LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, August 20, 1969.

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

PETITIONS: COLEBROOK HOME

The Hon. H. K. KEMP presented two petitions signed by 75 and 60 residents of South Australia respectively asking Parliament to take action to prevent the closing of Colebrook Home, to renew its lease, and to grant a licence for its continuance as an Aboriginal children's home under the supervision of the United Aborigines Mission.

Received and read.

QUESTIONS

FIRE HAZARDS

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Has the Chief Secretary a reply to my recent question about fire hazards and risks in modern buildings?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Fire risk and hazard in modern office blocks are matters that come under the provisions of the Building Act. The Building Act comes under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Local Government, but the administration of the Act is left in the hands of the municipal councils and corporations. The Building Act Advisory Committee does, from time to time, make recommendations to the Government concerning suggested changes to the Act and at the present time the Act is being completely revised with the object of improving both the flexibility and the effectiveness of the provisions of this Act. The technical drafting consultant to the committee keeps in close liaison with architects, engineers, the Fire Brigade and others who are concerned with building.

It is intended to use the Australian Model Uniform Building Code as presented by the Interstate Standing Committee on Uniform Building Regulations as a basis for the new Act. In addition to the proposed amendments to the Building Act, a Bill for an Act to supersede the Places of Public Entertainment Act is now in the hands of the Parliamentary Draftsman and the new Act, when brought into force, will provide that adequate safety precautions against fire and panic be taken in many places which are not, at the present time, covered by the existing Places of Public Entertainment Act.

YORKE PENINSULA WATER SUPPLY

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: Some considerable time ago, during the regime of the previous Government, I made some inquiries about water supplies on Yorke Peninsula, and the then Minister of Labour and Industry (Hon. A. F. Kneebone) was good enough to get me a report, which stated:

As soon as a report is received from the Mines Department an investigation will be made and a scheme prepared for the development of the Carribie Basin.

Subsequently, the then Minister of Mines (Hon. S. C. Bevan) was able to get me some further information on the possible development of that basin. In view of the increased needs of Yorke Peninsula for water supplies, particularly as affecting agriculture and tourism, will the Minister of Works investigate ways and means of stepping up the water supply in that area, taking into account the possibility of using the draw-off from the Carribie Basin together with the use of large storage tanks?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I will get a report for the honourable member.

BRANDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 19. Page 998.)

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Midland): I think most matters relating to this Bill have been dealt with, but there are two matters in it with which I do not agree. Consequently, I want to speak on those. Briefly, the Bill sets out to do four things. First, it provides that only postal votes that are in the physical possession of the returning officer at the close of the poll shall be counted. We all know what led to that amendment; it is desirable and I support it. Secondly, the Bill provides that the postal voting procedure shall be simplified, and that is desirable.

Thirdly, it provides that the Court of Disputed Returns shall be constituted by the senior puisne judge of the Supreme Court and by no members of the Parliament, who form part of the present Court of Disputed Returns. As the court has to deal with returns of a legal nature, this is desirable.

Also, it brings the law in this State into line with that in the other States as well as in the Commonwealth sphere. Fourthly, it repeals the clauses relating to the amount of expenditure candidates can incur for electoral purposes.

Clause 10 provides that a writ for an election shall be deemed to be issued from 12 noon instead of from 5 p.m. on the day on which it is issued. This is desirable because it assists in the printing of the rolls, and I cannot see that this provision will inconvenience anyone. Clause 14 amends section 73 of the principal Act, which deals with the question of persons desiring to obtain a postal vote, and an extension is made of the grounds on which a postal vote can be obtained, by providing that members of enclosed religious orders or persons who have some religious objection to voting on a Saturday can obtain a postal vote. Because I am always in favour of meeting the wishes of people with geniune religious beliefs in such a matter, I support the clause.

Clause 14 also provides that postal votes can be applied for as soon as it is obvious that an election will be held. Previously, application could not be made until 10 days before the issue of the writ. I see no reason why people, particularly people in remote areas, should not be given a longer time in which to apply for a postal vote. Clause 19, which amends section 80 of the principal Act, provides as follows:

Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section any person over or apparently over the age of 18 years is an authorized witness within the meaning of this Act.

I am not in favour of that clause because I consider it is important that the returning officer should be able to make certain that the application is witnessed by a person who can be identified. We have on the electoral roll the name of every person over the age of 21 years, but we do not have on the roll the names of people under that age. Therefore, as far as I can see, there is no means by which an electoral officer can determine whether the signature of a witness is that of a genuine person or of a person who actually exists.

The Hon. F. J. Potter: But such a person has to give his address and occupation.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: Be that as it may, there is no easy means of checking whether his address and occupation are correct. If the witness is a voter whose name appears on the roll there is an easy means of ascertaining who he is.

The Hon. R. A. Geddes: Would this amendment mean that a person who is not naturalized could act as a witness?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: Yes, I think it would.

The Hon. R. A. Geddes: The witness himself might not be eligible to vote?

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: That is so. If a person is under the age of 21 years there is no easy means of checking on his address or occupation; such a person is not required to have his name and address recorded at any place. I cannot see that it would inconvenience a person desiring to apply for a postal vote if he had to seek out a person over the age of 21 years because, of course, there are plenty of such individuals in the community. I cannot see why this clause should be included in the Bill; indeed, I am suspicious of its motives. I do not think it would create any further hardship for the public if the clause were limited to persons above the age of 21 years.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: We could amend the Act further to provide that persons of 18 years of age or over could vote.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: You will have some difficulty in getting my support for that.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: We can't win any way.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE: I oppose clause 40, which amends section 155b of the Act. The latter provides as follows:

(1) A person shall not post up or exhibit, or permit to be posted up or exhibited, on any building, vehicle, vessel, hoarding or structure of any kind an electoral poster the area of which is more than 120 square inches.

The Bill extends this size to 1,200 square inches. I am not sure that I favour this provision, but I want to listen to more arguments on it before I say anything more. Section 155b (2) of the principal Act states:

A person shall not write, draw, or depict any electoral matter directly on any roadway, footpath, building, vehicle, vessel, fence, hoarding or structure of any kind. Penalty: £100.

The Bill substitutes the following subsection:

(2) A person shall not write, draw or depict any electoral matter directly on—

(*a*) any roadway or footpath;

or

(*b*) any building, vehicle, vessel, fence, hoarding or structure of any kind without the permission (proof of which shall lie upon him) of the owner of that building, vehicle, vessel, fence, hoarding or structure.

I do not favour making it easier for people to put unsightly electoral matter on private property, buildings and structures, because nowadays there are ample means by which people can make their electoral views known—by television, newspapers and radio. Making it easier to publish electoral matter would create

great embarrassment for many people, particularly in country areas. A person with an interest in displaying electoral matter may go into a shop and say to the owner, "Do you mind if I put up a hoarding at the front of your shop or on the adjoining fence?" The owner is then put in the embarrassing position of saying "No" to his customer if he does not wish his premises to be disfigured. As an owner of premises, I would not like to say "No" to someone who asked me for permission to erect a hoarding on my property. A person who takes a pride in the appearance of his premises does not want them to be disfigured.

We are not doing any harm by limiting the display of this kind of literature. We are not preventing people from getting to know the facts about a candidate's policies and we are not preventing them from getting to know the real issues of an election. Consequently, I do not favour this clause because it will lead: (*a*) to an extension of the disfigurement caused by the indiscriminate posting of electoral material; and (*b*) to the owners of many properties being embarrassed.

I shall have more to say on both these clauses when the Bill reaches the Committee stage. At present, however, I point out, first, that a person witnessing a postal vote application should be at least 21 years of age so that his identity can be checked and, secondly, that we should not change the provisions relating to erecting posters on property simply through making it necessary to obtain the consent of the owner, because he is thereby put in an embarrassing position when asked to give consent. A person with strong political convictions may be embarrassed if a friend wants permission to erect a poster. If a man has no strong political convictions he may be asked by members of two, three or four Parties that all of them be given permission to place their posters on his property.

Even today one sees electoral posters relating to previous elections displayed on property. It looks untidy and does not achieve any purpose. Consequently, I must oppose the clause. Subject to the detailed comments I shall make on the clauses when this Bill reaches the Committee stage, I support it.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES secured the adjournment of the debate.

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

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 14. Page 962.)

The Hon. C. M. HILL (Minister of Roads and Transport): In reply, I wish to make brief comments in answer to points raised by the Hon. Mr. Kneebone when he spoke on this matter. First, he asked some questions concerning customers of the South Australian Railways in Broken Hill, and sought information about their private sidings. Four parties are involved, namely, B.P. Australia Limited, Mobil Oil Australia Limited, Caltex Oil (Australia) Proprietary Limited, and the Shell Company of Australia Limited, and each has its own private siding.

They have, indeed, rail-served depots on Beryl Street, and the New South Wales electricity power station is provided with fuel from a point in the Silverton Tramway Company's yard in Railway Town. Approximately 30,000 tons of fuel is railed from South Australia to these depots annually. In addition, approximately 5,000 tons of merchandise is carried by rail for general merchants with private sidings in Beryl Street.

The transfer of the oil depots to a location outside the business area of Broken Hill is sought by Broken Hill City Shipping and Transport. So far as this State is concerned our interest is in retaining the oil traffic on rail and any arrangement entered into between the oil firms and the Broken Hill City Council which results in the relocation of the oil depots in an area which can be served by rail will be satisfactory to the State. Negotiations are still proceeding between the four companies concerned and the Broken Hill City Council.

The New South Wales Electricity Commission power station cannot, of course, be relocated, and it is possible that oil from the power station will be pumped by underground pipeline from the Crystal Street railway yard. With regard to the general merchants in Beryl Street, delivery will be made to their stores from the railway goods shed in Crystal Street, and no difficulties are expected here.

The Hon. Mr. Kneebone then queried the matter of shunting in Broken Hill. The South Australian Railways will not undertake shunting operations on the mining leases nor, for that matter, to any private or public sidings in Broken Hill. It is a matter for the mining

companies themselves to arrange for shunting on the mining leases, and no announcement has yet been made as to who will do the work. Until this is known, the South Australian Railways has delayed making any arrangements for shunting other areas in Broken Hill, because for obvious reasons it would prefer to negotiate with the same authority as that shunting the mines.

The third matter dealt with by the Hon. Mr. Kneebone concerned his proposed amendment. I shall speak again on this matter in the Committee stage, but I point out that at present it is the firm policy of the South Australian Railways not to have train crews doing any other work in Broken Hill than that of coupling and uncoupling locomotives. I shall reserve further comments on this matter until the Committee stage is reached.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1 passed.

Clause 2—"Operation, control and management of the railway."

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I move:

In new section 4a (2) (*d*) after "(ii)" to insert "rates of salary or wages not being less than".

I consider that it is not possible to say what onerous conditions might apply to work outside of this State. I am not satisfied with the principle of this clause. The Minister has said that the people involved will only couple or uncouple trains, but I cannot see that that is the only work they will do. This provision will apply to all people employed by the South Australian Railways who go into New South Wales, and these could be other than the crews of trains. For instance, it could apply to agents and to other people who are sent to New South Wales from time to time.

My amendment will not have any serious effect on the position, for any employee is protected inasmuch as he could not get less than the rates of salary or wages applying in South Australia. All my amendment does is ensure that an employee must get at least the same rate.

The Hon. C. M. HILL (Minister of Roads and Transport): I stress the point that there is no suggestion that the employee should get less.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: I accept that.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The wording in the Bill is that the rate should be the same. Honourable members will recall that when I introduced this measure I indicated that it was in the nature of an enabling measure to confer on our Railways Commissioner the same powers as he is permitted by the law of New South Wales to exercise in that State in relation to the operation of the railway.

To avoid future difficulties in cases such as this, it is regarded as essential that legislation of this nature should mirror the legislation of New South Wales. This approach is necessary since in this matter the law of this State is only as effective as the law in New South Wales makes it. If our Bill departs in any material particular from the law of New South Wales, a question may well arise in the future as to the lawful exercise of the powers of the South Australian Railways Commissioner so far as they are authorized by that departure. In the question before the Committee, the relevant portion of the New South Wales law is as follows:

Notwithstanding anything contained in any Act, award or industrial agreement—

(*a*) the same terms and conditions of employment, including claims and the settlement thereof under any legislation of the State of South Australia relating to workers' compensation; and

(*b*) the same rates of salaries or wages,

shall be applicable and paid to officers and employees employed by the Commissioner in or in connection with the operation, control and management of the Railway as are applicable and paid to officers and employees employed by the Commissioner in or in connection with the operation, control and management of railways vested in him in the State of South Australia.

This provision appears as subsection (6) of section 8 of the Broken Hill to South Australian Border Railway Agreement Act, 1968-1969, of New South Wales. I draw honourable members' attention to the words "the same rates of salaries or wages" which appear in the passage that I have just cited.

Without canvassing further the merits or otherwise of the amendment, it is the view of the Government that this Parliament should confer on the South Australian Railways Commissioner the same powers as he is permitted to exercise by the law of New South Wales expressed in the same terms. Accordingly, I oppose the amendment.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I am not very impressed by the fact that legislation passed in New South Wales contains a certain term, and I should like to know who drafted that legislation. It seems to me that we are being faced with a *fait accompli* simply because certain words appear in the Act of another State.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: That does not say it is right.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: That is so. Why was New South Wales permitted to put through its legislation before we put ours through? I do not see why its legislation should be paramount. Surely, ours is the paramount legislation, and the New South Wales Act should be following our line rather than our following theirs. What is to prevent us from asking New South Wales to amend its legislation in the same way as I have asked that ours be amended? I maintain that those who advised the New South Wales Government on this matter were wrong. That legislation must have been introduced as a result of discussions between either the two Ministers or the two departments concerned, for I cannot imagine that New South Wales would introduce such legislation without discussing it with us first. Surely, this provision must have been inserted in the New South Wales Act at the request of either the South Australian Minister or the South Australian Railways Department, and I can hardly see the department asking for this type of provision without first having had the approval of the Minister.

The Minister has said that we should pass this provision simply because it is in the New South Wales Act, but I do not consider that a good and sufficient answer. We have had occasions before when Ministers in this Chamber have been criticized for saying that we should do something because it was in the terms of an Act in another State. Here is a provision that affects employees of this State and we are told that we should leave it as it is because some other State has a provision in its Act that applies to employees of this State. I cannot understand the thinking of people who talk like that. My amendment protects the employees of this State. We do not ask for other States to protect our employees: we protect them ourselves.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Prior to the standardization plan, the South Australian Railways Department ran its line to Cockburn, which is on the border. Then, for the 30-odd miles between Cockburn and Broken Hill, which is in New South Wales, there was a private railway run by the Silverton Tramways Company. Then, of course, the New South Wales Railways Department managed its own line between Broken Hill and the eastern seaboard.

When the question of standardization arose, that short piece of line naturally became the focal point of much negotiation and attention. The New South Wales Government took the view that the South Australian Railways Department could carry on with the line, and indeed manage it, within New South Wales right through to Broken Hill; then New South Wales would continue, as it had previously done, to manage its own railway from Broken Hill eastwards. The honourable member talks about which is the principal or paramount State in this issue. There is no doubt that, if he starts making this kind of comparison, New South Wales must predominate.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: In relation to our own employees?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: No—in regard to the general negotiations, because it is New South Wales land; that State's Government had to give us the right to lay our track and to manage our railways over that section, so it did what it had to do to honour this arrangement: it introduced a Bill and gave the necessary powers to the South Australian Railways Commissioner to manage and run his line across that New South Wales territory from Cockburn to Broken Hill. It follows that, having been authorized to do it, it is our place to confirm the power vested in our Railways Commissioner by this Bill.

So, it is a natural sequence of legislation: first, the right given us by New South Wales; then we confirm that arrangement. In the New South Wales legislation the words "the same rate of salaries or wages" appear. What I am asking the Committee to do is to confirm the powers bestowed upon us by New South Wales. I do not wish to be hard on South Australian employees.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: You must have changed a lot.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I am only saying that, while working on the 30 or 33 miles of line eastward from Cockburn, our employees must receive the same wages and salaries as do our local employees all over the State. There is no suggestion that they be paid less or more—only that they be paid the same. I cannot see the strength of the honourable member's argument.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I support the amendment, which does not take away any powers vested in the South Australian Railways Commissioner in relation to standardization, so the Minister's argument that the South Australian Railways Commissioner should have at least the same powers as the New South Wales Commissioner has in respect of this line holds no water. This amendment in no way detracts from the powers vested in the

New South Wales Commissioner. What concerns me is the wording "at the same rates of wages or salaries as pertain in South Australia". On this part of the line employees of the South Australian Railways Department will be working in New South Wales and there can be in the future, as there have been in the past, increases in wages for all railway employees in New South Wales. The present wording would compel the South Australian Railways Commissioner to pay the South Australian rates to his employees working in New South Wales, despite the fact that the New South Wales employees, who would be doing comparable work alongside South Australian employees, would be receiving a higher rate under an award or determination of that State.

What is wrong with the amendment? All it says is that the South Australian employee in New South Wales shall receive at least the same rate as applies in South Australia.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: What is wrong with that?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN: I am not arguing that. I am saying that, under the present wording, South Australian employees working over the border will be deprived of the benefit that applies to all other employees doing exactly the same work in New South Wales. That is all that this amendment is trying to rectify. Is there anything wrong with it? Why should not South Australian employees working in New South Wales receive any benefits to which the New South Wales employees are entitled? If this amendment is not carried, we shall have on our hands immediately discontent and industrial arguments. Surely it is our duty by legislation to try to avoid that happening. I ask the Minister further to consider this matter. We should safeguard the rights of our employees, which is all that this amendment seeks to do.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: As I understand the position, the section of the line in New South Wales will not be operated by men that work only within that State: the standard gauge train will simply be continuing on in a north-easterly direction from Peterborough, through Cockburn to Broken Hill. From what the Hon. Mr. Bevan has just said, the impression may be gained that employees will be changed at Cockburn and that other employees will work over the border. However, to the best of my knowledge there is no thinking along those lines.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Perhaps I created the wrong impression; the paramount part of the Bill is that it affects our employees. In referring to the work done by South Australian employees in New South Wales, the Minister referred to people who were doing coupling and uncoupling work. Also, freight agents and other people might be required to stay in another locality (say, Broken Hill) for some time, and they would be entitled to receive at least a district allowance. These are not the only people who are affected; we have seen the report regarding derailments that have occurred in other parts of this State, and, if another derailment occurs (and no-one says that one will not occur) on the new section of line, South Australian employees will be required to go to New South Wales and to stay there for some time, perhaps a week, to effect repairs. Because of the higher cost of living in the other States, such persons might be placed at a disadvantage compared with their counterparts in South Australia.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: If the cost of living were lower in New South Wales, do you think the employees should make a refund?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: That could happen, but we are concerned to ensure that persons who go to another State are not placed at a disadvantage. I see no reason why such a person should be told, "Bad luck, mate; you have to go to New South Wales where it will cost you more to live but you will get only the same rate of pay as a person working in South Australia." I think the honourable member's interjection is correct: that the cost of living in South Australia, because of the actions of the present Government, could eventually be higher than that in New South Wales. We must protect the people until the Labor Government resumes office and the cost of living here falls.

The Hon. L. R. HART: I think every member agrees that no railway employee should be placed at a disadvantage if it is necessary for him to be employed in another State, but I wonder what sort of precedent we are going to set if we adopt this principle.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: What is contained in the Bill is a precedent, too, don't forget!

The Hon. L. R. HART: Many South Australian employees working under State awards must from time to time in the course of their employment work in other States: I refer to transport drivers, who could find themselves spending much of their time in perhaps three other States.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: But their award covers them.

The Hon. L. R. HART: They are paid by South Australian companies under a State award. How do we adjust the whole matter, because one day a person could be working in one State where the wages were lower, and the next day be in another State where a higher sum was being paid? The fear that members have is that we may be setting a dangerous precedent.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: The honourable member is not conversant with what he is talking about.

The Hon. L. R. HART: I am only trying to get a little logic from Opposition members. The honourable member wants to get it both ways.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: We only want to give them British justice.

The Hon. L. R. HART: That is what I want to do. I do not suggest that a person employed by the South Australian Railways who has to go to another State in his employment should be out of pocket. The Hon. Mr. Kneebone, a former Minister, knows that out-of-pocket expenses are paid to people who are required to work under these conditions.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: The honourable member does not know much about the subject if he thinks that *ex gratia* payments are made to such persons. In some instances, other employees do not have to go out of the State before they receive a district allowance. Indeed, a district allowance of 50c is paid at Whyalla. However, under this clause railway employees will be denied conciliation and arbitration in this matter. Honourable members opposite seem to think I am trying to introduce a new principle, but this principle applies elsewhere. Interstate transport drivers know what remuneration they are going to receive because they are going to other States. Members of this Council as well as other people have talked about the great industrial relations of this State, and they are proud that we have been able to get people to come here to work as a result. Here we are trying to say to anyone who wants to come to South Australia, "All right, you can come here, but we include in our Acts of Parliament a provision that prevents you from going to arbitration."

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: Where does the Bill provide for that?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: On the one hand we have the group of people who work inside the State only. They get one wage, and there will be some other men who should receive a different wage. At present the Bill does not provide that they will have any right to approach arbitration authorities.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: I can't see anything in the Bill that prevents them from going to arbitration.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: It does not say that.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is no need for dialogue.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I will fight as hard as possible to prevent this principle from being adopted.

The Hon. A. J. SHARD: The Bill prohibits employees from going to the arbitration court. New section 4a (2) (*d*) provides that employees shall have the same rates of salary or wages. Let us assume for a moment that it does not prohibit them from approaching the arbitration authorities; what hope would those employees who go into New South Wales have of getting anything? Let us assume that the Railways Department has 5,000 employees and that 50 employees go into New South Wales; does anyone think that those 50 employees will get anything from the arbitration authorities when it would affect all the other employees of that kind in the State? In effect, the Bill provides that the right to approach the arbitration authorities will be taken away from these people. If the amendment is not carried industrial unrest may be created. The Hon. Mr. Kneebone's amendment gives the group of employees the right—only the right—to approach arbitration authorities, but the clause as it stands totally prohibits any approach to arbitration authorities. I suggest that the Minister should report progress and consider the matter carefully, because the principle involved is important.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I think that Opposition members are entirely on the wrong track when they say that the Government is trying to prohibit employees from going to arbitration. However, to satisfy Opposition members and in order that the matter may be fully investigated by all honourable members, I ask that progress be reported.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

TRANSPORTATION STUDY

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

(For wording of motion and amendment, see page 883.)

(Continued from August 19. Page 1003.)

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT (Southern): Numerous books on social history make it quite clear that ever since mankind has used

the wheel as a form of locomotion he has had transport trouble. These same books make it even more clear that the coming of the internal combustion engine, coupled with the wheel and followed by the provision of mass-produced, cheap transport, added to that problem with devastating effect. Historically, very few roads have been built with a view to the needs of the coming generation: almost entirely they have been built to meet the needs of past days or the needs that existed when they were built. Very seldom were they built to meet the needs of future days. In this respect Adelaide is extremely fortunate in that its original plan was laid out by a visionary whose roads have stood the test of time for a century or more.

It has been said that the Metropolitan Adelaide Transportation Study is a plan for the future, but not everyone will agree with that. The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill said yesterday that it was not a plan for the future, but we all agree that some sort of scheme is necessary. The point at issue is whether this plan, as it has been produced, is good. The question is: how adequately does it provide for the future and the overall benefit of metropolitan Adelaide and the State as a whole? It must be remembered that we cannot benefit one without benefiting the other.

Among submissions from those who have lobbied me, as they have lobbied other honourable members on this subject, one submission contained the remark that London, with 20 times the traffic of Adelaide, manages to cope easily (I think the submission said "smoothly and efficiently"). As a Londoner born and bred, I challenge this statement. Travel in London as long as I have known it has been a headache and, unless my correspondents completely lack perception, it is still a headache. Is the M.A.T.S. Report as sound and practical a scheme as can be devised for Adelaide's future? Will it make future planning impossible, as some of its opponents claim? These points have caused restlessness in many people's minds. Whether this programme, politically and from the community's viewpoint, has been skilfully handled has been discussed, but it is not the point at issue here today.

The point is whether this plan is a good one or not and whether it is worthy of continuation. When it was first introduced the Government very fairly presented it to the people and allowed a period during which they could consider the plan and express an opinion on it. The Government also gave an assurance that the views expressed during that period would be considered. Bearing in mind various alterations made to different sections of the plan, it is obvious that such consideration was given to views expressed by various people and to the pressure applied by the general public.

Another submission made to me by letter contained the remark that letters were "put straight into the waste-paper basket". Well, not all letters have gone "straight into the waste-paper basket", bearing in mind the amendments to the plan that have been made because of pressure exerted by the public. It has also been said that "public transport is the poor man's alternative". I do not believe that, because it is fundamental that a good transport system be provided in urban community life.

However, it cannot be disputed that a man buys a motor car to use, and if he is to use it then he needs adequate roads. Bottlenecks into and out of urban districts and city areas have been a headache all over the world. I referred earlier to London, and I assure honourable members that when I was living there traffic conditions were painful in the extreme, frustrating beyond measure, and conducive to a motorist taking reckless risks in order to gain a few minutes' time. All those things led to a higher accident rate than necessary. This recklessness, this sense of frustration, this sense of bad temper—all are human nature and all are conducive to a higher accident rate. In due course came the day when "fly-overs" and other similar structures, which are essentially freeways, were erected and they have been increasing steadily in numbers over the years. However, these have not eliminated difficulties but have made traffic conditions bearable and prevented a complete grinding to a halt of the transport in that city.

Returning to our own State, and speaking as one who lives outside the metropolitan area but travels into it regularly, and also represents a district that has to rely heavily on road transport, I am forced to ask myself how this long-term plan will ease or aggravate the problem of the metropolitan dweller; will his goods and produce, and his person, get into the city more readily and easily? If so, will that be at the expense of local and metropolitan transport? In thinking along those lines, I cast my mind back to the city of Tokyo about three years ago. Each morning I travelled from my hotel to a conference centre the other side of the city. It was a patchy journey, with areas where the taxi could speed freely and in comfort,

compared with other areas where the traffic was snarled right up. At one particular set of traffic lights where we stopped most mornings I could look up at two higher levels of roadway. I was on the base road, with one road above me and another above that. Traffic at those different levels was proceeding to different destinations but moving smoothly and freely: the traffic travelling along freeways on those higher levels had previously been travelling on the ground floor where my taxi was situated.

Yet one need keeps impressing itself on my mind in connection with M.A.T.S.: what effect does this plan have on the metropolitan dweller himself? Dwellers in the metropolitan area are of necessity exposed to the pressure of close living, to atmospheric pollution, and to noise. All these factors were brought home to us by His Excellency the Governor-General in his speech on this subject a few days ago. However, M.A.T.S. cannot be blamed, because that situation existed long before such a scheme was proposed; but, as individual dwellers, some must suffer more than others as a result of this scheme. That cannot be otherwise if land has to be acquired and property taken.

One thing is important: that in establishing such a claim the Government must ensure complete and adequate recompense for personal, domestic, and even industrial loss. Yet how does one equate what has been a home for some people during the last 30 or 40 years? It may be humble, with market value almost nil, but it is the place where certain people expected to see out the rest of their days. Just how does one equate it in these circumstances? One thing must exist, surely: not only human justice but generous mercy. Is this scheme a planner's dream that puts the machine first and man's needs second? Man certainly has limited rights and a limited place on roadways now, with certainly very limited safety, and any plan, therefore, must not add to those problems but must increase the degree of safety and means of access.

Cuts have recently been made in the plan, but can we be assured that these have not seriously disturbed the overall picture of the plan? We are glad the changes were made, but one is forced to ask if the changes were really necessary in the original plan if they have since been cut out. If they were really necessary, can we be assured that, now certain portions have been deleted, the total concept has not been irreparably harmed?

Man on the road is quite different from man in his own household environment. In the former he is placid and passive, but in the latter, on the road, he has been described as "a demon in charge of a monster"—and not always in charge! We have larger cars, more powerful cars, faster cars; some of them are in the hands of elderly people, people who by reason of age and infirmity are no longer considered fit even to sit in an office and work, yet they have these faster, larger, and more powerful cars available to them.

In addition, more cars are in the hands of youngsters, who taste speed as a heady wine. If we are to permit these vehicles, allow them to be used and to be available to anybody with sufficient money in the bank, then surely it is logical that roads be made suitable for such traffic. If we are to permit trucks to travel at speeds that cause more prayers to go up from the roads than ever go up from churches, prayers from very frightened road users, then surely the roads must be made safe for the people.

Socially and professionally I deplore the effect of the "community squash" in cities where the machine is nurtured and human beings, in the very nature of things, have to be bent to a mechanized life and needs. As I see it, the whole problem and subject of M.A.T.S. has been bedevilled by one group of persons trying to score off another, instead of all of us regarding this as some exercise in the interests of the need of the community of which we are all members.

Like other honourable members in this Chamber, I want to see the dignity and the gracious splendour of Adelaide ruined no further. Will this be achieved by allowing traffic congestion to increase at its present rate, including the present toll of life and limb, because as the traffic problem increases so does the toll of death and serious injury increase?

It is worth bearing in mind here that some 50 per cent of all accidents occur at cross roads. Therefore, it is not enough just to remove isolated obstacles in danger spots, for that would not really be enough even if there were to be no increase in the use of the roads. Every year more and more traffic congests our main arteries and leads to chaos and, consequently, increased inadequacy.

We have all been pressured through the post, at meetings, by press articles and letters by people who are trying to influence our decisions, and rightly so. However, speaking personally, behind all this and all that I have read and heard there has been a back-drop of personal

experience gained over years of having been on the receiving end of the results of accidents, mishaps and collisions in which people have been injured or even killed. In one accident seven people were killed and, in another, one person was killed and three others had legs amputated. So one could go on, literally *ad nauseam*.

I can recall some years back going to a meeting at which the speaker was the Hon. L. H. Densley, the honourable gentleman whose retirement led to my coming to this Council. I asked the Hon. Mr. Densley how soon there could be a fly-over some four miles beyond Murray Bridge on the Tailem Bend road where up till then there had been only a narrow dangerous crossing. Time had gone by and people had been asking for this, and we still went on asking for it. Then we found that within some 24 months there had been 18 serious accidents, quite a number of them including fatalities. In due course the fly-over was built, and there has not been one serious accident there since.

The cost of that fly-over must surely have been met already over and over again, bearing in mind that no more people have been killed at that spot. The community as a whole has benefited from this, and in particular families have gained. Surely that same principle applies on a broader scale to the M.A.T.S. plan or to any other similar plan. The Hon. Mr. Kemp, speaking in this debate a day or two ago, said that freeways had reduced the injury rate to one-quarter of what it had been previously. I do not dispute that figure; I cannot agree with it exactly because I do not know the figure, but I know that it is somewhere about that.

Mr. President, as I see it, some transport scheme is vital. The M.A.T.S. plan has been put forward as an integral whole. As I see it, this scheme could have been put forward piecemeal year by year or perhaps every other year and the public would never have known where it was going. Therefore, one must respect the Government for having put forward the scheme as a whole. However, like other members, I would not be happy, assuming that this motion is carried, if this plan were to be subject to more cuts, modifications, increases and alterations, with their inevitable effects and uncertainties upon local residents, without some reference to this Parliament.

Like others in this Chamber and outside, I consider that a scheme of this magnitude, both financial and mechanical, has tremendous social and human overtones, and this must not only be kept in the minds of our planners but the way they are dealt with must both satisfy and appear to satisfy those people who are disturbed in mind (and some of them are being disturbed literally in body) by the implementation of such a scheme.

I would just like to say a word about expenditure on country roads during the period of implementation of this plan. The Government has said that expenditure on country roads will not suffer. However, people outside the metropolitan area still have to be completely convinced that this will be the case and that the local needs will be met. Whilst I and my fellow non-metropolitan members of this Council fully recognize the needs of the city and suburbs, I am sure that the Minister of Roads and Transport himself would agree that we have a duty to make sure that no step detrimental to the rural areas will be taken.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I agree with that wholeheartedly.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: I am sure that proper emphasis of the interests of the rural roads in the minds of the rural dweller is something that must be going on all the time whilst this M.A.T.S. programme is either being considered or being implemented over the coming years.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Chief Secretary): I rise in this debate mainly to offer the Council certain explanations on some points that have been raised by various honourable members in this debate. I compliment the members who have spoken. I listened attentively to the Hon. Mr. Springett speaking about something that really is a public health matter, namely, the question of providing roads on which the toll of accidents will not be as great as it is at present. At a later stage I will present to the Council certain figures on this aspect.

I think the Council appreciates that the Minister of Roads and Transport will reply in this debate to the main questions that have been raised in regard to the M.A.T.S. plan. Nevertheless, certain matters have been dealt with in this debate on which I believe I should pass some comment. I had hoped—and the Government had hoped—that this debate would have been conducted on a plane above the pressures of Party politics, where all aspects of the plan could have been debated and examined rationally and reasonably. I assure the Council that the Government did

not wish this issue to become a straight political issue. I think the Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill very rightly pointed out yesterday that the ability of this Parliament and particularly of this Council to discuss the question in this atmosphere has been very effectively throttled by its becoming a rank political issue.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: That was only a result of what your own Leader did.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I welcome that interjection, and perhaps we can examine it.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: Have a look at *Hansard* and see what he said.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I do not need to look at *Hansard.*

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Of course, you don't want the facts.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I think I would be contravening Standing Orders if I quoted *Hansard.*

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Then quote the *Advertiser.*

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I do read the *Advertiser,* and it is quite obvious from reading the *Advertiser* that the Premier in another place was challenged about this being a confidence motion.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: I challenge you to produce that statement anywhere in *Hansard.* You can't do it.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I can quote from the *Advertiser*—

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Yes, but we are quoting what the members said, not what the *Advertiser* said.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I can quote from the *Advertiser* where this was a headline. The next morning I was somewhat concerned because, if this challenge was made—and I am a great believer in the fact that the *Advertiser* would not report this matter—

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: I challenge you to look in *Hansard* and see what was actually said. Which is the official record—the *Advertiser* or *Hansard?*

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: When this was done, it placed the Government in a very difficult situation.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: It was not done in the *Advertiser.*

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: The Labor Party wanted to have things both ways—

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: You do not want the facts to come out.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: —so that, irrespective of what happened, it could then say the Government was not game to make it a no-confidence motion. I can give this Council the assurance—

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Why don't you quote what the members said?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: — that it was never the Government's intention that this matter should reach the point of being a political fight, as it is at present.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Why don't you—

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Let us look at the history of this matter up to this point of time. In 1966-67 planning legislation was passed by both Houses of Parliament. In that legislation we adopted a Metropolitan Development Plan, including a plan for transportation. As I say, it passed both Houses of Parliament and included a provision for 97 miles of freeway in the metropolitan area. I do not think any honourable member here will deny this fact, that we passed and agreed to the adoption of the 1963 plan for transport for Adelaide, which included 97 miles of freeway in the metropolitan area. During that period, of course, the M.A.T.S. was under way, and the previous Government made no attempt whatsoever to prevent this study proceeding. Indeed, I believe the last Government made a specific request to the consultants to have this report published by February 1, 1968; and certain sums of money were made available to the consultants to enable them to expedite their work to get the present M.A.T.S. Report published and issued.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: Who made the sums of money available?

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: I thought you accused us of holding it back?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: This was the situation.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: It was not the situation.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Yes, it was. Also, the report was seen by the previous Cabinet and, no doubt, the very conscientious Cabinet, having seen it, would have studied it closely.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: That is a deliberate lie.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: You are saying it was not a conscientious Cabinet?

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: I am saying that the report was not available to any member of the previous Cabinet; nor did they see it.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: I deny that we ever saw the report.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: My information is that the previous Cabinet did see the report.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: It is a deliberate lie.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: No, it is not.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: It is a deliberate lie.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I am prepared to say this, that I will check my information, but I believe on the information I have that the M.A.T.S. Report was available—

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: It was not available.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: —to the previous Cabinet.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: The present Minister, too, knows it was not available.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I am saying that on the information I have—

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: Your information is definitely wrong.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: That may be as it is, but I am certain that the Hon. Mr. Bevan would not deny the fact that his Government made a specific request that this report be published before February 1, 1968.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: I was always on their back to try to get the report made available.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Up to this point, we have reached the stage where Parliament has accepted a town planning Bill, in which was included a Metropolitan Development Plan for transport that included 97 miles of freeway in the metropolitan area. The previous Government proceeded with and actively pushed forward the M.A.T.S. proposals.

The Hon. A. F. Kneebone: The study, not the proposals.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: We had no alternative: the contract was let before we took office.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Then suddenly we have a purely political matter, and I am in complete agreement with the Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill that this has reached the point of being a political issue of the worst sort. One can study this and see how far this matter has gone in relation to bringing it down to a purely political level. I quote from the *Border Watch* of Tuesday, August 12, where it is reported that four critics of the M.A.T.S. plan being debated in the House of Assembly went to Mount Gambier and said:

Scrap the M.A.T.S. plan and instead build a second South Australian city of 500,000 people, in the South-East.

I do not think anyone has been a keener advocate for the South-East than I have in my time but, for goodness sake, let us keep our feet on the ground. The point is clearly this, that during the next 20 years we shall be spending in the metropolitan area about $400,000,000 (possibly more) out of a probable allocation of $1,200,000,000 for roads in South Australia. In other words, in all probability we shall be spending $400,000,000 in the metropolitan area and $800,000,000 in areas outside the metropolitan area. This amount of money will be spent irrespective of whether any decentralization occurs in the South-East or on the Murray or in the gulf area or on Eyre Peninsula. Those are the plain facts and figures that, irrespective of whether or not we implement the M.A.T.S. plan, this amount of money will be spent over this period of 20 years.

What the M.A.T.S. plan does, of course, is to attempt to set a blueprint to which the departments involved with transport can work, subject to variations that will occur during that period. I think all honourable members will agree that in any plan, whilst we can have a blueprint, there must be a degree of flexibility and change. No plan for a period of 20 years can be completely static; I think we all accept that. Nevertheless, there is a need for some blueprint, particularly for the metropolitan area. The Government could equally bring forward a detailed $1,000,000,000 plan proposed for transport for country areas, because this is the amount that will be spent in the next 20 years in South Australia on transport matters outside the metropolitan area. It is quite obvious to anyone examining this matter that this is not a critical situation, that a plan for an area outside the metropolitan area where this amount of money will be spent on railways, roads, and bridges is not critical; but, where we have a closely settled area like the metropolitan area, surely some blueprint is vitally necessary.

These amounts of money will be spent, as I say, irrespective. Also, they will be spent within the bounds of the present taxation measures. The acceptance of this plan does not envisage increases in taxation or new levels of taxation for its completion. The fear expressed by many members that country people will be taxed to provide road services for the metropolitan people is completely without foundation. I refer to the *Border Watch* of Tuesday, August 12, in which Mr. Burdon said that country people would be

affected the same as those living in the metropolitan area as far as the financial proposals for the M.A.T.S. plan were concerned. He is implying there that country people will be taxed to provide amenities for the city. However, that is completely unfounded and is an intrusion of political fear in relation to this problem.

I will refer now to some figures for the next five years that have already been provided by the Minister of Roads and Transport. It is expected that $131,000,000 will be spent on country roads and bridges during the next five years, such sum not including expenditure on railway transport, and that $89,000,000 will be spent in the metropolitan area. I am prepared to take this matter a step further and say that if M.A.T.S. or some other development plan is not adopted and we return to the previous plan that was passed by Parliament, or if we proceed on an *ad hoc* basis, the financial burden over the 20 years will be considerably more. I believe it to be a factual assessment that country people have more to fear by a rejection of this plan than they would by its acceptance. I am convinced that unless some firm proposal is adopted (if we proceed without a plan), the overall cost over the 20-year period will be increased.

Many matters that have been mentioned in this debate should, I believe, be answered by the Minister of Roads and Transport. However, I should like to examine the question raised by the Hon. Mr. Springett and the Hon. Mr. Kemp regarding the relationship between highways and health matters. I do not think we have fully accepted that the most important public health matter before us at this time is the death, carnage and injury that is taking place on our road systems. If we in South Australia experienced a poliomyelitis epidemic that put into hospital only one-tenth of the people who are put into hospital as a result of road accidents, there would be an outcry throughout the length and breadth of the State.

When the expenditure of large sums of money is being contemplated, any Government needs to look carefully at the relative expenditure taking place in different fields. The aim must always be to achieve the best value for money, and one way of ensuring this is to see that expenditure agreed to in one direction will have the effect of reducing the need for expenditure in another direction. We have seen many examples of this principle in the field of health in recent years: the Salk vaccination campaign against poliomyelitis was an expensive one but it is now almost six years since a new case of that unfortunate disease has occurred here. The national campaign against tuberculosis that was carried out by all States and by the Commonwealth Government has cost $195,000,000 in 20 years, but its benefits in human terms have been incalculable.

Of course, economic and developmental benefits have been derived as well. The two most striking examples centre around the closing of the Bedford Park Sanatorium and the Morris Hospital as hospitals for the treatment of tuberculosis. The former provided a ready-made and magnificent site that has been and is being used so admirably for this State's second university. Morris Hospital has become a first-class unit for the care of paraplegics.

While the Government views with satisfaction the provision of these excellent and necessary facilities, I am sure that this Council as well as the Government deplores the growing need for facilities for the long-term care of those who, often through no fault of their own, are condemned to a life of permanent paralysis and limited mobility. The toll of life and limb on Australian roads is a growing one, and South Australia is no exception to this nation-wide trend. There has been some reduction year by year in the numbers killed and injured in relation to total motor vehicle registrations, but a sharp increase in death and injury figures continues, both as an absolute total and for each 100,000 of population.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: The freeways will add to that.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: It is rather odd that the honourable member should say that, because that is not so.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is absolutely untrue.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: At present about 30 Australians out of every 100,000 are killed on the roads each year compared with 20 out of the same figure in 1960. In an attempt to find the real reasons for this change, many authorities are analysing traffic accidents in relation to place and time of occurrence, the type of people involved, the vehicle involved, the road conditions and many aspects of human behaviour. The National Health and Medical Research Council is beginning to look at this as a public health matter. Enforcement, education and engineering are put forward as the lines along which remedial action must continue to develop.

As Minister of Health, I find myself charged with the responsibility of providing facilities

for more and more sophisticated (and therefore expensive) medical care processes. I refer to kidney transplantation, open-heart surgery and nuclear medicine, all of which are examples of areas of medical pioneering in South Australia.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: Do you think the Health Department should pay for pedestrian overpasses?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: That is a most important point. I think I shall return to the Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill's point.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: We heard enough about this yesterday.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: There is probably a case for this point, and this is the only respect in which I agree with the Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill: in relation to motor taxation, there is the question of the drain upon the funds of the State in regard to motor accidents. I cannot agree with the rest of the honourable member's argument.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill: You will hear more about it later.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I expect so. The modern tragedy is that the provision of these life-saving facilities to apply the results of research already done is constantly and, indeed, increasingly hampered by the need to provide care for the ever-growing stream of more and more severely injured people with which our hospitals are faced. Injuries are becoming more severe year by year. Not only has there been an increase in the number of people injured on the road, but also there has been an increase in the severity of these injuries.

A survey taken in Western Australia showed that, in 1958, accident victims had, on average, 1.94 body regions injured. In 1966 the figure was 3.66 body regions injured. One can see, therefore, that there has been an increase not only in the total number of injuries but also in the severity of injuries. In 1968 more than 4,000 South Australians were admitted to hospital as a result of road accidents. I have referred to admissions to hospital but, of course, there are other kinds of injury as a result of which the injured person does not go to hospital.

There is, of course, a wide variation in the length of time accident victims remain in hospital, but the average stay appears to be about 14 days. On this basis, road accident victims in one year took up 112,000 bed-days of hospital care in South Australia. With hospital bed costs now in the region of $20 a day, the cost of hospital in-patient care alone of road accident victims is now greater than $2,240,000 a year. I need hardly emphasize that there are many other costs, both human and economic, that arise directly from traffic injuries. There is also the question of the direct involvement of the taxpayer in many of these costs but, of course, there are more distressing matters than these. The question of the wastage of life, particularly young life, and the question of injury to a productive life must be considered.

Turning back to the question of the provision of freeways, I want to refer the Council to House Document 93 submitted to the 86th United States Congress entitled "The Federal Role in Highway Safety". In this document it was concluded from carefully studied experience that full control of access, whereby entrance and exit movements to and from the through-traffic lanes are limited to designated points where these movements can be performed safely, has been the most important single factor in accident reduction yet developed. The freeway, where no intersections at grade are permitted, is the most advanced type of controlled access facility.

The biggest single factor in the urban accident problem in metropolitan Adelaide or anywhere else is the intersection. Half of all metropolitan accidents occur at intersections. Freeways have the important effect of eliminating intersections, but even conversion of a major road to a dual carriageway has a major effect in reducing accident and injury, probably because it reduces the number of decisions a driver has to make at any one time.

We are considering in this proposal the expenditure of many millions of dollars that will be spent in any case, but this proposal channels this expenditure to improve traffic flow in the face of rising population and ever-increasing demands upon our road system. I put it to honourable members that there is an additional and important benefit—a dual benefit, both human and economic—to be gained from that expenditure. The extent of the reduction of the toll of death and injury and the extent of the need for hospital facilities for care of the injured are not easy to predict in relation to any specific plan of road improvement, but I can say quite confidently that the development of freeways and limited access roads in other countries and in our neighbouring States has been the biggest single factor in checking the growing threat to life and limb that we have all been experiencing in recent years.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: Have you looked at the American figures?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Yes.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: Do you still stick to your statement?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Yes. Figures I have show that in 1959, before it had a freeway, Melbourne had the highest road death rate of any city in the world—it was 50 per cent higher than that of the worst city in the United States of America—and there is no doubt that freeways have reduced the incidence of road injuries.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan: They have not done so in America.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: That is incorrect. I should like the honourable member to present his figures to the Council, because all the figures I have present a completely different picture.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The rate comes down from seven to two deaths for every 100,000,000 vehicle miles.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Yes, and there are many reasons for it. There are no intersections and no cross-traffic on freeways. Opposing streams of traffic are separated by a wide median strip, and there is no side activity, because pedestrians, bicycles and horses are not permitted on freeways. Because they are entirely new roads, freeways can be designed to a high standard and can incorporate the latest safety innovations. Many studies carried out overseas have indicated quite clearly that the accident rate applying to freeway traffic is about one-quarter of that which applies to normal arterial roads. This is shown in any study that the Hon. Mr. Bevan likes to consult on this question.

There is no doubt that implementation of a freeway system in the metropolitan area will create much safer conditions on metropolitan roads than would be the case if the proposals were not proceeded with. It has been estimated that there will be a saving of 350 lives on the completion of the freeway system in metropolitan Adelaide. The reasons for this and the facts and figures can be borne out quite easily by a study of any oversea figures. In metropolitan Adelaide in 1968 there were 19,850 accidents and, of these, 4,633 involved personal injury or death.

Let us consider the economic cost of this carnage. We can assign a cost to these accidents by taking insurance figures, although they do not truly reflect the cost of accidents to the community. They represent only a portion of the monetary cost involved and make no allowance at all for the cost in terms of suffering and social consequence. The insurance figures give an average cost of an accident that does not involve injury of $650, and an average cost of an accident involving injury or death of $2,150. On the basis of these figures, the monetary cost of accidents last year was almost $20,000,000.

If measures such as the M.A.T.S. proposal or some other development proposal are not introduced in metropolitan Adelaide and traffic conditions continue to deteriorate, we can expect by 1986 a total of 47,650 accidents annually—and about one-quarter of these will involve personal injury or death. I think this Council will agree that these are staggering figures, and the cost would be even more staggering—about $48,000,000 annually. With the full implementation of the M.A.T.S. proposals or the development of freeways, we can expect a substantial reduction in these figures for both the number of accidents and their cost.

A study of this matter has recently been undertaken in Melbourne in connection with the transportation proposals for that city. In the Melbourne study it has been estimated that the proposals would effect a reduction of 33 per cent in the accident rate. In any study we have done on this matter we have used the figure of 25 per cent, but the Melbourne study recognized that the reduction would be of the order of 33 per cent. In the Melbourne study the recommendation is that one mile of freeway be constructed for every 12,000 residents in the city of Melbourne, whereas our present proposal, which reduced the 1966-67 proposal on freeways from 97 miles to 60 miles, provides for one mile of freeway for every 25,000 residents in the metropolitan area.

However, I again emphasize that the amount of money to be spent in the metropolitan area on a development plan of this nature will be spent in any case, and it will not in any way reduce the amount of money that will be spent on country transportation development in the ensuing 20 years. I said I would not answer other questions which I know that the Minister will answer in closing this debate. However, there were some matters referred to by honourable members on which I wanted to make some comments.

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

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.12 p.m. the Council adjourned until Thursday, August 21, at 2.15 p.m.