

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday, October 14, 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: 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. J. SHARD: On August 12 this year I directed a question to the Minister of Roads and Transport regarding the Islington railway crossing. In his reply, the Minister said:

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.

The Minister went on to say that he shared my concern regarding the hazards of the crossing. He also said:

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.

Whilst I appreciate that these attempts are to be made to ensure safety, this, to my mind, is only begging the question. Now that the M.A.T.S. plan has been debated in Parliament and agreed to in part, can the Minister tell me how long it will be before this particular question is decided and also when it is expected that the design of the over-pass will be completed?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I will refer this matter to the Highways Department, where the design and planning engineers are, I know, engaged on some of the preliminary work concerning the over-passes that have been approved in principle in the M.A.T.S. plan, and I will bring back for the Leader the information that he seeks.

TRAFFIC SIGNS

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: I seek leave to make a short statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Roads and Transport.

Leave granted.

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN: My question relates to recent statements in the press by the Minister regarding uniform traffic signs throughout Australia. I have noticed that we now have a complexity of signs along roadsides. The colour yellow is used to indicate our school signs, particularly, and red is used for "stop" and "give way" signs. However, we find that the use of these colours by other people along the roadsides for advertising purposes is becoming more prevalent. For instance, the Municipal Tramways Trust uses yellow for its own signs. Moreover, the driver of a vehicle is now faced with these colours in private advertising and, at the same time, he has to drive under increasingly complex traffic conditions. Can the Minister say whether, in considering the advisability of uniform signs throughout Australia, consideration was given to using a more distinctive colour or to controlling the use of the colours yellow and red on roadside advertisements and commercial signs?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The question of the actual colour used in the various signs along our roads will be dealt with in considerable detail when the manual being prepared by the Australian Committee on Road Devices (known as A.C.O.R.D.) is finally produced. The honourable member has made a very worthwhile point in regard to many of our local signs, and I agree with him that the colours vary considerably.

I shall have a word with the Road Traffic Board on the subject of what may be termed local signs, such as bus stop signs and other signs in the country. However, I point out that my recent remarks were directed more at the other States of Australia and at the need for general uniformity between the States.

The position is that South Australia conforms almost entirely to the signs specified in the Australian standard CE/1/1960, Australian standard rules for the design, location, erection and use of road traffic signs and signals, generally known as the S.A.A. Road Signs Code.

Since the publication was prepared in 1960, there has arisen the need for minor modifications to some of the signs given in the code and also the need for additional signs for specific purposes. These modifications and additions have been considered by the State road authorities and have been adopted for general use in each State.

South Australia does comply with these national standards to a greater extent than any other State. The newly formed committee

known as A.C.O.R.D. is currently preparing a manual (to which I referred earlier) of uniform traffic control devices for Australia. Differences in practice between individual States in the use and application of the signs and devices will be resolved to some extent by the publication of this manual.

CITRUS INDUSTRY ORGANIZATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

OPTICIANS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

GOODS (TRADE DESCRIPTIONS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Minister of Agriculture): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It has been introduced to assist the Commonwealth Government to become a party to an international convention. Last year at a meeting of the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General the Commonwealth Attorney-General requested that amendments be made in the laws of each State to enable Australia to become a party to the Lisbon Revision of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property. As legislation regarding trade descriptions is administered by the Ministers of Labour in each State, the Attorneys-General of the various States referred the matter to the Ministers of Labour. At their recent conference all of the State Ministers of Labour agreed to introduce the necessary amending legislation.

The Goods (Trade Descriptions) Act of this State is substantially in agreement with the provisions of the convention. The only amendments required are to provide that the trade description of goods shall include reference to the suitability of goods for the purpose for which they are advertised, and to include reference to the characteristics of goods in the definition of trade description. These amendments are effected by clause 3. As the Act has not been amended since 1935 and the penalties have now been altered to show amounts as decimal currency, they have been increased somewhat to accord more with the current value of money. These amendments are effected by clauses 4 and 5.

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

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

The PRESIDENT: I notice in the gallery a distinguished member of the United Kingdom Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in the person of Sir Harmar Nicholls, J.P., M.P., and I ask the Hon. the Chief Secretary and the Hon. A. J. Shard to escort Sir Harmar to a seat on the floor of the Council.

Sir Harmar Nicholls was escorted by the Hon. R. C. DeGaris and the Hon. A. J. Shard to a seat on the floor of the Council.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2)

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The total appropriation proposed in this Bill is \$246,606,000. This, together with expected payments of \$81,655,000 authorized by special Acts, gives a total of \$328,261,000 for proposed payments in 1969-70. Receipts are estimated at \$326,021,000 and the formal Budget estimate is, accordingly, a deficit of \$2,240,000. However, it is obvious that the State will face increases in wage and salary awards not as yet determined. The extent of those increases could be of the order of \$5,000,000. Assuming this figure, some compensating increase would naturally occur in the tax reimbursement grant and, on past experience, this could be about \$1,800,000. On such a basis, the combined effect of the two factors could be a net increase in the deficit of about \$3,200,000. This would carry the prospective deficit to \$5,440,000.

In giving these estimates, I would point out that they are made against the background of a continuing firm control of expenditures and the expectation of virtually a full year's yield from the previous year's extensive revenue-raising measures. The Government believes it has done all that could reasonably be expected of it to frame a responsible and practicable Budget and the main question that now remains to be answered is, "To what extent will the Commonwealth Government be prepared to make supplementary grants available?"

Last year, the State secured supplementary assistance of \$3,350,000. Unfortunately, this year we must proceed without any assurance, other than that the Prime Minister will meet the Premiers in the new year to review financial

arrangements. The Government intends to continue its efforts to secure an additional grant sufficient to balance this year's accounts and, in concert with all other State Governments, to secure a more satisfactory arrangement for future years. Before dealing with the Bill in detail, I shall comment briefly on the events of last year and estimated receipts for this year.

The Revenue Budget presented 12 months ago forecast a nominal surplus of \$21,000. However, it was known that new wage awards were bound to become effective during the year, and Parliament was aware that a realistic forecast was for a significant deficit unless the Commonwealth Government could be prevailed upon to make additional grants available or there should be some quite unexpected lift in the State's finances. The adverse impact of additional awards is calculated to have been about \$4,100,000. As the total of actual payments was only \$2,611,000 in excess of the original estimate, it may be seen that the unavoidable extra wage and salary costs were offset by economies and savings in expenditures elsewhere of almost \$1,500,000. Looking at receipts, we see that new and adjusted Commonwealth grants were about \$5,017,000 in excess of the estimate. Therefore, as the total of actual receipts was only \$3,050,000 above the original estimate, it follows that there was a net shortfall of other revenues of almost \$2,000,000. The net effect of all these factors was to give a small surplus of \$460,000.

Before giving details of the ways in which these and other factors influenced the receipts and payments of individual departments, I refer briefly to the accounting for Whyalla Hospital. The hospital was to have been vested in the Government in October, 1968, and the estimates of both receipts and payments took that expectation into account. It took longer than expected to resolve all outstanding matters and the vesting was deferred until July, 1969. While this had no appreciable net impact on the Budget, it did mean that appropriation for running expenses directly from the Budget was not required, and that receipts expected to go directly to the Budget did not occur, but that grants were necessarily increased beyond the original provision, to the extent that the running expenses exceeded the current receipts of the hospital.

Taxation receipts overall were \$32,000 below estimate. The major variation was in stamp duties receipts, which eventually fell \$412,000 below estimate. New and increased rates of duty operated about one month later than

planned. Gift duty receipts fell \$91,000 short of estimate. The volume and value of liquor turnover was below estimate, and revenues were lower for that reason by \$167,000. On the other hand succession duties exceeded estimate by \$222,000 mainly because of an increase in numbers of higher value successions. Receipts from motor vehicle taxation exceeded estimate by \$393,000.

The decline of \$600,000 in railways cash revenues from the estimate was the main variation in business undertaking receipts. The carriage of grain to the seaboard was less than estimated due to slower sales and reduced availability of shipping from South Australian ports. The delay in shipment of grain affected harbour receipts which fell \$253,000 below estimate.

Revenues from water and sewer rates were \$310,000 below the earlier forecast due to reduced usage of water during the mild summer and lower billing for excess. A review of the forestry operations in March last showed a rate of recovery less than expected and accordingly further transfers to the credit of Revenue Account were deferred pending a review of the undertaking's 1968-69 accounts. Receipts were \$480,000 below estimate.

For miscellaneous departmental charges, recoveries and fees, there were many variations both above and below estimate, the net effect being a shortfall of \$278,000. The largest individual variation was in receipts of the Hospitals Department, \$636,000 below estimate. Of this some \$400,000 arose out of the deferment in the vesting of Whyalla Hospital, and the remainder from the later implementation of new scales of patients' fees.

The improvement beyond estimate in Commonwealth grants arose from three factors. In the first place, at a conference in March, 1969, the States convinced the Commonwealth Government of the seriousness of the common difficulty of meeting major wage awards and other current Budget problems, and as a result the Commonwealth agreed to make available an additional grant of \$12,000,000 to be shared among the States. South Australia's share of that total was \$1,350,000.

In the second place, this State had lodged a detailed submission for further grants to assist in overcoming our long term and intractable Revenue Budget problem. The Commonwealth, on being satisfied that the State was doing all that could reasonably be expected to help itself by exercising economy and by substantial taxation measures, approved a special grant of \$2,000,000 late in the financial year

In the third place, it became apparent quite late in June that the factors which are used in the calculation of the annual taxation reimbursement grant had varied more than originally expected. In particular, the finally determined increase in the level of average wages disclosed a marked improvement, and as a result the total payment for the year to South Australia was \$1,667,000 above the first estimate. The combined effect of the three factors was to increase Commonwealth general purpose grants by \$5,017,000.

I have mentioned that payments last year were \$2,611,000 above estimate, that the cost of awards after the framing of the Budget was about \$4,100,000, and that accordingly net savings and economies elsewhere were almost \$1,500,000. Despite the fact that other payments in total were some \$1,500,000 below the aggregate appropriations approved 12 months ago it was necessary for Parliament to consider Supplementary Estimates totalling \$1,235,000. This was because the net saving of \$1,500,000 was the result of a large number of variations, some above and some below estimate. Under appropriation procedures, excess expenditures for one department may not be offset against savings by another department.

For those items for which appropriation is contained in special legislation, there were excesses above estimate aggregating \$1,113,000. Increases of \$693,000 in debt services and \$454,000 in transfers to the Highways Fund were offset to only a minor extent by decreases in superannuation and other provisions.

For the railways undertaking, the excess of payments above original appropriation was only \$461,000 despite the fact that the cost of awards subsequent to that appropriation amounted to \$1,220,000. The saving in other payments was due partly to reduced train operation resulting from slower grain movement, and partly to the effects of other economies. The Engineering and Water Supply Department was able to contain payments to a total \$540,000 less than the appropriation. This was achieved after meeting an additional cost of about \$154,000 for awards. Reduced demand for water pumping through the two major pipelines resulted in savings of \$478,000 in power bills. Economies were also achieved in general operation.

After meeting additional costs of more than \$400,000 for new awards, the Hospitals Department recorded payments which in total were \$870,000 within the approved appropriation.

Almost \$700,000 of the under-expenditure as shown was due to the deferment of the vesting of Whyalla Hospital in the Government. The total of grants and other payments listed under Chief Secretary—Miscellaneous exceeded the earlier appropriations by \$228,000—the net result of increased grants of \$275,000 to Whyalla Hospital, offset by small savings elsewhere. The services of the Education Department required payments aggregating about \$1,508,000 above the amount originally provided by Parliament. This corresponded quite closely to the additional cost of new awards, which had a relatively heavier impact on the Education Department than on any other department. The appropriations listed under Minister of Education—Miscellaneous were exceeded by \$276,000 because of additional grants to the University of Adelaide and the South Australian Institute of Technology. The cost of awards and unavoidable commitments in the maintenance, repair and servicing of various Government buildings led to an excess of \$473,000 in the payments of the Public Buildings Department.

The estimated total of receipts in 1969-70 is \$326,021,000, which would be \$27,666,000 more than actual receipts last year. They may be summarized as follows:

	\$
Taxation	56,066,000
Public works and services— charges, recoveries and fees	143,407,000
Territorial receipts	3,140,000
Commonwealth grants	123,408,000
	<u>\$326,021,000</u>

The estimate for taxation is \$5,993,000 in excess of such receipts in 1968-69. Land tax receipts are estimated at \$7,600,000, that is, \$44,000 below the amount collected last year. Taxpayers reduced arrears during last year and the amounts awaiting collection at the end of June, 1969, were less than they were 12 months earlier. It seems reasonable to expect that last year's rate of growth in motor vehicle taxation receipts will be maintained this year, and an increase of \$807,000 to a total of \$14,500,000 is estimated.

The estimate of \$20,153,000 for stamp duty receipts of all kinds forecasts a major increase of \$5,020,000 above the actual receipts of 1968-69. The increase set down in the Budget papers had regard to the new revenue-raising measures introduced last year and to the probable effect of increased volume and value of business. Revenue from succession duties is extremely difficult to estimate. Based upon the

experience of the past five years or so, a total of \$9,000,000 is forecast, an increase of \$178,000 above last year's actual receipts. Upon review of the rather small amount of information available after a part year's operation of the new gift duty, receipts from this source in 1969-70 are estimated at \$550,000. Liquor tax receipts are estimated at \$3,000,000, or about \$367,000 above last year. The increased fees introduced last year will operate for a full year.

Having regard to the elimination of the winning bets tax as from July 1, 1969, the increase in turnover tax and an expected small increase in bookmakers' turnover, the estimated receipts of the Betting Control Board from betting taxation are expected to decline this year to \$485,000, that is, \$614,000 below last year's receipts. The revenues from Totalizator Agency Board operations which are paid to the credit of the Hospitals Fund will for the future more than offset the elimination of the winning bets tax.

Receipts from public works and services are estimated at \$143,407,000, an increase of \$15,087,000 above the actual receipts of 1968-69. The receipts from the operation of the State's Marine and Harbors Department in 1969-70 will depend very largely on the shipment of grain, as this will affect both wharfage and the revenues from bulk handling installations. In the light of present storages and the harvest outlook, it is expected that receipts will increase by some \$53,000 to a total of \$6,600,000.

The fares and freights of the railways services are estimated at \$30,500,000, an increase of \$1,150,000 above such receipts last year. This estimate has regard to the probable movement of grain from inland storages to the seaboard and to recent improvements in the carriage of merchandise and in interstate freight traffic.

An increase of \$2,410,000 in receipts from water and sewer rates and charges for excess water is expected this year, bringing total collections to \$26,200,000. The major part of the increase is expected to flow from adjustments in rating and charges effective from July 1, 1969. Recoveries of interest and sinking fund are expected to reach \$27,963,000, an increase of \$1,979,000 above such recoveries last year.

The estimate of \$33,875,000 for receipts from miscellaneous departmental fees and recoveries is \$5,029,000 in excess of actual receipts in 1968-69. Recoveries for education purposes are expected to increase by \$1,933,000

due to higher Commonwealth contributions to match increasing State provisions for universities and colleges of advanced education, and to Commonwealth grants for science laboratories, technical colleges, teachers colleges and secondary school libraries. Receipts for the Hospitals Department are estimated to increase by \$2,545,000 due to the operation of the Whyalla Hospital as a Government hospital from July, 1969, to increased patients' fees and Commonwealth benefits, and to the greater contribution available from the Hospitals Fund.

The revenues of the Hospitals Fund arise from the operations of the Totalizator Agency Board, the surpluses of State Lotteries, and the stamp duty on third party insurance policies. It is estimated that \$4,000,000 will be available from these sources in 1969-70, an increase of \$808,000 above such receipts last year. The Government proposes that \$1,450,000 will be allocated to cover increases in maintenance grants to non-government hospitals, leaving \$2,550,000 available towards meeting the rapidly-growing costs of Government hospitals.

Territorial receipts are expected to increase by \$703,000 to a total of \$3,140,000. The larger part of the increase will arise from royalties on minerals. The first contribution, estimated at \$200,000, of royalties on natural gas will be received this year, and royalties on iron ore are likely to be some \$200,000 above 1968-69 receipts because of greater production and some higher rates of royalty.

Having regard to the current levels of wage and salary earnings, the taxation reimbursement grant from the Commonwealth, calculated in accordance with the statutory formula, is estimated at about \$122,000,000 for 1969-70. This would be an increase of \$9,232,000 above the actual grant received last year. As I indicated, some increase above this estimate may be expected as a result of further salary and wage awards, but the increased recovery will be far less than the cost to the Budget for additional salaries and wages.

Proposed payments in 1969-70 for purposes for which appropriation is contained in existing legislation are \$81,655,000. Public debt payments are estimated at \$68,612,000, an increase of \$5,830,000, the Government contribution towards superannuation pensions at \$4,011,000, an increase of \$177,000, and the transfer to the Highways Fund at \$8,010,000, an increase of \$90,000.

The amount to be appropriated by this Bill, \$246,606,000, is the difference between total estimated expenditure for the year and payments already authorized by special Acts. Clause 3 sets out the details of the requirements of each department. I will now give honourable members a brief outline of the larger and more interesting appropriations sought to continue and expand these activities during 1969-70.

Police Department, \$10,271,000—This is an increase of \$557,000, or almost 6 per cent above actual payments last year. The recruitment policy of the department is to rely almost completely on the cadet system rather than on adult recruitment, and the provision this year is designed to permit an increase in cadet strength from 410 to 450. It is estimated that some 120 cadets will graduate each year and be available to join the active strength of the Police Force.

Prisons Department, \$2,131,000—The proposed expenditure in 1969-70 is \$271,000, or 14 per cent, in excess of last year's payments, and this will enable the appointment of 13 additional prison officers, four additional probation officers, and an officer to manage prison industries.

Hospitals Department, \$27,606,000—This provision is \$3,452,000 above actual expenditure in 1968-69 and includes an amount of \$1,066,000 for the staffing and operation of the Whyalla Hospital, which was vested in the Government from July 1, 1969. The increase available for other hospitals is thus \$2,386,000, or about 10 per cent above last year. During 1969-70 the new north wing at the Royal Adelaide Hospital will be progressively occupied as staff becomes available, and the training of nurses for Modbury Hospital will be continued and extended. The Morris Hospital, previously conducted as a tuberculosis unit, has now become part of the Royal Adelaide Hospital organization, and its services will include the treatment of paraplegic patients. Provision has been made for the continued expansion of the mental health services with the opening of the new Strathmont Hospital, a hostel at Marden Hill, and a diagnostic and advisory centre at Hyde Park.

Department of Public Health, \$1,269,000—This is an increase of \$152,000, or 13½ per cent above expenditure in 1968-69, and particular emphasis has been given to the needs of the school dental services. The first female dental therapists have completed their two-year training period and are providing

dental services to schoolchildren in country areas. Clinics have been established at Whyalla, Port Augusta, Port Pirie and Peterborough, and new clinics are being built at Renmark and Murray Bridge. The total number of therapists at present under training is 32.

Chief Secretary and Minister of Health—Miscellaneous, \$7,820,000—Included under this appropriation are the grants and subsidies to non-government hospitals and other institutions providing medical and health services which, this year, are estimated at \$7,592,000. Of this total, \$1,450,000 is expected to be met from the Hospitals Fund, leaving a net impact against Revenue Account of \$6,142,000.

The basis for contributions required to be made to hospitals by country local authorities has been reviewed this year. Previous levies on councils varied from less than 3 per cent of rate revenue in some instances but rising considerably above this figure in many other areas. The Government has agreed that in no case shall a council be levied in excess of 3 per cent. The resultant relief to councils will be offset by increased Government grants, and \$80,000 has been provided for these purposes this year.

Engineering and Water Supply Department, \$13,416,000—After setting aside \$370,000 for this State's share of the estimated cost of maintenance incurred by the River Murray Commission, and \$1,280,000 for electric power for pumping through the three major mains to Adelaide, Whyalla and the Lower North, a total of \$11,766,000 is available for the general costs of operation and maintenance of water and sewer services. Because of the mild summer last year actual costs of \$722,000 for electricity for pumping were well below the estimate of \$1,200,000. Although there was a good carryover of stored water from last year, and a satisfactory winter intake, it is not reasonable to expect a summer so abnormally mild as last year's. Accordingly, \$1,280,000 has been provided for the three mains this year.

Public Buildings Department, \$9,056,000—This is an increase of \$1,173,000, or 15 per cent above actual payments last year. The significantly increased provision arises from a careful review of the state of maintenance of Government buildings, which indicates that it is necessary to step up the maintenance expenditure this year to ensure the proper protection of existing assets. Provision has been made for maintenance costs of \$1,650,000 for

education buildings, \$1,240,000 for hospital buildings, \$310,000 for police and courthouse buildings, and \$620,000 for other Government buildings.

Education Department, \$60,709,000—The amount proposed this year comprises \$59,821,000 of State funds and \$888,000 of Commonwealth grants towards equipment for technical colleges, science laboratories and teachers colleges, and books and equipment for secondary school libraries. The increase in State funds is \$5,189,000, or about 9½ per cent above payments in 1968-69. The record salaries provision of \$48,537,000 is designed to allow for an additional 550 appointments to the teaching, lecturing, specialist, advisory, and guidance staff, and for a student intake of 1,550 into teachers colleges. Employment of additional ancillary staff equivalent to 246 full-time appointments is proposed during the year and for the first time provision has been made for clerical assistance in primary schools.

Funds have been allotted for the fourth instalment of equal pay for female teachers and for increased allowances to students in teachers colleges. Essential equipment for teaching mathematics in primary schools, previously provided on subsidy, will now be supplied at Government expense. From January 1, 1970, the annual boarding allowance for students in the first four years of secondary schooling will be increased from \$150 to \$180 and that for students in the fifth year will be increased from \$200 to \$230.

Also, from January 1 next the annual book allowance is to be increased from \$18 to \$24 for fourth-year secondary students and from \$20 to \$26 for those in fifth year. Honourable members may be interested to learn that the increase in funds for the department this year is second only to the unavoidable increase in debt services.

Libraries Department, \$1,125,000—This is an increase of \$112,000, or 11 per cent in excess of actual payments last year. The proposed expenditure for staffing, purchase of books, and other running expenses of the State Library is \$906,000, and \$219,000 has been set aside as subsidies to match the contributions of 22 local government authorities towards buildings, equipment, books and operating expenses of 32 country and suburban libraries.

Highways and Local Government Department, \$4,537,000—This provision is part only of the activities of the department and comprises the administrative and head office

expenditure for the year. The actual construction and maintenance costs of road and bridge works are charged directly to the Highways Fund.

The major portion of State funds available to the department comprises the net collections of motor vehicle taxation and the road maintenance contribution charged on vehicles with a carrying capacity of eight tons or more. Under the Commonwealth aid roads legislation, recently renewed for a further five-year period, increasing annual allocations of funds are made available by the Commonwealth for roads purposes. It is estimated that a total of \$38,015,000 of new funds will be available to the department in 1969-70. Of this total, \$16,100,000 will be provided from State sources, \$21,000,000 from the Commonwealth, and \$915,000 from repayments by councils. Including the use of about \$3,000,000 from the balance available at the beginning of the year, a total programme for roads purposes of \$41,015,000 is proposed.

Railways Department, \$35,417,000—The amount proposed is \$2,092,000 greater than actual payments last year. Included in the increase is a special provision of \$600,000 for deferred maintenance following the report of the expert committee that investigated the cause of derailments. Increased funds for this purpose will be required for a number of years. Provision has also been made to cover the cost of awards and for additional train running.

Department of Social Welfare, \$3,694,000—This represents an increase of \$362,000, or 11 per cent above payments in 1968-69. The appropriation comprises \$3,034,000 for normal services, and \$660,000 for the payment of public relief. Provision has been made to cover costs of internal training courses for probation and welfare officers, for increased payments to foster parents of children placed out by the department, and an amended scale of public relief assistance.

Department of Aboriginal Affairs, \$1,794,000—This provision is \$106,000 above payments last year. In addition, it is expected that the Commonwealth Government will provide \$495,000 as compared with \$350,000 last year for Aboriginal welfare. Particular emphasis will continue to be given in the fields of education, employment, housing and health.

I turn now to the clauses of the Bill. Clause 2 provides for the further issue of \$166,606,034, being the difference between the amount authorized by the two Supply Acts. (\$80,000,000) and the total of the appropriations required in this Bill. Clause 3 sets out

the amount to be appropriated and the allocation of the appropriation to the various departments and functions. The clause also provides that, if increases of salaries or wages become payable pursuant to any determination made by a properly constituted authority, the Governor may appropriate the necessary funds by warrant, and the amount available in the Governor's Appropriation Fund shall be increased accordingly.

The clause further provides that, if the cost of electricity for pumping water through the Mannum-Adelaide main, the Morgan-Whyalla main, and the Swan Reach-Stockwell main should be greater than the amounts set down in the Estimates, the Governor may appropriate the funds for the additional expenditure, and the amount available in the Governor's Appropriation Fund shall be increased by the amount of such additional expenditure. Honourable members may recall that in previous Bills the provision for unforeseen pumping covered the additional costs in respect of bores in the Adelaide Water District, but did not, of course, extend to the newly-constructed Swan Reach to Stockwell main. The provision in respect of bores was required in the very dry year, 1967-68. However, in present and prospective circumstances, it appears more reasonable that the clause be kept relatively simple, that the three major pipelines be specified, but that the reference to bores be deleted. Following the recent rains and further run-off since early September, it is most unlikely that the special provision will be required this year.

Clause 4 authorizes the Treasurer to pay moneys from time to time up to the amounts set down in monthly orders issued by the Governor, and provides that the receipts obtained from the payees shall be the discharge to the Treasurer for the moneys paid. Clause 5 authorizes the use of Loan funds or other public funds if the moneys received from the Commonwealth and the general revenue of the State are insufficient to make the payments authorized by clause 3.

Clause 6 gives authority to make payments in respect of a period prior to July 1, 1969. Clause 7 authorizes the expenditure of \$4,000,000 from the Hospitals Fund during 1969-70 and of \$1,300,000 in the early months of 1970-71 pending the passing of the Appropriation Bill for that year. Clause 8 provides that amounts appropriated by this Bill are in addition to other amounts properly authorized. I commend the Bill for the consideration of honourable members.

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

MOTOR VEHICLES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 9. Page 2111.)

The Hon. L. R. HART (Midland): Because of changing circumstances it is necessary from time to time to amend the Motor Vehicles Act. One could engage in a long preamble on this matter, but I do not intend to do so. The Bill falls into two main parts, the first of which proposes to make certain corrective amendments and to bring the Act up to date, and the second of which introduces the points demerit system.

All members are no doubt pleased that clause 3, which amends section 12, widens the list of exemptions from registration of farm implements and tractors. In relation to their implements and tractors farmers have to deal continually with two Acts—the Road Traffic Act and the Motor Vehicles Act—both of which were designed in the main to apply to motor vehicles rather than to farm implements. However, the definitions are such that many farm implements are caught by these two Acts, much to the disadvantage of the primary-producing industry. I am pleased that the Minister has seen fit to introduce this clause to broaden the list of exemptions from registration of farm implements.

Perhaps one reason why farmers are involved with these two Acts is the action of over-zealous police officers. In many instances a farmer faces prosecution not because he has been apprehended on a main road for a traffic offence involving his driving capabilities but because he has been caught on a back road driving from one paddock to another an implement or tractor that does not comply with the provisions of either the Motor Vehicles Act or the Road Traffic Act. It is therefore pleasing to see that provision has been included for widening the list of exemptions.

The Minister did not explain fully some clauses, particularly clause 5, which deals with the duty of the Registrar to vary the registration number allotted to a motor vehicle. Honourable members may wonder why this clause is necessary, but no doubt the Minister will explain this when he replies later. Perhaps also clause 8, which deals with the power weight of motor vehicles, could have been more fully explained in the second reading explanation. Members know that different types of

vehicle coming on to the road today do not comply with the Act and that provision must be made to cover them.

Clause 9 deals with the list of vehicles that can be registered without fee, and it is pleasing to see that this list has been widened. On February 20 I asked a question about the possibility of bringing into the category of motor vehicles that can be registered without fee a vehicle used by a local government body to control and eradicate noxious weeds. Previously, a vehicle would have to be used exclusively for this purpose before it could be exempted in this respect. The Bill provides that a motor vehicle used for such control and eradication (and I assume this means an inspection of areas where the weeds are likely to be found) will be an approved vehicle under the Act. Paragraph (c) of the same clause provides for the exemption of:

... any motor vehicle owned by, and used for the purposes of, the Lyrup Village Association.

My investigations indicate that that is an association with a very long history, dating back to February, 1894, when several of these village associations were set up. I believe the Lyrup Village Association is the only one that still exists. Back in 1894 when it was established, it consisted of about 90 villagers; at present the association still administers control over its water pump and its irrigation area. I am pleased that provision is made in the Bill for the exemption of vehicles owned by that association.

Clause 23 deals with the points demerit scheme. The first part of the clause deals with the prescribed number of demerit points and prescribed offences, these matters to be provided for by regulation. Other honourable members have referred to these matters and some have indicated that they should be dealt with by the Act rather than by regulation. At first sight, one would tend to agree with this point of view but, on closer examination, as this is new legislation in which we are inexperienced, I think it is better that it be done by regulation. There may be a need from time to time to make changes in the regulations.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Couldn't it be done by a Bill?

The Hon. L. R. HART: That is the point. If it is to be done and it is done in a schedule, a Bill will be necessary before changes can be effected. This delay may not enhance the safety of the general public. For instance, there may be too many

offences of a certain type, and this can be corrected quickly by regulation. After all, Parliament does eventually have some say in regulations, although admittedly a regulation can come into force at a time when Parliament may not be sitting; but we must realize, too, that we cannot change the Act by an amending Bill unless Parliament is sitting. I believe it would be better at present for this to be done by regulation. It will still be subject to review by Parliament, which is what I think honourable members want. After all, we must have some confidence in Executive Council, which will look at this matter closely. From time to time we shall need to alter the number of points to be allotted for a particular offence. Admittedly, we have some guide at present in the legislation of other States, but even their legislation has not been in operation for a long period.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: In some States it has not been in operation at all.

The Hon. L. R. HART: Admittedly, that is so, but perhaps we can be guided in the regulations we make by those States where this legislation is in operation. Therefore, I am inclined to support the Bill as it is in respect of the prescribed number of demerit points.

The prescribed offence, however, worries me more than the prescribed number of demerit points does, particularly when we look at new section 98b (2), which states:

In this section, "prescribed offence" means a prescribed offence against this or any other Act, the commission of which offence, in the opinion of the Governor, demonstrates any deficiency in the standard of proficiency or care exercised by the person convicted of the offence in driving or controlling a motor vehicle, or in maintaining the motor vehicle in a safe condition.

That is a very wide category. Let us consider the effect of this provision on the primary producer. At present, primary producers are being prosecuted for not having safety chains on their cultivators when taken from paddock to paddock; they are being prosecuted, too, because they are slightly overweight with a load of wheat or because their vehicle may be slightly over the allowable load width. Admittedly, these are offences, but they are not offences against safe driving. In most cases these offences are occurring on back roads, where they would not make any significant contribution to lack of safety on the roads.

The Hon. Sir Norman Jude: These offences actually appear in the Act, and so do the penalties.

The Hon. L. R. HART: That may be so, but I am rather concerned because there are several Acts involved—the Motor Vehicles Act, the Road Traffic Act and the Police Offences Act—and a person would not know what offence he was committing until such time as it was detected; and then he might collect some demerit points. Also, he does not know the number of points he will collect, but we can leave that part of it to judgment, provided we know the offences that are liable for demerit points.

I fully support new subsection (6), which provides that the Registrar must, where possible, notify a person when he has accumulated a certain number of points. At this stage, one wonders whether some corrective treatment should be introduced. With other honourable members, I believe that corrective treatment is important in reducing road accidents. It is mostly a matter of when such treatment should be considered. I know it can be ordered by the court after a first offence has been committed, but it may not have been ordered up to that point of time. The Registrar must now notify the person concerned of the number of points recorded against him.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: What do you mean by "corrective treatment"?

The Hon. L. R. HART: If he is given corrective treatment, he may not accumulate the extra points that would lose him his licence. There is no doubt that corrective treatment is effective.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: How do you carry it out?

The Hon. L. R. HART: There are many ways of doing it—for instance, at the police driving school.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: I go along with that.

The Hon. L. R. HART: One of the most effective methods at the present time is training schoolchildren. A recent report issued by the South Australian Police Department stressed the desirability of driver education in schools. The report also indicated that secondary school students in South Australia who had been trained by instructors of the police driving wing committed 100 offences in

the ensuing three years compared with a total of 379 offences recorded against a similar number of young drivers who had not been given training by the police driving wing. This proves beyond doubt that driver training under proper supervision is effective. Paragraph (16) of the points demerit scheme reads:

If the Supreme Court is satisfied by evidence given on oath by or on behalf of the appellant that it is not in the public interest that the licence be suspended, it may order that the aggregate of the demerit points recorded against the appellant be reduced by a number not exceeding one-quarter of that aggregate.

In some instances it is not the driver of a vehicle but the owner who is at fault, and in these cases it is the owner who should have points awarded against him rather than the driver. That would apply especially in a case of overloading a vehicle. The driver of an overloaded vehicle could incur demerit points if convicted of the offence, but he may not have known that the vehicle was overloaded. The responsibility for the overloading could well lie with the owner. If it were proved that the driver was not aware of the overloading, then perhaps that would be an instance where some concession should be given.

In the interests of safety I think the Bill has much to commend it. No doubt other speakers will comment on various aspects of the Bill during the second reading debate, and as it will be dealt with clause by clause in the Committee stage one will have a further opportunity of contributing to the debate then. At the present time I am prepared to support the second reading.

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

TEXTILE PRODUCTS DESCRIPTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

FOOTWEAR REGULATION BILL

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

ADJOURNMENT

At 3.26 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, October 15, at 2.15 p.m.