

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday, July 20, 1967.

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

## QUESTIONS

## NEW HORIZONS.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I direct a question to the Chief Secretary further to my reference yesterday to a political pamphlet circulating in the District of Edwardstown. In view of the obvious inaccuracy in the description of Mr. Virgo as the local member, and as a courtesy to the Minister's friend and colleague, the Hon. Frank Walsh, will the Chief Secretary use his influence to ensure that such an obvious inaccuracy is corrected in the future?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: I realize that it is an obvious error. I will use my best endeavours to see that the error is not repeated, and I hope all political Parties will readily agree to the suggestion being adopted.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I ask leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of you, Mr. President.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Yesterday the Hon. Mr. Hill laid on the table of this Council a document entitled *New Horizons* which, as we all know, contained some very valuable information of great interest to the people of South Australia. I understand that under Standing Order 418 this document will be referred to the Printing Committee for consideration. As a member of the Printing Committee, and to assist it, I ask whether you will have inquiries made as to the most suitable number of copies of this document that should be printed, from an economic viewpoint?

The PRESIDENT: The honourable member is quite correct in stating that Standing Order 418 provides for the printing of Parliamentary Papers if their printing has not been moved by a Minister or if they have not been printed by the Government Printer when laid on the table. The paper stands referred to the Printing Committee, which reports from time to time on what papers should be printed. I am sure that the committee will be glad to have the assistance of the honourable member in making its deliberations and recommendations, after which the matter will be referred to this Council, and it will be left to the Council to adopt, or otherwise deal with, the recommendation.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: Am I correct, Mr. President, in assuming that when this document is referred back to this Council we will have a further opportunity to discuss it?

The PRESIDENT: The question raised by the honourable member will be dealt with at the appropriate time.

## SWIMMING POOL.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: I address a question to the Chief Secretary, and I apologize for doing so because it relates to a matter unconnected with my own district and trespasses on a matter relating to the district of the Chief Secretary and his colleagues. I noticed in last night's *News* that a swimming centre was to be established in the north park lands.

The PRESIDENT: Does the honourable member seek leave to make a statement?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: Yes, Mr. President. Leave granted.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: Thank you, Sir. I am glad to see that this has come about. I understand that the money the Government will make available is contingent upon the Prospect council providing \$50,000 and the Walkerville council providing \$4,000. Can the Chief Secretary tell me whether those councils have indicated quite firmly that they are prepared to make these sums available? If they have not, I take it there is still some doubt about the project going ahead. It was also announced that some sort of hole was to be dug in the park lands and the dirt sold and removed elsewhere.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: Not sold.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: I understand the dirt is to be paid for and removed elsewhere. We do not want our park lands taken away. If it is intended to proceed to dig this hole, will there be a reasonable assurance that the construction work will proceed within a limited period of time?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: I understand that it is a firm offer. I am told that the former Mayor of Prospect who retired in June did everything possible in negotiating for the swimming pool. I understand that the offer from the Walkerville council is a firm one. As the honourable member will know, many discussions take place in Cabinet. My recollection in this case is that if this money was provided the work would proceed almost immediately. I understand, too, that the reason why they are so anxious for a firm and quick decision is that the earth to be excavated from the place where the swimming pool will be can

be used in connection with the Montefiore Road extension. The ready disposal of that earth will be in the nature of a *quid pro quo*: it will balance out to everybody's advantage. My impression is that the work will begin within two months and will be completed so that the pool will be ready for the summer of 1969. This will mean some little discomfort for the nearby residents for the time being (I appreciate that, but it cannot be avoided) and that discomfort could last for at least one summer. However, I will take up this matter with either the Premier or the Minister of Works (whoever is the responsible Minister), put the honourable member's point of view and try to minimize as much as possible the discomfort involved.

#### NURIOOTPA HORTICULTURIST.

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: My question refers to the provision of a horticulturist in the Nuriootpa area. I am aware that recently the resident horticulturist was promoted and now there is a vacancy. I am also aware that the Government is calling for applications to fill this vacancy, but I am informed that some voluntary work on bud selection has been done in this area by residents of the Barossa Valley, that the vines have been selected and the cuttings are now being collected, and that a horticulturist is needed to do the necessary work in the research station when these cuttings are provided. I realize that the Minister may not be able to secure a new permanent appointment overnight and also that the present officer in charge (Mr. Loder) in that district is overworked and cannot undertake this detailed work. In the circumstances, will the Minister ask the Minister of Agriculture to consider making a temporary appointment from his Adelaide staff so that this necessary work can proceed pending the appointment of a permanent officer?

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

#### ALICE SPRINGS ROAD.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: I seek leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Roads.

Leave granted.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: Some four years ago the main Port Augusta to Alice Springs road was re-routed in several places through the station country and at that time an undertaking was given by the Highways Department that it would install ramps on the road at the required places. I have a letter from two station owners, one of whom has 11 internal fences still left open awaiting ramps, while the other, on an adjoining station, has seven internal fences still awaiting the installation of ramps. I am sure the Minister will agree that this is a long time to wait and that these people have been very patient.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: How long did you say they had been waiting?

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: Who would know better than the Minister when the re-routeing of that road took place? I would say it was three to four years ago. This is a road from Pimba to Kingoonya, and the same applies on certain sections of the road from Kingoonya to Coober Pedy. Will the Minister obtain information regarding immediate installation of these ramps?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: At present the re-routeing of the railway line near the road to which the honourable member has referred is being discussed with the Commonwealth Government. If it is re-routed, probably the road will be re-routed at the same time. This may be the answer. However, I shall obtain a report from the Highways Department on the cause of the delay.

#### FRUIT FLY (COMPENSATION) BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

#### CATTLE COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from July 19. Page 660.)

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES (Northern): I should like the Minister to answer several questions about this Bill at a later stage. The need for the control of bovine tuberculosis is quite obvious and most essential. For this reason the Cattle Compensation Act was brought into being. I agree entirely with the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Springett about the increasing need for the population to be protected from tuberculosis. I have no squabble with the Government about the need for this measure. No honourable member should forget the important problem of the export of our dairy produce and meat,

which must conform to the health regulations of the United States of America. We must also keep in mind the growing export trade to our neighbours in the South-East Asia countries, where tuberculosis in the population is now or has been very bad, although active steps are being taken to eradicate or control the spread of this disease.

The export markets for our cheese and other dairy products will die if there is no guarantee that the products we sell are free from tuberculosis. It was stated in the press a few weeks ago that the Minister of Agriculture, in a reply to a deputation that had been to see him regarding the need for more veterinary surgeons in the northern areas of the State, said that there was an urgent need for more veterinary surgeons to look after the animal population of the State. He said that the problems of finance were such that this would only be possible if the landholders were prepared to subsidize the salary of any veterinary surgeon the Government might put in an area, such as Port Augusta, to serve the north, the west and the east from that centre. Now we have an anomaly in the Bill that is hard for me to follow. In his second reading speech the Minister said:

So far, substantially all dairying areas and some agriculture areas in the State are covered, but there are indications that by 1975, at the latest, our valuable export trade to the United States of America and certain other countries will be effected unless the whole State is covered. At present most of the programme is undertaken by private veterinary surgeons paid out of general revenue. The expenses of the programme are continuing ones, as testing must be carried out at regular intervals.

I understand from people who run dairy herds in the Adelaide Hills that, once they rid their herds of tuberculosis and they have received a certificate that their herds are free of disease, and as long as no other stock comes on to the property, no further testing for tuberculosis takes place on the property. It would appear that once an area containing dairy cattle is free of tuberculosis, then there is no further inspection in that part of the country, so the statement that the expenses of the programme are continuing ones, as testing must be carried out at regular intervals, needs some explanation. In his second reading explanation the Minister stated further:

The primary purpose of this Bill is to authorize the Minister to meet the costs of this programme out of the Cattle Compensation Fund. Clearly, the programme has already effectively reduced the claims for compensation under the Act, and the programme itself falls within the purposes of the Act, which was to

facilitate the eradication of, amongst other diseases, bovine tuberculosis, by spreading the cost of that eradication over the industry as a whole.

Section 11 (1) of the Cattle Compensation Act states:

There shall be established and kept in the Treasury an account to be called "The Cattle Compensation Fund".

Section 11 (3) states:

The fund shall, subject to this Act, be applied to the payment pursuant to this Act of claims for compensation.

However, the Minister said:

... the programme itself falls within the purpose of the Act, which was to facilitate the eradication of, amongst other diseases, bovine tuberculosis.

I fail to see where the Act mentions that the purpose of the Cattle Compensation Act was to allow the Agriculture Department to spend money on the eradication of any diseases mentioned in the Act with the idea of spreading the cost over the whole industry, although that is what was said in the second reading speech.

It is clearly understood from the wording that it is a Cattle Compensation Act; I have no squabble that we must continue to guard against the spread of disease, and that in cases of disease compensation should be paid. However, I disagree that the fund (which I understand now stands at about \$272,000) should be used not only for compensation but also for other purposes when that was carried out in the past by the department, as is clearly stated in the second reading speech. I remind members of the statement of the Minister that, if veterinary surgeons are needed in the country, that would be approved as long as they were subsidized by the grazier. Because of that I consider an anomaly exists, because the diseases of the cattle industry are being looked after by the department in the dairying industry and, as the Minister says, in some agricultural areas of the State. The Minister admits that the incidence of bovine tuberculosis has decreased over the years, and yet it appears necessary to spend money from the Cattle Compensation Fund in order to decrease the incidence of bovine tuberculosis even further. I cannot see why that should be necessary, because a fund carrying over \$200,000 has been accumulated by those who run cattle, sell them and are taxed on them.

The Hon. H. K. Kemp: It belongs to the producers. It has been a steal.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: Wasn't the fund set up to eradicate this disease?

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: That is what I am trying to find out. The Minister implied

in his second reading speech that it is in the Act and that authority for money to be spent on the eradication of this disease does exist. If he can find that information for me in the Cattle Compensation Act then I would appreciate it, because I do not believe it is there. The Act states that its purpose is to provide compensation to the owner for cattle that have to be slaughtered because of tuberculosis or other diseases. But as tuberculosis is the principal worry at this time, it does not state in the original Act that any authority exists for moneys to be spent from the compensation fund by the Government or by the department for the eradication of this particular disease. The fund was set up, and money contributed by the grower, with the idea that when the grower suffered loss because of the disease he would receive some compensation for it.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: The reason that the fund was set up was that if disease broke out and cattle died of tuberculosis then the producers would be compensated for the loss of their cattle.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: I thank the Minister for that interjection. If tuberculosis or any of the other cattle diseases become rampant (and they have been known to become rampant in the past in selected areas very quickly), what happens? An amount of \$272,000 would not be much on today's values if a disease were to spread amongst the cattle population of the South-East or the Adelaide Hills where there is a big cattle density.

If this fund was used for other purposes, it would be up to the Government to continue to pay compensation, because it is provided in the Act that the Government should do that even if the fund should be overspent. In that respect, the provision is as follows:

If the Treasurer is of the opinion that the moneys in the fund are for the time being insufficient for the purpose of the Act, the Treasurer may from time to time advance moneys out of general revenue to be paid into the fund, and every such advance, together with interest thereon at the rate of 5 per cent per annum, shall subsequently be repaid from the fund to the Treasurer.

If the Cattle Compensation Fund were to be depleted, the producer would have to reimburse the fund, at the same time paying interest on it. I understand from some references made yesterday that there may be some amendments to the Bill, and I should like to reserve my thinking until I know the effect of those amendments. I want an assurance from the Minister that there will be safeguards that this fund will

not be eroded away just on one particular facet of the cattle industry, that is, bovine tuberculosis eradication.

The Hon. H. K. KEMP secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from July 19. Page 667.)

The Hon. L. R. HART (Midland): I have always supported prices legislation but have done so on each occasion with some misgivings. I probably would not have spoken in this debate had it not been for some of the points raised by the Hon. Mr. Banfield, who tended to give the impression that it was only necessary to apply price control on a commodity to bring about a saving of X dollars to the community. Of course, we all know that this is not entirely true, because with price control we bring in a number of anomalies. The Hon. Mr. Banfield, perhaps unconsciously, mentioned some of these anomalies himself.

The honourable member dealt at some length with pies and pasties, and I believe he was on very weak ground there. He said that at present one could buy 18 pies or pasties for the same price as one could buy 12 previously. That is probably so, because the price is controlled and, indeed, it has been reduced by price control. However, what he did not say was that the size of pies and pasties is not controlled, nor are their contents. Although a person may buy an extra six pies or pasties, it does not mean that he is getting any increased amount of material; he is getting a smaller article, or else he is getting an article that is composed of the cheapest commodities available at the time.

We all know that pies and pasties consist of a certain amount of meat and that the amount is governed by the price of meat at the particular time. The remainder of the pie or pasty is filled with vegetables, and the vegetable content depends on the price of the vegetables at the time. I have in my area a number of growers of pumpkins and trombones, and I often see huge stacks of them; I often wonder just what happens to all those vegetables. However, I assure the Hon. Mr. Banfield that without doubt he consumes many in the cheap pies and pasties he purchases.

Therefore, there is no reward for the manufacturer of pies and pasties who wishes to produce a quality product. It does not matter what is the quality, he can get only the same

profit. As a consequence, there is no incentive for any manufacturer to produce a quality article and, after all, the community often demands a quality article and is prepared to pay a little extra for it.

When an increase in price is required by a manufacturer he is usually asked by the price control authorities to submit a statement of his costs. After an examination of the costs, the manufacturer is either granted a price increase or refused an increase. It is extremely difficult for a small manufacturer to submit costs of a particular commodity because of the number of articles that he often manufactures. He may manufacture pies and pasties and small cakes and buns, and he may even cook some of them in the oven at the same time. The pastry he makes for one article may be used for another article that is not under price control, and it is very difficult for him to separate these articles and prepare a proper submission for an increase in one or perhaps two of them.

A country manufacturer in a reasonably big way told me that it took him a week to prepare his submissions in support of an application for an increase in the price of pies and pasties. Such an increase has been granted to manufacturers in certain country areas, but this increase is not a blanket cover over a particular town or area: it is granted only to the individual who makes his submission. Other people who are not in a position to make a satisfactory submission are not able to obtain an increase in price.

The price of pies and pasties in Port Pirie, Port Augusta, Whyalla and (I believe) Port Lincoln is 1c above the Adelaide price. The manufacturer at Port Pirie or Port Augusta often sends pies and pasties to Marree and Leigh Creek and places up the northern line, but the pies and pasties that go from Port Pirie to those places have to be sold at the Port Pirie price. If the storekeeper in these localities obtains his pies and pasties from Adelaide, he then has to sell them at 1c each less than the price of the Port Pirie pies and pasties. These are some of the anomalies that occur under price control. That particular storekeeper either does not stock pies and pasties at all, and thus does not render a service to the community, or, if he does, endeavours to recover his costs on some other articles not under price control. So, to say that \$X is saved on pies and pasties because they are under price control does not ring true. The consumer may save something on a particular commodity

but the retailer has to cover his costs in some way: he recoups his losses on other things, so the community overall does not benefit by price control.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: If we added 1c to the price of a pie or pasty, what would that amount to a ton in freight?

The Hon. L. R. HART: I do not know; I have not gone into that.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: It would be about \$680 a ton.

The Hon. L. R. HART: As the Minister is in charge of the department, he should know the answers, but the storekeeper who pays the freight is not permitted to pass it on, so he recovers his costs on some other articles that he sells—perhaps small cakes or buns purchased by the schoolchildren of the area. They spend slightly more on cakes and buns compared with what they save on pies and pasties, so overall the community is not gaining.

The Hon. Mr. Banfield also mentioned bread. We know that through trading practices today many articles are sold in supermarkets, bread being one of them. By the nature of the trade in a supermarket, it is necessary that bread be wrapped, as indeed it is. The Prices Commissioner will allow an increase in price for wrapped bread only on a 1½ lb. loaf; he will not allow an increase in price for wrapping a 2 lb. loaf—and, of course, the 2 lb. loaf is the normal loaf that people buy; it is the most sought after. So people who want to buy their bread through a supermarket can buy only a 1½ lb. loaf instead of a 2 lb. loaf; and we all know that the bigger the article we buy the cheaper it usually is. So in this case the consumer is paying 2c a loaf extra on a 1½ lb. loaf, whereas the Prices Commissioner will not allow an increase in price for wrapping a 2 lb. loaf.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: You are advocating an increase in the price of bread, are you?

The Hon. L. R. HART: I am merely stating the facts as they relate to wrapped bread under price control. The situation is that the Prices Commissioner will allow an increase of 2c for wrapping a 1½ lb. loaf but will allow no increase in price for wrapping a 2 lb. loaf.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: You are suggesting that bread should be dearer?

The Hon. L. R. HART: I am suggesting an increase should be allowed for wrapping a 2 lb. loaf as well as for wrapping a 1½ lb. loaf: then the consumer would gain some benefit. We also have the situation where the small family unit bakes bread on Sundays,

a practice condoned by the unions. By the nature of their enterprise, these small family units can do this within the prices permitted under price control. However, the bigger manufacturer, who also has to bake bread on Sundays to hold his trade and so has to employ union labour at penalty rates, is not permitted to increase his price above the controlled price. All these factors make it difficult for the country baker to stay in business.

Furthermore, the large metropolitan baker delivers bread into the country areas, despite a gentlemen's agreement on zones, so the country baker is steadily being forced out of business. Therefore, while the Government issues many pious platitudes on decentralization, it does little to retain what industry we have in the country areas. I well remember the time when meat was under price control and there was no incentive for the farmers to produce a well-finished, quality animal. Furthermore, the consumer received no benefit from the control of meat prices. It was only when meat was removed from price control that quality received its just reward and, contrary to the general belief at the time, the average price of meat did not rise.

The Hon. Mr. Banfield went on to say that many firms were wary of increasing their prices because they feared that, if they did so, they might be brought under price control. This may be true. The Prices Commissioner can look at the trading practices of all forms of industry. It might not be a bad idea to look at the trading practices of some of the semi-government bodies in this State, particularly the Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs Board. If he does, he will see that the killing charges there are so high that the Metropolitan Abattoirs cannot compete with country works in South Australia or with abattoirs in other States. The Minister has reduced the quota of one country killing works by 50 per cent because he is trying to protect the monopoly of the Metropolitan Abattoirs. He has to do this because the Metropolitan Abattoirs cannot compete with country works in killing charges. We hear talk about decentralization. Here is a case where the Government itself is endeavouring to put out of business a decentralized industry, simply because its own monopoly cannot compete in costs. This is despite the fact that the Government monopoly uses its surplus labour requirements in a form of (shall I say) dilated labour: it is using its employees for painting purposes, thus denying the paint-

ing tradesmen a job. These are things that the Prices Commissioner should examine.

Since the manufacture of Bruce boxes from imported timber for the citrus industry, there is now a surplus of certain types of pinus timber. I understand some stocks of timber have built up and every effort is being made by the department to sell as much timber as possible. A constituent of mine who has consistently been buying timber through the department was told recently that he could no longer obtain supplies from that source; yet the Minister said recently that he was conscious of the fact that the department had a build-up of stocks and every effort was being made to sell them. Here is a ready buyer, yet the department is not prepared to sell to him. He has virtually been told he must buy from his local mill. Why? It would be as well for the Prices Commissioner to look at this, too. I believe that semi-government bodies should also be subject to price control legislation. However, as I have said, I have always supported price control. Although I am doing so with a certain amount of misgiving, I support the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Duration of Act."

The Hon. L. R. HART: This clause extends the operation of the Prices Act for a further 12 months; I assume this means that the whole of the Prices Act is to be extended by this period. Consequently, I assume that I am in order in referring to the various sections of the principal Act. In the second reading debate I asked whether semi-government bodies were subject to price control legislation. Can the Minister clarify this matter, because I think this Council is entitled to know just what bodies are within the ambit of the legislation?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD (Chief Secretary): I do not want to be difficult, but I do not think the honourable member's question has anything to do with this clause.

The CHAIRMAN: This clause refers to the whole ambit of the legislation. The honourable member is in order in asking his question. Does the Minister decline to answer?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: I thought that this clause dealt with the date, and the date only.

The CHAIRMAN: It deals with the whole ambit of the legislation.

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: I accept your ruling, Sir.

The Hon. L. R. HART: What concerns me is the situation in the pinus industry at present. There is a ready buyer for the product the department has for sale, but the department will not accept an order from this man despite the fact that for a number of years he has been a firm client. Indeed, he would have bought considerably more than he has bought over the years had the additional quantity been available. I realize that, when the orange growing industry used pinus for the making of cases for oversea shipments, there was a heavy demand for a certain quantity of this timber. However, this demand has now been satisfied from another source and, consequently, there is a small surplus.

The gentleman to whom I have been referring is a tomato grower and also a case manufacturer, and he is prepared to continue his patronage of the Woods and Forests Department, but the department has informed him that it is not prepared to supply him. I should like a statement from the Minister about why the department refuses to sell timber at this time, when the Minister of Forests has stated that every endeavour is being made to sell timber. This, I believe, is an unfair trade practice.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Minister of Local Government): I have no intention of coming in on this debate, as this clause simply extends the legislation for another 12 months. By no stretch of the imagination has the Prices Commissioner any jurisdiction to order anybody to sell something to somebody else. He has jurisdiction only when a matter is referred to him to investigate whether the price is fair and just. The matter referred to by the honourable member has nothing to do with the Bill, the principal Act or anything before the Committee. He is complaining that the Woods and Forests Department is not selling timber to a prospective customer, and undoubtedly the department has a reason. I am amazed that a member can get away with this.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the Minister disputing the ruling of the Chair?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: No, Sir.

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister will resume his seat. This matter has been raised previously and a ruling given. Where a clause provides for the extension of an Act for a period, the whole of the legislation is under review and honourable members can speak to any matter relevant to the legislation.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: Has that ruling been given in Committee, Sir?

The CHAIRMAN: On the clause in Committee, yes.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I thank you, Sir, for your ruling, because it would be somewhat anomalous if a member were not able to raise these matters under one clause of the Bill, particularly when the Minister in introducing this measure went to great pains to raise all the subjects that honourable members have dealt with in the second reading. Normally, some of these queries would be answered by the Minister when concluding the debate on the second reading, but he did not take advantage of this. Therefore, honourable members have only one opportunity to seek information on matters covered in the second reading explanation, and I believe this is an appropriate time to raise them.

The matter raised by the Hon. Mr. Hart has been given much prominence in the press recently. I should like to know a little about price fixing in the timber industry today, because it is fairly obvious to me that the Woods and Forests Department was for many years virtually the price fixing authority in this State. It appears that since the department joined the Pinus Radiata Association it has lost that advantage, as the price of timber today has increased.

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: In view of the discussion, I ask that progress be reported.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

#### LAND SETTLEMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from July 19. Page 668.)

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): I support this short Bill, which has two objectives: first, to extend the life of the Land Settlement Committee for a further two years; and, secondly, to extend the committee's powers for a further two years in relation to South-East drainage matters. As has been pointed out by the Hon. Mr. Dawkins, the amount of work that is coming before the committee has decreased considerably, due in the main to the completion of the major part of the drainage works in the South-East. Further work was allocated to the committee three or four years ago, when it was given the task of investigating applications for finance under the Rural Advances Guarantee Act, but even here, in the last two years, the references have sharply declined. There is a capacity in the committee that is not being used, and I consider that the Government

should allocate more work to it in the form of inquiries into various aspects of land settlement and the development of rural areas in the State.

The committee has made a long and detailed inquiry into drainage in the South-East over many years. Recently, opinions have been expressed in the press in the South-East about the growing concern that drainage is being overdone in that part of the State. I live in that district and I can assure honourable members that there is good reason for this concern, even though we have had, in the last few years, seasons slightly drier than normal. It can be appreciated that taking water off the country allows for much heavier pasture development which, together with increased afforestation in the South-East, has increased the quantity of water required. There is a case for investigation into over-drainage. Several viewpoints have been put forward, some people asking for the locking or weiring of the drainage system and others asking that the drains not be cleaned, thus preventing the rapid departure of water to the sea. I do not entirely agree with those views, but I believe the committee should be given the task of investigating this matter.

I do not know how much water is being diverted to the sea at present through the drainage system, but I think it would be about 100,000 acre-feet a year. In the Western Division, I do not think it would be possible to divert this water anywhere other than to the sea, because in that division the height above sea level is minimal (between 30ft. and 100ft., I think). The land is almost flat, and it is difficult to know what to do with the water that must be removed from it. The only place to put it is the sea, but this water could possibly be used to better advantage.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: What is its salt content?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: It has no salt content. In the Eastern Division of the South-East (the section near the Victorian border) something could be done in relation to the water that is at present going to the sea. There is the advantage that that water is, at its source, well above sea level; it is much higher above sea level than the water in the Western Division. This area is largely drained by the main channel of Baker's Range drain, which runs roughly in a north-western direction and picks up the water in the Eastern Division. At the moment, it is tapped in a westerly direction through Drain M. All this Eastern Division water is drained to the sea.

I consider this matter should be the subject of an inquiry by the Land Settlement Committee, with a view to diverting this water farther to the north-west. This could possibly be done by taking the water slowly north-west through the Coorong and, possibly, into Lake Albert, and using Drain M as a control measure for floodwaters.

Already one large irrigation scheme, using a swamp on the present Baker's Range drain, is irrigating several thousand acres to the west of that drain. This proposal, instead of taking the water directly to the sea through the Western Division, would use Drain M as a control measure and let the water find its way to the north-west, and it would have many beneficial effects. First, more water would be held in the Eastern Division for a longer period, and this would have some beneficial effects. Secondly, it would increase the potential for flood irrigation, particularly on the western side of the Baker's Range drain. Thirdly, it would allow a greater recharge capacity for underground water in the Lower South-East. Fourthly, it would allow a greater flow of water over the Padthaway horst into the Coorong area that is in need of recharge water for its underground supply. The Land Settlement Committee should be engaged in that kind of inquiry because I believe it to be a most urgent problem.

I refer to both over-drainage and the diversion of some of this fresh water from its rapid course to the sea into areas where it could be utilized. The committee has the capacity to engage in such inquiry and I think it should be so engaged. It may well be that the proposal I am putting to this Council is uneconomic. It may be impracticable also from an engineering viewpoint, but I believe that this committee has the time and capacity for making such an inquiry. I do not wish to deal further with the matter, but I present my views for what they are worth because I believe it would be a worthwhile investigation. I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

#### FOREST RESERVE: MURTHO.

Adjourned debate on the resolution of the House of Assembly:

That forest reserve No. 58, hundred of Murtho, as shown on the plan laid before Parliament on June 27, 1967, be resumed in terms of section 81 (1) of the Crown Lands



Act, 1929-1967, for the purpose of being dealt with as Crown lands.

(Continued from July 19. Page 669.)

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland): I rise to support the resolution. The area concerned is commonly known in the Upper Murray and is marked on the map as Woolnook Bend. It is one of our red gum bends and it is interesting that it was here that the Japanese internment camp was located during the war. The Japanese prisoners of war were employed in cutting trellis posts (and a very fine job they made of it, too) and throughout the area can still be seen the trellis posts they cut. They are of red gum, beautifully enhanced and finished by the prisoners of war.

In common with many other bends on the Murray River it is good natural red gum timber country. It is a continual source of worry to me that we have not sufficient red gum reserves in the Upper Murray areas. I also believe that we should have more reserves of that type in the Adelaide Hills because red gum is a priceless timber and is in grave danger of being cut out. The gum is a slow grower and a useful timber, but I think more precautions should be taken than are at present taken to ensure that the supply does not become exhausted. It is a natural eucalypt and therefore we should treasure it.

For over 10 years I have been urging the Forestry Department to interest itself in red gum timber on the Murray River. From time to time I have made the suggestion that a permanent conservator should be located in the vicinity of the Murray River and empowered to treat these red gum forests in the same way as the pine forests in the South-East are treated. In other words, with a good regeneration after floods care should be taken to select strong healthy trees, leave them, and cut out the remainder. Normally, red gums come up like a forest, live for 10 to 15 years, but eventually smother each other out. With careful thinning, as is done in Victoria where foresters are most active, a real contribution would be made not only to the aesthetic beauty of the river but also to the economy of the State. We have a fine red gum miller and forester in Mr. Alec Rowe at Paringa at present, and he is currently engaged in getting the best of the timber out of the Chowilla dam area. That timber is being used for sleepers on the Port Pirie to Broken Hill railway line and also by the Housing Trust for use as studs and bearers in construction work as well as being used as trellis posts and for other purposes.

Red gum timber cannot be stored for long periods and therefore most of it must be taken out before the Chowilla dam fills. At present it seems that this will not be for a considerable time, although it was confidently expected that by the early 1970's timber in the area would be under water. Once again I make a plea that something be done to appoint a competent forester or conservator and station him in the Murray River area. Then not only the red gums will receive attention but more work will be done in experiments on deltoides, poplars, and on various types of commercial eucalypts. I also make a plea that while dealing with this legislation we should treasure existing reserves.

Under the Bill this forest reserve is to revert to Crown lease for the purpose of correcting some anomalies. They are, in brief, that the boundary of the bend goes to the centre of the river and it was decided many years ago that it would be desirable that every river frontage have a 150-link reserve. The reserve was proclaimed but unfortunately nothing was done about altering the boundary from the centre of the river, which is the hundred line.

What is now happening is that the forest reserve is to revert to Crown lands and have these anomalies corrected and then, as I understand it, they will be revested in the Forestry Department as a forest reserve. This bend has for many years been leased by landholders for grazing cattle. I am not sure what the position of the lessees will be; whether, when the land reverts to the Crown from the Woods and Forests Department, such leases will be voided. If so, I am wondering whether they will be reissued when this land reverts to a reserve again, or whether the department has something else in mind for this area when it is put back under a forest reserve.

I think this is most important from the point of view of the lessees, who have had this area for a long time. Also, I think it is important that the public should know whether or not this land is to be used for some other purpose. In my opinion, it is most essential that the land revert to a forest reserve, for we have very few of them now and if we do not do something to preserve them we shall have a river that will have practically no red gum on it, which to my mind would be an absolute tragedy. Can the Minister of Local Government clarify these points?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Minister of Local Government): I thank honourable members for their attention to this matter. I think the information contained in a document I have before me at the moment will take care

of the fears expressed by the Hon. Mr. Story. As I understand the contents of the docket, the 150 links frontage to the river will be preserved. On the other matter raised, there is no doubt at all in my mind that the timber will be preserved; it will not be possible for anyone to desecrate the area or to remove timber from it, for it will be reserved until the necessary delineations are made. The intention is that the area will revert to a forest reserve, and this will preserve the timber there.

That is how I understand the document before me, which contains a specific reference to the bend referred to by the honourable member. I fully appreciate the honourable member's comment regarding the permanency of an officer in the area, which seems to me to be a worthwhile suggestion. I will certainly take up with my colleague, the Minister of Forests, all the points raised by the Hon. Mr. Story. I hope I have made myself clear; I know that I am attempting to do so very hurriedly. The docket is available for the honourable member's perusal. However, I feel sure that the assurances contained in the docket will allay the fear expressed by the honourable member.

Resolution agreed to.

#### SUCCESSION DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from July 19. Page 672.)

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Midland): I support the Bill, and in doing so my attitude is somewhat different from the one I usually adopt regarding succession duty Bills. The Bill is designed to clear up one or two matters which are of importance to the people concerned but which do not really go to the root of succession duties. I approve of all the four main amendments in the Bill. The first of those amendments provides a special rebate or exemption for people dying on active service in Vietnam; the second applies the same duty on a gift to an illegitimate child as is applicable to a gift made to a legitimate child; the third amendment is a similar provision regarding a bequest to a *de facto* adopted child; and the fourth amendment clarifies the position regarding exemptions for gifts in respect of the advancement of religion, science or education.

I think these are all desirable amendments. I particularly want to speak on the question of gifts made for the advancement of religion, science or education. It rather surprises me

in the course of my experience to find the number of people who have no immediate relatives but who have a considerable estate and have some difficulty in determining how they shall dispose of that estate by will. It does seem to me that in numbers of these cases not sufficient detailed consideration is given by those people as to what they should do with their assets. Invariably, I suggest to them that they pick on the charity, the religious organization or the institution in which they have the most interest and that they devise their estate to that organization and set out what conditions they would like to apply to the gift. I consider that if we make it easier from a succession duties point of view for this to be achieved, it will result in a larger flow of money to these organizations, which I think is a very desirable thing.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: That is the intention of the Bill.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: I think that is so. Quite frequently people say to me, "If I leave X dollars to that particular organization, they are strangers in blood to me and therefore it will attract rather a heavy rate of duty." I suppose the classic example that I can remember was a person I knew some years ago who had considerable money and was not quite certain what to do with it, so he disposed of it by leaving it to the Treasurer of the Commonwealth Parliament to be applied in part liquidation of the war debt. The tragedy about it was that, as it was a gift to the Commonwealth Government, the State Government did not collect any succession on it. I am not in favour of the people of South Australia leaving money to the Commonwealth Government.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: It gets more than its share now.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: Charity begins at home.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: I would have thought that perhaps if the person concerned had been properly advised a very much better disposition of that asset may have been made.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Bymill: He could certainly help now by lending it to the State.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: He could do better than that: he could leave it to me.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: I do not want to be difficult, but I do not propose to take up either of those suggestions. The other point I want to make regarding succession duties is that, although the value in terms of monetary units of most estates has increased very considerably over the last few years, the return

from succession duties has remained comparatively stable, which means, of course, that people are taking measures to ensure that they dispose of their assets before they die so that they do not attract succession duties. This is the desirable procedure, but I am never in favour of anybody divesting himself of an asset to such an extent that he becomes dependent on someone else's good will or charity to enable him to meet the expenses that inevitably occur when he gets on in years.

I have seen some unfortunate examples where assets have been passed over to children and the father and the mother concerned have run into unexpected illness, with the attendant medical or hospital expenses, and have found themselves impoverished in their later years, a condition which they did not deserve. They have done this, of course, because they have tried to avoid the imposition of succession duties. It is because of this that I think the logical approach to this question is, if anything, to charge people a little more in respect of gifts made during their lifetime so that they can meet the debt during their lifetime, but to reduce correspondingly the imposition that is imposed on death. I would favour a gift duty provision, provided it was accompanied by a corresponding reduction in succession duties.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill: For how long would the reduction last correspondingly?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: Of course, that is the difficulty, but there are many people who would much rather have the responsibility of paying the debt on transfer of the assets while they were alive, earning an income, and able to do it, than leave it to be handled by their beneficiaries after they had died. This is particularly important for the farming and primary producing community, because the asset value today of a farm is far more than its productive value. I have known instances where farms have been devised to children, who have found themselves having to cope with State succession duty and Commonwealth estate duty, which has meant in some instances that the property which should have been an inheritance for the family has been disposed of to meet these liabilities. These matters should be kept in mind when we are dealing with succession duty on a future occasion. Possibly, they are not strictly within the ambit of this Bill. I support the Bill.

The Hon. H. K. KEMP secured the adjournment of the debate.

## HIGHWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from July 18. Page 605.)

The Hon. Sir NORMAN JUDE (Southern): This Bill is a comparatively simple but, I think, desirable amendment to the Highways Act. The present Act provides for lighting on the Port Road, and on that road only: any other lighting on our highways, particularly at intersections, has been by arrangement with the local council. Even more of a problem is the effective lighting at intersections where it has been found desirable to install traffic lights. I call to mind the lights installed on the highway through Elizabeth, where for some considerable time the Highways Department had difficulty in securing the co-operation of local government as regards costs before the highly desirable traffic lights were installed. That was because the Elizabeth corporation felt it was not its job to provide lighting on a main through road.

Efficient lighting is needed close to where traffic lights have been installed. Therefore, it is desirable to include in the Highways Act a section permitting the Commissioner of Highways to install lights, for lighting purposes as distinct from traffic lights, if he wishes to do this on highways, and to request the local council to pay half the cost. I have no doubt that, with the more enlightened outlook prevailing today, the councils will co-operate. As I see it, the solution to the problem will be practical: the Highways Department will go ahead and do the work and afterwards it can, if necessary, inquire into the financial situation, so that the work can be done at the direction of the Commissioner of Highways. Therefore, this Bill should receive the support of all honourable members. In conclusion, let me say that this matter is closely associated with road safety, and anything concerned with road safety brooks no delay. Therefore, this amending Bill is most desirable, and I have pleasure in supporting it.

The Hon. C. M. HILL (Central No. 2): I have some queries about the Bill, in respect of which I seek some explanation and assurance from the Minister. It improves on rather cumbersome wording and makes the Highways Act more effective. It does several things. First, it increases costs to local government from one-third to one-half. Even under the existing Act, in some cases not even a full one-third can be charged, because there is a condition attaching to the charge of one-third

of the cost of lighting that the amount cannot be in excess of 18 per cent of the rates payable on property abutting that part of the road that has been lighted. So this is yet another example of a further charge being made on local government.

In his explanation of the Bill the Minister said that the provision increasing the one-third to one-half had been agreed to by the various local government bodies. I take that to mean the Municipal Association and the Local Government Association. If those two associations have had this matter referred to them and have given it their approval, I am perfectly satisfied.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: I assure you they have.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I thought it might have been referred to some councils that the department knew would be seriously affected in the near future.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: I referred it to the organizations.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I see. The second general aspect of the Bill that perturbs me concerns the new roads (freeway or arterial) now being constructed and undoubtedly to be constructed in the future by the Highways Department. I ask the Minister to say whether the lighting installed by the Highways Department on them will come under this provision of local government bearing half the cost. If that is so, I think some councils will be fairly heavily hit by it.

Consider, for instance, the new arterial road being built through Stirling. The extent of the lighting needed on a road of this kind is great; consequently, the cost is high. The freeway will certainly benefit and serve Stirling, but it will serve other municipalities beyond Stirling as well, so I wonder whether it is fair for the Stirling council to be charged half the cost of that lighting.

Another example that highlights this point even more is the construction of a freeway through a relatively small municipality close to the city. There may be no access on to the freeway within the area of a particular municipality. I have in mind the proposed freeway which, we have been told in the press, will follow the Torrens River and enter the city from the east or the north-east.

This will mean that it will pass through Walkerville or St. Peters, and I imagine that there will be no access on to the freeway within these municipalities, because its purpose will be to bring people from outlying areas. If portion of the cost of the extensive lighting

that will be necessary on the freeway is charged to these municipalities, it will be very unfair.

I have read that the Minister's approval must be given to such matters but, unfortunately, I do not think that it will be fair for the municipalities of Walkerville or St. Peters to be charged in the manner I have described, and I wonder whether they are fully aware of the obligation being placed upon them in this Bill.

I have read in the press that under the Metropolitan Adelaide Transport Study a ring road may be built around the periphery of the park lands. If this road comes within the boundaries of the city of Adelaide, the Adelaide City Council is excluded altogether under section 2 of the Highways Act. A decision will have to be made in the future regarding the lighting there.

If this ring road is constructed, it may well swing into adjoining municipalities, and such municipalities already have grave doubts whether any benefits will come to them through this road. We are giving to the Highways Department the power to charge the municipalities half the cost of the lighting on this ring road within the respective municipal boundaries, and in doing so (though I realize the Minister has discretion) we are taking a far-reaching step, and I doubt whether these bodies understand this point. I respectfully ask the Minister to explain these matters in closing the debate.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from July 19. Page 674.)

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS (Midland): I support the Bill. Its purpose, as the Minister has said, is to make five necessary alterations to the Local Government Act. I have had a good look at the Bill and the principal Act, and I can see no reason to criticize this Bill. As all honourable members know, the Local Government Act is very complex, and we must face the fact that, even when we have a new Act, amendments may still be necessary because of the complexity of its subject matter and because of changing conditions.

Clause 3 amends section 9a of the principal Act, in which provision was made in 1961 for the then District Council of Salisbury to become a municipality and to be declared a city.

This was done in due course, and it is now necessary for a similar provision to be made for other areas, particularly some within the greater metropolitan area, which is constantly expanding.

When Salisbury was declared a city there was no argument about its title, because Salisbury was the main and the oldest established town. In the case of the District Council of Tea Tree Gully, I wonder whether the title will be Tea Tree Gully, Modbury or Highbury. However, that is something for others to decide later. As the Minister said by way of a reply to an inquiry during the second reading debate by the Hon. Mr. Gilfillan, provision is also made for other areas to be declared cities at appropriate times.

The next provision refers to minimum rates; we all know that it is possible for a council to prescribe a minimum rate for a particular area. I believe that the Act says something like "this shall be the minimum rate." The amendment in this Bill prescribes exceptions. I believe that the Hon. Mr. Gilfillan had a point when he said that, when this Bill was drafted, a word like "notwithstanding" should have been included; if we include this provision as drafted, the two subclauses will contradict each other.

I have known of instances where, owing to a change in boundaries (a long time ago in some cases), a small portion of a property has juttred over into an adjoining council area. Prior to the practice of declaring a minimum rate, it was the usual procedure for councils to rate this portion at a very nominal amount, and this was reasonable enough, having regard to the smallness of these portions of land. However, problems have been created where a person may have a very small piece of land in a council area which now has a minimum

rate of \$6 or \$10 and where in the past the ratepayer has been charged, say, only 20c for that particular small piece of ground. Unless this new provision is adopted, the council will have to charge the ratepayer \$6 or \$10, as the case may be. Therefore, I am in favour of this amendment, as it makes it possible for councils to make exceptions in these circumstances. Clauses 4 and 5 enable this to be done by both municipalities and district councils.

Clause 6 authorizes payments approved by the council, other than for the purposes specifically provided for by the Local Government Act. Having regard to the change in money values, I support this amendment. Clause 6 provides:

Paragraph (k1) of subsection (1) of section 287 of the principal Act is amended by striking out the word "lesser" therein and inserting in lieu thereof the word "greater".

This amendment should be included, so that a council will be able to spend at least \$400 or 1 per cent of its rate revenue (whichever is the greater), which appears to be reasonable in these days.

Clause 7 makes two amendments regarding insurance. It enables a council to insure the mayoress or some other person who may be acting for her in the execution of official duties. I consider that this is a reasonable provision, and I support it. The Bill also provides for insurance to be extended to the wives of chairmen of district councils who may also be engaged on official council functions. I consider these provisions are reasonable, and I support them. I support the Bill, and commend the Minister for submitting it.

The Hon. C. M. HILL secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.4 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, July 25, at 2.15 p.m.