LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday, August 12, 1969.

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

QUESTIONS

ISLINGTON CROSSING

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: Has the Minister of Roads and Transport a reply to my recent question about the railway crossing at Regency Road, formerly known as the Islington railway crossing?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The question of an over-pass at this crossing is one of those projects included in the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study plan. Consequently no progress will be made on design until the question has been debated in Parliament. There is little doubt that the over-pass proposal is the best answer at this site, particularly as the widening of the at-grade crossing is a costly undertaking and one which would take some time to accomplish.

If the crossing is approved for an over-pass, steps will then be taken to implement the next stages of design, but in any event early relief at this crossing is not possible. However, as I share the honourable member's concern regarding the hazards of the crossing I have directed that the following works be carried out:

The centre yellow lines are to be repainted and kept bright, as is the edge lining on the side of the road.

Hazard boards and reflective delineators are to be added and the white approach railing is also to be painted.

TRANSPORTATION STUDY

The Hon. L. R. HART: I ask leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Roads and Transport.

Leave granted.

The Hon. L. R. HART: In this morning's *Advertiser* there were comments by two prominent people about freeways and about the M.A.T.S. Report. The General Manager of the Royal Automobile Association of Auckland, returning from a world tour, said that the building of freeways is booming overseas and that they were necessary. He said that anyone suggesting alternative methods of transport was hiding his head in the sand.

Locally, the President of the Adelaide Chamber of Commerce (Mr. K. D. Williams) was reported as saying:

> The commercial world believed that great improvements in transport were required, and most people agreed in principle with the M.A.T.S. Report. . . . Postponement for further review would be a serious blow to all road users and would add greatly to costs and inconvenience.

Earlier in the article Mr. Williams was quoted as saying:

> The provision of a special property court would enable speedy and generous settlements for all properties and disabilities relating to M.A.T.S., with a minimum of legal costs and delays.

Can the Minister say whether any thought has been given to setting up such a property court and whether it would have any practical advantages over the system operating at present?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I realize that honourable members have not had for very long copies of the lengthy speech that I made last Thursday, and I realize it will take them some time to read it. In that speech I said that the Government had agreed in principle to establishing a special court and that it hoped to proceed with this arrangement. Ultimately it will be of great benefit to the people, who will find that they can take their acquisition problems into a court specializing in this form of work, where they will be resolved quickly.

RAILWAYS INSTITUTE

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I seek leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Roads and Transport.

Leave granted.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: On June 17 I asked the Minister of Roads and Transport a question regarding alternative accommodation for the South Australian Railways Institute in view of the fact that the festival hall is to be built on the area where the institute's main building is now situated. I was concerned yesterday to see that the Secretary of the Railways Institute, on the instructions of the council of the institute, had written to the press in regard to this matter. He said that the 7,000 members were concerned about the matter and that the executive of the institute considered that the Government and the public did not realize fully the implications of the imminent action of demolishing its buildings. The letter from the Secretary also said:

On May 7 the institute council, supported by committees of the five associated country areas, drew the attention of the Premier to the implications of the proposal as it affected members using the institute for educational, cultural and recreational purposes.

It went on to say that they were concerned that the press announcement had said that by the middle of 1970 it would be necessary to bulldoze the present accommodation down to get ready for the building of the festival hall. The Secretary states in the letter that the institute has 48 affiliated clubs and that the uncertainty is affecting them with regard to the planning of their programme for next year. The present accommodation is said to cover 40,000 sq. ft. The letter goes on to say:

To a substantial degree the institute is autonomous, in that the majority of councillors are elected by secret ballot amongst the members themselves. These members contribute more than 60 per cent of running costs, and in addition over recent years have contributed in excess of $1,000 annually towards capital improvements. They are naturally concerned that these or equivalent facilities may not be available to provide continuously for the 120,000 personal attendances recorded each year. Not only does the institute provide for the cultural and recreational welfare of railway employees and their families, but also for essential training of staff in specialized aspects of railway operations. Such training, which is undertaken on behalf of the Railways Commissioner, is not available outside our organization. This fact is recognized by the Commissioner in his patronage of the institute and 100 per cent financial backing of these activities.

Now that it has been announced in the press that the present institute buildings will be demolished by 1970, will the Minister treat this as a matter of extreme urgency and reach some decision upon some adequate and satisfactory alternative accommodation for this most worthy organization?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: When the honourable member mentioned this matter before, I agreed with him that it was one that raised considerable concern, because we all know the value of the institute and the role it plays in the general railways organization in this State. Discussions are still taking place to ascertain the best method by which we can re-accommodate the Railways Institute.

I mentioned previously that we had two alternatives in mind, one being the possible purchase of an alternative building, the other the possibility of building new accommodation for the institute. Since the matter was raised, the Government's thinking has firmed towards the possibility of erecting a new institute building for these people. The plans are not yet finalized and, therefore, no definite announcement can be made. However, the Government is treating the matter as urgent. Indeed, only yesterday I had detailed discussions with the Director of the Public Buildings Department, when we also perused plans. He was then going to discuss the project with his Minister, the Minister of Works.

I make the point that the Government is treating the matter as urgent, and we hope we shall be able to satisfy the Railways Institute with the alternative that we decide upon. I point out at this stage, however, that there will, in all probability, be some inconvenience between the time when the institute as an organization will have to leave its present accommodation and when it can be rehoused in the alternative accommodation.

We trust that the plan to be announced will be such that institute members will be prepared to put up with some inconvenience during this interim period because of what they will have as their home when the alternative is finally completed. I agree that this interim period is a source of worry; nevertheless, what the institute will eventually obtain will be worth waiting for. I hope that the institute members will be patient and that eventually they will be extremely satisfied with the plans that the Government will ultimately announce.

GAS CARTAGE

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Has the Minister of Roads and Transport a reply to the question I asked on July 30 regarding the cartage of gas from the carbon dioxide works in the South-East of this State?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Highways Department engineers have been in touch with both the councils concerned in the upgrading of this road. Arrangements have been made for improvements to be carried out by the District Council of Mount Gambier. I understand that work commenced last Friday, August 8, 1969.

WESTERN TEACHERS COLLEGE

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: Has the Minister of Local Government received from his colleague, the Minister of Education, a reply to the question I asked recently regarding the future replacement of the Western Teachers College?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The Minister of Education reports that steps are being taken to acquire 28 acres of land at Underdale for a new Western Teachers College. It is hoped that the new college may be built during the 1970-1972 triennium.

LEASEHOLD LAND

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: Has the Minister of Agriculture received from his colleague, the Minister of Lands, a reply to the question I asked on August 7 regarding the formula used for the reassessment of land rentals?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: My colleague, the Minister of Lands, reports as follows:

The Land Board determines rentals of perpetual leases on the basis of the reasonable value of unimproved land. These values are influenced by sales transactions. In some cases it is considered that recent sales have been unreasonably high. In making reductions of rents, the board will give less weight to these sales. In general, rents of perpetual leases which commenced after January 1, 1966, will be reduced.

EASTERN STANDARD TIME

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: In yesterday's *Advertiser* a gentleman from Netherby wrote a letter to the editor (which I thought was a very sensible letter) about introducing Eastern Standard Time in South Australia. The suggestion was made that this should be adopted for the summer months, starting on the Labour Day holiday and ending on the Easter Monday. The results of my own personal inquiries from people in the metropolitan area about this matter since it was first raised some months ago seem to indicate that most people in the metropolitan area (I cannot, of course, speak for the country) would like to move to Eastern Standard Time in the summer but would like to retain our own Central Time for the winter. Can the Chief Secretary say whether Cabinet has considered moving to Eastern Standard Time during the period mentioned by the writer of this letter? If it has not, can this matter be considered by Cabinet at some time in the future?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: This matter has been fully discussed in Cabinet. Also, I believe that, in mentioning this matter in the first place, the Premier was anxious to get a reaction from the public. Taking all these factors into consideration and the matter having been looked at by Cabinet, the decision has been made not to make any change at this point of time.

CASUALTY TREATMENT

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Has the Chief Secretary a reply to the question I asked on July 22 about the position of people applying to the casualty section of the Royal Adelaide Hospital for treatment and then being recommended to go to a private hospital?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I have a lengthy report on this matter. The patient attended Casualty at 9.27 a.m. on June 28, 1969, and was seen by a resident medical officer, who gave emergency treatment and formed the opinion that surgery was required. The resident medical officer was concerned about the critical situation in respect of availability of beds in the hospital at that time and consulted the admitting officer about the advisability of referring the patient for treatment in another hospital. The admitting officer agreed to this course of action in view of the critical bed state. He admits that he should have been aware that this was contrary to current instructions. He stated that there was no discussion between the resident medical officer and himself about whom the patient should be referred to for treatment.

The resident medical officer rang an honorary clinical assistant and asked him whether he could take over the treatment of the patient. The honorary clinical assistant was visiting St. Andrew's Hospital at the time. The resident medical officer stated that the reason why he contacted him was because he was of the opinion that he was a competent surgeon and considered that he would be in a position to provide immediate treatment. He had not had any close contact with the honorary previously.

The latter came to this hospital at about 10.30 a.m. and examined the patient, diagnosed amputation as being necessary, dressed the finger and sent the patient to Ru Rua Hospital in a taxi, having made arrangements for his admission to that hospital. He admitted that he was aware of the instruction prohibiting the diversion of patients for treatment outside the hospital but stated that he had been asked to treat the patient outside because the Royal Adelaide Hospital was "full". He admitted that he did not draw the attention of the resident medical officer to the fact that the procedure proposed by the latter was contrary to instructions.

The honorary clinical assistant denies that the patient sat "with a finger dripping blood" for five hours. The patient was admitted as an in-patient to Ru Rua Hospital and had proper nursing care, whilst the dressing on the finger was satisfactory. He also stated that in his opinion the treatment was given as promptly as could be expected in view of the necessity for pre-operative procedures to be

carried out. He also stated that the patient has been most happy with the care received.

The Royal Adelaide Hospital Board formed the opinion that both the admitting officer and the honorary contravened instructions of which they were aware and, because of this, they were reprimanded. However, it is satisfied that there was no collusion between the persons concerned.

With regard to whether action will be taken to prevent a recurrence of this practice in the future, the hospital policy outlined by Mr. Banfield will be redrafted and reissued to all medical staff and the hospital's policy will be highlighted by the Medical Superintendent at personal meetings with resident medical staff. It is relevant to report that the position of Assistant Medical Superintendent (Casualty) at the Royal Adelaide Hospital was advertised several weeks ago and it is anticipated that the appointment of this senior officer with overall direct administrative responsibility for casualty services will result in improved supervision and a greater standardization of procedures in this area. The present system of rotation of supervisory medical staff through the casualty area of the hospital can lead to misunderstandings in policy implementation despite written instructions in the form of manuals of procedures.

The third question relates to the action taken against the doctors concerned. It will be noted that the hospital board has personally reprimanded both the admitting officer and the honorary clinical assistant involved for contravening instructions of the hospital. As there was no evidence of any direct collusion on the part of the officers concerned, the Royal Adelaide Hospital Board considers that appropriate disciplinary action has now been taken.

COLEBROOK HOME

The Hon. H. K. KEMP: Has the Minister of Local Government representing the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs a reply to my question of July 31 (a similar question has been asked by the Hon. A. M. Whyte) regarding the reasons for the recent refusal of a renewal of the lease of the Colebrook Home for Aborigines at Eden Hills?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: No, I have not the answer yet, but I will again ask the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs for this information.

BRINKWORTH AREA SCHOOL

The Hon. L. R. HART: Has the Minister of Local Government representing the Minister of Education a reply to my question of July 29 relating to the Brinkworth Area School?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The Education Department realizes the need for the replacement of the accommodation at the Brinkworth Area School. It has not been possible to include Brinkworth on a list for replacement as yet although a schedule of requirements has been prepared and sent to the Public Buildings Department whose architects have carried out some design work. It is expected that some design and investigation work will be carried out during the present financial year.

RAILWAYS STANDARDIZATION AGREEMENT (COCKBURN TO BROKEN HILL) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. C. M. HILL (Minister of Roads and Transport) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Railways Standardization Agreement (Cockburn to Broken Hill) Act, 1968. Read a first time.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Honourable members will recall that on October 2, 1968, an agreement, regarding the construction of a standard gauge railway between the border of this State and Broken Hill in New South Wales, was entered into by the Government and the Governments of the Commonwealth and New South Wales. This agreement was subsequently ratified by this Parliament by the Railways Standardization Agreement (Cockburn to Broken Hill) Act, 1968.

Under arrangements made pursuant to that agreement the South Australian Railways Commissioner is responsible for the construction of the permanent way and the operation, control and management of the railway after that construction is completed. Since, in this matter, the powers of the Commissioner will have to be exercised outside the boundaries of this State, it is necessary that provision be made in the laws of New South Wales giving the Commissioner the appropriate authority to operate, control and manage the railway.

By the Broken Hill to South Australian Border Railway Agreement Act Amendment Act, 1969, of New South Wales, which was assented to on April 9, 1969, the necessary powers have been conferred on the Commissioner and it now remains for the law in this State to be amended to ensure that the Commissioner has from the point of view of this State's law sufficient power to do all the things in New South Wales he is authorized by the law in that State so to do.

Clause 1 of the Bill is formal. Clause 2 inserts in the principal Act a new section 4a which at subsection (1) confers on the Commissioner the right to operate, control and manage the railway. At subsection (2) the extent of the Commissioner's powers in relation to operation, control and management of the railway are set out in similar terms to those by which the powers are vested in the Commissioner under New South Wales law. In substance, in the operation, control and management of the railway the Commissioner will have the same powers as he has in the operation, control and management of the railways in this State.

Clause 3 gives power to the Governor to make regulations providing for specific charges in connection with the operation, control and management of the railway since such charges are authorized under the New South Wales legislation.

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

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS (REDIVISION) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This short Bill is designed to correct an anomaly in the Electoral Districts (Redivision) Act, 1968-1969, which has been referred to in Part I of the report of the Electoral Commission. The anomaly results from the fact that, by section 7 of the Act, the metropolitan area is to be determined by reference to the Metropolitan Planning Area as defined in the Planning and Development Act, 1966-1967, with certain exclusions. However, it was not realized at the time that such islands as Torrens Island and Garden Island, the Port River and adjacent waters were not included in the Metropolitan Planning Area and were accordingly, by definition, excluded from the metropolitan area for the purposes of the principal Act, although they should logically be part of that area and not part of any country electoral district.

Clause 2 of the Bill will rectify the anomaly by providing in proposed new subsection (3) that there shall also be included in the metropolitan area such islands, jetties and waters and parts of the State, being adjacent to the municipalities of Brighton, Glenelg, Henley and Grange, Marion, Port Adelaide, Salisbury, West Torrens and Woodville or adjacent to the district council districts of Munno Para and Noarlunga, as in the opinion of the commission contain or may in the future contain any Assembly elector or Assembly electors.

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

ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. C. M. HILL (Minister of Local Government): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Following consideration of the Millicent electoral petition by the Court of Disputed Returns it seemed desirable to examine the Electoral Act to see what modifications should be effected to it in the light of the judgment of the court and of matters which arose during the hearing.

In the hearing of the electoral petition and the cross-petition the issue, in substance, resolved itself as to the question of the admission or rejection of the votes represented by 15 ballot-papers.

Five of these turned on the question of whether or not the ballot-papers were posted before the close of poll. At section 86, the Electoral Act provides, in effect, that unless the returning officer is satisfied that a ballot-paper was in fact posted before the close of poll he must disallow the ballot-paper. In its judgment of May 2, 1968, the court, in a majority decision, held that it could admit certain evidence to assist it in the determination of the question as to when particular ballot-papers were posted, that is evidence, which in the nature of things, could not be available to the returning officer at the time he had to consider the question.

After sittings extending over a number of days and after having a number of witnesses examined and cross-examined the court came to the conclusion that two of the five votes should have been rejected and the remaining three should have been admitted. As to the difficulty in reaching its decision the following observations were made by the court:

In any appreciation of the evidence of an elector who seeks to uphold the validity of his vote and to have it included in the count, substantial weight must be attached to the circumstances that, in the very nature of things, a respondent can have little or no means of contraverting the assertion of such a witness by the introduction of destructive evidence. The negative is often incapable of proof and, speaking generally, in the ordinary case of a contraverted election, it would be well-nigh impossible for a respondent to adduce evidence to impeach the affirmative evidence of a witness who, for instance, deposes to the

actual voting, prior to the close of poll, of an envelope containing a postal ballot-paper. (Supplementary reasons for judgment, page 23, paragraph 4.)

As to the task of the returning officer, the court had this to say:

In actual practice the only evidence before the returning officer at the time of conducting the preliminary scrutiny would ordinarily be the application for the postal vote certificate, the envelope bearing the postal vote certificate and containing the postal ballot-paper, records of the names of postal voters and of the districts appearing in the postal vote certificates, advices of the transmission of envelopes containing postal votes and, no doubt, a certified list of voters. In coming to a decision the returning officer would commonly rely upon these documents, but so long as section 86 simply provides that if an envelope bearing the postal vote certificate has been posted or delivered prior to the close of poll the ballot-paper shall be accepted for scrutiny, and, so long as regulation 30 stands in its present form, it is difficult to conceive how, in some circumstances, an elector would be able to prove the due posting of the envelope without recourse to *ex parte* and, perhaps, self-serving or partisan evidentiary materials. The returning officer cannot be expected to act in a judicial or quasi-judicial capacity; and to impose on him the task of deciding upon the accuracy, reliability and veracity of the supplementary evidence put before him with a view to his accepting a ballot is something which we do not think was really envisaged by Parliament. The problems which could thus fall for decision would be troublesome enough for this court, let alone a returning officer who is called upon as a layman to exercise his statutory function. (Supplementary reasons for judgment, page 27, paragraph 4.)

Thus, the Statute enjoins the returning officer to reach an *ad hoc* decision which will be upheld by a Court of Disputed Returns after days of deliberation. This is just not common sense. At least when the provision was first enacted the returning officer had the advantage of being able, in doubtful cases, to refer to a postmark on the envelope. Today, this slight assistance is denied him: more and more post offices are closed on Saturdays and bulk pre-franked posting dispenses with postmarks. In these circumstances, he is unable to decide doubtful cases with certainty and, as a result, every closely-run election could be followed by an almost speculative appeal to the Court of Disputed Returns.

In the past the difficulties inherent in this provision may have been justified if the absence of the provision would have the effect of depriving a person in a remote locality of his vote. However, it is suggested that this argument is no longer valid. In the last general election a potential postal voter would have had 19 days in which to receive his postal vote certificate and return his vote to the authorities before the day of polling. There must be few places in the world where a communication cannot be sent and returned within that period of time if the parties involved act with due expedition. Where such a communication cannot move within that period, it is unlikely the additional period of seven days allowed for its return (and I emphasize "its return") would make any difference.

To summarize, the provision relating to the late reception of postal ballot-papers should be removed, because (*a*) in doubtful cases it is frequently impossible for the returning officer to determine whether or not a ballot-paper should be admitted and as a corollary the results of closely-run elections are often unnecessarily clouded in doubt; and (*b*) the provision no longer serves its clearly intended purpose, which was to ensure that persons in remote areas were not deprived of their votes.

A further five votes were disputed on what was, substantially, a single ground, namely, that the witness did not fall or did not appear to fall within the class of authorized witnesses as enumerated in section 80. It was not suggested that the witnesses did otherwise than perform their function *qua* witnesses properly but merely that they did not appear to fall within the enumerated class.

However, when the enumeration is examined one finds that it includes almost every adult in this State and a considerable number of mature infants. If the suggestion of the court was followed (supplementary reason for judgment, page 26, paragraph 4) the enumeration would include almost every adult in the Commonwealth and a large number of mature infants. It seems pointless to continue this enumeration *ad infinitum* and, accordingly, the qualifications of an authorized witness have been expressed as being "over or apparently over the age of 18 years".

Finally, regard was paid to the suitability of the Court of Disputed Returns, constituted as it was, to undertake the task imposed on it. The particular composition of the court reflects its unique position as an organ of the Legislature; it is, in effect, Parliament sitting in its judicial capacity. Historically, the evolution of this sort of tribunal can be traced from the time when it was constituted by the whole House of Commons before 1770 (when the hearings had degenerated into mere trials of strength of contending factions) through the period up to 1868, during which many attempts

were made to ensure that trials of electoral petitions would be patently uninfluenced by other than the merits of the case.

In 1868, this particular jurisdiction of Parliament was, in the United Kingdom, transferred by Statute to the courts of law. The same position obtains in the Commonwealth and every Australian State other than this State. While it is true that there is no virtue in mere uniformity for uniformity's sake, it is equally true that such a radical departure from the norm as exists in this State does not, of itself, necessarily have any merit. The following reasons seem to justify the reconstitution of the court along what are, now, more traditional lines:

(*a*) the matters before it, particularly in the case of the recent election petition, are essentially matters of law and matters which are more and more reflected in the system of case law that is being built up, and such matters desirably should be dealt with by a judge;

(*b*) in the system of courts of Parliament, the status of the court of this Parliament must suffer because of its majority of non-judicial members;

(*c*) while it is not suggested that the "non-judicial members" of the court took a narrow Party view it was, I understand, widely said before and during the hearing, "The two Government members will be on one side, the two Opposition members on the other, and the judge will decide. What's the good of having the politicians on it?";

(*d*) the procedure for setting up the court seems expensive and time-consuming, with the necessity for a special meeting of the House. This seems unnecessarily cumbersome, and in operation could result in undue delay in the resolution of a disputed election.

All in all, the manifestly different position of this State does not seem to be justified.

Finally, aside from the question of its constitution, it proved necessary to clarify the jurisdiction of the court and make appropriate provision for it to function effectively. In broad terms then the Bill proposes: (*a*) that only postal votes actually in the hands of electoral officials at the close of poll will be counted at the scrutiny; (*b*) that the postal voting procedures be simplified; (*c*) that the Court of Disputed Returns be constituted by a single judge of the Supreme Court in lieu of the judge and four members of the House affected; and (*d*) that the part of the Act relating to limitation on electoral expenses be repealed. Opportunity has also been taken to adjust penalties provided for offences against the Act.

I will now deal with the Bill in some detail. Clauses 1, 2 and 3 are formal. Clause 4 amends section 18 of the principal Act to ensure that common form (computerized) rolls can be kept for both State and Commonwealth electoral purposes.

Clause 5 amends section 38 of the principal Act to give the Returning Officer for the State further power to make formal amendments to the rolls. Clause 6 repeals section 39 of the principal Act relating to a form of alteration of the roll which was appropriate when rolls were altered by hand but which is not appropriate when rolls are printed by computer.

Clauses 7 and 8 effect a decimal currency amendment. Clause 9 provides for two days' notice to be given of the issue of a writ for an election and will to some extent ensure that electoral rolls can be "printed out" speedily. Clause 10 amends section 51 by bringing the hour at which a writ for an election is deemed to be issued forward from 5 o'clock in the afternoon to 12 o'clock noon. This will effectively enable the "print out" of the computer roll to commence one day earlier than would otherwise be the case and thus save some time.

Clause 11 is a drafting amendment that should make the meaning of section 52 clearer. Clause 12 is, again, a drafting amendment. Clause 13 effects a decimal currency amendment.

Clause 14 amends section 73 of the principal Act, which deals with applications for postal votes, by inserting a new ground upon which a person may apply for a postal vote certificate and ballot-paper. This ground closely follows a similar provision in the Commonwealth Act and ensures a postal vote for persons in enclosed religious orders or persons who by reason of their religious convictions cannot travel to vote on a Saturday (which is the day on which under section 53 of the Act polling must take place in this State).

This clause also provides for the authentication of an application for a postal vote where the applicant is, by reason of illiteracy, unable to write. It also enables people to apply for postal votes as soon as it is obvious that an election will be held. Previously no application could be made until after the tenth day before the issue of a writ; this provision should be of considerable assistance to people in

remote areas. In addition, the last hour for applications has been advanced from 6 o'clock to 5 o'clock. Finally, the penalty for making false statements in applications has been increased to $200.

Clause 15 amends section 74, which deals with the duty of witnesses and is in consequence of the amendments made to section 73. Clause 16 amends section 75, which relates to the issue of ballot-papers, and recognizes that the Returning Officer for the State can under section 73, as amended, also issue postal ballot-papers.

Clause 17 repeals section 77 of the principal Act, which provided for the noting of the issue of postal vote certificates against the certified list of voters if "there is time conveniently to do so". In fact, under the present system there is never time conveniently to do so and, accordingly, this provision is proposed to be repealed.

Clause 18 amends section 79 and is intended to ensure that a person who can satisfy the returning officer or presiding officer that his postal vote certificate or ballot-paper has been lost may be permitted to vote either in person or by post.

Clause 19 amends section 80 of the principal Act, which relates to the descriptions of the classes of person who may be authorized witnesses under the Act. As has already been mentioned year by year, this list has grown longer, and the latest proposal before the Government would have had the effect of including just about every adult person in the Commonwealth of Australia and a good number more besides. Accordingly, it is proposed that the only qualification necessary for authorized witnesses is that they will be over or apparently over the age of 18 years.

Clause 20 is intended to simplify somewhat the postal voting procedure. Clause 21 effects a decimal currency amendment and at the same time doubles the penalty for a breach of duty by an authorized witness. Clauses 22, 23 and 24 are proposed in consequence of the simplification of the postal voting procedure.

Clause 25 amends section 86, which deals with the reception of the postal ballot-papers and amends that section to provide that only postal votes in official hands before the close of poll will be counted. Previously, a postal vote received up to seven days after the close of poll could be counted provided that the returning officer was satisfied that it was posted before the close of poll. As has already been mentioned, honourable members who followed the proceedings in the recent Court of Disputed Returns will be aware just what a field of speculation this provision gave rise to. It is suggested that in the circumstances of today such a provision is just not practical.

Clause 26 amends section 88 and ensures that the Returning Officer for the State is armed with the necessary powers to make arrangements for the conduct of the poll. Clause 27 effects a decimal currency amendment and also increases the penalty somewhat for a breach of section 99.

Clause 28 clarifies section 105 of the Act without altering the principle involved. Clause 29 increases the penalty for an offence against the provisions relating to the marking of votes.

Clause 30 amends section 118a, which relates to compulsory voting, by relieving the Returning Officer for the State from having to ask for reasons for non-voting when he is already satisfied that the non-voter had a valid and sufficient reason. This provision will result in considerable saving of time and money.

Clause 31 increases a penalty for a breach of section 124, which relates to improper marking of ballot-papers by officers. Clause 32 effects a drafting amendment to clarify the meaning of section 126 of the principal Act. Clause 33 re-enacts section 128 of the Act to make it clear just what powers are given to the officer conducting the recount.

Clause 34 repeals entirely Part XIV, which deals with limitations on electoral expenditure. It is thought that this Part of the Act is inappropriate where today much expenditure is actually related to the return of candidates of a particular Party rather than particular candidates.

Clause 35 increases somewhat steeply the monetary penalty for a "breach of official duty" provided for in section 145. This sharp increase is necessary to bring it into line with the maximum term of imprisonment provided (that is, one year). Clauses 36 and 37 generally increase penalties.

Clause 38 repeals section 155 of the Act, which restricted advertising in picture theatres. With the large amount of television advertising associated with electoral campaigning it is thought that this restriction is no longer warranted. Clause 39 increases the penalty for an offence against section 155a, which deals with false claims of support from organizations.

Clause 40 brings section 155b, which deals with the size of electoral posters, into line with the equivalent legislation of the Commonwealth. The permitted size of a poster has been increased from 120 sq. in. to 1,200 sq. in. In addition this clause provides (*a*) that it will no longer be an offence to depict electoral matter on buildings and fences with the consent of the owner of the property; (*b*) that the restriction on the size, etc., of posters will apply whether or not the writ for the election has been issued; this corresponds to the equivalent Commonwealth provision; and (*c*) that mere advertising on a cinema screen will not be a breach of the size provision of an electoral poster.

Clause 41 increases the penalty on a person who fails to transmit forthwith a claim for enrolment to the Returning Officer for the State. Clauses 42 to 53 reconstitute the Court of Disputed Returns and are generally self-explanatory, the main changes being: (*a*) the court will be constituted by a single judge of the Supreme Court, the senior puisne judge or the next available puisne judge in order of seniority; (*b*) the court will be serviced by the facilities already available to service the Supreme Court; (*c*) the procedure to be followed by parties before the court has been set out a little more clearly as have the powers of the court; and (*d*) the court can, in appropriate circumstances, order that all or portion of the costs of the petitioner be paid by the Crown. (Honourable members may recall that His Honour the President of the Court of Disputed Returns commented on the lack of such a provision previously). Clause 54 increases the maximum penalty for a breach of any of the regulations. Clause 55 repeals a schedule rendered unnecessary by the repeal of Part XIV of the Act.

The Hon. A. J. SHARD secured the adjournment of the debate.

TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Adjourned debate on the motion of the Minister of Roads and Transport:

That this House:

(*a*) acknowledges:

(i) that the general principles underlying the Report of the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study were laid down in the Metropolitan Development Plan which was endorsed by Parliament by legislation enacted in the years 1963 and 1967 and are designed to meet the transport needs of all people of the State whenever they move within the Metropolitan area; and

(ii) that adequate safeguards in the implementation of that part of the proposals accepted by the Government will be assured to the community because the transportation proposals are required (under the terms of the Planning and Development Act) to be consistent with the general provisions of the Development Plan as it may be varied from time to time:

and

(*b*) endorses:

(i) the general principles underlying the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study proposals for the co-ordinated development of both public and private transportation and ancillary facilities; and

(ii) the action taken by the Government in approving in principle a major proportion of the proposals as set out hereunder:

Retention of suburban rail passenger service on the four existing main lines to Outer Harbour, Gawler, Blackwood, and Hallett Cove, and extension of the Hallett Cove line to Christie Downs;

Construction of the King William Street Subway to connect the two main lines on the north with the two main lines on the south and necessary modifications to rolling stock;

Express bus services on the Modbury Freeway;

Express feeder bus service on the Reynella Expressway to a transfer terminal at the Oaklands Railway Station;

An extensive programme of station modernization and reconstruction to encourage transfer from automobiles and feeder buses to the rail system;

Twenty suburban rail road grade separations;

Arterial Road System: 220 miles of arterial road improvements including 20 miles of new arterial roads, and 200 miles of arterial road widening;

Expressways—
Dry Creek Expressway,
Glenelg Expressway,
Gawler By-pass,
Reynella Expressway,
Port Wakefield Expressway,

Freeways—
Noarlunga Freeway,
Hindmarsh Interchange,
Salisbury Freeway,
Port Freeway,
North Adelaide Connector,
Modbury Freeway,

and contained in the Report and excepting certain proposals which include those relating to the Hills Freeway and the Foothills Expressway (affecting the eastern and

southern suburbs) and the Goodwood-Edwardstown Rail diversion (in the western suburbs):

and

(*c*) is of the opinion:

(i) that the Metropolitan Transportation Committee should annually make a written report to each House of Parliament on the programme of work in implementing the proposals contained in the Report which are accepted from time to time by the Government; and

(ii) that the Government should continue its examination of existing legislation relating to the compulsory acquisition of land and introduce amendments thereto so as to ensure just compensation for persons affected by the acquisition of land necessitated by those proposals.

(Continued from August 7. Page 752.)

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Central No. 1): Members of this Council are asked by this motion to endorse the general principles contained in the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study Report and to approve the action of the Government pertaining thereto. I do not support the proposals, especially in view of the announcements made by the Government over the last few weeks regarding the alterations to and deferments of the original plans. I intend to move an amendment to the motion because I believe there is no longer a properly integrated plan for public transport. This has been highlighted by the number of deferments announced by the Minister of Roads and Transport; I refer to the Grange railway line, the proposals for which have been deferred for further investigation. This has in turn resulted in the deferment of roadworks in connection with that railway line until the disposal or otherwise of that line has been determined. Because we no longer have an integrated plan before us, I move:

That all words after "House" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

is of the opinion—

(*a*) that the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study Report does not make adequate provisions for the development of transport movement in Metropolitan Adelaide;

(*b*) that the plan should be withdrawn and referred to the State Planning Authority for reassessment to ensure:

(i) a properly integrated plan for roads and public transport development;

(ii) that any plan is financially feasible; and

(iii) that the destruction of homes and other properties is minimized;

(*c*) that the Government should proceed forthwith to amend legislation on compulsory acquisition of land so as to ensure just compensation for persons affected by the proposals.

I realize that some freeways will be necessary in the future, but they should be planned flexibly enough to allow for future development and to cause the minimum of interference with community living. The present plans will produce the reverse effect. The Minister has announced 16 major alterations and deferments, including the announcement that the Hills Freeway and the Foothills Expressway are not acceptable to the Government at this stage. If the motion is carried, that can be implemented in the future. What effect all these deferments will have on the overall plan one cannot visualize as very little of the original plan is left. Yet we are asked to endorse this plan in principle.

Because of the number of objections received to the M.A.T.S. proposals, the Government set up a committee to consider the submissions lodged and to report to the Government. However, before this can be done, we are asked to give the green light to a non-existent plan for an integrated roads and public transport system in metropolitan Adelaide. It has been amply demonstrated by all the deferments now made that insufficient consideration has been given by the Government to the M.A.T.S. Report—or what is left of it. For instance, a section in the middle of the Modbury Freeway has been deferred, and we also have the deferment now of that portion of the Noarlunga Freeway in the Marion council area, apparently because of the very strong opposition to it from the council and the residents. The route proposed in the 1962 plan was abandoned by the M.A.T.S. Report in favour of the present proposed route, which has now been deferred pending a further look at the original proposal. What happens to the people in the line of both these routes? Since 1962, when the original route was proposed, the people in the line of it have been unable to dispose of their properties, because nobody wants to purchase a property only to lose it later. When inquiries were made about the proposed route, the people concerned were informed by the local council that they should not purchase the properties because they were in the line of the proposed freeway route, so the owners could not dispose of their properties. The same thing applies to those people having properties on the route in the M.A.T.S. Report

since its release. All these people are to be further left in the air, and perhaps others as well, pending further examinations of the matter.

What about the remaining sections of this freeway? Here again, I contend that insufficient consideration has been given to the effect that this plan will have on industry and on homes. The Hindmarsh, Thebarton and West Torrens district council areas will be destroyed by this freeway: many industries and homes must be demolished in those three districts. That will result in a considerable loss of rate revenue to the councils and make it virtually impossible for them to carry on financially. The councils are not prepared to sink their identities and cease to exist as individual councils, in an amalgamation. Already we have been told this by the Minister. Apparently, approaches have been made to the Hindmarsh and Thebarton councils. What will happen? Will the Government subsidize these and other councils or will the Minister set up a committee to determine the municipal council boundaries with power to enforce its findings? Again, what will be the reaction of the ratepayers in these areas if this is done? That question remains unanswered. People have been told that these two particular councils cannot and will not agree to an amalgamation where their identities are sunk. However, if an amalgamation is forced upon them, the repercussions from the ratepayers in those areas will be tremendous.

There will be displaced industries. Where will they go to be re-established? Vacant land for this purpose is available but at a considerable distance from the present location of the industries. West Thebarton is a factory area, and industries situated on this route will have to go elsewhere. Also, factories near the Torrens River will be affected, as will those in the Mile End area, such as Horwood Bagshaw and other industries close by. The whole of this route is through a completely built-up area, so this plan will result in the wholesale destruction of homes, and employees working in the affected industries will have much farther to travel to work, which will impose on them extra burdens of cost and time. What consideration has been given to these matters? I suggest very little.

Again, there will be disruption of the general community. On this proposed freeway there will be an earth embankment that will cut off present cross-streets, necessitating a convergence on other streets. Therefore, a realignment of local streets will be necessary, including George Street, which is a connector between South Road and Port Road. The Minister has told us that the Government has agreed to the Thebarton council's submission for the realignment of George Street, but where will it be realigned? Nobody has told us. The committee to which this matter was referred has not told us but has said that George Street will be realigned when these plans are on the drawing board. That is a lot of good to the people living in the area, to have to wait until the plans are on the drawing board and then a suggestion is made to realign a particular street, which is a main thoroughfare, somewhere else, in relation to the freeway in this area.

The earth embankment will occupy much more room than a form of freeway, anyhow, and I understand that from the Torrens River there will be two under-passes under the freeway to the Henley Beach Road; one is George Street while the other will be somewhere along the freeway. Answers to these questions have not been given to this Council, neither do the residents in the areas concerned know what will happen to George Street and its proposed realignment.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Does the Minister know?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I suggest that the Minister does not know at this stage, neither does the committee, because decisions have not yet been reached. Nobody has come up with an answer (if there is one), yet we are asked to support in principle a plan which is really no longer in existence.

The cost of compensation payable to industry and to home owners will be enormous. Industry will have to be compensated not only for the loss of premises but also for dismantling of plant and machinery and the carriage and reassembling of equipment in the new area. In addition, there must be compensation for loss of production and possible loss of time of employees during the transitional period. The basis for compensation to home owners, according to the Minister, has yet to be determined by an amendment to the Act, but on what basis will that be made? At the moment it is based on present-day values as applied to the acquisition of property. Present-day valuations are based on present circumstances, and because of the proposed freeways those values have been deflated since the release of the report. Most of the homes were built many years ago, and their present valuation would be about half that of a replacement home.

That is another question I pose: will the difference in cost be paid as compensation to these people? Further, payment of compensation, I submit, must be considered to people whose homes will not be acquired for freeway purposes but which are in such close proximity to the freeway that their values are greatly reduced, especially when in the areas concerned the freeways have earth embankments. People in such circumstances will not receive any compensation, according to the plan, and it is obvious that further consideration should be given to this matter.

I pose a further question: in many cases it will be necessary to provide a mortgage; will that mortgage be available on similar terms to the original mortgage when the property was first acquired? Also, what terms will be available for people who are displaced from their existing property but who find it necessary to buy a new property? Again, in many cases people in such a position arranged a mortgage under terms and conditions that prevailed many years ago. Many of those people would not yet be free from their mortgage and would still have to meet some commitments in that respect. It must be remembered that these are their homes, and that many people have owned their homes for years.

Because of the proposed freeways, these people, and many others in a similar position, will lose their homes. They will be forced, because of the compensation which is proposed, to find about half the cost of the purchase price of a new house. In such circumstances people will be forced to arrange a new mortgage; many house owners are not young, most of them being middle aged or perhaps a little older. They will be forced to arrange a mortgage on present-day conditions merely because a freeway is to be built in a completely built-up area. Those are some of the questions that I desire the Minister to answer, because he has indicated that it is intended to amend the Act and make a more equitable system of compensation available to people likely to lose their houses.

The Minister today has told the Council what is contemplated in constituting a court to deal with compensation claims, but he has not indicated proposals to amend the Act as affecting compensation or the form such amendments will take. Whilst dealing with this question, many people have had their homes acquired by the Highways Department and I believe negotiations for acquisition were arranged on present-day values. If the Act is amended to grant more equitable compensation, will they be included in the amendment or be left with the compensation already provided? I think the amendments should be placed before the Council now so that the information can be considered and so that the general public will have that information and know where they are going.

The cost of road and highways improvements is estimated at this stage at $436,510,000. Of that amount, the sum of $332,000,000 will be available from the Highways Fund, leaving a deficit of $104,500,000. It is suggested that the latter amount be made up by increases in motor registration fees, drivers' licences, an increase in road maintenance tax, to be effected by reducing the present eight-ton vehicle limitation to four tons, and a further approach to the Commonwealth Government for additional funds to meet the expenditure. In 1968 the Minister was asked how the cost of the proposed freeways and roadways would be met, and he answered that the estimated revenue from the Highways Fund would be used and spread over the whole period. The Minister also said that the Commonwealth Government would be asked to make up the deficiency. When that answer was given, I think I interjected, "You are a super-optimist." From answers given by the Minister it appears to me that only limited funds will be available for rural roads over the next 18 years; what other conclusion can be reached, despite increases in road taxes?

On October 3, 1968, the Minister was reported as stating that "$123,000,000 would be spent on rural roads over the next five years", such amount representing 62 per cent of the total funds available to the Highways Department over the next five years. If that is so, only 38 per cent of the total funds will be available for all other purposes during the five-year period mentioned. How are we to implement the work proposed in the report in the metropolitan area during the next five years? It appears to me that, once Parliament provides the amount, little work will be done on rural roads, yet country road users will have to contribute to the cost of providing freeways in the metropolitan area with little or no benefit to themselves. The increased taxation proposed will mean an increase in the cost of carting goods, and this in itself will result in increased costs of living which will have to be borne just as much by the country people as by those in the metropolitan area.

Further, insufficient consideration has been given to the construction of the proposed freeways. No service road is provided for, and one can visualize that in peak traffic periods a freeway will be full. In the event of a serious accident, no ambulance will be able to get through because of the pile-up of traffic. A special lane or even a special road should be provided exclusively for the use of buses. Too much emphasis is being placed on road use. We should be planning to get traffic off the roads rather than to increase traffic, and we should be doing this by providing better, faster, and cheaper public transport, thus encouraging people to leave their cars at home.

The present facilities for public transport are totally inadequate to meet demands, and there are plenty of examples of this, one being Elizabeth and another being the rapidly growing area of O'Sullivan Beach to the south of Adelaide. This latter place is being serviced at present by a private bus service: this is its only public transport. In this very fast growing area, just to the south of Adelaide, buses leave O'Sullivan Beach on Mondays to Fridays at 7.18 a.m., 9.40 a.m., and 4.50 p.m. On the return journey, the bus leaves Adelaide at 8.25 a.m., 4 p.m. and 5.15 p.m. This is the public transport! People coming to work at, say, Chrysler Australia Limited at Tonsley Park, or in the city, are limited to the bus leaving O'Sullivan Beach at 7.18 a.m., and those shop assistants or office workers who start work at 9 a.m. also have to catch this bus, because the next one would be too late for them.

It means that people working in the city have only the one bus that they can catch. Women who wish to come to the city for shopping or for other purposes can catch the 9.40 a.m. bus, but it is then necessary for them to remain in the city until 4 o'clock. Although many of these women would have to meet young children coming out of school, they would not arrive home until about 5 o'clock in the afternoon. Who can use this particular transport? A bus leaves the city at 5.15 p.m. to return to O'Sullivan Beach, so it is no use to the people who finish work at 5.30 p.m. What about the remarkable public transport service in this area on Saturdays? One bus leaves O'Sullivan Beach at 7.18 a.m. No further transport is provided in this area during the whole of the day, so anyone wanting to come to Adelaide to a football match, which starts at 2.15 p.m., would have to leave home just after 7 o'clock in the morning.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: This is what applies at the present time, I take it?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: Yes. The only bus leaving the city for this area on a Saturday leaves at 11.45 p.m.! Is it any wonder that people do not use public transport to any extent? This is the reason why so many cars are on the road today. This state of affairs exists in many parts of the suburbs. It takes me about seven minutes to drive from Parliament House to my home. I use my car for this journey because I cannot get on public transport. The people in the Torrensville and Mile End areas have great trouble getting on a bus to go to work in peak periods because the buses run from Grange and by the time they come from Grange via Henley Beach they are full when they reach the Torrensville area. Often when I have been standing at the bus stop at the corner of Henley Beach Road the bus has gone straight through without stopping. The same thing applies in the evening. We now have minimum fare buses on the road as an inducement to keep off the buses those people who have only short distances to travel so that the people travelling longer distances can get on the buses. The people in the closer areas must stand back and wait for another bus.

These are examples of our public transport. Is it any wonder that people have gone in for motor cars and deserted the public transport? People are being driven off the public transport, and because of the lack of patronage fares have had to be increased. This in turn has meant that it is now necessary for the buses to travel a longer route, and this, too, has driven yet more people away from public transport. This applies to practically every area today, yet we claim that we have adequate public transport.

The United States of America found out its mistake in building freeways, for these have become jammed with traffic. The U.S.A. is now spending millions of dollars on research to induce people to leave their cars at home and use public transport. One method that is proving successful in some States is the use of what is known as the maxi-cab system. I am sure the Minister of Roads and Transport has heard about this system, even if he has not investigated it. These vehicles pick up workers at or near their door and drop them at their work. It is reported that these maxi-cabs carry from 300 to 400 people daily, and this adds up to many cars taken off the road on an annual basis. I believe that this form of public transport is relatively cheap, considering the distances involved. It

costs passengers from $9 to $18(U.S.) a month, depending on the distance travelled. When one compares that with the bus fares operating in this State, one finds that it is much cheaper to travel to work by public transport in America than it is here. This method is well worth investigation and is another reason why the M.A.T.S. plan should be withdrawn.

Finally, there is the question of the proposed railway improvement at an estimated cost of $79,050,000. All members know that our railways are financed from general revenue and Loan funds and that they are at present running at a loss. We are not told where the additional $79,050,000 is to come from. Under existing financial arrangements, little money will be made available for the upgrading of public transport. Does this mean then that there will be further taxation increases in order to obtain additional funds to meet the expenditure for railway improvements?

It could be well worth while investigating the possibility of our approaching the Commonwealth Government for a revision of the Commonwealth-State transport aid provisions. The public is entitled to know where this money will come from before it agrees to anything in principle regarding the M.A.T.S. Report. Once freeways are built, nothing can be done to them except that they must be maintained. Additional taxation will have to be levied to meet all this additional expenditure in relation to railway improvements.

One could go on for some time finding fault with the programme outlined to us. In my opinion the report should have been investigated at the time it was made available to the Government and before it was released to local government and other interested organizations. In that way any unsatisfactory aspects could have been deleted before they were made public, and a concise plan could have been put before everyone concerned. Because of all the reasons I have given, and because of the objections yet to be dealt with and reported upon by the committee which has been set up by the Government to investigate them, the amendment I have moved should be carried by this Council. The present plan should be withdrawn and a reassessment, as has been suggested in my amendment, should be undertaken by the committee.

The PRESIDENT: It will be necessary for the amendment moved by the Hon. Mr. Bevan to be seconded. Is the amendment seconded?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I second the amendment, Sir.

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

HIGHWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 7. Page 752.)

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Central No. 1): Undoubtedly, the declaration for the introduction of the clearway operating on the Anzac Highway is one reason why the Commissioner of Highways has exercised his right of taking over the control of the highway. However, if this action were challenged, I think it could be found to be illegal in the light of the Anzac Highway Agreement Act. It merely goes to prove that it can be done anyway. Section 6 of the Anzac Highway Agreement Act provides as follows:

> No agreement which is made by way of variation of or in substitution for the Agreement mentioned in section 2 of this Act, and which increases the share of the cost of the Anzac Highway payable by the Commissioner of Highways, shall have any force or effect until it has been ratified by the Parliament of South Australia.

The agreement itself, which is the Schedule to the Act, is lengthy and I do not propose reading it. Section 6, which provides that no agreement made by way of variation of or in substitution for the agreement mentioned in section 2, increasing the share of the cost of alterations to the highway payable by the Commissioner, shall have force until it is approved by Parliament, is to be regarded as distinct, despite the powers bestowed upon the Commissioner himself.

The Bill will clarify the position, and I agree with the action of the Highways Commissioner in taking over the responsibility for the maintenance of the highway in the future, as the councils concerned have now met their financial commitments under the Anzac Highway Agreement Act.

The development of the Anzac Highway and the resurfacing thereof has been paid for pursuant to the provisions of the Act and, apparently, because of these factors the Commissioner has acted in accordance with the Highways Act in notifying the councils concerned that he is prepared to take over the full responsibility in relation to the Anzac Highway.

The Bill removes any doubt that might have existed as to the legality of this matter. If there has been any doubt, the Bill will exonerate the Highways Commissioner for any action taken by him. I support the Bill.

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

ADJOURNMENT

At 3.51 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, August 13, at 2.15 p.m.