

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, June 21, 1967.

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

### QUESTIONS

#### POLICE.

The Hon. L. R. HART: I seek leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Chief Secretary.

Leave granted.

The Hon. L. R. HART: The Police Commissioner's report, which was tabled yesterday, stated that the equivalent of 152 policemen were still doing what was termed "extraneous duties". It was also stated that it was hoped that legislation would be enacted to make provision for the delivery of summonses by post. In His Excellency's Speech no mention is made of this. Does the Government intend to introduce legislation to enable this recommendation to be put into operation?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: As the question is obviously one of policy, I ask that it be placed on notice.

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I direct my question to the Chief Secretary in his capacity as Minister controlling the Police Force. Yesterday the Police Commissioner tabled a report, which, in essence, points out that more policemen are needed because the Force is understaffed. Will the Chief Secretary state what plans the Government has in mind to bring the Force up to strength, and whether it will be done in the near future?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: I have to smile at the way some people ask questions. Let me say that the Police Force has been maintained, as far as staff is concerned, in the way that it was when a different Government was in office. Because of increases in population in this State it is not always easy to maintain the number of policemen required. I point out to honourable members opposite that if brickbats are thrown at us they will be thrown back.

The question implies that the Police Force has been reduced, but that is not so. If members want straightforward answers they should ask straightforward questions. This matter was discussed in Cabinet 12 months ago; it has since been discussed and will be further discussed in future. A recommendation was made and it was referred to the Treasury because

estimates had to be examined. Last year, because of various difficulties nothing could be done and the position is the same now as it was then. However, the matter will be reviewed; much depends upon what allocation of funds can be made.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: I ask leave to make a brief statement prior to asking a question of the Chief Secretary.

Leave granted.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: My question arises partly out of the question asked by the Hon. Mr. Story and the Minister's reply. I recollect that early in the life of this Government the Attorney-General said he was looking at a plan for relieving members of the Police Force of court orderly duty by expanding the staff of the Sheriff's office—I presume with civilian people appointed specially for the purpose. Can the Chief Secretary say whether further consideration has been given to this plan for replacing the police acting as court orderlies and whether the staff will be expanded for the purpose of serving summonses?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: I am trying to think back. There was a question on police asked by the Hon. Mr. Hart. However, there has been a series of questions in connection with the Police Department. I will look at them all and give a considered report one day next week.

#### DOCTOR SHORTAGE.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I seek leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Chief Secretary.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: As honourable members know, in recent months I have been concerned (and I know the Chief Secretary has also) about the position of doctors in country hospitals. I am aware that there are problems in various country towns where no doctor is available for many miles. I know the Chief Secretary has been making inquiries. Can he say whether he has been able to make any further progress or can he see any further light in the matter of providing doctors in country areas where at present they are not available?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: During the latter part of the last session, if my memory serves me correctly, I gave a detailed account of what had happened from time to time. I regret to say that nothing has occurred since to improve the position. I do not want to say

tensely, "No". In connection with the committee set up last year to inquire into the qualifications of migrant doctors (for want of a better word), one or two applications have been received but I do not know what will be the result. Generally speaking, the position is the same as it was last March when I made my previous statement on this matter.

#### MURRAY RIVER SALINITY.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question of the Minister representing the Minister of Works.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: During the last session I asked a number of questions regarding salinity in the Murray River. The last word I had before the Council rose in March was that the Government intended to carry out an investigation into all phases of the matter. Has the Minister a report and has the investigation, in fact, been carried out?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I shall convey the honourable member's question to my colleague and bring back a report as soon as possible.

#### THEVENARD SLIPWAY.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question of the Minister representing the Minister of Marine.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: Concern has been expressed by fishermen in the Thevenard area that, though there is a good ramp for speedboats, no provision has been made there for a more suitable slipway and boat haven for the fishermen, who at least pay licence fees and produce many tons of fish for the trade. Can the Minister say when finance will be available for a better slipway and boat haven?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I shall convey the honourable member's question to my colleague, who will provide the information requested.

#### LYELL McEWIN HOSPITAL.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: The Chief Secretary will remember that on a number of occasions I have inquired about the Lyell McEwin Hospital at Elizabeth. I think the last report I had was that an officer was preparing a statement for the Minister on assistance that it may be possible to give. Has the Minister any further details?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: Yes. Some months ago the honourable member with other honourable members brought a deputation to me con-

cerning the cost of maintenance of the Lyell McEwin Hospital and how that cost affected the various councils. Since then I have twice met representatives of the councils and I have formulated an idea of my own that I think may satisfy the people concerned (I cannot be sure of this, of course). The matter is currently being examined by the Auditor-General's Department and it may have to be reviewed by the Treasurer. I gave the councils an undertaking that we would keep the matter in mind; I was anxious to know the position for the 1967-68 financial year. I hope that in the next week or two I shall be able to put a proposition to them that may settle the question to everybody's satisfaction.

#### HOUSING TRUST.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question of the Minister representing the Minister of Housing.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Section 18 of the South Australian Housing Trust Act states:

Once in every three years the Governor shall cause an investigation to be made into the operations and administration of the trust and a report thereon to be supplied to the Governor. I do not know when the last investigation was carried out. Can the Minister say whether the Government proposes during its current three-year term to carry out such an investigation?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: I cannot recall this particular item being discussed by Cabinet. However, I shall refer the question to my colleague, the Minister of Housing, and bring back a report as soon as possible.

#### SCHOOL BUSES.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question of the Minister representing the Minister of Education.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Yesterday, the Hon. Mrs. Cooper asked a question concerning the payment of swimming instructors teaching swimming in the Education Department. The Minister replied as follows:

I am surprised to hear this type of question . . .

I myself was not at all surprised to hear this question, because I have had similar complaints regarding the service to Education Department buses. Some of the complaints that have come to me have been unjustified but others have been justified. Can the Minister, when getting a report on the question asked by Mrs. Cooper,

also obtain a report from his colleague concerning payment for service to Education Department buses?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Yes.

#### GAS.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Mines.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: I understand that no agreement has yet been made between the Natural Gas Authority and the Electricity Trust. If no agreement can be made, can the Minister say whether it will mean that the pipeline will not be able to come to Adelaide?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I cannot visualize that no agreement can be or will be made. Negotiations are still taking place between the producer company and E.T.S.A. in relation to arriving at an equitable price. As far as I am concerned the pipeline is a foregone conclusion and will be built, and deliverability of gas at the scheduled time of January, 1969, will be given effect to.

#### AGRICULTURE.

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: Can the Minister of Labour and Industry, representing the Minister of Education, say how many students are taking agriculture as a major subject in area schools and high schools separately?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I shall convey the honourable member's question to my colleague and obtain a reply as soon as possible.

#### WATER SUPPLIES.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question of the Minister representing the Minister of Works.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I am sure that all honourable members are very concerned about the very dry season that we are now experiencing. I have heard some comments as to whether it is a drought or a dry season, but at this stage of the year I think it can only be described as a very dry season. We have seen late seasons before today, and we can still hope that that is what it will be this year. We are very concerned about the position, as was evident from what one of my colleagues (Hon. G. J. Gilfillan) said yesterday. I am concerned regarding water supplies in the Midland District, particularly in view of the fact that full-scale pumping probably will have to be resumed at an early date. I am

interested particularly regarding the storages at the South Para, Warren and Barossa reservoirs, which serve a very large area of the Midland District. Will the Minister obtain from his colleague the present position regarding storage in those reservoirs?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Yes. I am glad that the honourable member is one of the optimistic people who would agree that this year the season probably will be late. Although yesterday I referred to a drought, I think that perhaps it is merely a late season, and I sincerely hope that that is the position. The Government is as concerned as anyone else regarding the dry season. I could also comment that most of the other States are in a better position regarding rain than we are. Despite this situation, in the light of the fact that unemployment increased by only a small amount in South Australia of recent months I believe that if we had not had this dry season extending over about five months—I think it is the driest spell for 10 years—we probably would have been the only State in Australia that did not have an increase in unemployment. I think I can say that my colleague will, as soon as possible, provide the figures the honourable member has requested.

#### MURRAY BRIDGE ROAD BRIDGE.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: I ask leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Roads.

Leave granted.

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE: Recently somewhat disquieting rumours have been spreading around the Murray Bridge district regarding the state of the road bridge across the Murray River in the town. Recently an accident which involved the replacement of certain girders appeared to reveal problems connected with the steel or iron in the structure. I therefore ask the Minister of Roads whether he will get an urgent report on the position in case the not impossible situation arises that the bridge has to be replaced, and in that event whether he will take steps immediately to put in hand the construction of one or two heavy punts to deal with the problem that would arise?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I have heard a few such rumours myself, and I would say that they arose because two accidents occurred on the bridge, I think both caused by semi-trailers. One must realize that the bridge was built about 100 years ago and that the materials used at the time were certainly different from the materials being used today. Consequently, when such accidents occur considerable repairs

have to be undertaken. When a semi-trailer hit the bridge recently it brought down part of the overhead structure, which then had to be removed. I think I can say that the Highways Department did a remarkably good job in getting the bridge open again in such a short time. The bridge had to be cleared of the wreckage, and the new arch or overhead structure had to be constructed in Adelaide and then taken to Murray Bridge. This new arch was soon in position and it will be seen that the bridge was closed for only a very short period of time. The construction work in Adelaide was a 24-hour job, and the workshop staff had to work all night to complete it.

The Hon. C. R. Story: Is cast iron hard to get?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: The material necessary for this work happened to be steel. I point out that all material in the bridge is becoming so crystallized that it does not take much to take a piece out of it, and an accident may occur at any time. At this stage I do not think the Highways Department would be justified in providing new punts to be held in reserve in case something should happen to the bridge. I do not visualize such a thing happening, but if a serious accident did occur something would have to be done about it.

It is not simply a matter of building a couple of heavy punts to be held in reserve, because other matters would have to be considered. There would have to be the construction of approaches on both sides of the river and the placing of cables in position to operate the punts. Because of this I do not think the suggested action is warranted, and we will not construct heavy punts simply because there may be an emergency at Murray Bridge. However, I will refer the matter to the Minister and ask that it be investigated.

#### HOUSING TRUST ACCOUNTS:

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I ask leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Minister representing the Premier.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: In the Auditor-General's Report for the year ended June 30, 1966 (prepared by the Treasurer) there is a statement by the Auditor-General regarding affairs of the Housing Trust. The Auditor-General said that the rental and house purchase operations of the trust were not separated in its accounts, and that this made a proper review of each of these aspects difficult to complete. He further stated that he intended to request the trust to provide a

separate statement for rental properties. Has the trust acceded, or does it propose to accede, to this request for the current financial year?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: It is obvious that I cannot answer that question but I am prepared to refer it to my colleague in another place and get a reply in due course.

#### TRANSPORT COMMISSION.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I seek leave to make a brief statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Transport.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: During inquiries being conducted by the Royal Commission on State Transport Services it was indicated that the Commission might be submitting an interim report. I believe this was indicated some time ago in the South-East. Can the Minister tell the Council whether the Commission will bring forward an interim report and, if so, when?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I cannot say at this point whether an interim report will be presented to me. Neither I nor the Government has received one so far. We have not been informed by the Commission that it intends to submit one. It is a matter for the Commission.

#### KEITH WATER SUPPLY.

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: I ask leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Labour and Industry representing the Minister of Works.

Leave granted.

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: Recently, considerable publicity has been attached to the acute water supply position at Keith where, if honourable members will recall, the ground water is being badly contaminated by domestic drainage water. Since that time the position has become considerably more dangerous; certainly, it is no better. There has been discussion of a scheme to provide a water supply for Keith from a bore about six miles away, but this would leave a large tract of country between the present termination of the main and Keith completely devoid of water. In this area heavy unloading of stock has occurred this year through lack of water. There is no immediate prospect of the position improving. Does the Government intend to resume the laying of the main to Keith?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Yes. It is intended to resume the laying of the main at some time. I cannot tell the honourable member exactly when this will commence but, in regard to the water supply at Keith, my

colleague the Minister of Works attended a meeting in that town. Previously, feelings of hostility had been engendered in Keith about this matter, but as a result of the meeting things became more amicable and suggestions for interim measures for a water supply were made. I think the Minister of Mines can give the honourable member further information in that regard. The honourable member asked when the work on the main would be resumed. I have answered that.

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: Has the Minister of Mines any further information on the Keith water supply?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Yes. As my colleague, the Minister of Labour and Industry, said a moment ago in answering the honourable member, this question is one of urgency. The Minister of Works attended a public meeting at Keith and a proposition was put forward. Following that meeting, I had a request from the Minister of Works that a bore be put down in the township area of Keith for the purpose of providing the township with an interim supply of water of sufficient volume to meet the needs of the area until the main into Keith was completed. At present a fair amount of survey work is being done, as honourable members will appreciate, to locate the areas most suitable for drilling. The Mines Department has one of its geologists in the area at present. He has been doing a survey of the most probable sites for obtaining sufficient water of adequate quality to be used by the township domestically. The Keith area is subject to many peculiarities, there being good water at a normal depth in some places and salty water, irrespective of depth, in other places. These things have to be discovered. It is expected that the geologist will be tendering his report by the end of this week. We have a drilling crew operating a few miles outside Keith at present, boring at the request of private landowners to augment their own supplies. Immediately the survey is completed and a report on the most probable sites for the supply of water is submitted, boring can be commenced straightaway. Within the next week a bore could be commenced in the area for the purpose of obtaining an adequate supply of water for Keith.

#### WHYALLA HOSPITAL.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: There have been some press reports lately of an unpleasant state of affairs between doctors and the nursing staff at the Whyalla Hospital. Can the Chief Secretary inform me of the position?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: I know as much about the Whyalla Hospital position as the honourable member does. All I know is what I have seen in the press. At the moment I do not know the facts of the quarrel, one way or the other.

#### SITTINGS.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Has the Chief Secretary any information on the proposed sittings of this Council for the next few weeks, particularly night sittings?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: Yes. The Government intends that we shall sit next Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and the following Tuesday, July 4. We shall adjourn on that day until the following Tuesday, July 11, because of an important event that is taking place in one of the northern towns of the State, which many honourable members wish to attend. That is the reason for the adjournment. It is not the intention of the Government or myself to sit at night prior to that day. We shall have four good sitting days in which to deal with the debate on the Address in Reply. It is to be hoped that honourable members will fully utilize that time. Further than that I have not thought about the matter but, although we have a busy session in front of us, I hope we do not have many night sittings this session.

#### FLOODWATERS DRAINAGE SCHEME.

The PRESIDENT laid on the table report No. 2 by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence, on Fulham Gardens and Henley Beach Floodwaters Drainage Scheme.

#### SUPPLY BILL (No. 1).

Received from 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 provides for the appropriation of moneys so that the Public Service of the State may be carried on in the early part of next financial year. The Bill is in the same form and for the same amount—\$36,000,000—as the first Supply Bill passed by Parliament in each of the past four years.

As honourable members know, the annual Appropriation Bill does not normally receive assent until about the end of October, and as the financial year begins on July 1 some special provision for appropriation is required to cover the first four months of the new year. That special provision takes the form of Supply

Bills, normally two such Bills each year, and without this Bill now before the Council there would be no Parliamentary authority available for normal expenditure from July 1, 1967. The \$36,000,000 of appropriation now proposed should cover requirements throughout July and August. It will be necessary for a second Bill to be considered by the Council in the latter part of August to provide for requirements in September and October while the Appropriation Bill is under consideration.

A short Bill for \$36,000,000 without any details of the purposes for which it is available does not mean that the Government or individual departments have a free hand to spend, as they are limited by the provisions of clause 3. In the early months of 1967-68, until the new Appropriation Bill becomes law, the Government must use the amounts made available by Supply Bills within the limits of the individual lines set out in the original Estimates and the Supplementary Estimates approved by Parliament for 1966-67. In accordance with normal procedures honourable members will have a full opportunity to debate the detailed 1967-68 expenditure proposals when the Budget is presented.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): This is the usual Bill that comes before the Council to enable the Public Service to be carried on in the first months of the new financial year. However, at the outset I should like to take this opportunity to welcome to this Chamber the Hon. V. G. Springett; the Chief Secretary has already, from the Government side, congratulated him and I should like to add my congratulations, too. I am certain that in the Hon. Mr. Springett we have a very worthy replacement for the Hon. L. H. Densley, who served this Chamber and his District so well for very many years. I assure the Council that the Hon. Mr. Springett is a man of outstanding intellectual capacity and ability. Furthermore, I think it is to the credit of this Chamber that he is the first migrant to take his place in the State Parliament since the last war. It is a matter of satisfaction to this Council that we have the honour of attracting the first migrant to enter politics for some years. Also, he is the first member of the medical profession to enter Parliament in South Australia since 1927; I hope that in the near future we shall see more members of this profession serving in this Parliament.

I see no reason to delay this Bill. Its procedures are controlled by Statute and by the various awards. Looking back over the years,

I find that this Bill has occasioned considerable debate at times; I noticed in *Hansard* of 1959 that the then Leader of the Labor Party spoke for almost an hour on a similar type of Bill. In those days it was used to whip the Government on financial matters of all kinds. My own view is that, as it is a Supply Bill which is controlled by Statute and various awards (as we see in clause 3), I do not think that this approach is warranted at this stage. Perhaps we can say that this Chamber is adopting a very responsible attitude to this Bill at this stage. I support the Bill.

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

#### SESSIONAL COMMITTEES.

The House of Assembly notified its appointment of Sessional Committees.

#### RETIREMENT OF MR. W. A. WHICKER.

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

That this Council express its appreciation of the services of Mr. W. A. Whicker, Senior Reporter of the Government Reporting Department, over a period of 33 years and extend its best wishes to him for a long and happy retirement.

I should like to take this opportunity, with your permission Mr. President, and the concurrence of the Council, to pay a tribute to Mr. William Arthur Whicker, who joined the Government Reporting Department as a *Hansard* reporter on July 2, 1934. His service has been continuous since that date. Mr. Whicker gained the qualification of Licensed Shorthand Writer in 1923. He took part in the reporting of the proceedings of the Royal Commission on Lotteries in 1936 and, more recently, he supervised the reporting of the proceedings of the Royal Commission on the Licensing Act. Mr. Whicker was appointed Senior Reporter on August 27, 1964. His 33 years' service with the department ends with the commencement of recreation leave next Monday, June 26, prior to his retirement. I feel that all honourable members would want to thank Mr. Whicker for his services to Parliament over many years. As is the case with all the *Hansard* staff, Mr. Whicker has always been willing to co-operate with members. I am sure all honourable members will join with me in extending best wishes to Mr. Whicker and his family. We hope he will enjoy a long and healthy retirement at the conclusion of his work as a *Hansard* reporter at 65 years of age. He does not look anything like that age. On the surmise that he

will find something to occupy his mind in his retirement, I wish him well on behalf of all honourable members.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): Very briefly, I should like to support the words of the Chief Secretary on the retirement of Mr. Whicker. I think we all realize that Parliamentarians are many times in the hands of those who report our speeches in the *Hansard* gallery. It is appropriate to recall the words of Omar Khayyam, who said:

The moving finger writes; and having writ,  
Moves on; nor all your piety nor wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,  
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it.

I am at times reminded of those words when the *Hansard* reporters call back a word or two and make some alterations, which I think most members appreciate—this privilege of having corrections made to some of the words used in the Chamber. I have known Mr. Whicker for quite some time, and all members of my Party desire to be associated with the motion wishing him all the best in his retirement from service in this Chamber and this Parliament.

Motion carried.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 3.7 p.m. the Council adjourned until Thursday, June 22, at 2.15 p.m.