, September 1, at 2.15 p.m.