LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday, October 24, 1968

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

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2)

His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the Bill.

QUESTIONS

TOXIC AGENTS

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Has the Minister of Health a reply to a question I asked on October 16 about toxic agents in industry?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I have the following full reply for the honourable member:

The Occupational Health Branch of the Department of Public Health is set up to maintain surveillance of and to give advice to industry on all aspects of the occupational environment which may be hazardous to workers. Such hazards may arise from chemical contamination of the environment by gases, fumes or vapours, or from physical agents such as heat, noise, ionizing radiation, dusts or inadequate lighting or ventilation.

The staff of the branch is structured to enable a scientific assessment to be made of any occupational environment which is suspected of being hazardous, and at the present time is composed of two medical officers, one chemist, one physicist, and health inspectors.

Investigations are carried out at the request of industrial management, union representatives or individual workers. Suspected hazardous situations found during routine factory inspections are also referred from the Department of Labour and Industry. The branch maintains surveillance of those industries in which known hazardous processes are carried out, and initiates investigations in all establishments which undertake any process that is suspected of having caused ill health.

Follow-up studies are made to ascertain the prevalence of industrial diseases, but the extent to which this can be undertaken is restricted by the practical limitations of reporting and of staff. At the present time it is mandatory for employers to notify any case of industrial disease causing more than three days' lost time to the Department of Labour and Industry. These notifications are forwarded to the branch and each is investigated. In addition, private medical practitioners are encouraged to notify the branch of any case of illness of which the cause is suspected to be due to the patient's work. The number of such reports seems to be increasing, not because of an increased prevalence of industrial disease but by an increasing awareness on the part of medical practitioners of the services offered by the branch.

It is part of the duties of each officer to be familiar with the advances in knowledge pertaining to his specialty. This is done by maintaining an up-to-date reference library, by subscription to journals of societies specializing in this field and by maintaining a literature reference system. Efforts are made to establish contact with workers in the field of occupational health both interstate and overseas for the exchange of information and knowledge.

Officers of the department are members of the Occupational Health Committee and the Radiation Health (Standing) Committee of the National Health and Medical Research Council. Each of these committees forms a valuable forum for exchange of knowledge and information, and within its terms of reference prepares codes of practice for approval by council. These codes give guidance to employers, employees, and administrative authorities for the maintenance of safe working environments.

MURRAY RIVER

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: Has the Minister of Agriculture obtained a reply to my recent question about Murray River flows?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: My colleague has informed me that his department estimates the quantity of water that flowed through the Murray barrages during the time they were open this year at 1,750,000 acre feet.

GRAIN CROPS

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to my recent question about the zoning of grain deliveries?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: The honourable member asked me whether I would take up with South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited the matter of zoning wheat deliveries. I suggested that the honourable member and other honourable members might like to discuss this matter with their zone directors. When in New South Wales earlier this year the General Manager of the co-operative (Mr. P. T. Sanders) investigated the zoning and quota scheme for bulk grain deliveries in operation in that State. Mr. Sanders was informed that a committee representing 19 receival centres approached the Grain Elevators Board in August, 1967, with a proposal for a scheme for orderly receival of wheat to be implemented for the 1967-68 harvest.

The scheme was subsequently put into operation, the New South Wales Grain Elevators Act amended and the Minister's consent obtained. The scheme was intended to be a pilot operation designed to serve as a testing ground before consideration was given to any extension to other areas. The area under test was a compact geographical one and, as such, officers of the Grain Elevators Board stated that it was relatively easy to administer. This year the board

has approved the inclusion of five more stations and it is hoped by the Grain Elevators Board that a substantial harvest will really give the system a thorough test.

It was mentioned that one of the major problems to overcome in the setting up of a zoning and quota scheme is the establishment of boundaries as between receival points whilst the second and equally important is the compilation of accurate lists of growers at those stations which have agreed to be zoned. Mr. Sanders points out that the zoning and quota scheme in New South Wales has been in operation for only one season and growers in South Australia, since the bulk handling system was established, have been accustomed to delivering their wheat to the silo of their choice, with complete freedom in this regard. There has not been a firm approach from any group of growers for the establishment of a zoning and quota scheme in any area in South Australia.

He foresees objections to such a scheme from growers whose crops mature early, but who would have to wait for all the first quotas to be satisfied before being able to deliver their grain; and for these and other reasons he does not favour the introduction in South Australia of this scheme for the coming harvest. It is hoped that the co-operative will be able to provide storage space for at least 75 per cent of the expected wheat crop; and it would seem that only in exceptional circumstances would the need for farmers to hold excessive quantities on their properties be likely to arise.

GILES POINT

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: I seek leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Agriculture, representing the Minister of Marine.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: I have received a letter from the Manager of Y.P. Barley Producers Limited which, I presume, my colleagues have also received, and which reads:

At a meeting of barley growers, sponsored annually by this company, some 70 farmers were in attendance in the Town Hall at Minlaton on October 10, 1968, to hear addresses by the Chairman of the Australian Barley Board, Mr. A. G. Strickland, the Manager, Mr. D. Martin, and growers representatives J. J. Honner and M. Pearce. These farmers were from all parts of Yorke Peninsula. There was great interest shown in Giles Point and much discussion resulted in the following motion being put to the vote and carried unanimously.

That resolution was as follows:

That this meeting recommends to the Minister of Works and Marine, Mr. Coumbe, that whilst Giles Point is being constructed a longe range view be taken, considering the trend towards larger ships handling grain and the virtual demand by some grain buyers that 50,000 tons minimum be delivered in one consignment, and that the jetty now under construction be extended to give a 40ft. depth of water.

Will the Minister of Marine consider this matter and see whether this unanimous request by barley growers on Yorke Peninsula can be acceded to?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I will certainly take up the matter with my colleague. Like other honourable members, I have received the same letter. I had preliminary discussions with the Minister of Marine this morning, and I will bring down a report for the honourable member when Parliament reassembles.

THEVENARD CHANNEL

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: Has the Minister of Agriculture, representing the Minister of Marine, a reply to my recent question regarding the deepening of the Thevenard channel?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: This work has been the subject of an inquiry by the Public Works Committee and that committee reported favourably upon it. I discussed this matter with the Minister of Marine this morning, and I am going to Thevenard next Monday where I hope, on my arrival, to be able to tell something to the deputation that meets me. At the moment I cannot disclose the exact terms of what it will be because I do not know them. I assure the honourable member that we are doing our very best to have the channel deepened, because this is of great importance not only to the wheat industry but to other industries already established and those that may become established. I will by tomorrow have from the Minister a full report which I hope will be satisfactory to the people in that area.

POINTS DEMERIT SYSTEM

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: I note that the points demerit system, which is giving very good results in New Zealand, has now been introduced in Western Australia. Can the Minister of Roads and Transport say what stage the South Australian inquiry into this system has reached and whether its early introduction here is likely?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The departmental investigation into the proposed points demerit scheme in this State has, in effect, been completed. However, in order to test the result

of this investigation with actual cases in which people have offended against traffic laws, a further check is being made with the Police Department. In other words, the proposed scheme is being checked against offences that have been committed over a certain period of time, or a certain number of offences, to see how it would have worked out in practice had it been in force in this State previously. This check that the departmental officers are taking, which I think is a very wise one, should be completed very soon. When the final report on the matter comes to me, Cabinet will consider the question and the result of Cabinet's deliberations will be made known in due course.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

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

STAMP DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

RAILWAYS STANDARDIZATION AGREEMENT (COCKBURN TO BROKEN HILL) BILL

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

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Chief Secretary): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It seeks the approval of Parliament to an agreement made between this State, the Commonwealth and the State of New South Wales for the construction of standard 4ft. 8½in. gauge line between Cockburn and Broken Hill. Honourable members will be aware, no doubt, that this length of line is the final section of a through standard gauge link between the east and west coasts of Australia. Honourable members will also be aware that, pursuant to an agreement made between this State and the Commonwealth and approved by the Railways Standardization Agreement Act, 1949, of this State, which, for convenience, I will refer to as the "1949 agreement", the line from Port Pirie to Cockburn is being converted to the standard gauge and this work should be well advanced by the end of the year. The agreement which is set out as a schedule to the Bill is the result of long and complex negotiations by both the previous Government and this Government on behalf of the State. In essence, it provides that this State will build, own and operate a railway line within the territorial limits of New South Wales. Such an arrangement is not unusual in the case of so called "border railways".

The marshalling yards at Broken Hill itself will be the responsibility of the New South Wales authorities. The route of the proposed railway is very nearly a direct line between Cockburn and Broken Hill and up to thirteen miles to the south of the line belonging to the Silverton Tramway Company that is at present part of the Adelaide to Broken Hill line. This new route offers some advantages, not the least of which is that it is approximately five miles shorter than the present line. Since it is the agreement to which the approval of this House is sought, it appears desirable that the agreement, as set out in the schedule to the Bill, should be dealt with in some detail before the Bill is dealt with.

Clause 1 of the agreement sets out the definition used in the agreement. Clause 2 makes the agreement subject to the approval of the Parliaments of the States concerned and the Commonwealth before it can have any force or effect. I can inform honourable members that an appropriate measure has already been introduced into the Commonwealth Parliament and a similar measure will come before the New South Wales Parliament in the very near future. Clause 3 sets out the detail of the work to be performed by the States, and as honourable members will observe pursuant to clause 4 the bulk of the work will be carried out by this State. I would also point out to honourable members that the work referred to in paragraphs (*d*) to (*g*) of subclause (1) of clause 3 are extensions of the 1949 agreement between this State and the Commonwealth and in fact somewhat clarify the position as to certain works related to the 1949 agreement in respect of which there was some doubt. In addition, in clause 3a (1) (*c*) provision, which was sought by both this and the previous Government, is made to assist in the retention of certain Broken Hill business over and above the ore business. Clauses 5, 6 and 7 are self explanatory.

Clause 8 deals with the calling for tenders for work under the agreement but provides that States may undertake the work themselves. Clause 9 is self explanatory, and clause 10 authorizes the execution of "extra work" by the States at their own expense. Clause 11 provides that, subject to the agreement, the Commonwealth will meet the

expenditure under the agreement, and subclauses (2) and (3) deal with certain allowances against that expenditure. Clause 12, in effect, amends and extends the agreement made between this State and the Commonwealth in 1949 and provides for the allocation of expenditure against this agreement and that agreement in the proportions specified therein. Clause 13 sets out the limitation on the Commonwealth expenditure in relation to the various aspects of the work, and Clause 14 sets out the procedure for the actual payment of the amounts payable by the Commonwealth; Clause 15 guards against improper expenditure by the States.

Clause 16 provides for repayment by this State to the Commonwealth of three-tenths of the amount of the payments made by the Commonwealth to this State in connection with the agreement. These repayments are to made by equal annual instalments over 50 years. This repayment provision is generally in line with clause 16 of the 1949 agreement. Clause 17 provides for the provision of annual estimates of expenditure by the States, and clauses 18 and 19 are fairly standard accounting provisions. Clauses 20, 21 and 22 relate to the provision of information and collaboration generally. Clause 23 rescinds clause 23 of the 1949 agreement which states:

The Commonwealth shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that the Silverton Tramway and the locomotives and rolling stock thereon shall be acquired and vested in the South Australian Railways Commissioner.

Since the approval of this provision by the Parliaments of the Commonwealth and this State it has, as has been mentioned in connection with the route of the railway, been decided to follow a southerly and more direct route than that followed by the company's line. Accordingly, this provision is now redundant. While legal advice indicates that there is no obligation to compensate the company, it is recognized that the new line will substantially affect the business of the company. Accordingly, the company has been offered an *ex gratia* payment of $1,250,000 by the Commonwealth Government. The company has at this stage declined to accept the offer and, since the future course of this matter is in the hands of the company, it would be inappropriate to make further comment.

Clause 24 is a formal matter relating to the giving of notice as required under the Act. The schedule to the agreement sets out the general route of the railway and appropriate standards for its construction. In substance, the Bill is fairly straightforward. Clauses 1 and 2 are quite formal. Clause 3 formally approves the agreement and gives it the force of law in this State. Clause 4 extends the power of the South Australian Railways Commissioner, under the South Australian Railways Commissioner's Act, 1936-1965, to encompass the work he will be required to perform as a consequence of this Act. Such a specific extension of power seems necessary since almost all of this work will have to be carried out within the State of New South Wales. Subclause (2) ensures that the Railways Commissioner will have sufficient power to act on behalf of the Government in the construction, operation and maintenance of the railway. Clause 5 is a standard financial provision. Clause 6 empowers the Governor to make such regulations as may be necessary. Clause 7 gives direct statutory effect to the rescission of clause 23 of the 1949 agreement by clause 23 of the agreement proposed, by this measure, to be approved.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE secured the adjournment of the debate.

PETROLEUM ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

TRUSTEE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 23. Page 2073.)

The Hon. L. R. HART (Midland): In rising to support this Bill, I should like to compliment the Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill on the contribution he made to this debate yesterday. We are, indeed, indebted to him for his research into this matter. He has a long and vast experience of the banking world, which stands him in good stead when dealing with matters of this nature.

Sir Arthur drew attention to certain dangers in this Bill "as he saw them". (That is the term he used.) We are all agreed that we must provide protection for investors at any time, and it is even more necessary that protection be given when we are dealing with trustee investments. This consideration must be paramount in our minds. It must also be ensured that a permanent building society has a high credit rating: indeed, it is only those societies whose credit ratings measure up to the required standards that will be proclaimed under the Act.

The permanent building societies in South Australia have a long history of, one may say, ethical trading. Their credit rating has been established by their continued growth over a number of years. I do not think we

should give much thought to the fear expressed of a threat to the financial establishments. I do not think this can be sustained when one looks at the growth of the traditional finance houses, in many cases reaching record heights. It has been suggested, too, that an increase in investment in permanent building societies will lead to a reduction in the volume of the work and finance available to the Housing Trust. This, of course, in itself may be a good thing, because the Housing Trust probably has not the competition it should get. I believe it has gone past the concept of its original charter, which was to provide cheap housing for people in the low-income brackets. Perhaps some competition in this field will be of some benefit.

The possible dangers that Sir Arthur Rymill has mentioned may not be as great as he suggested. He said yesterday that he had not had time to do all the homework he would have liked to do. I find myself in a similar position. He raised the point of trustee investment in permanent building societies having no greater security than that of a member or a shareholder. I believe this is not so. As I say, I have not had time to investigate all the permanent building societies in this State but I have looked at the situation as it affects the largest building society in South Australia, which, incidentally, is a co-operative building society, the position of which may differ from that of other building societies, but not to a great extent. The position with this particular society, at any rate, is that the depositor (who, in this case, would be the trustee investing in the society) would be getting a lower rate of interest than the shareholder. The shareholder gets a higher rate of interest because he does not take priority in repayment: the depositor or the trustee investor would take priority in repayment.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill: I do not think that is correct.

The Hon. L. R. HART: This is correct.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill: I do not think it is correct, because the shareholder or member can pull out his money at any time at 30 days' notice.

The Hon. L. R. HART: That could be done, but that is looking at an extreme situation.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill: No, it is not; it is his general right.

The Hon. L. R. HART: When it comes to lending by building societies, the shareholder is able to borrow at a lower interest rate than is the non-member. The interest rate is adjusted half-yearly, and it remains this way for about four years. Then, a non-member's interest rate is reduced to that of a member for lending on dwellings. In the case of a co-operative society, 90 per cent of its finances must be lent to members.

I refer now to the question of a Government guarantee of repayment, which was another matter raised by the Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill. In the case of one permanent building society that I know—and this may apply to all such societies—when the loan is more than 75 per cent of the society's valuation, it is guaranteed in line with the insurance requirements as laid down by the Commonwealth Government under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. The other matter raised by the honourable member is the question of a minimum three-year period for deposits. At present the maximum term of a deposit with a building society is considerably less than three years. In fact, I think it is more like three or six months. If the honourable member's suggestion was adopted it could cause some problems for the building societies. It is hard to be sure whether such a requirement is necessary. The building societies have been trading for many years—some up to 90 years—and the trustee investments will be covered by further protection than that which operates now in connection with permanent building societies.

We are, however, indebted to the honourable member for raising these points. Undoubtedly, when the Bill reaches the Committee stage, there will be further discussion on them. I believe that we should support this measure because it will do much for housing in this State. There has been a continual growth in this type of investment in recent years because it is attractive to the investor and advantageous to the borrower. In fact, permanent building societies will lend money on Housing Trust houses if they are required to do so. This could work to the advantage of the Housing Trust as well as to the advantage of the societies. I support the second reading.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

STATE BANK ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 23. Page 2074.)

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS (Midland): I support the Bill. In his second reading explanation the Minister referred to the

various functions of the State Bank. These were also dealt with yesterday by the Hon. Mr. Rowe, and I do not intend to repeat what has already been said. I do, however, want to say that the State Bank, as all honourable members will be aware, has been of great assistance to people in many parts of the State, particularly to people in developing areas, in varying fields and under the Acts mentioned by my colleagues. The bank has always been of great assistance in land settlement, in developing fruit blocks and market gardens in some areas in competition with trading banks, and in some other fields where trading banks may hesitate to operate.

The bank has been an agent of the State, in effect, with regard to the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. It has also been of great assistance in connection with the Rural Advances Guarantee Act. In this connection the bank has provided many of the loans that have been examined by the Parliamentary Committee on Land Settlement. In each case these loans have been guaranteed by the Treasurer; their nature has been such that an ordinary trading bank may hesitate to proceed with them. Nevertheless, such loans have contributed greatly towards land settlement and have enabled people who otherwise would not have been able to do so to build up an asset of value not only to themselves but to the State as a whole.

I believe that Trans-Australia Airlines, a Commonwealth Government instrumentality which may be described as a semi-independent corporation, should pay tax in the same way as do private concerns. I believe that T.A.A. does pay tax and I also believe that the State Bank should pay some of its net profits to the Treasurer in the same way as other banking institutions pay tax. A Government or semi-government instrumentality such as this should operate under conditions similar to those experienced by private organizations that run almost parallel to it. I have great pleasure in supporting the Bill, and I commend the State Bank for the work it has done over the years.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL (Central No. 2): In my usual fashion, I had not intended to speak on this Bill, because I agreed with its content and therefore saw no reason to add anything to the debate until I was spurred on by the criticisms of the Hon. Mr. Geddes to express my views. I heartily agree with the Hon. Mr. Dawkins that the State Bank is an excellent institution, a very fine bank, and that it has done much for South Australia. This, however, does not mean that its pattern of operation must always remain identical with its past pattern. As I understood the Hon. Mr. Geddes, the effect of his speech was that the State Bank should continue to capitalize all its profits, as it has done in the past, for the purpose of using them for further lendings. This would mean that these lendings would be to a restricted number of people throughout the State, and the bulk of its funds—

The Hon. R. A. Geddes: I supported the Bill: I agreed with the principle that it should pay tax.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: I did not understand that. I understood that the honourable member—

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: I think you probably read the newspaper report of the speech, and that is not always accurate.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: You would not dispute that.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: I would not dispute that at all. The reporters, sub-editors and editors have as many human failings as members of Parliament have. I have no doubt that those gentlemen all carry out their duties in their respective spheres of operation to the best of their ability.

The Hon. C. R. Story: As they see the position.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: Yes. I now refer to a short *Hansard* cutting from the Hon. Mr. Geddes' speech. I thought this was the printed copy, but it could not be as the speech was made only last Tuesday. He said:

This is not a good step to take, unless the Government intends to look at the whole structure of the State Bank, to try to make it stronger and thereby to increase its profits and the amount paid to the Treasury.

I then interjected:

Do you think it should be helping only certain sections of the community, not the whole community?

The honourable member then replied:

I understand it is helping only certain sections of the community at present.

I hope I have not taken that out of its context, because it is the only cutting I have got. The State Bank has power to help all sections of the community because, like all other banks, it has its general trading department. It also has specialized administration departments that apply only to certain sections of the community, and the effect of capitalizing its funds

is that quite a proportion of its funds, although not all of them, is used for sectional interests in the community.

This Bill provides that nine-twentieths of its profits shall be paid to the State Consolidated Revenue Fund and, in effect, the balance goes to the bank's reserve funds. This means that the balance is still being capitalized and will be used for the general purposes of the bank. I have examined what other State banks do, and I find that this is not a general pattern in State banking. One State bank pays interest to the Government on its capital. I do not think the State Bank of South Australia does that, although the Government has supplied much of its capital. However, this follows the pattern prescribed for the Commonwealth Bank some years ago. Until then all the profits of the Commonwealth Bank went into building up the bank. It was decided then that the Commonwealth Bank should pay taxes to the Commonwealth Government in exactly the same way as the private banks had to pay.

Honourable members should be clear that in the case of the Commonwealth Bank this is not a question of payment *in lieu* of taxation. That bank pays Commonwealth taxes (of course, it is exempt from State taxes) in exactly the same way as the other banks do. This is an interesting point because, under the Commonwealth Constitution Act, State banking is exempted from the interference of the Commonwealth authority, which means that the State banks, among other exemptions, do not have to pay Commonwealth company tax. The effect of this Bill, purely and simply, is that the State Bank of South Australia is being put into virtually the same position as the Commonwealth Bank, in that the latter pays the Commonwealth rate of company tax to its owner, the Commonwealth Government.

The Hon. R. A. Geddes: It paid $2,500,000 last year.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: Or thereabouts. This bank will pay tax to its owner, the State Government, at the same rate as the Commonwealth Bank pays. That seems to me to be perfectly fair and logical in every way, and I cannot see why it should be criticized. It is somewhat of a transfer from one Government pocket to another Government pocket and, if the State Bank needs some of these funds back, no doubt when the State Government thinks it is the proper time, that it can afford to give it or that it is a good thing to give it, it will make that entry and give the State Bank further money for the virtuous purposes for which it uses it. I cannot see any business, ethical or other reasons why the Government should not do this, except that it is something different and new in the State banking arena, with the one exception I have mentioned.

I should like to take the matter one step further and say that, if it is right for the State Bank, why does not the Government do the same for the State Savings Bank? Some years ago that bank was made a Government bank. Prior to that time it was Government-guaranteed, although it virtually owned itself. However, it now belongs to the South Australian Government, and if this is right for the State Bank I see no reason why the same principle should not be applied to the Savings Bank of South Australia, which is also Government-owned. I can see no difference between them in this respect.

I do not think members of the Labor Party would disagree with me on that point because, as they will remember, it was part of their policy, although they did not carry it out (very wisely, I think), to combine these two banks. Obviously, they view it in the same sort of context, as they regard those banks as the same sort of institution which, in some senses, they are. If the State Government thinks (and I think rightly) that the State Bank should pay tax, I see no reason why it should not take the further logical step and make the State Savings Bank pay also. The Government is looking for revenue: of that we have no doubt. I do not agree about increasing State taxation, but this would be rather a painless way for the Government to meet some of the obligations it faces rather than raising other taxes, as the Government has told us it proposes to do. It would obtain revenue that would be legitimately and properly payable by this other State authority, which would surely reduce by that amount the burden on the State's taxpayers. With those remarks, I support the Bill.

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

REGISTRATION OF DOGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 23. Page 2069.)

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Central No. 1): I support the Bill because I cannot find anything in it to oppose. Apart from one or two

alterations of substance, it merely makes certain decimal currency amendments. Clause 3 amends section 10 of the principal Act which deals with the mode of registering dogs. Section 10 (2) states:

The Registrar shall thereupon give to the person or his agent a receipt for the sum paid in the form in the third schedule, and if demanded, a copy certified under his hand of the description of the dog so registered, for which certificate the sum of one shilling shall be paid to the registrar.

The first amendment to that subsection deletes the words "in the form in the third schedule", and the second amendment effects the conversion to decimal currency. I agree that this is necessary, especially in the light of the amendment to the Local Government Act in relation to accounting methods, for it will assist in the keeping of accounts. Therefore, I would support the amendment for that reason if for no other. Clause 8 repeals section 16 (1). I am rather puzzled why this subsection was not deleted previously. It states:

It shall be the duty of every registrar, before the thirtieth day of June in every year, to cause inquiries to be made on all premises occupied by any persons within his district for the purpose of ascertaining if any unregistered dogs are kept thereon.

This provision has been in the Act since 1924. I cannot see how it could ever be implemented, unless considerable additional staff were employed. It would not be possible for one man to go around an entire district, and I cannot see that it would be possible to obtain additional staff just for this specific purpose. Therefore, I agree with the repeal of this subsection.

Clause 18 repeals section 36 of the principal Act relating to the keeping of up to two unregistered dogs by full-blood Aborigines. This will mean that every full-blood Aboriginal will now be required to register every dog that he owns. I can see great difficulty in this matter. Perhaps it will be easy enough to police this provision in the metropolitan area, but it will be extremely difficult in the North of the State where in many Aboriginal camps the dogs outnumber the Aborigines by about 10 to one. Naturally, there are many Aboriginal children in these camps and the dogs are the pets of those children. Seeing that we are discussing the Hon. Mr. Kemp's motion to set up a Select Committee to inquire into the welfare of Aboriginal children, perhaps we should refer this matter to any Select Committee that may be set up. As I said, I am at a loss to know how this provision can be policed.

In view of the status given to Aborigines in this State (I think they have full rights now on practically everything) I cannot see why they should have any advantage over anyone else in relation to the registration of dogs. Therefore, I do not disagree at all with the proposed amendment.

The Hon. H. K. Kemp: What about the position with National Service?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I know that a number of full-blood Aborigines have entered our armed services voluntarily. The only other matter to which I want to refer is the clause dealing with spayed bitches. I think there is every justification for this amendment reducing the registration fee by 50c. Many owners of bitches have had them attended to by a veterinary surgeon in order to prevent their breeding, so I cannot see why the registration fee should be greater than in the case of a male dog. This amendment will ensure that the registration fee is the same in each case.

I understand that today a certain type of tablet can be administered to a dog to prevent breeding but, of course, an owner can stop administering this tablet at any time. Therefore, it is not in quite the same category as a bitch that has been attended to by a veterinary surgeon. I certainly support this amendment. The other amendments merely effect conversions to decimal currency and in this respect they bring the legislation up to date.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE secured the adjournment of the debate.

VETERINARY SURGEONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

(Second reading debate adjourned on October 23. Page 2078.)

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

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 1)

Adjourned debate on third reading.

(Continued from October 22. Page 2015.)

The PRESIDENT: This being a Constitution Bill, it is necessary for it to be passed by an absolute majority. I have taken a count of the Council as required by Standing Order No. 282, and there being present an absolute majority of the number of members I put

the question "That this Bill be now read a third time." Those in favour say "Aye", those against say "No". There being a dissentient voice, it is necessary to take a division. I appoint the Hon. Mr. Rowe teller for the Ayes and the Hon. Mr. Bevan teller for the Noes.

While the division was being taken:

The PRESIDENT: There being only one member on the side of the Noes, I declare for the Ayes and declare the third reading carried with the concurrence of an absolute majority.

Third reading thus carried.

Bill passed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 3.31 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, November 5, at 2.15 p.m.