

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday, October 5, 1967

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

QUESTIONS**ELECTRICITY TRUST**

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: I seek leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Chief Secretary.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: Yesterday when speaking on the Appropriation Bill I referred to the statement of accounts of the Electricity Trust of South Australia as published in the Auditor-General's Report for the year ended June 30, 1967. This shows that the surplus of income over operating expenses was \$12,260,000. The interest charges on loans amounted to \$11,742,000, which left an operating surplus for the year, as I pointed out, of only \$518,000, compared with an operating surplus for the previous year of \$954,563. This means that the surplus was reduced by almost 50 per cent in that 12 months. If that situation continues the trust will have to look very carefully at its finances during this coming year. Has the Government given detailed consideration to the annual report presented by the Electricity Trust, and has it given any consideration to the question whether the trust will be able to maintain its existing rate of charges without any increases during the coming 12 months?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: Regarding the first part of the question, to the best of my knowledge that matter has not been discussed by the Government. Regarding whether the trust will be able to maintain its existing rate of charges during the coming 12 months, the answer is, "Yes, we think it can."

CONCESSION FARES

The Hon. JESSIE COOPER: Has the Minister of Transport a reply to my question concerning concession fares on Municipal Tramways Trust services for families during school vacation time?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: The Municipal Tramways Trust reports that it is not in favour of introducing a scheme of family concession travel because experience with concession fares has generally shown that it is necessary to provide a substantial discount to make such schemes attractive, and this usually

means a fall in total revenue. For example, if a 25 per cent discount were granted it would be necessary to attract additional patronage of one-third to yield the same revenue. The honourable member may know that last summer the South Australian Railways introduced beach excursion fares, but the patronage was so disappointing that they were discontinued.

UNDERGROUND WATER

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. L. R. HART: I understand that tomorrow night the Minister of Mines and Dr. Miles will be addressing at Salisbury a public meeting arranged by the Fruit and Market Gardeners' Association. The title of their address will be "Shortage of underground waters in the area and measures to be adopted to counteract same". If measures to counteract the shortage of underground water in the area are being considered, will restrictions be placed on the amount of water that can be pumped from existing bores or has the department other measures in mind?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: The matter is being considered and will be discussed at the meeting tomorrow night.

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: Yesterday, I asked a question of the Minister representing the Minister of Agriculture about the availability of wheat for stock fodder in country silos. The Minister's reply was that the whole answer was contained in the Bill now before the Council. However, there is no mention of silos or stock fodder in the Bill. Can the Minister give me any further information?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I am sorry; I misunderstood the question directed to me yesterday. I will refer it to the Minister of Agriculture and obtain a reply as soon as possible.

NURIOOTPA PRIMARY SCHOOL

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 Education.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: My question refers to the proposed provision of a new primary school for the town of Nuriootpa.

The present school is both old and cramped and there is poor access to it from narrow streets, involving some danger to the children. A new school is long overdue. I am aware that land has been acquired—in fact, I had the privilege of inspecting the site. Will the Minister inquire of his colleague whether any further progress has been made by the department in the planning of the new school?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I shall make inquiries of my colleague.

PARLIAMENTARY SALARIES

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Has the Chief Secretary a reply to my question of September 26 about Parliamentary salaries?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: Yes. The Premier reports:

At this stage of proceedings the Government does not feel that another adjustment is justified and some further time should elapse before a review is completed. The review would then take place at a time in keeping with the lapse of time between reviews of other salaries which are paid from public funds.

TRUST FUNDS

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I ask leave to make a statement prior to asking a question of the Hon. Mr. Rowe.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Yesterday, during his speech on the Appropriation Bill, the Hon. Mr. Rowe said, in regard to the temporary use of trust funds by the Government:

If I were in another place I would introduce a Bill that, where the Government proposes to use any of the money in trust or deposit accounts, it must first obtain the written consent of the people in the organizations concerned before attempting to take it away.

As the honourable member was the Attorney-General in the Playford Government, I ask him: (1) did the Playford Government temporarily borrow from the trust funds held by the Treasury during his term as Attorney-General and as a member of the Cabinet of that Government; and (2) did he take action to have a Bill introduced in another place to obtain the written consent of the people in the organizations concerned before attempting to borrow money from those trust funds?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: I do not remember any occasion whilst I was a member of the Cabinet when the Playford Government borrowed money from the trust funds. The answer to the honourable member's second question, therefore, is that there was no necessity to introduce a Bill. I should like to add that I do not approve of this method of finance.

What concerns me is that when the Playford Government came into office it found that the previous Labor Government had indulged in the practice of using trust funds, and it took the Playford Government some years to repay them. This situation will be repeated when the present Government goes out of office next March. The position is that \$6,700,000 of trust funds belonging to the Legacy Club and to State children has been used by the Government; we are told in the Budget papers that this has been done on a temporary basis but no plans have been made as to when this money will be repaid.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: I think the honourable member will find that the Playford Government did the same thing.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I ask the Hon. Mr. Rowe, who was the Attorney-General in the Playford Government, whether he disagrees with the statement of the Hon. Frank Walsh, the then Premier and Treasurer, made on September 29, 1966? It is recorded in *Hansard*, page 1961, as follows:

Treasury records show that the previous Government used trust and deposit funds for deficit financing to the extent of \$1,240,000 on June 30, 1958—

which was about 15 or 16 years after the Playford Government first took office—and \$2,672,000 on June 30, 1959.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: I do not know the facts, so I am not able to answer the question.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: We know the facts, though.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I ask leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Chief Secretary.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: In view of what has been said in relation to the use of trust funds, I ask the Chief Secretary: first, were the trust funds completely accounted for when the present Government took office; and, secondly, does the Chief Secretary expect that these trust funds will be completely in order at the end of the term of the present Government?

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: I am not the Treasurer. I understand that a statement was made concerning the funds in hand at the time of the change of Government. I do not know what the position was but I shall be happy to find out and let the honourable member know. The reply to the other question is "Yes". Let me make it clear: I have said privately that I never want to belong to a Government that does not confine and keep its trust funds in accounts so that they are there when they

are needed. In my lifetime I have handled much money belonging to other people. My colleagues well know that I have always said that trust funds must not be used for other purposes unless they are paid back. The Government is guided by the same Treasury officers as guided the Playford Government and, whenever a decision is made, Cabinet accepts their advice and guidance. Everything regarding the Government's financial dealings has been honest and reasonable.

ROAD GRANTS

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: Can the Minister of Roads say what amount of finance has been made available by the Commonwealth Government for the maintenance of the road from Port Augusta to Woomera?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I shall check the matter and provide the honourable member with a reply as soon as possible.

MENTAL HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

LONG SERVICE LEAVE BILL

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

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE (Minister of Labour and Industry): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It gives effect to the policy of the Government as regards the granting of long service leave to workers in industry. The Government considers that it is important that all workers in the State who continuously serve one employer for a reasonable period should have an entitlement to an adequate period of long service leave, and it considers that the entitlement provided in this Bill is the appropriate one. There is in existence an Act passed by Parliament in 1957 that masquerades under the title of the "Long Service Leave Act". No-one who examines the provisions of the Act could possibly see any connection between its title and its provisions, for what it does is provide that an extra week's annual leave shall be given to all workers in their eighth and subsequent years of service with the same employer. In 1957, the Long Service Leave Bill was vigorously opposed by members of my Party, but the Liberal and Country League had a majority in both Houses. Although the Bill was amended

in various respects, it was passed in the form in which we now find the Long Service Leave Act, 1957.

Members of the Labor Party opposed the Bill at the time not only because it was not a long service leave Bill at all but also because it was considered that if it were passed it would considerably retard the progress that members of my Party had made towards obtaining the benefit of long service leave for all workers in the State. I remind members that in 1954 Mr. M. R. O'Halloran, who was then the leader of our Party, introduced into the House of Assembly a Long Service Leave Bill to enable workers generally in South Australia, who served an employer for a substantial period of time, to receive the benefit of long service leave. Even at that time, which is now 13 years ago, the principle of granting long service leave to all workers had been recognized to be just and reasonable, first in New South Wales (in 1951), then in Queensland (in 1952) and in Victoria (in 1953). The proposal of Mr. O'Halloran in 1954 was not revolutionary. At that time South Australia was a claimant State and all that he proposed was that workers in South Australia should be granted the same long service leave benefits as applied in the three major States. This attempt to achieve justice for workers generally in South Australia was denied by the Government of the day.

After that Bill had been defeated the United Trades and Labor Council of South Australia continued to make representations to the Government for a long service leave Bill to be introduced into South Australia. However, instead of introducing a Bill in the form which by 1957 applied in all of the other five States of Australia and which in the case of Victoria had been unsuccessfully challenged before the Privy Council, the then Premier concocted a scheme of his own and introduced it as a long service leave Bill. As I have already said, it was not a long service leave Bill at all but one that provided for an extra week's annual leave.

Not even the employers of this State considered the 1957 Act to be a satisfactory one. The Act provides that any employer is exempted from its provisions, if he:

- (i) is bound by a registered industrial agreement or a State or Federal award providing for long service leave; or
- (ii) is bound by such agreement or awards to grant long service

leave to the majority of his employees, and decides to grant the same period of long service leave to the balance of his employees; or

- (iii) has a long service leave scheme of his own in operation which is not less favourable to his employees as a whole than the scheme of leave provided in the Act.

Within a few months after the 1957 Act had been passed the South Australian Chamber of Manufactures, the South Australian Employers Federation and other employer organizations entered into agreements with trade unions in this State that were based substantially on the provisions of the Long Service Leave Acts in the other States, which the Labor Party had unsuccessfully endeavoured to place on our Statute Book in 1954. At the present time there are more than 100 of these agreements that have been made between unions and many employer organizations. Also, employer organizations have sought and obtained long service leave awards from the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission and also from the State Industrial Commission. The result of this is that employers of more than 80 per cent of the workers in the State have, one way or another, avoided observing the provisions of the 1957 Act.

The situation with regard to long service leave in the State is most confusing; in fact, it has been described as chaotic. The long service leave obligations of an employer and the rights of his employees can now be determined in either one of five different ways:

1. The 1957 Act (and as I have said only a small percentage of workers are subject to the Act).
2. An industrial agreement.
3. An award of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission.
4. An award of the State Industrial Commission.
5. A long service leave scheme of an employer.

One of the difficulties caused by the present Act is that it is not necessary for application to be made to any court or tribunal or other body to obtain exemption from the Act, and consequently in many cases no-one is quite sure of the entitlements to long service leave of some employees. Protracted investigations

have been necessary when there has been any dispute as to an entitlement for long service leave.

I do not think that anyone can defend the present Act, and it will be to the benefit of both employers and workers if it is erased from the Statute Book. In its place the Government considers that provisions should be made that will apply to all workers in South Australia, except those who are subject to an award of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, which constitutionally an Act of this Parliament cannot override. The Bill is in a form that is similar not only to the Long Service Leave Acts in all of the other five Australian States but also to the provisions of awards of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission and of the State Industrial Commission, and it will not be possible for an employer to obtain exemption from the provisions of the Act without the authority of the Industrial Commission. Before exempting any employer, the commission will have to be satisfied that employees of any employer who seeks exemption are entitled to long service leave on a basis which is not less favourable than those contained in the Bill. I make no apology for the fact that the entitlement to leave in this Bill, that is, three months' leave after 10 years' continuous service, is more advantageous to workers than the provisions in the other States; but this is the entitlement that the Government considers to be reasonable and appropriate, and is the same period as has been provided for many years for all officers and employees of the Government.

The provisions of the Bill are as follows: Clause 1 is merely formal. Clause 2 repeals the Long Service Leave Act, 1957. Clause 3 deals with interpretation and does not differ materially from the corresponding provisions of the repealed Act. Clause 4 establishes a worker's entitlement to long service leave. A worker is to be entitled to 13 calendar weeks' leave after 10 years' continuous service and nine calendar days' leave for each successive year thereafter. Subclause (5) provides for pro rata long service leave after five years' adult service.

Clause 5 defines service and provides that in certain circumstances an interruption of service shall be deemed not to break the continuity of the service. Subclause (2) provides that a period served as an apprentice shall count towards long service leave if the apprentice is employed by the person with whom he served the apprenticeship within 12 months

of its termination. Subclause (3) provides that national service or service in the Citizen Military Forces will count towards long service leave. Subclauses (4) and (5) deal with a situation where a business is transferred from one employer to another and workers continue to work in the business under the employer to whom the business has been transferred. Subclauses (6) and (7) provide for service in the employment of associated or related companies. Frequently a worker must alternate between service in one or the other of such companies. His right to long service leave is preserved under the Bill by deeming such companies to be one employer. The category of "associated companies" is introduced because one frequently finds a group of companies under the same management owning, for example, a chain of hotels, but these companies are not strictly related companies under the Companies Act. Subclause (8) deals with service before the commencement of the Act.

Clause 6 deals with the rate and manner of payment to a worker on leave. Clause 7 establishes the principle that long service leave should not be taken except in reasonably substantial periods, thus ensuring that the purpose of long service leave is not defeated. Clause 8 enables an employer and worker to agree together that long service leave may be taken before it has actually accrued. Clause 9 gives an employer credit for long service leave already granted by him. Clause 10 obliges the employer to keep records relating to long service leave.

Clause 11 enables the Industrial Commission to exempt an employer from the obligations of the Act if he is already bound by an award, agreement or scheme that is more favourable than the provisions of the Bill.

Clause 12 provides that a worker, or his union, may apply to the Industrial Commission in order to enforce a right to long service leave. Clause 13 prevents a worker from engaging in employment during long service leave, as such employment would defeat the object of such leave. Clause 14 empowers an inspector to make investigations in order to determine whether the provisions of the Bill have been complied with. Clause 15 provides for offences against the provisions of the Bill. In addition to imposing a penalty on an employer, the court may order him to grant long service leave to any person who is entitled to it. Clause 16 enables the Governor to make regulations. I commend the Bill to honourable members.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER secured the adjournment of the debate.

SEWERAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE (Minister of Labour and Industry): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this short Bill is to correct an error which occurred when the Waterworks Act and the Sewerage Act were amended in August, 1966. At this time the amendments to these Acts were drafted in such a manner that similar amendments could be made to each Act. In doing this it was overlooked that because of a variation between the two Acts it was necessary to vary the wording of clause 17 which amended the Sewerage Act from that of clause 8 which amended the Waterworks Act. As a result the portion of the Sewerage Act which defines which land and premises should be rated has been deleted, and to comply strictly with the Act it would now be necessary to charge sewerage rates on all lands and premises within a drainage area irrespective of whether they can be drained or not. This was not intended, and such a situation is most inequitable. Therefore, this Bill rectifies this situation by merely reinstating a passage inadvertently deleted from the Sewerage Act.

Clause 3 amends section 78 of the principal Act by inserting in subsection (2) the passage, "which in the opinion of the Minister could, by means of drains, be drained by the sewer". The insertion of this passage ensures that sewerage rates will be levied only on properties abutting a sewer where that property can be drained by the sewer. Clause 3 (2) provides that this amendment shall be deemed to have come into operation when the August amendments of 1966 to the Waterworks Act and Sewerage Act came into operation. I commend the Bill to honourable members.

The Hon. L. R. HART secured the adjournment of the debate.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Minister of Local Government): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The amendments to the Planning and Development Act proposed by this Bill are mainly consequential on the provisions of the Real

Property Act Amendment (Strata Titles) Bill, which was introduced into this Council earlier in this session. These amendments have become necessary because of the provisions of sections 44 and 59 of the principal Act.

Subsection (1) of section 44 provides, *inter alia*, that a person shall not sell, etc., any land, other than an allotment, or an undivided share of an allotment, to any person without the approval in writing of the Director. (An allotment is defined in section 5 as meaning, *inter alia*, the whole of the land comprised in a certificate of title.) Subsection (4) of section 44, however, is intended to exempt from the operation of subsection (1) of that section any home unit that is within a home-unit scheme comprising not less than three home units if they are erected on an allotment and the building scheme has been approved by the local council. Under the Real Property Act Amendment (Strata Titles) Bill, it would be possible to obtain a certificate of title to a unit within a scheme comprising two or more units so long as the building is approved under the Building Act on or after the date prescribed in that Bill, namely, January 1, 1940. It is considered that subsection (4) should be brought into line with the provisions of that Bill, and that the definition of "allotment" should expressly catch up a unit in respect of which a certificate of title is in force under the Real Property Act. Clause 3 of the Bill amends that definition accordingly.

Clause 4 (a) repeals and re-enacts subsection (4) of section 44 to bring it into line with the proposed new provisions of the Real Property Act. It will be noted that the exemption contained in the new subsection (4) is limited to building-unit schemes, the plans and specifications for which have been approved by the appropriate council not earlier than January 1, 1940, and not later than the commencement of the Real Property Act Amendment (Strata Titles) Act, 1967. This is designed to prevent promoters of land subdivision from virtually subdividing their land by converting it into home units without a properly approved plan of subdivision or plan of resubdivision or strata plan.

Clause 4 (b) clarifies the provisions of subsection (5) of section 44, which excludes any piece of land over 20 acres in extent from the operation of subsection (1) of that section. However, there is a weakness in subsection (5) as originally enacted which would enable the owner of a 35-acre allotment to sell 21 acres of it, leaving a balance

of 14 acres in his own name. This was not the intention of subsection (5). The intention was to allow a person to sell off a piece of over 20 acres in extent if the remaining land was also over 20 acres in extent. Section 59 (1) of the principal Act prohibits the division of an allotment (a) shown on a deposited plan of subdivision; or (b) shown on an approved plan of resubdivision, except in accordance with a recognized plan of subdivision or plan of resubdivision. This principle should be applicable to any allotment at all (whether or not it is shown on a deposited plan of subdivision or on an approved plan of resubdivision). Accordingly, clause 5 (a) of the Bill deletes the qualifying paragraphs (a) and (b) of section 59 (1).

Subsection (2) of that section provides that a person shall be deemed to divide an allotment if, being the owner of the allotment, he sells, etc. or otherwise disposes of a part only of that allotment (any home-unit designed for separate occupation within a building unit scheme comprising not less than three units not being regarded as a part of an allotment). Clause 5 (b) repeals and re-enacts subsection (2) so as to bring it into line with the proposed new provisions of the Real Property Act, and paragraph (c) of that clause brings subsection (4) of that section into line with the new subsection (2) as re-enacted by clause 5 (b).

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

STATUTES AMENDMENT (ORIENTAL FRUIT MOTH CONTROL, RED SCALE CONTROL AND SAN JOSE SCALE CONTROL) BILL

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

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Minister of Local Government): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It amends three Acts which are in almost identical terms and which deal with the control of oriental fruit moth, red scale and san jose scale, respectively. Two major problems have arisen in relation to the administration of these Acts. First, the provisions relating to the conduct of a poll by which the orchardists within a district decide whether to establish or dissolve a committee empowered under the respective Acts to take steps towards the eradication of those pests are somewhat ambiguous. It is not clear whether the owner of two or more orchards is entitled to two or more

votes or only to one. Secondly, under the Act the chairman of the committee is the person in whose name legal proceedings are taken. This has in a number of cases aroused some antipathy towards the chairman personally. This is, of course, most undesirable and it has therefore been decided to incorporate the committees and provide simply that proceedings are to be taken by the committee in its own name.

The Bill provides as follows: Part I containing clause 1 is merely formal. Part II amends the Oriental Fruit Moth Control Act as follows. Clause 2 is merely formal. Clause 3 amends section 5 of the principal Act by striking out the provision that an orchard is to be registered and substituting a provision that either the owner or the keeper of an orchard is to be registered in respect of an orchard. A new subsection is inserted which requires the applicant for registration to furnish information as to where his orchard or orchards is or are situated and the number of host trees therein. Clause 4 amends section 6 of the principal Act. Subsection (3) of this section has given rise to a certain amount of ambiguity and it is, therefore, struck out and two new subsections inserted in lieu of it. These new subsections contain substantially the contents of the previous subsection (3) but the ambiguity raised as to whether a person who has registered two or more orchards is entitled to two or more votes is removed by amending subsection (4) which, so far as relevant, will read "each voter shall have one vote only whether registered as the owner or keeper of one or a number of orchards".

Clause 5 inserts new section 7a in the principal Act, which incorporates every committee appointed pursuant to section 7 of the Act. Clause 6 amends section 9 of the principal Act by striking out the reference to the chairman in relation to the recovery of fees and charges by action in a local court. Clauses 8 and 9 make similar amendments to sections 10 and 15 of the principal Act. Part III, which contains clauses 10 to 17, makes identical amendments to the Red Scale Control Act, 1962-1964, and Part IV, which contains clauses 18 to 25, makes identical amendments to the San Jose Scale Control Act, 1962-1964.

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

CROWN LANDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Minister of Local Government): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

As honourable members will be aware, the last large areas of undeveloped Crown lands situated in an area of assured rainfall are those in the upper South-East area in the counties of Buckingham and Chandos and adjoining areas. Until comparatively recent years, it was generally agreed that this area was not capable of safe economic development. With the advances that have taken place in development and management techniques, however, interest in these lands has increased. Following extensive investigations of the area by departmental officers, it was considered that it could be reasonable to open the area for settlement provided that adequate control could be retained both in initial development and in subsequent management. Following this investigation, the question of the development of this area was referred to the Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement, which made its report on August 26, 1967, and recommended, *inter alia*, that a limited development of the area be undertaken and that this should be encouraged inwards from the fringe area. The committee also drew attention to certain other requirements and suggested that action be taken to ensure that sufficient control could be kept over the development of lands of this type.

Since 1963 further departmental investigations, including a soil survey of the area, have been carried out, and my department has watched with interest the progress of private development in the vicinity, and as a consequence I feel that action should be taken to commence development. The scope and form of this legislation have been considered by the Land Board and officers of the Lands Department. The primary purpose of this Bill is to provide the legislative framework to meet requirements for development and to provide the control considered desirable by the Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement and departmental officers.

Although it was the problem of these lands which gave rise to this legislation it is recognized that there are other lands in the State which, for not necessarily the same reasons, also require special care in their development and accordingly this proposed Bill is designed to ensure that appropriate measures can be adopted in relation to those lands also in cases where such action is considered necessary.

In the upper South-East it is a problem of "unstable" lands, that is, lands which except under most carefully controlled conditions

would tend to deteriorate and could also represent a hazard to surrounding areas. Control over their development then should pay regard to, amongst others, the following factors:

- (a) holdings should be sufficiently large to be economic without any need for overstocking or over-cultivation to the point of land exhaustion and, as a consequence, subdivision of holdings should not normally be permitted;
- (b) holdings should be by way of perpetual lease rather than as freehold to ensure that appropriate control can be exercised over development and management;
- (c) steps should be taken to ensure that persons granted leases have the financial and other resources necessary to enable them to successfully bear the substantial costs of development; and
- (d) there must be power to stop occupation and development when it is clear that continued occupation and development is causing deterioration in the land.

At the same time opportunity has been taken to make some amendments of somewhat lesser importance to certain sections of the principal Act. These amendments provide for the simplification of administrative procedures and the correction of minor clerical errors which have been noted in the principal Act. Generally, no matters of principle are involved in these amendments. Amendments of this nature have been made to sections 14, 44, 47, 206, 225 and 232(h) and the Eleventh Schedule.

To consider the Bill in some detail: clauses 1 and 2 are quite formal. Clauses 3 and 4 make consequential amendments to the principal Act arising from the insertion of a new Part dealing with special development lands. Clause 5 deals with the meaning of "adjacent land" and replaces a reference to this meaning which occurs at sections 66a and 66b of the principal Act and which is also used in the Part proposed to be inserted in the principal Act.

Clause 6 corrects a clerical error in section 14 of the principal Act. Clause 7 amends section 44 of the principal Act which deals with agreements for the purchase of the freehold of Crown lands. The amendments proposed to be effected provide that in addition to the conditions, covenants and provisions set out in the Fifth Schedule to the Act the agreement may be made subject to such other conditions, covenants and conditions as the

Governor thinks fit or such other provisions as the Governor thinks fit together with a right of re-entry. In the past it has been frequently necessary and desirable to impose conditions other than those contained in the Fifth Schedule in relation to agreements and this has necessitated the drawing of a separate contract between the parties to the agreement. This amendment, therefore, will enable all the conditions of the agreement to be contained in the one document as is at present the case of perpetual leases under section 35.

Clause 8 repeals and re-enacts portion of section 47 of the principal Act which provides for minimum payments in respect to rents and periodical payments under agreements to purchase lands and is necessary for two reasons:

- (a) some doubt has arisen as to the general effect of an amendment to section 47 made by section 13 of the Crown Lands Act Amendment Act, 1965, which came into force on November 25, 1965; and
- (b) in any case it is felt that amendment did not make it quite clear that the only rents or payments affected were those in respect of leases granted or agreements entered into after that date.

The proposed amendment is intended to clarify the situation and is accordingly expressed to have effect from the date of the commencement of the 1965 amendment.

It has not been thought necessary to re-enact section 47 (2) since this section was of consequence only where the number of payments under an agreement was fixed at 60. It was there to ensure that the increase in the minimum of each payment did not result in an increase in the total amount to be paid by providing that, where this increase of the total amount would otherwise occur, the number of payments would be reduced accordingly. Since, following an amendment in 1965, the number of payments is no longer fixed, there is now no need for this provision. The provision relating to the completion of payments before the expiration of the first six years of the agreement has been omitted since this matter is covered specifically in the form of the agreement itself.

Clauses 9 and 10 repeal provisions in sections 66a and 66b of the principal Act relating to the definition of adjacent land; this provision has now been inserted by clause 5.

Clause 11 inserts a new Part and since this represents the substance of the Bill the proposed new sections will be dealt with in order:

New section 66c inserts a definition, for the purposes of the Part, of "lease"; this is merely a matter of convenience. New section 66d provides for the declaration of land as "special development lands". New section 66e restricts the granting of special development lands to the grant on perpetual (special development) leases. New section 66f provides for the delineation of "excluded areas", that is, those areas within special development lands which should not be used at all. New section 66g ensures so far as is practicable that no person shall acquire a lease under this Part unless he has satisfied the board in all respects as to his capacity to develop the land. It also provides that no person shall hold more than one lease under this Part unless the dual holding is for the purpose of amalgamation of the two leases held.

New section 66h specifically excludes the operation of certain portions of the principal Act to or in relation to special development lands or leases under this Part; the excluded sections are:

- (a) section 31, which limits the allotment to a person of lands exceeding the values set out in that section; this exclusion is necessary as other holdings of Crown lands may represent part of the resources needed to develop leases under this Part;
- (b) section 35, which provides for the form and effect of "normal" perpetual leases; the form and effect of leases under this Part are provided for in new section 66e;
- (c) section 57, which provides for subletting for up to three years with the approval of the Minister given without reference to the Land Board. It is not proposed that leases under this Part will be sublet except with the recommendation of the Land Board made in accordance with this Part, the only exceptions to this rule being the case of sublease for certain easements;
- (d) section 61: because of the special conditions of leases under this Part it is not envisaged that they could be offered for sale in the manner set out in that section;
- (e) section 210, which would permit the surrender of a lease under this Part for an ordinary perpetual lease; this is

quite inappropriate in relation to a lease under this Part and in fact could defeat the object of this Bill;

- (f) section 212, which provides for the purchase of the fee simple; again, this provision would be inappropriate in relation to leases under this Part;
- (g) section 220: this section can have no application since leases under this Part cannot be surrendered for other leases or agreement;
- (h) subsections (2), (2a), (2aa), (3), (4) and (4a) of section 225 relate to the size of individual holdings and hence should properly not apply in relation to transfers of leases under this Part; this again relates to the need for substantial resources to develop the leases under this Part.

Clause 12 amends section 206 of the principal Act, which relates to the surrender of a lease or part thereof for the grant of a new lease either to the lessee surrendering or to a nominated person. Subsection (2) of that section provided that the new lease would be on the same terms and conditions as the lease or portion of a lease surrendered. This provision is unobjectionable when the purpose of the new lease is the same as the purpose of the old lease, but where the new lease is not for the same purpose it appears reasonable that the terms and conditions of the proposed new lease should be examined in the light of the new purpose. For example, specified rent or improved conditions that would be quite appropriate to a lease for agricultural purposes would be inappropriate in the case of a lease for the erection of a dwellinghouse. In addition, the minimum rent provisions provided for in section 47 have been specifically applied to new leases under this section.

Clause 13 amends section 225 of the principal Act which, amongst other things, provides for advertisement, consideration by the board and the consent of the Minister to dealings in Crown lands. At the moment much seemingly unnecessary work and expense results from the application of this section in relation to the creation of easements in favour of the Crown and its instrumentalities, these easements being created by way of sublease. The effect of this amendment will be to obviate the need for advertisement and consideration by the Land Board with regard to sublease for the purposes of these easements. The provisions relating to the consideration of objections to the

grant of the sublease are retained, as are the provisions requiring the consent of the Minister. Clauses 14 and 15 correct clerical errors in section 232h and the Eleventh Schedule respectively.

Clause 16 enacts new Twelfth and Thirteenth Schedules to the principal Act, as provided for in proposed new section 66e (3). In form and substance these schedules follow the analogous provisions in the Crown Lands Act relating to ordinary perpetual leases with the following significant exceptions:

- (a) an additional obligation to fence any excluded area is included;
- (b) an additional obligation to comply with any directions of the Minister as to the number of stock which may be carried on the land;
- (c) an additional liability to forfeiture if—
 - (i) any excluded area is cultivated, etc.; or
 - (ii) the Minister is satisfied that the stability or productivity of the land is deteriorating so as to be detrimental to the land or to any adjacent land.

I assure honourable members that the Government is fully aware of the need for care in the allotment and development of this land. Appropriate action will be taken to ensure that holdings are of sufficient size for successful development. Roads will be surveyed before the land is allotted, and development will follow the routes of surveyed roads. In the initial stages, the number of blocks available for allotment will be limited, probably in the vicinity of presently established roads, and the results will be observed, in order that any changes that may be found necessary may be made as allotment, which can be expected to be spread over a number of years, proceeds.

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

OIL REFINERY (HUNDRED OF NOARLUNGA) INDENTURE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE (Minister of Labour and Industry): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to correct an anomaly in the principal Act that occurred when it was amended in 1965. In 1963 a new section 9 was enacted in the principal Act providing

for the exemption from the charge of outward wharfage at Port Adelaide of petroleum products produced at the refinery, transported by pipeline to Port Adelaide, and therefrom shipped and subsequently unloaded at any wharf in South Australia, such products incurring full inward wharfage charges wherever discharged. It has recently been brought to the attention of the Government that a petroleum product, such as furnace oil, which cannot be transported by pipeline and must therefore be transported in road tank waggons to Port Adelaide for outward transmission to ports in South Australia, is charged both outward wharfage at Port Adelaide and inward wharfage at the port of delivery. Clause 3 corrects this position by adding after the words "by pipeline" the words "or by any other means of land transport", thus extending the application of section 9 of the principal Act to all petroleum products transported to Port Adelaide by pipeline or by land. The Bill, being of a hybrid nature, was referred to a Select Committee in another place. After consideration the committee recommended the passage of the Bill in its present form.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT secured the adjournment of the debate.

PRIMARY PRODUCERS EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 4. Page 2381.)

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN (Northern): I support the Bill, but not with any great enthusiasm, because I consider that, despite the publicity that has been given by the Government to its introduction, it will achieve very little in relieving the very serious situation that now exists throughout most of South Australia. However, although it will achieve very little, it is better than nothing, and for that reason I support it.

The Bill clearly shows how little appreciation the Government has of the problems that face not only the State generally but in particular the person who is relying on primary production. I do not believe the Government realizes how this season will affect most primary producers in the State, not only the person in the worst hit areas but the person who will receive only a moderate return this year.

It is not generally appreciated that in many instances a moderate return or a moderate yield from the land means no profit whatsoever; in many other instances it means an

actual loss on the year's operations. We are primarily concerned with the very real tragedy that faces people in the marginal areas, in the Upper Mallee areas and in other sections of the State that are now experiencing their second or third dry season.

As I read the Bill, it provides very little relief that cannot be obtained through the normal channels, as in most other instances the person substantially established would be able to get his financial accommodation through the usual channels. The Government should take into consideration the very real impost that increased taxation and charges have placed on the rural community since it came to office. This increased taxation has to be met, and it has been paid into general revenue in an endeavour to further the Government's policy in many other fields. In all justice, I believe that when a crisis of this description hits a certain section of the community some contribution should be made from general revenue in order to relieve the situation. Not only are we facing a disastrous year as far as the season is concerned but we face also a serious decline in the prices of commodities sold by primary producers. Many producers in the distressed areas have had to shear their sheep prematurely. In a dry season the wool clip is almost always considerably reduced, and now, coupled with a light wool clip, comes a serious fall in the price of wool—a price fall that is continuing, as can be seen from the report of yesterday's wool sales in South Australia. In addition, today's report of yesterday's abattoirs markets shows that sheep prices have fallen.

Because of that, it is a matter not only of reduced production but also of reductions in commodity prices. The combination of these factors will place many producers in a position where they will be forced to receive financial assistance of some description. This applies particularly to people who have recently purchased properties and even more particularly to share farmers, who do not have any equity in properties that they work. I believe that is not appreciated by the Government, because few members of the Government in either place have had practical experience on the land. Although such members may be guided by responsible departmental officers, I believe it is necessary for a person to be closely associated with an industry before understanding its problems.

An examination of the Bill shows that the amount of relief proposed is negligible:

Broadly, the effect of the Bill is to use money standing at credit in the Treasury—money put there for another purpose—in order to finance primary producers in distress. Persons applying for financial assistance will do so under the same terms as they would receive from normal lending institutions. The only assistance under the Bill is that provided by the clause under which the Minister can offer relief in the matter of interest and repayment, but first the person seeking such relief has to establish, in the same way as he would if he approached a normal lending institution, his ability to carry on his enterprise.

Under the Bill the money to be used is that shown in the Auditor-General's Report as standing to the credit of the Marginal Lands Improvement Account. In the 1966-67 report that account shows a credit of \$332,478. Of that amount, \$150,000 may be used to establish the fund proposed in the Bill. It is a negligible amount when considering the widespread effects of this season. Yesterday it was estimated that there would be a reduction of \$40,000,000 in the gross return expected from primary production. Even if the \$150,000 was a straight-out grant it would still be negligible when one considers the seriousness of the situation.

When an applicant has been approved, provision is made for the money to be repaid. Clause 5 (2) (a) provides:

The advance shall bear interest at the rate charged by the State Bank of South Australia in respect of overdraft loans made to primary producers at the time of the making of the advance and shall be subject to such other terms and conditions as may be determined by the Minister of Lands:

The rate of interest shall be that charged by the State Bank of South Australia on overdraft loans at the time. Can the Minister indicate what that rate of interest will be? We know that under the Commonwealth Bank Agreement the maximum amount charged on any overdraft shall be 7½ per cent, but some discretion is given to the various banking organizations regarding the amount charged. I believe this Council should be informed of the cost to primary producers able to avail themselves of the small concession made in this Bill.

In addition, can the Minister indicate whether the money at credit in the Marginal Lands Improvement Account is bearing interest? I cannot find any record of it in the Auditor-General's report. If that money is not bearing interest at the present time, it seems to me that if the Government lends it

to primary producers at normal overdraft rates then it will be making a profit from such lending. I notice that clause 5 (3) seems to provide an escape from the provisions of the Bill where a special agreement is made between the Commonwealth and State Governments regarding the use of Commonwealth funds, and that some relief can be obtained from the provisions relating to Commonwealth grants. However, there is no indication of any Commonwealth grant being available, because the State has not done its part; it has not indicated in any way, either publicly or through the provisions of the Bill, that true relief in the form of grants will be given. Clause 5 (1) (b) provides:

Payments towards the cost of fodder or water for starving stock including the cost of transport of such fodder or water, or for any other purpose deemed necessary by the Minister for the purposes of this Act.

However, later in the Bill provision is made for the Minister to demand repayment of any concession made under this provision. The season is well advanced and we are now considering matters already put into effect by other States for areas suffering far less than parts of South Australia. The help that will be given in this field is not only limited but too late for any concession or assistance in the transport of fodder to be of value. Not only have many people sold their stock but fodder is no longer available.

In fact, this Bill does nothing more than make provision for the Government to lend money to primary producers who can meet the necessary qualifications. The one small provision here to help these people who are in such desperate straits is the one that stipulates that an applicant under this Bill will not have to pay stamp duty on any agreement made with the Minister.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: I believe the Victorian Government gives much wider concessions.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: That is so. Other State Governments have recognized this problem much earlier in the season and have given very real concessions to the people concerned.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Would the honourable member like us to follow the Victorian Government in most things?

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: There is no comparison between the conditions in Victoria and those in South Australia. Recently I had the opportunity to speak to a person from a declared drought area in Victoria, and that

person showed me samples of his crop that would be as good as any in the most favoured areas of South Australia.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: And he is in a declared drought area.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: Yes, in an area close to the south-eastern border. The Bill contains a provision for regulations to set out the details of administering this legislation, and perhaps when we have the regulations before us we may have another chance to speak on this matter. I do not intend to speak at length on this Bill or delay it in any way, for although it gives practically nothing I believe that, in the interests of the people concerned, whatever small concessions we may give we must see that the people receive them before it is too late. I support the Bill.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE (Northern): I, too, must support the Bill, although not because I think it serves any great purpose. It is one of those straws at which people who are grasping must grab. As previous speakers have pointed out, the Bill provides very little. At a time of disaster to many primary producers, and perhaps to the State for a long time to come, the Government has suggested that it will make available \$150,000, which is part of one fund.

This is a mere pittance and something that could quite easily be expended in one small area. No other provision has been made at this stage for further moneys to be made available. Clause 3 (b) provides that there shall be paid into the Farmers Assistance Fund so much of the moneys held in the Marginal Lands Improvements Account kept at the Treasury not exceeding \$150,000 as the Treasurer may approve. Paragraph (c) goes on to say:

... such other moneys as may be provided by Parliament for the purpose of giving financial assistance.

Perhaps the biggest drain on this financial assistance is yet to come, with the approach of the summer months. Parliament will not even be sitting then, yet the Minister administering this legislation is to have access to a maximum of only \$150,000 to expend.

This niggardly amount involved is quite a reversal of form for this Government, for nowhere else has it at any time indicated that it is frightened to spend money, regardless of what fund the money comes from. Yet, in this dire emergency, only this very small amount is allotted. To qualify for any portion of this money, a farmer must have assets in excess of

his liabilities. If he has this excess of assets he already has avenues of finance available to him. Therefore, as I have said, the Bill is providing very little. Many of the unfortunate people who will perhaps be forced to take advantage of its provisions will find that the Minister can foreclose on them at any time it suits him to do so. I have no option but to support this Bill, but I think it is a poorly constituted piece of legislation and that it provides very little assistance at a time when much should be forthcoming.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS (Midland): I rise to support this Bill but with no more enthusiasm than my honourable colleagues who have just resumed their seats. I believe that we must support it and get it through as soon as possible for whatever very small benefit it may provide, but I also believe that the Bill, with the very meagre pittance of money that has been referred to by previous speakers, does show the Government's complete inability to see and assess clearly the plight of primary producers.

Other speakers have referred to the condition of the State as a whole. In common with other speakers, I have travelled around the State quite a bit in recent months, and I am aware that there are very few areas that are relatively in fair condition. In contrast, there are many areas which are very bad indeed, and the great majority of primary producers are in a very difficult situation.

This has been underlined by the fact that, in many instances, this year is the culmination of a period of bad years. We have had three years which have been difficult, with only a few patches where there have been good seasons. I know somebody will say that the last year's wheat yield was nearly a record. That is so and I should be surprised if we were not down by anything up to 30,000,000 bushels this year on last year's wheat yield.

Even so, last year's near record yield was obtained by phenomenal yields in certain parts of the State, while other parts had only a mediocre yield, as they had also in the previous year. So, the fact that this small Bill is designed to relieve this position shows the Government's inability to assess the true situation. The relief contained in the Bill is piteously inadequate. I think it was the Hon. Mr. Kemp who referred to some of the other disasters which we had had in this country, and in this State in particular, in recent years, such as the disastrous fire some 15 years ago and the equally disastrous flood of 10 to 12 years

ago. He pointed out that the then Government made grants with no restrictions. They were administered by a committee usually presided over by a competent person such as a magistrate.

I fail to see anything in this Bill approaching that type of relief. The Hon. Mr. Kemp indicated that he would move an amendment providing for direct grants. I would certainly view such an amendment sympathetically. It would be a step in the right direction, but at the same time I fail to see that it could achieve very much because of the paucity of the total amount of money provided in this Bill. The amount of relief given is utterly inadequate. It is true that in the Murray Mallee we find odd spots where, to quote one person from that area only last week, "the season is almost normal"; but in other places it is fantastically bad. In my own district I have only to go less than 20 miles from my home to find conditions that are frighteningly bad, which will put primary producers into financial jeopardy. I must support the Bill, but I do protest at its inadequacy.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Minister of Local Government): I have listened with great interest to the debate on this Bill, although, for the most part, it has been a repetition of what was said in another place. I appreciate the need for assistance to farmers, some of whom require it more than others do. Even this reason, from information I have, I think that some areas of the State will do quite well so long as they get late rains, in which case they will return good crops; but in other places there will be no crops at all. I imagine that will be the case in the Murray Mallee.

The Hon. H. K. Kemp: What about Eyre Peninsula?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I appreciate there are some areas of the State that this year will suffer considerably; I am not attempting to deny that. Both here and in another place the Government has been accused of playing politics with this Bill; in other words, that the Government is playing politics with the position in which the farmers find themselves today. Allegations of this nature indicate a low level of debate. Yesterday, in this Chamber the Government was accused of playing politics.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: Do you mean Party politics?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: If the honourable member wants to include his own Party in playing politics, I will accept it from him.

It was stated in this Chamber yesterday that the Labor Government was playing politics with this Bill. I suggest the boot is on the other foot. The Government in another place was accused of playing politics with this Bill and delaying it. This rather amuses me.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: It does not amuse those needing assistance.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: When this Bill was being dealt with in another place, the Opposition claimed it had not had sufficient time to analyse and examine its contents.

The Hon. L. R. Hart: But the Opposition in another place voted against the adjournment of the Bill.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Opposition members in another place complained bitterly about not having enough time to study the Bill; yet, when they were told they could have time and it was moved that the debate on the Bill be adjourned, the scream and accusation went up that the Government was playing politics. They said, "You were trying to bulldoze the Bill in and now you are trying to bulldoze it out!" How ridiculous can members be about that! The only contribution to the debate that we had from the Hon. Mr. Hart was purely and simply that the Government was playing politics with the Bill; he made a poor job of dealing with it. Let us get down to the realities of the measure in an attempt to give relief to the more necessitous cases instead of trying to play politics. Let us examine the Bill and put it through so that the Government can consider these matters.

The Hon. H. K. Kemp: If the Government meant to do anything about it, there was no need for a Bill at all.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: A statement like that brings us back to playing politics. The Hon. Mr. Hart complained bitterly yesterday about the delay in considering this Bill, that it was adjourned for a month.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: Why did you delay it for a month?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: When the Bill was introduced in another place, the Opposition said, "We have not had time to look at it" but, when they got time to look at it, the Government was accused of playing politics.

The Hon. L. R. Hart: Who is supposed to be protecting these people?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Stop trying to play politics, which is what you are attempting to do now! Why pick this particular Bill? It is getting to be quite ridiculous. The honourable member, supposedly representing the

farming community in this State, makes an interjection like that—"Who is supposed to be protecting these people?" Let us get on with the realities of the Bill.

The Hon. L. R. Hart: What is stopping you?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Let us forget about politics. If the honourable member thinks he can get up and make whatever statement he likes in this Chamber and not be challenged by me, whenever I am in charge of a Bill, he has got another think coming.

The Hon. L. R. HART: I will always accept your challenges.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: The Bill was delayed for a month.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: The Bill was delayed because other matters came up.

The Hon. L. R. Hart: We seem to have got you on your Achilles heel!

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: The Hon. Mr. Kemp yesterday spoke of the Commonwealth making funds available to the State and mentioned interest charges being made. He said that the Government would charge interest on this money when it was made available to the farmers and that the State Government would therefore show a profit. If the honourable member looks at the Bill he will find that this is not the Government's intention, and what he alleges will not transpire.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: Why not put it in the Bill?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: It is in the Bill. The Bill provides that arrangements are to be made for an agreement to be entered into between the Commonwealth Government and the Minister of Lands in relation to Commonwealth funds and the terms on which such funds are made available. Does any honourable member mean to tell me that the Commonwealth Government would grant money—and the Hon. Sir Norman, as an ex-Minister, ought to know this—for farmers' assistance in this State if we intended to charge interest on the Commonwealth's money? I point out to the Hon. Mr. Kemp that moneys made available to the other States by the Commonwealth were not interest-free.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: Special bush fire grants were interest-free.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I shall prove to the honourable member that an interest charge was made on money made available by the Commonwealth Government to New South Wales.

The Hon. H. K. Kemp: On bush fire relief in South Australia?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: On farmers' relief made available to New South Wales.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: We are talking about South Australia.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: This Government has no intention whatever of charging interest on money made available to farmers in this State by the Commonwealth Government as grants. Of course, some honourable members seize on these things. This Bill is absolutely necessary and I think all honourable members approve it. All they can say is that the amount is meagre and that there is not enough money being made available. It is limited in one aspect but not in another aspect: we do hope that members of the Opposition will support this Government's request for assistance from the Commonwealth Government. If members of the Opposition want to assist farmers in distress, why do they not join the State Government in its representations to the Commonwealth Government? Instead of merely criticizing they should be pulling their weight in supporting this Government's approach to the Commonwealth Government. I hope this Bill passes today so that the State Government can immediately assist the farmers who are in dire need.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—"Interpretation."

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Two funds are mentioned in the Bill, one in clause 2 and another in clause 3. The fund mentioned in clause 2 is the Farmers Assistance Fund, which is defined as follows:

The Farmers Assistance Fund kept in the Treasury pursuant to section 12 of the Primary Producers Assistance Act, 1943.

Can the Minister say how this fund is made up and how it originated?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Minister of Local Government): The Farmers Assistance Fund is Commonwealth money that was made available to this State some years ago and which was not fully used. It has been held in trust ever since.

Clause passed.

Clause 3—"Payments to Farmers Assistance Fund."

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Clause 3 states, in part:

. . . the Marginal Lands Improvements Account kept at the Treasury . . .

From that account \$150,000 is to be transferred to the Farmers Assistance Fund. Can the Minister say where the money in the fund came from originally?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: It is joint State and Commonwealth money. I do not say this is absolutely correct in every detail. This fund has not been used for some time.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Since this fund, which is to be called the "Farmers Assistance Fund", is to be made up of money which in fact largely belonged to the Commonwealth and was provided by the Commonwealth, does the Government expect the Commonwealth to provide further assistance by way of grants to this State? When we consider the Premier's letter to the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister's reply and when we also consider the assistance given to Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, we realize that Commonwealth policy is that it will assist a State Treasury where that State's Budget is affected directly by assistance given to those involved in any disaster, such as a drought. This was fairly clearly pointed out by the Prime Minister in his letter, which was tabled in another place.

It appears to me that the Commonwealth is being placed in an extremely difficult position, because no direct budgetary assistance is being given to this fund. Indeed, we will be using moneys that have already been provided by the Commonwealth. Can the Minister say whether the Government expects the Commonwealth to subsidize this Farmers Assistance Fund on the ground that this State is shouldering its burden correctly in respect of drought assistance?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Of course we expect the Commonwealth Government to assist, as it assisted Queensland and New South Wales and Victoria in similar circumstances. It did not dally about it then. It did not lose much time in making funds available to the other States. This money is available now and could be used immediately to give some assistance.

Other money will certainly have to come forward, unless there are unforeseen circumstances whereby the claimants will be fewer than is expected. The State Government will have to do something in this matter, because the amount of money now available is insufficient. The Commonwealth Government is master of its own destiny, and whether it recognizes that South Australia is part of the Commonwealth and a State entitled to assistance is a matter for it to decide. I fully expect that the Commonwealth Government

will very shortly make available a grant to the State to be paid into the Farmers Assistance Fund, which is the one fund into which money from the other two funds will be paid and from which assistance will be given.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: This is an interesting position when one looks at the position in other States. The Minister has stated that the Commonwealth Government quickly came to the aid of the other States. That is true, but I point out that in Victoria, immediately there was a drought, assistance was given directly from the State Budget, but no direct provision is made in our Budget to give drought assistance to people in this State.

The Hon. H. K. Kemp: The Government wants all its pounds of flesh: land tax and everything else will be increased.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Exactly. In Victoria, direct budgetary assistance was given and relief was provided to those in drought-stricken areas by way of reduced land tax and rail freight charges. This directly affected the Budget of that State, and the Commonwealth Government then played its part. Indeed, in his letter the Prime Minister pointed out that the State Government is primarily responsible for this kind of relief and where it can be shown that its Budget has been affected (that the State is pulling its weight) the Commonwealth would share the responsibility. This State's Budget makes no allocation of funds to the Farmers Assistance Fund; indeed, money that the Commonwealth Government has already supplied to the State is being used, yet we expect the Commonwealth Government to subsidize those same funds.

The Hon. H. K. Kemp: No permission has been given to use Commonwealth Government funds.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: It is obvious that the claim that some members of the Government are playing politics with this matter is clear as we see the facts of this measure emerging. It is the State Government's responsibility to make assistance available from the Budget to assist these people.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: During the second reading debate I directed a question to the Minister on these moneys. On checking the Auditor-General's Report I could find no record in the interest-bearing part of the trust funds of interest being paid on moneys held in the Farmers Assistance Fund or in the Marginal Lands Improvements Account. I made the point that if no interest were paid on the funds but they were merely held in the deposit

and suspense accounts that, if the money were not earning interest but interest at overdraft rates was to be charged on it, the Government would be making a profit. Can the Minister say whether this money earns interest?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: No, the funds are not interest bearing, and there is no intention to charge interest on grants from the fund, although interest at the prevailing rate will be charged on advances for specific purposes.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: Subclause 3(c) states:

Such other moneys as may be provided by Parliament

As Parliament is expected to prorogue at the end of this month, how will the Minister get further money after the \$150,000 has been exhausted? Does this subclause mean that the Minister's hands will be tied until Parliament sits again?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: On several occasions honourable members have said that no provision is made in the Budget for this assistance. The approval of Parliament must be obtained, and I thought the honourable member would be aware of that.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: The Budget hasn't been passed yet; you could still put it in.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: No, but it has been passed in another place. Should we reframe the Budget? How is the State to make available money in these circumstances when, under this clause, it does not have the power to do this? On the one hand the Government is criticized for not doing anything and when the Bill makes provision for something to be done the Government is still criticized.

The Hon. A. M. Whyte: It's not enough.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: There is no set amount in the Bill. If there were a set amount, it would be the amount approved by Parliament. If it were not sufficient, application would have to be made to Parliament to provide more money. Approval must be obtained from Parliament or from the Treasurer to meet necessitous circumstances.

The Hon. A. M. Whyte: There's no authority in the Bill for the Treasurer to make further funds available.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: The Treasurer does not have an open hand to do this without the approval of Parliament. A Bill cannot be amended in such a way that Parliament can be asked to provide more money.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: You can't get a supplement to a line on the Estimates at the end of the financial year if the line never existed. The Minister should know that.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Exactly, but there is nothing to stop the Government from seeking the approval of Parliament in the future to have more money made available for the Treasurer to grant further assistance. Is there anything to stop the Government from doing it? I do not know what is wrong with Sir Norman Jude this afternoon, because he knows this as well as I do.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: I know too much about it!

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Then the honourable member knows that what I am saying is correct; it gives the Government authority to approach Parliament for the money.

The Hon. L. R. HART: What the Minister has said is probably correct but history will show that when similar calamities have occurred the Government of the day has simply announced that it would be prepared to assist with a certain amount. When severe bush fires occurred the Government did not approach Parliament and ask it to agree to an allocation of certain funds to assist sufferers but simply made an announcement that it was prepared to assist.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: We had a dictator in charge then.

The Hon. L. R. HART: It was prepared to assist with a definite sum of money, and it approached Parliament asking that this be approved. That has not happened here because the Government has not given any indication that it is prepared to assist in any way. Did the Treasurer approach Parliament and ask for its approval before budgeting \$1,750,000, which was sufficient to cover an additional week's annual leave for certain Government employees? No, he granted that leave and asked for approval afterwards. However, when there is a severe drought affecting the economy of the State, a drought from which recovery will be slow, the Government will not indicate that it is prepared to make available a certain sum of money but merely states that it will go to Parliament to see if it approves. If the Government would come out into the open and say, "We are prepared to donate \$200,000; we believe this will be sufficient, but if it is not sufficient we will make a supplementary donation to the fund", then we would be satisfied.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I reiterate my remarks, and if the honourable member who has just spoken opens the neck of his shirt he can pull his head right in. He says the Government has not indicated that it will make a

specific sum available. An examination of the clause will show that the Government has given an indication of what it is prepared to do. The honourable member would be the first to complain if the Government attempted to make available a sum of money without Parliamentary approval. If any honourable member is able to comprehend the meaning of the clause, it can be seen that it is an indication that the Government is prepared to come back to Parliament to obtain Parliamentary approval or otherwise of a set sum to be made available to the Treasurer for this purpose. The honourable member complains that the Government will not do anything, but this provision will enable it to do something.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: I am not complaining that the Government will not come back to Parliament and ask for money; my question, simply, is: what does the Minister or the Government intend doing in the meantime until Parliament sits again?

Clause passed.

Clause 4 passed.

Clause 5—"Power to make advances."

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: I move the following suggested amendment:

In subclause (1) (a) after "production" to strike out "and", and after paragraph (b) to insert:

"and

(c) direct grants of money to primary producers in necessitous circumstances as a result of drought, fire, flood, frost, animal or plant disease, insect pest or other natural calamity to enable such persons to continue in the business of primary production."

Its purpose is to make a direct grant available immediately to people in distress. That is important, especially in the event of a bushfire, and it is equally important to people who have been in distress for the last three years because of drought and who are now completely out of money.

Under the clause as drafted the only method by which a distressed person can obtain direct financial assistance to remain on his property is by a long rigmarole involving a mortgage, payment of interest, and then repayment of principal.

This amendment does not in any way affect the working of the Bill as designed by the Government: I have been careful not to employ mechanism that would upset the Bill. However, it gives power to a future committee set up specifically to deal with any of the disasters mentioned in the Bill to make immediate assistance available. When such a disaster occurs quick help should be available.

A dairy cow cannot go one day without feed without suffering lasting effects, but the cumbersome mechanism involved here (application through a committee, consideration of financial status of the individual, whether there are other methods of assistance available to the applicant through a bank or a stock firm) makes it difficult to render assistance. Finally, the necessary money cannot be granted unless the farmer arranges for a bill of sale, a mortgage or a lien over his assets. That is a completely impractical approach. Moreover, people at present in need of assistance have completely exhausted means available to them through normal channels. The banks and the stock firms have kept these people on their places for as long as it is practicable for them to do so. Farmers are in a position where they cannot rehabilitate themselves if they go further into debt. Banks and stock firms carry a man up to the point where further interest-bearing finance (the only finance they have available) would put a burden on him from which he could not recover.

I think it is important that this amendment be accepted. It is a fairly simple one. It simply makes available as a third alternative a direct grant of money to a primary producer who is in necessitous circumstances. The Government may or may not use it: it remains in the Minister's discretion. I sincerely recommend it to the Committee for favourable consideration.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I certainly oppose the amendment. The Hon. Mr. Kemp wants to direct the Government to make grants available.

The Hon. H. K. Kemp: I am not seeking to do that at all: I am merely making it possible for the Government to do it.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: The honourable member seeks a direction to the Minister.

The Hon. H. K. Kemp: Have you ever heard of "direct" being used as an adjective?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: The honourable member should read this amendment in conjunction with the clause.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: The amendment provides that the Minister may make direct grants.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I think the matter is already covered.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: The words in subclause (1) are "may make"; that is the verb.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I think the Hon. Mr. Kemp made it clear that this amendment provided for the making of grants.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: The adjective is "direct" and the verb is "may make".

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: The word "direct" has only one meaning to the Labor Party, hasn't it?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Let us get back to the clause. It says that the Minister may make payments towards the cost of fodder or water. This could be a grant, if the Minister so desired. Subclause (4) provides:

A person who has received any payment, or the benefit of any payment . . . shall, at the request in writing of the Minister of Lands, pay to the Minister the whole amount or such part of such payment as the Minister may specify in his request.

The Minister may not specify any amount at all, or he may specify only a small amount. I submit that the discretion is already there for the Minister to do exactly what the Hon. Mr. Kemp wants.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: Then why are you opposing the amendment?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Because the provision already exists. What the Hon. Mr. Kemp is trying to do is to write it in as a direction to the Minister, otherwise why is the word "direct" there?

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: It is a direct grant—a grant that is given directly to a person.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Then I say that the word "direct" should be taken out. If honourable members want to delay this matter, it is their funeral. I maintain that the position is already covered, because the Minister has a discretionary power to remit any amount.

The Hon. G. J. Gilfillan: That does not apply to general advances: it applies only to the transport of fodder, etc.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Honourable members are just beating against the wind. In my opinion, the point is already covered in the Bill and it is not necessary to have this amendment.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: The Minister said there was provision for both advances and grants. However, the word "grants" is not mentioned in the Bill. Subclause (4) refers to payments.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: What about "advances" in subclause (2) (a)?

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: Under subclause (2) (d), the Treasurer may remit part or the whole of any interest on or part of the whole of any advance made under this Act, but this is distinct from a direct grant to meet certain circumstances. This is only giving the

Minister discretion to make some remission where the person has already qualified for and received some assistance.

The Hon. H. H. Kemp: The Minister cannot do it: the Treasurer has to do it.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: With the concurrence of the Treasurer, the Minister may do this. The amendment merely gives the Minister the same discretionary power to make a direct grant. I believe it is worth while and that it should have been in the Bill originally. It has already been established in this place that the funds that are to be used have been provided largely from sources outside the State's sphere. Also, they are not receiving interest so, virtually, we have an interest-free fund supplied largely by the Commonwealth and we are proposing, as the Bill stands, to advance it to primary producers at current bank overdraft rates. The amendment is not a direction that the Minister must make these grants: it gives him a discretion to make a straight-out grant where absolutely necessary. I support the amendment.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE (Minister of Labour and Industry): I cannot see the difference between an advance and a grant: it is only a matter of words.

The Hon. G. J. Gilfillan: Oh, yes, there is a difference.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Clause 5 (1) gives the Minister of Lands the right, in his discretion, to make "advances to primary producers in necessitous circumstances as a result of drought, fire, flood, frost, animal or plant disease, insect pest", etc.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: If I give an advance, I expect it back.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: But suppose a man cannot pay it back?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: This is to be given to people in necessitous circumstances. The only difference between the amendment and subclause (1) (a) is that one is an advance and the other is a grant.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: Yes.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: If this is so, why is there a difference between a grant and an advance, anyway?

The Hon. G. J. Gilfillan: Advances are subject to repayment.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Why is this amendment suggesting a grant rather than an advance? An advance assists a person over the period that he needs assistance. The amendment proposes a grant, in which case there will be no need to repay anything.

Are members opposite seeking a grant in respect of paragraph (b)—payments towards the cost of fodder or water and transport—or are they seeking a grant for some other specific purpose?

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: It may be a grant for a man to pay his grocery bills.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I support this amendment and endorse the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Gilfillan. I think the Minister has misunderstood the amendment. All that the Hon. Mr. Kemp is seeking to do is to give the Minister three alternatives. First, subclause (1) states:

Subject to this section, the Minister of Lands, after consideration, may make from the Farmers Assistance Fund (a) advances to primary producers

If a man gets an advance, he is expected to repay it. Even though it can be remitted, the person concerned does not know that; he does not know his situation as far as repayment is concerned. Secondly, paragraph (b) states "payments towards the cost of fodder or water", etc. Here again, the inference would be that the payment would have to be refunded in due course, but the man in dire straits would not know how much of that was hanging over his head. Then, as a third alternative, we have this amendment, under which the Minister may make, if he so desires, "direct grants of money to primary producers in necessitous circumstances as a result of drought", etc. The Minister is thus given a third alternative that he may well wish to use on occasion. The whole discretion is left with the Minister. In any case, only \$350,000 is involved, all told, and unfortunately with that small amount of money the direct result of this amendment may be limited to some extent. However, the Minister can make an advance that may be repaid, or he can make a payment, or, if the amendment is carried, in necessitous circumstances he can make a direct grant. This amendment gives him the opportunity to do that, but the whole discretion is left with him. I cannot see why the Minister of Local Government objects to this amendment, because it is not a direction: it is another discretionary power that the Minister would have.

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: This amendment in no way alters the working of the Bill as it stands; it contains no direction. The relevant words are "The Minister may make from the Farmers Assistance Fund direct grants of money". There is no direction. It is simply a third alternative that the Minister may use if he wants to; he is not obliged to. It

makes it possible for the Minister of Lands, after a bush fire, to say, "We can help these men immediately." At present the whole mechanism is limited. Subclause (2) states:

Subject to subsection (3) of this section, any advance made under subsection (1) of this section shall be made subject to the following conditions: (a) The advance shall bear interest at the rate charged (b) No advance shall be made unless the Minister of Lands is satisfied (c) The Minister of Lands may take security for any advance by mortgage, bill of sale, lien, assignment or such other charge as he thinks fit.

Any advance at present has to meet the conditions of subclause (2) (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e). If the Minister at any time wishes to avoid those onerous and time-consuming conditions, he can do so. That is the purpose of the amendment.

Suggested amendment carried.

The Hon. L. R. HART: In the second reading debate I asked the Minister for an explanation of subclause (2) (e), where the Minister may, if he thinks the primary producer "has no prospect of ultimate recovery, demand repayment of the advance and realize on any security taken in respect thereof". There may be other claims on a security. Will the Crown's claim take precedence over any other claim on a security if it is realized?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: If the honourable member cannot understand what he reads, I cannot help it.

Clause, with a suggested amendment, passed.

Remaining clauses (6 to 10) and title passed.

Bill reported with a suggested amendment. Committee's report adopted.

CONTROL OF WATERS ACT

Adjourned debate on the resolution of the House of Assembly.

(For wording of resolution, see page 2041.)

(Continued from October 4. Page 2396.)

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES (Northern): The fact that South Australia's future economic development may be seriously impeded through lack of sufficient fresh water does not always occur to the ordinary layman. Coupled with this fact is the point that the rate of development of South Australia's water resources is falling behind the rate necessary to cope with the growing demand for water for irrigation, industrial, commercial and domestic purposes. This is an alarming prospect.

It is always readily agreed that increased funds are needed for roads, harbours and education, but it must also be remembered that

water is at the basis of all our activities. So far, this debate has been most constructive; references have been made to the Chowilla dam project, salinity, evaporation and the water supply for the metropolitan area.

The basis of the problem underlying this resolution is the necessity to maintain the river level, or the pool level, at and below Mannum. As the Hon. Mr. Kemp said, the problem of evaporation in Lake Alexandrina and Lake Albert is a major uncontrollable factor. To counter this problem, sufficient water must be released upstream to allow this pool level to be maintained at a reasonable level at all times.

It is realized that, with the riparian rights that exist below Mannum at present, agriculturists below Mannum are allowed to irrigate as much country as they can and to use as much water as they can. So, we have the combined problem of evaporation in connection with this large water mass and of irrigation. As the Minister has pointed out, the amount of irrigation has greatly increased over the last year or two. Therefore, in order to maintain the pool level, the engineers have the problems of evaporation and irrigation. However, the engineers have a fair knowledge of evaporation but no knowledge of the amount of irrigation, because there is no control of the irrigation going on at present.

This situation highlights the very problem that was envisaged when the Chowilla project was first considered. In a year when the whole watershed of the Murray River has received rainfall and snowfall well below average, greater emphasis is placed on the urgent need for the Chowilla dam or an equivalent type of temporary storage. This would allow water to be released not only to flush out saline and other polluted water but also to maintain the pool level below Mannum for the benefit of the river system as a whole.

The Chowilla project is now in the melting pot, yet somehow in the coming summer irrigation commitments from Renmark to the coast must be catered for, the metropolitan area must be catered for, and the industrial complex at Port Pirie and Whyalla must be catered for. I cannot see how these intricate reticulation programmes, which are related to the Murray River, can be carried out without complete control of the Murray waters. In fact, this resolution does not go far enough, because I have been led to believe that less than 60 per cent of the water pumped from the Murray into the

Onkapinga River reaches the Mount Bold reservoir. I understand that 40 per cent is taken out by irrigators before it reaches the reservoir, and this water is obtained without any payment to the Engineering and Water Supply Department by the people concerned. I believe that freedom of enterprise for the private citizen does not necessarily mean unbridled freedom, and this is why I support the resolution.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: The honourable member's colleagues thought the resolution was purely political.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: It is a matter of deep concern that South Australia's development may eventually be impeded through lack of sufficient supplies of fresh water to meet its domestic, industrial, commercial and rural requirements. The State and Commonwealth Governments must spend much more money in intensifying research into the whole problem of water and its development and control, not only in South Australia but throughout Australia. Depending on the control and use of fresh water, this State will advance or stagnate. I support the resolution.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS (Midland): I support the resolution, which deals with that portion of the Murray River between Mannum and the barrages. We have heard some first-class speeches, particularly from the Hon. Mr. Story and the Hon. Mr. Kemp. The Control of Waters Act is based on the necessity for an amount of water to be kept in reserve, as the Hon. Mr. Geddes has just said, in order to be able to flush saline water through and to maintain a good pool level.

At this late hour I perhaps would not have spoken on this subject after the very good speeches we have heard if it had not been for the fact that I would like to underline the importance of the salinity problem. I realize the Hon. Mr. Kemp has emphasized this problem ever since he became a member of this Council. We have also heard about it from time to time from the Hon. Mr. Story and other honourable members. Recently, I interviewed experienced people from the Upper Murray area who were extremely concerned at the level of salinity in the river. I understand that last year the citrus crop was down by 40 per cent, and this reduction was attributed largely to the high level of salinity and to the fact that in recent years departmental advice had suggested that overhead irrigation was advisable. Under this system now widely used

trees are more subject to salinity than they are under the flood irrigation system. Nevertheless, the level of salinity is causing much concern to the people in the Upper Murray area and also to the people of the State, generally. This level of salinity highlights the need to construct the Chowilla dam in order to store water to be used to flush through when needed, to keep the pool level high, and to keep the salinity level as low as possible. This is one of the most important projects needed by this State. As the Hon. Mr. Geddes said, we will live by the quantity of water we receive from the Murray River and we will stagnate if the quantity is limited.

I do not apologize for referring to what the Hon. Sir Norman Jude called "the extraordinary 10-year statement" of the Premier. I referred to it in the Loan Estimates debate, and I find it completely incomprehensible that a person in charge of the State could say that we are all right for the time without the dam, but that if it is not started in 10 years we will be in trouble later. That is an unrealistic statement, and completely out of touch with the facts of the situation for people in the Murray River areas, from Mannum to the barrages as well as Upper Murray areas, and for the people as a whole throughout South Australia who get water from the mains. I ask the Government to make the strongest representations about this matter, and to do what it can to ensure that in the immediate future something is done to reduce the level of salinity, which is of great concern to the citrus industry in the Upper Murray areas and those people living in the Lower Murray areas.

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

STAMP DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2)

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 4. Page 2394.)

The Hon. F. J. POTTER (Central No. 2): I support the second reading of this Bill, but realize that this Council has limited powers to deal with it. This legislation is either supported, or the debate takes the form of criticism of the Government's intended policy for the coming year and what had been or had not been achieved in the previous year. In order to consider what has gone before and what is

to come, one must refer to the Financial Statement made by the Treasurer as a preliminary to introducing the Budget. To look behind the provisions of this Bill one must go to the Budget documents that have been prepared because there one sees the real outline of the proposals for the coming year.

This is a mark-time Budget: it has been prepared by the Government as the best possible one for a pre-election Budget. It contains no significant taxation increases, and tries to hold expenditure within the financial capacity of the Government, having regard to what it considers reasonably prudent. This does not mean that the Government's overall policy is financially prudent or even has been during the last three years. It seems that the Treasurer must be disappointed at presenting this, as his first Budget and, for a pre-election Budget, he must be disheartened. We have had nearly three years of Labor Administration, and now the economy of the State is stagnant.

Statistics have been given of the run-down in economic activity, of the decline in the registration of new motor vehicles, of the decline of building approvals, of the decline in the numbers employed in the building industry, and of the increase in the number of persons registered for unemployment and who are receiving unemployment benefits. It has been argued that these statistics are not significant and do not necessarily prove a case, but these figures do show that there has been a significant run-down in the State's economy. This is highlighted if these statistics for South Australia are related as a percentage of the Australian total.

As an instance of this, I will give some of the figures that result from comparing the South Australian figures for persons receiving unemployment benefits with those that are relevant to the whole of Australia. In 1963-64, there were 1,475 persons receiving these benefits in South Australia, compared with 24,976 in the whole of Australia. This is 5.9 per cent of the Australian total.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: We have about 10 per cent of the total population of Australia.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: Yes. I will not give the actual figures for 1964-65, but the percentage was again 5.9. In 1965-66 (the first year of this Government) the percentage of the South Australian figure to the Australian total had risen to 9.2, and in 1966-67 it had risen to 15.1.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: What was the percentage in 1961?

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: I have not gone back that far.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: For obvious reasons.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: However, it was only about 5.9 per cent, actually.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: Figures can tell any story you want them to tell.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: I am tracing it from 1963-64 onwards. The figures were never substantially higher before that year.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: In 1961 they were much worse.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: I would be interested to see what the 1961 figures were, and perhaps next week I shall be able to tell the Minister. In August of this year, 3,673 people were receiving unemployment benefits in this State, compared with 20,224 in the whole of Australia. Therefore, South Australia had 18.5 per cent of the total unemployment in Australia. I reiterate that in the last year of the Liberal Government's term of office it was 5.9 per cent. These figures speak for themselves.

If honourable members follow similar percentage comparisons for the registration of new motor vehicles and the number of persons in building employment, they will see that there has been a fall-off in these categories. Building approvals have fallen from 11.8 per cent in 1963-64 down to 7 per cent of the Australian total in 1966-67. I think more significant figures as to the situation in South Australia at present are contained in the recent release of the *Monthly Review of Business Statistics*. This review contains figures relating to the average weekly earnings per capita of male employees in this State compared with male employees throughout Australia.

It also compares figures for the consumer price index. That index for the six capital cities for the March, 1965, quarter was 130.09. In June, 1967, covering the period of this Labor Government, the Australian consumer price index had risen to 140.06.

Therefore, over that period in Australia there was an increase of 7.4 per cent in the cost of living, but if one compares the South Australian figures over the same period one sees that the figure rose from 128.9 in March, 1965, to 138.9 in June, 1967, an overall increase of 7.7 per cent. In other words, the cost of living in South Australia has risen slightly more than the cost of living throughout Australia—7.7 per cent, compared with 7.4 per cent. Over that same period,

however, the average weekly earnings for males per capita in Australia rose from \$52.20 in March, 1965, to \$62.30 in June, 1967, an increase over the period of 19.03 per cent, whereas the average weekly earnings for males in South Australia over the same period rose from \$50.10 to \$57.90, an increase of only 15 per cent.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: Isn't that what you have been barking about all the week? Isn't that what you want?

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: This is the significant result: whereas the average earnings in South Australia over the period have lagged behind, the cost of living has gone ahead. If, in fact, South Australia had an economic climate that would have enabled the workers in this State to increase their earnings in the same way as has applied to their fellow workers in other States, their earnings would have increased by the same amount as the Australian earnings have increased, and the current figure for South Australia would be nearly \$2 a week more. In other words, South Australian workers have suffered, and are suffering, a reduction in their average wages of \$2 a week, compared with their fellow workers in other States, although the cost of living in this State has risen over the same period more than it has risen in other States. These seem to be some of the most telling figures that I have seen regarding the present situation in South Australia. I ask leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: TRUST FUNDS

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Midland): I ask leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: It is in relation to a question asked of me this afternoon, quite properly, by the Hon. Mr. Banfield. Upon perusing the *Hansard* proof of what I said on the Appropriation Bill yesterday, I find that I made no statement as to whether or not the Playford Government had borrowed from the trust funds and deposit accounts. In answer to the Hon. Mr. Banfield's question this afternoon, I stated that I did not remember any occasion, whilst I was a member of Cabinet, when the Playford Government had borrowed money from the trust funds. I have now had an opportunity of perusing the report of the Auditor-General and find there was a very limited borrowing on a temporary basis. The point I now make is that the amount borrowed was repaid in full at the earliest possible opportunity. This is vastly different from the present position where \$6,711,115 was borrowed from the trust and deposit accounts as at June 30, 1967, and \$8,077,072 as at June 30, 1966, with no proposal or suggestion as to when or how the amounts would be repaid.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.13 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, October 10, at 2.15 p.m.