LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday, September 11, 1973

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

His Excellency the Governor's Deputy, by message, intimated the Governor's assent to the following Bills:

Aboriginal Lands Trust Act Amendment,
Consumer Credit Act Amendment,
Consumer Transactions Act Amendment,
Fair Prices Act Repeal,
Money-lenders Act Amendment,
Police Act Repeal,
Public Purposes Loan,
Unemployment Relief Council Act Repeal,
Weights and Measures Act Amendment.

QUESTIONS

ESCAPED PRISONERS

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I seek leave to make a brief statement before asking a question of the Chief Secretary.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I am certain that most people in the State are concerned about the ease with which two convicted murderers escaped from the Wayville Showgrounds last week. From the statements he has made, I am led to believe that the Chief Secretary, too, shares the same concern. Is he prepared to make a statement to the Council on this matter?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Being sure that honourable members would like to hear a statement from me on this matter, I have had one prepared. I point out, however, that the statement is not the complete answer to what I have requested, as those concerned in the Prisons Department could not supply me with the reports I have been seeking in the time allotted to them. I will be receiving a much fuller report from the department in addition to this statement, which describes how the prisoners were selected and how the operation at the showgrounds was conducted.

The escaped prisoners, Farnsworth and MacDonald, were convicted of murder and commenced terms of imprisonment on October 6, 1967, and July 29, 1970, respectively. At that time, Farnsworth was 22 years of age, MacDonald was a juvenile aged 17 years, and neither had any previous convictions. As with all prisoners, they have been subject to periodic assessment by the Classification Committee of the Prisons Department. The committee consists of the Deputy Comptroller of Prisons (Mr. K. Skegg); the Superintendent of Yatala Labour Prison; the Chief Prison Officer; the two supervisors of industry; and a probation and parole officer. Experience over many years has shown that the assessment of prisoners by the Classification Committee has worked well and has been of marked importance in the rehabilitation of prisoners. Farnsworth has been reviewed by the Classification Committee on 12 occasions, the last being on May 17, 1973, and MacDonald has been reviewed on seven occasions, the most recent being August 24, 1973.

The Classification Committee's reports on both prisoners and psychological reports on both have been most encouraging. As a result, both prisoners were transferred to C Division, the minimum security area of Yatala Labour Prison. Both prisoners have been out of the precincts of Yatala Labour Prison on a number of occasions with the puppet group prior to the episode at the Royal Adelaide Show. On these occasions when they are outside the prison, opportunities for escape are obviously greater than they would be if they remained inside the walls of the prison. This group activity is acknowledged to be a creative rehabilitation measure, but it is obviously impossible to conduct the show inside the prison walls. It is, therefore, an essential part of the programme that the shows must be conducted in public venues.

In hindsight, it is clear that, despite the apparently excellent response of these two prisoners to the treatment being received, they apparently decided to make this escape when an appropriate moment arose. In this sense, it must be admitted that a mistake was made in respect of these two prisoners, but this incident should not invalidate the selection processes followed by the department in the terms of office of both this Government and some previous Governments. The Government is most concerned about the escape of Farnsworth and MacDonald, and every effort is being made by the Prisons Department and the Police Department to locate them and return them to custody. If they are located outside of South Australia, extradition processes will follow.

The puppet show at the showgrounds involved 15 prisoners, who were at all times supervised by two prison officers in civilian clothes. In all, on a roster basis, 10 prison officers were involved and their reports indicate clearly that they had no cause to suspect any trouble. This was further borne out by periodic unscheduled visits to the puppet show by senior officers of the Prisons Department. The behaviour of the puppeteers was so exemplary that, when time permitted, they visited neighbouring exhibits, but plainclothes officers were in the area. As mentioned earlier, there was no reason based on departmental knowledge of the prisoners involved to suspect that any might have tried to escape.

At 5.30 p.m. on the day of the escape, all prisoners were present for tea and were in the area ready to commence the first evening show at 7 p.m. At 6.50 p.m., three prisoners were discovered to be missing. A search was made of the immediate area to see whether these prisoners were assisting with the crowd, which had been done previously. They could not be located, and Yatala Labour Prison was immediately notified. Immediately, the Assistant Comptroller (Institutions) was informed and he went immediately to the showgrounds. The Superintendent of Yatala Labour Prison came from his home to the prison and detailed the Deputy Superintendent and the duty Chief Prison Officer to proceed to the showgrounds to make inquiries. At the same time, the Police Department was informed. All relevant details of the prisoners were given to the police and an immediate guard was placed on all exits from the showgrounds. Senior officers then remained on duty until 12.30 next morning, maintaining communications with the Police Department. Information given led to the early sighting of the third escapee and his eventual arrest. All other members of the puppet group were questioned at length and the department is satisfied that none of these men suspected what was to happen, and indications are that the decision to abscond was made on the spur of the moment.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I thank the Chief Secretary for his statement. He has said who makes the recommendations in this regard. Does he or Cabinet have an overriding authority in connection with recommendations made

to allow convicted murderers to be involved in activities such as those at the showgrounds?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: No. I certainly gave approval for the unit to operate at the showgrounds, as was done on several previous occasions in the time of the present Government and in the time of previous Governments. The classification committee, which was mentioned, is involved not only in this work: it also classifies prisoners when they first come to the prison in regard to the work that they do and whether they should be in maximum security, medium security, or minimum security. The prisoners in the minimum security division also fight bush fires and do other jobs that take them out of the prison; this is part of the rehabilitation process. They are given work to do under supervision in areas where there is minimum security; the committee is responsible for that. If the committee had to approach Cabinet with every suggestion regarding the transfer of a prisoner from one type of security to another type, its efforts would be completely stultified.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: I am hardly suggesting that.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking a question of the Chief Secretary.

Leave granted.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: It was pleasing to see that the Chief Secretary showed much concern about the escape of the prisoners. From reading an article in this morning's newspaper, it is obvious that the Chief Secretary is agitated because these men are at large. It is also obvious to me that the recommendation that leniency be extended to some prisoners is the responsibility of someone. Clearly, there are shortcomings somewhere in the organization, whether they be in connection with the terms under which the committee works or in connection with the personnel engaged in this work. It is not good enough simply to say that these naughty boys have not done what they said they would do; it must be remembered that the authorities are dealing with people such as Farnsworth and MacDonald. I believe that the system needs a thorough overhaul. Does the Chief Secretary plan to change the terms of reference under which the committee works or perhaps to change some of the personnel of the committee?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: The situation as I see it is that in this case the committee has made an error of judgment, but one must realize that the committee has examined and reclassified perhaps a thousand prisoners a year, placing them in various classifications each year, and that this has been going on for many years.

The Hon. A. M. Whyte: It could be a fatal error in some cases.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Mistakes have been made possibly on two occasions—one six years ago and the one at the weekend. Certainly, an error has been made in the classification of these people, but I have yet to receive the full written report on the matter and to discuss with the members of the classification committee their reaction to what has happened. I want to do this. As to terms of reference, these are highly skilled people who have had long experience in this area. Why not look also at the successes of the system and at the number of people rehabilitated? How many people, as a result of the rehabilitation received in Yatala, have been paroled and released, some after committing major crimes? As a result of the treatment meted out in this area they have been able to make good in the community and have not returned to gaol, nor have they committed similar crimes. Parole has been extended to many people who have committed crimes similar to those committed by these two people, and they are now back in the community after being rehabilitated and returned to society.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: I seek leave to direct a question to the Chief Secretary, and before doing so I ask leave to make a short explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: When I read of the escapes from the showgrounds area last weekend, I was very much aware of what would be passing through the mind of the Chief Secretary and the minds of many of the staff at Yatala, because for some years I worked in an institution that dealt with people similar to those who have escaped. In over 60 years involving the release of selected prisoners, not one of the murderers released had repeated his crime, but everyone knew it could happen; certain risks obviously have to be taken at times. It seems to me, however, that to have only two men guarding 15 people, including people in this category, shows a rather naive trust in the word of people who obviously will use every effort and opportunity to escape if their mental condition is such that they are not prepared to serve their term of sentence. It seems wrong to me that, in a place such as the showgrounds, where thousands of people, including children, are milling around, folk such as these two men are put into a situation where they can escape and even may be tempted, God forbid, to commit; similar crimes again. Is consideration being given, not as a result of this escape but perhaps even before this had happened, to the establishment of proper half-way type of houses where people from gaol can be sent, under gradings of security, until they have reached the stage where they can be released with reasonable safety into the community?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I have already said that a mistake or an error of judgment was made concerning these two men. I also believe that security was not what it should have been. Regarding half-way houses, a committee is at present studying the Mitchell report on various aspects relating to pre-release work, and as soon as that report has been evaluated I will consider the matter raised by the honourable member.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: When replying to the Hon. Mr. Whyte the Chief Secretary said that the full report of the committee was not yet available. When that report is available will it be tabled in Parliament?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: When I get the report I shall consider tabling it. However, some of the reports I shall get will be individual reports from various people, including prison officers, and in some circumstances it may not be advisable to publish them. I will endeavour, however, to get a summary of the report, which I will make public.

ENTRANCE QUALIFICATIONS

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: In this week's *Sunday Mail* there was a report concerning LaTrobe University that gave the results of 19 students who were admitted to that university as unqualified students. On Saturday the university announced that all 19 students had passed in all subjects and that none of the experimental students had the Higher School Certificate which, in Victoria, is the normal university entrance qualification and that all students had had limited periods at high school. Of the

students, 13 per cent produced A grade passes, another 15 per cent B grade honors and an additional 30 per cent of exams produced C grade passes. Nearly one-third of total passes were with honors, which is nearly three times the university average. This result is of much interest to people with students attending schools where university entrance courses are not available. There are many schools in the country, and I am in no doubt that the Minister is aware of this, where qualification courses for universities or colleges of advanced education are not available. Will the Minister consider a different method of entrance qualification where the qualification course is not available, either because of the lack of students or staff at the school, so as to give the students the opportunity of qualifying for tertiary education at a lower level?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I will refer the honourable member's question to my colleague and bring down a reply when it is available. 1 would be interested to see the report quoted by the honourable member because I thought at one stage he was going to say the report had access to the answers to all the questions. However, it does seem an enlightening statement.

SALE OF PIPES

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: I understand the Minister of Agriculture has a reply to the question I asked on August 22 about the sale of certain pipes.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: The pipes referred to by the honourable member are some of those which were taken up by Hinton Demolitions Proprietary Limited. The Engineering and Water Supply Department expended considerable sums of money in placing the pipes in stacking areas, and legal action is proceeding to recover this money. Tn the meantime the sale of the pipes has been frozen by the court and they cannot be sold by either the contractor or the department. As negotiations for a settlement are continuing, it is therefore not possible to say in what manner the pipes will eventually be made available for sale.

EGGS

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to my question of August 15 about egg production on Kangaroo Island?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: The Chairman of the South Australian Egg Board has informed me that the board is well aware of the problems of egg distribution in the more geographically isolated areas of the State. It has overcome these problems by licensing producers to sell eggs direct to shopkeepers or consumers. Any producer may apply to the board for a Producer Agent Licence; this enables eggs to be sold direct and avoids the need for eggs to be sent from areas such as Kangaroo Island to Adelaide and then back to Kangaroo Island for sale to the consumer in these areas. Eggs that are forwarded from Adelaide to Kangaroo Island are only those required to make up the seasonal fluctuation in demand for eggs that cannot be met by local producers.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Can the Minister say whether these producers must pay the full cost to the board, the same as other producers must do, or whether a special rate is fixed for them?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I will obtain a report for the honourable member.

WILLS

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I seek leave to make a statement prior to asking a question of the Chief Secretary, representing the Premier.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: The President of the Law Society (Mr. C. J. Thomson) has drawn attention to the need for people to take expert advice in the preparation of their wills. He quite correctly points out that death duties today can seriously affect what he terms the small-income estate, that is, an estate consisting only of a house, or a house, a car, and an insurance policy. In the debates that have taken place over the last few years on Government measures concerning succession duties, the impression has been given to the public by Government publicity that small estates had little to worry about, and that all the increases would be in what the Government termed wealthy or larger estates. Probably this kind of emotional and misleading publicity may have added to the lack of interest of people with relatively small estates in taking expert advice on will preparation. Can the Chief Secretary say whether the Government is aware of this problem and, if it is, will the Government direct publicity to the fact that people who own what the President of the society describes as small-income estates should take expert advice on will preparation to minimize the impact of: death duties on their estates?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I will refer the honourable member's question to the Premier and bring down a reply as soon as it is available.

FESTIVAL THEATRE

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Has the Chief Secretary a reply to my question of August 22 regarding exit doors at the festival theatre?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: No exit doors at the festival theatre are locked during performances. However, certain doors at the first balcony level are closed during performances and are unable to be opened from the outside. These doors are of the sliding type, being actuated by means of compressed air and electrical contacts. The mechanism operating the sliding function of these doors is switched off in order to prevent casual spectators and visitors from gaining admission to the plaza level foyers while a performance is in progress. However, these doors include a specific safety design feature that is not found in normal sliding doors. This feature provides that, when the doors are closed, they may be pushed open and swung outward by a smart push from the inside. This means that, even though the mechanism operating the sliding function of the doors is switched off, or in the event of there being a power failure, the doors may always be pushed to open outwards and hence act as true panic doors. Regarding the safety precautions at the theatre generally, it is considered that every practical safety measure possible has been incorporated into the building.

ROAD ACCIDENTS

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: Will the Minister of Health ascertain from the Minister of Transport whether there are any statistics available to show (a) the number of road accidents that have occurred to trucks owned by primary producers; and (b) the number of road accidents that have occurred to trucks carrying primary industry goods over the last five years?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I will refer the honourable member's question to my colleague and bring down a reply as soon as it is available.

ROCK MUSIC FOUNDATION

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: Reports have appeared in the press over the last few weeks of submissions to

the Government regarding the setting up of a rock music foundation by a group of musicians. Can the Chief Secretary say when a Government decision is likely to be made in this regard; can he give me any idea of the proposal contained in the submission; what cost is envisaged in setting up such a foundation; and what is the Government's reaction to this concept?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: I will try to obtain all the information the honourable member has asked for and bring down a reply as soon as it is available.

PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRY

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: Has the Chief Secretary a reply to my recent question regarding the proposed petro-chemical industry in South Australia?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: The percentage of ethane gas now being taken from the Cooper Basin is 5 per cent of the total gas volume. At present, it is not extracted but sent to Adelaide together with methane for domestic use. When wetter wells are drilled, this ethane percentage will rise and the average annual availability of ethane for the years 1978-1988 is estimated to be 350 000 t.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH DOCTORS

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Has the Minister of Health a reply to my question of August 21 about occupational health doctors in South Australia?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The terms of employment under which medical practitioners practise occupational health differ widely. In addition to full-time employment, contracts are arranged with industries for attendances varying from one to several hours a week, and for services ranging from a full occupational health service to all staff and employees to annual examinations of executive staff. At present, the following numbers of medical practitioners are employed:

Government—three full time.
Statutory authorities—two full time.
Universities and colleges of advanced education—three full time and five part time.
Private industry—three full time, three half time, and eight less than half time.
Private consultant in occupational health—one.

General practitioners or clinics having arrangements with industries for treatment of accidents or illnesses only have not been included in the above figures.

BICYCLE TRACKS

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: I seek leave to make a short explanation before asking a question of the Minister of Health, representing the Minister of Transport.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: Recently there have been numerous press reports regarding the increased use of bicycles as a means of transportation. Indeed, Governments are encouraging people to use pollution-free vehicles, and there is nothing more pollution free than a bicycle. Some years ago, there were bicycle tracks on each side of Anzac Highway but, somehow or other, they have disappeared. I can recall using those tracks myself when I was younger. In the general transportation studies on. the metropolitan area, is the Minister of Transport considering providing specific lanes solely for bicycle use, in view of the increased use of such vehicles?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I will refer the honourable member's question to my colleague and bring down a reply as soon as possible.

ABATTOIRS WAGES

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Can the Minister of Agriculture say whether there has been any increase in any kind of remuneration paid to slaughtermen, tradesmen or salaried staff at the abattoirs during the past 12 months and, if there has been any increase, what sums have been involved?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I will refer the question to the Chairman of the South Australian Meat Corporation and bring down a reply when it is available.

MEDICAL REPORT

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: I seek leave to make a statement before asking a question of the Minister of Health.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: It is reported in the press of September 6 that, when giving evidence before the National Rehabilitation and Compensation Scheme Committee of Inquiry, Dr. D. O. Crompton said that secrecy within the medical profession, enforced by Government lawyers, was continuing to camouflage important incidents of patients suffering from negligence in Adelaide hospitals and, I presume, in other hospitals in the State. Is the Minister of Health aware of this report; is it true that the Government is suppressing doctors from giving patients the true facts of their cases; and will the Minister examine the report of the statement by Dr. Crompton to see whether something can be done regarding the matter?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I do not know of any such order having been given by the Government. The honourable member referred to Government lawyers: whether this means the Attorney-General, I do not know. I assume it relates to claims for compensation, and this may suggest that too much information should not be given. However, I will look into the honourable member's question and bring down a reply when it is available.

TOTALIZATOR AGENCY BOARD

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Has the Chief Secretary a reply to my recent question regarding the Totalizator Agency Board?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: Under section 31m (2) of the Lottery and Gaming Act, the South Australian Totalizator Agency Board is empowered to accept investments against pre-established credit accounts opened in accordance with the Rules of the board. As at June 30, 1973, the board had 12 538 credit accounts in metropolitan telephone betting on which, during the 1973 fiscal year, 2 634 771 tickets were written for a total turnover of $5,701,676. Total credit balances outstanding at June, 1973, were $144,379. Since the introduction of telephone betting facilities in 1967, $8,042 has had to be written off as bad debts and at June 30, 1973, the total of overdrawn account balances outstanding was $3,961.

CAR-RAIL SERVICE

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I seek leave to make a statement before asking a question of the Minister of Health, representing the Minister of Transport.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: While in another State in the last few days I noticed with much interest the operation of a car-rail service between Melbourne and Sydney. By this arrangement, a passenger's vehicle travels either on the same division or on another division of the same service being patronized by the passenger. By this means, one's

vehicle arrives at its destination at about the same time as does its owner. Similar arrangements are operated by the Commonwealth Railways for persons travelling to Western Australia from South Australia. Will the Minister say whether the establishment of a car-rail service between Adelaide and Melbourne has been considered and, if it has, whether such a scheme can be implemented soon?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I will refer the honourable member's question to my colleague and bring down a reply as soon as possible.

COUNTRY NEWSPAPERS

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: Has the Chief Secretary a reply to my recent question regarding country newspapers?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: It is a long-standing requirement of the postal regulations that supplementary material enclosed in a registered publication must not exceed the weight of the publication. The reason for this restriction is to prevent the anomalous situation of a registered publication, which enjoys a concessional postage rate, enclosing extraneous material of greater weight than the registered publication itself. Furthermore, supplements must normally bear the title and date of the publication in which they are enclosed. The present arrangement whereby *Venture* may bear a common date and the title of all newspapers involved is in itself a special concession that was extended to regional country newspaper groups. On Budget night, the Postmaster-General announced that progressively, and over a three-year period, the registered publication service would be placed on an economic basis. Nevertheless, during this phasing-out period, country newspapers will continue to receive a postage rate considerably below that applied to other articles. When account is taken of this, it is considered that the present limits on supplementary material remain reasonable.

VERMIN AND WEED CONTROL

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Has the Minister of Health a reply from the Minister of Environment and Conservation to my recent question regarding vermin and weed control on Government reserves?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: My colleague states that the question asked by the honourable member regarding vermin and weed control in national parks and other Government reserves in the South-East and in other parts of the State is very difficult to answer without more specific information being given. My colleague has therefore requested that the honourable member supply details of the areas adjacent to national parks in which it is claimed that vermin and weed infestation are causing a problem.

PINE HILL CORNER

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking a question of the Minister of Health, representing the Minister of Transport.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: In the *Advertiser of* September 7 appeared an article concerning Pine Hill Corner, Mount Gambier, part of which stated:

We are sick and tired of bringing in injured people and mopping blood off this comer.

A constituent has informed me that there have been 70 to 80 accidents at this comer. It is not a bad comer but after rain the road surface is very slippery, considering that it is not a main road. The police, the district council and the Highways Department have been concerned about the corner and want to remedy the fault. In fact, signs have been erected there warning of a slippery surface on a short section of the road. However, this move has had no result, and there has been a further accident. Will the Minister ask his colleague to look into this matter and see whether, before someone is killed at the corner, something can be done to cure the problem, which is causing so many accidents?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I shall be happy to direct the question to my colleague and bring back a report.

REVALUATION

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking a question of the Minister of Agriculture.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: In view of the Commonwealth Government's announcements about the revaluation of the Australian dollar, can the Minister of Agriculture say what action he has proposed, or whether any action has been proposed, to the South Australian Cabinet to ensure that primary producers are properly protected from probably a very serious deflationary effect on their produce?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: This matter has not been discussed by the State Government. As regards the prices being realized overseas today on our exports, I am sure that, if the honourable member had been walking around the Royal Show recently, he would have heard comments from woolgrowers to the effect that wool prices were abnormally high and that this was not in the best interests of the industry, because the higher the wool price the easier it would be for the synthetics people to come in, as happened in the 1950's. Comments were also made that a more realistic wool price would be in the interests of the woolgrowers of this country, even, as one person said, if it was $1 less than the current price.

The Hon. R. A. Geddes: Do you subscribe to that theory?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I subscribe to the theory that the wool prices are abnormally high and are not in the interests of the growers of this country. Export prices for much of our primary production are the best ever. There is no reason why they should not be, because there have been lean times in the past. I am sure the Commonwealth Government in its deliberations has taken into account all the matters under consideration together with the advice of the Treasury, the economists' advice and the advice of all the rest of the experts that the Government has at its disposal. Nevertheless, I am not prepared to make up the Commonwealth Government's lines for it; I am prepared to wait and see exactly what effect this will have on our exportable primary products. Do not think for one moment that I am not sympathetic to the fact that revaluation does affect the income of the farming community, but I also draw attention to the fact that, whilst our prices are abnormally high at the moment for most of our primary exports, oversea markets could change dramatically overnight, which would not be the fault of this country: that would be the result perhaps of better seasonal conditions in other parts of the world.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: The Minister seems to think there is only one commodity that we export—wool. Man

may live by bread alone but is not made by wool alone. Has the Minister taken advice and studied the situation of the primary producer in the smaller industries, and particularly the wine industry, the canned fruit industry and the dried fruit industry? They are not highly organized in the way that the wool industry has been subsidized and organized. The wheat industry falls into a different category: that is an industry coming directly under the control of the Commonwealth Government. Will the Minister consider that these smaller industries will be hurt?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I thought I made it quite clear, when I mentioned primary products, that I used the plural and did not specify wool alone. I merely mentioned wool because that was the one article that was discussed at the show among many primary producers. A letter has already been sent by the Premier to the Commonwealth Government on the problems that will arise as regards the wine and brandy industries, and particularly the latter. That was sent, I think, almost a fortnight ago. There are problems that the canning industry and the dried fruit industry must face. If I may just amplify that, today I heard a talk by the general manager of an Australian firm that sold out to a firm in South Africa to the tune of $12,000,000. That was a canning fruit complex, and it was interesting to hear the comments of this gentleman in South Africa, that we have to rationalize our industry, and particularly the canned fruit industry, in this country, as has been done in South Africa because, apparently, people in that country can see that the writing is on the wall as regards the long-term future of the industry. I make that point because other countries are doing it, and we must look at this vexed problem in this country. I mention that merely for the information of the honourable member.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: I seek leave to make a statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Agriculture.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: I appreciate the concern that the Minister has shown for industries that are affected by the Commonwealth Budget and the revaluation of the Australian dollar, which in the last day or two has come upon certain industries already in strife with exports. One industry in particular facing severe problems owing to the continuing revaluation of the dollar is the fishing industry. As the Hon. Mr. Story has pointed out, other industries, too, are facing these problems. It is obvious that the Commonwealth Government, in any submission for assistance, will require information from these industries, and the means of obtaining that information will in some cases be beyond the resources of the industry. It would be simpler for a Government department to carry out such inquiries as are needed—

The PRESIDENT: Order! I draw the honourable member's attention to the fact that the time for asking questions has expired. Call on the business of the day.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (PUBLIC SALARIES) BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY (Minister of Agriculture): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill, which is in substantially the same form as measures previously introduced into, and passed by, this Council, is intended to adjust the salaries payable to the holders of certain offices the salaries of which are fixed by Statute. Honourable members will no doubt be aware that, following the settlement of a claim by the Public Service Association before the Public Service Arbitrator, salaries relating to the administrative and clerical grades in the Public Service have been increased.

The Public Service Board has already made recommendations to the Government covering appropriate adjustments that should be made to the salaries of certain permanent heads and senior departmental officers. The Government has accepted these recommendations and, in so accepting them, is aware that, in making them, the Public Service Board had in mind, amongst other things, the substantial increases that had recently been granted to senior officers of the Victorian and Australian Public Services. This measure, with one exception being that of the salary of the Valuer-General, does no more than provide for the maintenance of the existing salary relationship between the salaries of the permanent heads in the Public Service and those of the statutory office holders. At the same time it also applies to the statutory office holders the national wage increase of June 4, 1973, which has already been otherwise applied throughout the Public Service.

In considering the Bill in some detail, clauses 1, 2 and 3 are formal. Clause 4 increases the present salary of the Auditor-General which now stands at $21,300 to $21,856 from June 4, 1973, and to $25,400 from August 27, 1973. Clause 5 is formal. Clause 6 increases the salary of the Commissioner of Police from his present salary of $19,700 to $20,224 from June 4, 1973, and to $23,500 from August 27, 1973. Clause 7 is formal.

Clause 8 adjusts the salaries of the Chairman and Commissioners of the Public Service Board, in the case of the Chairman from his present salary of $21,300 to $21,856 from. June 4, 1973, and to $25,400 from August 27, 1973, and in the case of the Commissioners from their present salary of $18,200 to $18,694 from June 4, 1973, and to $22,000 from August 27, 1973. Clause 9 is formal.

Clause 10 makes a somewhat different form of adjustment in the case of the Valuer-General. In this case, having regard to the nature of the duties of the Valuer-General and the level of responsibility appertaining to his office, the board has, in a manner of speaking, recommended a reclassification of this office with effect from June 4, 1973, and in this case the variations of salary are from a present salary of $13,400. The salary of the Valuer-General moves to $15,991 from June 4, 1973, and to $18,000 from August 27, 1973.

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

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 30. Page 613.)

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): I support the second reading of this short Bill, which increases the permissible number of Ministers of the Crown from 10 to 11. Those who have had the honour of serving in Ministerial posts will appreciate the amount of work involved. In view of the volume of legislation coming before Parliament at present, most of it involving increased workloads for the Administration, one can understand the

need for further Ministerial appointments. Honourable members have often drawn attention to the tendency of Governments to legislate on everything; this tendency must increase the workload of the various Ministers. In view of the amount of legislation emanating particularly from the Attorney-General's Department connected with consumer credit, consumer transactions, consumer protection, etc., it might be a good idea that the new Minister be a deputy Attorney-General, to assist the Attorney-General.

It often appears to me that Ministers (and this applies collectively to a Government, too) at times become almost hypnotized by what one may term "legislomania". They need to give an impression of hard work, community involvement, and a "with it" image, and Governments lend to seek solace in legislation. I look forward to the day when the public rebels against the developing attitude of what I shall call "legislative paternalism". I also look forward to the day when Governments recognize the existence of another word—"economy". Governments are to an increasing extent taking the attitude that the only people capable of spending money are Government agencies. There are times when any private body, whether it be simply a household or a small private business or a larger undertaking, must economize for its future good. Neither a State Government nor the Commonwealth Government can continue to increase its expenditure year after year at a rate above a certain level without seriously affecting the overall economy.

In New South Wales there are 18 Ministers; in Victoria, 17 Ministers; in Queensland, 14 Ministers; in South Australia, 10 Ministers; in Western Australia, 12 Ministers; and in Tasmania, nine Ministers. So, one can see that, by comparison with other States, we are not over-endowed at present with Ministers of the Crown, and one can also see that the increase in the number of Ministers here is justified. I should also like to draw attention to the number of members in the Upper Houses of the various States. If an analogy can be drawn, since there is a need in this State for an increase in the size of the Ministry because of the increased workload, I ask the Government to examine the question of the number of members of the Upper House. In New South Wales there are 60 members of the Upper House; in Victoria, 36 members; in Western Australia, 30 members; in South Australia, 20 members (but this number will be increased to 21 and, later, to 22); and in Tasmania, 19 members. So, by comparison, the South Australian Upper House has a small number of members. Therefore, the recent amendment to the Constitution to provide eventually for 22 members is completely justified.

Further, in relation to our Constitution, I would support a nexus situation between the two Houses; such a situation exists in Commonwealth legislation. I believe that such a constitutional tying of the number of members in the two Houses removes one factor for Government manipulation connected with a possible gerrymander—the number of members of the Lower House. Many factors are involved in gerrymanders, one being the number of members in the Lower House, and the tying together of the Houses with a nexus overcomes the problems that can exist between the two Houses and the size of the Houses, and also fairly accurately ties the number of members of Parliament of the Lower House to a figure that overcomes Government juggling with that position.

With the passage of the previous Constitution Bill, when it is assented to by Her Majesty, there will remain certain aspects of the Constitution that require change; certain sections of the old Act are now redundant. One of these matters in particular will require a referendum before it can be changed. 1 suggest to the Government that we should establish a Joint House Committee to examine the Constitution Act in relation to the recent passage of a Bill through this Council and to examine and recommend to Parliament any further changes that may be needed to the Constitution Act. Because at least one of these changes will require a referendum, a recommendation from a Joint House Committee would appear to me to be the correct way to go about procuring a change. The Bill is a small one, simply allowing the Government to increase the Ministry from 10 to 11, and I support it.

The PRESIDENT: As this is a Bill to amend the Constitution Act, and as it provides for an alteration of the Constitution of the Parliament, its second reading requires to be carried by an absolute majority of the whole number of members of the Council. I have counted the Council, and there being present an absolute majority I put the question "That this Bill be now read a second time". For the question say "Aye", against "No". I think the "Ayes" have it. I declare the second reading to be passed by an absolute majority.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

GIFT DUTY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 30. Page 616.)

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT (Southern): I support the Bill, which simply makes clear that the officers of the department may exercise the powers given in the Act to the Commissioner if such powers are delegated' to them. The Bill has been considered necessary because, in regard to certain other legislation, it was held recently that the powers given by the Act to the head of the department in question were not validly exercised unless exercised by him personally. It is as well to know that some of the powers given to the Commissioner under the Act are not merely administrative but can affect the rights and obligations of taxpayers. Referring to the original Act, section 21 deals with the power to adopt Commonwealth valuations; section 30 (2) deals with power to remit additional duty for late payment; section 39 (2) with power to deduct from duty certain stamp duties; section 51 (3) with discretion in arriving at the value of certain shares and debentures (and this is a most important power); section 52 (1) deals with power to compromise a claim for duty in certain circumstances. However, the inquiries I have made satisfy me that there is no likelihood of abuse if these powers are exercised by departmental officers.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

PAY-ROLL TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 30. Page 614.)

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): The Bill before us does two things: first, it lifts pay-roll tax in South Australia from 34 per cent to 44 per cent; secondly, it makes pay-roll tax payable by Government departments whereas, in the original Bill, Government departments were specifically exempted from paying such lax. The original agreement between the States, when the Commonwealth allowed the States to raise taxation by the

imposition of pay-roll tax, was that the States would impose a pay-roll tax of 3½ per cent applicable from September 1, 1971. When that Bill was before Parliament it was debated at length and a number of amendments emanating from this Council were accepted. The percentage of pay-roll tax levied by this Bill moves to 4½ per cent by general agreement, I believe, of all the States; in other words, all States will be lifting their pay-roll tax to 4½ per cent, although there are some deviations one can detect in the legislation of the other States.

The statement was made clearly in the Budget presented recently to the Parliament that there was no real increase in taxation, and yet two measures are to come before us, one dealing with pay-roll tax in which the increase in taxation amounts to almost 30 per cent, or a lift from $34,000,000 being collected in 12 months to almost $50,000,000 being collected in 12 months. Other legislation provides for the considerable increase of taxation gained from the Electricity Trust. The actual increase in the Bill is 28.7 per cent in pay-roll tax in South Australia, and the amount of increased taxation that will be collected in the coming nine months is $16,000,000, moving to almost $20,000,000 next year, not taking into account any increase in the wages paid. The powers of the Act became applicable from September 1, 1971, and there were a number of exemptions including the Governor, religious or benevolent institutions, hospitals, schools or colleges other than technical schools, local government and enterprises involved in the generation of gas, electricity or water supply, Government departments, defence forces, diplomatic and consular representatives in South Australia, trade commissioners, the War Graves Commission and the Australian American Educational Foundation. The Highways Department did not have an exemption from pay-roll tax. In his second reading speech to this Bill the Chief Secretary stated:

> Clause 3 amends section 12 of the principal Act. This section, amongst other things, provides that most Government departments shall be exempt from a liability to pay pay-roll tax on wages paid by them. When the power to levy pay-roll tax was transferred from the Commonwealth Government to the States in 1971 it was thought that an exemption for Government departments would save unnecessary bookkeeping and administrative work. However, with the benefit of hindsight—

which we have heard much of today—

> this exemption has in fact caused some problems, particularly where work is done by a Government department and the costs thereof have to be recovered from some outside body. In these circumstances it is usual to make a charge to cover the "notional pay-roll tax" that should properly be a component of the cost of the work, performed by the department. Unless there is a clear liability for the department involved to pay pay-roll tax, some difficulty may arise in collecting this component of the cost. Accordingly, this clause proposes that on and from July 1, 1974, all Government departments will pay pay-roll tax on their taxable wages.

I believe that an exemption for local government was moved in this Chamber (but I may stand corrected) and that the reason given for that exemption was that Government departments were exempt and that local government should be, too. Government departments will now pay pay-roll tax, and I have stated reasons for that, and they apply also to local government. It occurred to me that the position of the Education Department should also be clarified, and I ask whether that department will have to pay pay-roll tax when other colleges will not. There appear to be some anomalies in relation to the payment of pay-roll tax by Government hospitals when it is not being paid by other hospitals in the community, and I should like the Chief Secretary to provide more information regarding Government hospitals.

The general exemption still stands at $20,800. I shall now examine pay-roll tax since it was introduced in 1941, when the annual exemption was fixed at $2,080. At that time average weekly earnings were about $1 I and, in effect, pay-roll tax exemptions equalled the wages of about four employees. Over the years there has been a gradual easing of the position and the exemption has been altered as follows: in 1941 the exemption was $2,080, average weekly earnings were $11 and the average number of employees where pay-roll tax was applicable was 3.6; in 1953 the exemption was $8,320, and the average number of employees increased to 5.1; in 1954 it was increased to $12,840, and the average number of employees was 7.5; in 1957 it was increased to $20,800, and the average number of employees reached 10; and in 1973 the base exemption is still $20,800 and the average number of employees is back to where it was in 1941. With the rate of inflation with which this nation is afflicted today I therefore believe that the whole question of the imposition of pay-roll tax deserves further examination.

Other States have introduced variations to the pay-roll tax. Generally, agreement was reached between the States in relation to the imposition of 3½ per cent pay-roll tax, and general agreement has now been reached to lift it to 4½ per cent. I doubt whether I approve of the States introducing variations into the scheme. In Victoria there is a move to give a 100 per cent rebate of pay-roll tax to approved decentralized industries, which follows the ideas the Commonwealth Government has where pay-roll tax exemptions are given as export incentives to assist industries to get into the export market. While I agree that incentives should be given to exporters and to industries to decentralize I do not believe they should be given in this way.

To receive the 100 per cent rebate of pay-roll tax in Victoria a company must be an approved decentralized industry and must be outside a 50-mile radius of the centre of Melbourne. Inside that 50-mile radius a 50 per cent rebate is available to industries in particular localities. I suppose the incentive scheme in Victoria will save the taxpayer about $8,500,000. Although I agree with action to assist the decentralization of industries I do believe it is an important aspect of decentralization that must be examined before States make agreements to use these incentives. There is an amendment to be moved to the Bill, but I have not yet examined it closely. I support the second reading.

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

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

The PRESIDENT laid on the table the Auditor-General's Report for the financial year ended June 30, 1973.

AGENT-GENERAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 30. Page 614.)

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland): I support the Bill. I want to say how much I appreciated, when I was in London, the efficiency of the services and the courtesy that were extended to me by the then Agent-General (Mr. Lance Milne) at times between 1966 and 1971. We have been well served in London by our Australian representatives, although views have been expressed from time to time that

the office of Agent-General could well be abandoned because we have Australia House in London. Australia House, which is a large concern, consists of many small departments, and for a South Australian to find his way around Australia House is almost like going to Sydney and trying to find a pork pie. The service rendered by South Australia House in the Strand, London, is extremely good.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The staff is extremely good, too.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Yes, and most of the staff have been there for a long time. The present Agent-General is Mr. Ray Taylor, who will be returning to South Australia to undertake an important job for the Government. However, I wish that he were not returning to take that important job, because I see no joy in Monarto. I see Ray Taylor as being better employed as our Agent-General. Mr. John White, C.M.G., who will take over from Mr. Taylor, will be a loss to the State Public Service, but he will fill the position of Agent-General very well. I am sure that he and his good lady will represent South Australia's interests extremely well. My only regret is that, just when Mr. Taylor is getting his feet on the ground, he is being withdrawn and brought back to the new town of Monarto. My problem is that I do not know what kind of new town Monarto will be.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: It's a fair way off.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I suppose it is a fair way off. 1 can go back only a little way about Agents-General, but Sir Charles McCann did an excellent job between 1934 and 1951. He introduced sales promotions for citrus and apples, particularly apples. He was an outstanding man, and I think that he has been written up as one of the good South Australians for the work he did in the promotion of the primary industry sector of the community. Sir Charles was succeeded by Mr. Greenham, who had been Secretary in London for many years. Mr. Greenham remained in office from 1953 to 1961 and was awarded the C.M.G. for his services. Mr. Greenham was succeeded by Mr. Malcolm Pearce, who was also a good South Australian. He did a very good job from 1961 to 1965, and he was awarded the C.B.E.

Mr. Pearce was succeeded by Mr. Lance Milne, who was Agent-General from 1966 to 1971. He, too, was awarded the C.B.E. It is a great pity that Mr. Taylor's services will not be recognized because of our Government's stupidity in following the Commonwealth Government's lead in not awarding honours at the appropriate time.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: A few other people come into that category and will never be rewarded.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: A large number of them, and it is a terrible thing. Mr. J. S. White, who has been appointed as our new Agent-General, has been awarded the C.M.G. I am glad of that, because such awards confer considerable status on people in London. If people are not granted some recognition when they are stationed near the mother of Parliaments, it is a sad thing indeed, because they are not recognized as being people whom their own country wants to honour.

We have had such Bills as this one previously. The Bill provides a $10,000 expense allowance for the Agent-General, and that is little enough. When I examined Mr. Milne's guest list when I was in London, I wondered how he managed to get through on his salary and allowance. This Bill goes much of the way towards putting South Australia House in London on the map. I therefore have much pleasure in supporting it.

Bill read a second, time and taken through Committee without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 29. Page 564.)

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS (Midland): Bills to amend the Prices Act have been hardy annuals in this Chamber for many years. The principal Act was enacted in 1948 on a yearly basis. Although at first glance one may think this is the usual Bill to extend the operation of the Prices Act for another year, one sees when one examines it that the Bill contains a couple of variations that warrant further examination and consideration by this Council. Clause 2 seeks to amend section 7 of the principal Act, which deals with the declaration of secrecy, subsection (4) of which provides:

Nothing in this Act shall prohibit—

(a) the Commissioner, whenever he considers it necessary or desirable in the interests of justice so to do—

(i) from communicating to the Attorney-General any information which has come to his knowledge . . .

(ii) from producing for use in connection with the prosecution of a person for any such offence, any documents, books or papers containing any such information;

(b) any person exercising any power or performing any duty under this Act from answering any question relating to any such offence which he is required to answer when called as a witness in the prosecution of a person for that offence.

(c) the Minister or the Commissioner from communicating to a Minister or Prices Commissioner of another State any information which that Minister or Prices Commissioner reasonably requires . . .

This Bill seeks to amend paragraph *(c) of* subsection (4). The suggestion in the Bill is that paragraph (c) will now embrace not merely the Minister or the Prices Commissioner of another State but also the Minister or any person concerned in the administration of the legislation of another State, of the Commonwealth or of a territory of or under the control of the Commonwealth, relating to the control of prices. That clause extends the power of communicating information to another State to the Commonwealth and a territory thereof. Although that may not be of any great moment, it is worthy of further consideration.

I take exception to clause 3, which seeks to repeal section 53 of the principal Act. Honourable members who have dealt with this matter over the years will know that section 53 originally provided that the Act would apply only to transactions taking place before the first day of January, 1950. That provision has been amended from year to year to extend it to 1972, or 1973 as the case may be. It is intended to repeal that section and to insert the following section in its place:

Sections 34 to 42 inclusive of this Act shall not apply to transactions taking place, or which have taken place, after the first day of January, 1962.

This will have the effect of making the legislation permanent. I am aware that we have every year for many years extended the operation of the legislation for a year, retaining the option that, if it was considered necessary in future, we could drop it. I believe section 53 should be extended now in the same way that it has been extended in the past, without repealing it and enacting another section in its place. I cannot support clause 3, which I intend to vote against when the Bill is in Committee.

The concept of abolishing the annual review of this legislation reminds me of the same thing which we did in relation to the daylight saving provision last year. At that time, I queried the wisdom of making that provision permanent, and I believe on further reflection that we should have resisted the temptation to make daylight saving permanent. Likewise, we should now resist the temptation to make the operation of the Prices Act permanent. I also query the possibility of overlapping between our Prices Commissioner and the set-up we have here, which is basically intrastate, and the new Commonwealth prices justification tribunal, which is basically interstate. Despite this qualification—that one is intrastate and the other is interstate—there are some areas in which activities could conceivably overlap and where decisions made by one body could conflict with those made by the other authority. I draw the Government's attention to this matter and ask what the Government intends to do about it. Is it willing to consult with the Commonwealth Government to resolve such possibilities before any confusion arises? Although I have grave doubts regarding clause 3 and some qualifications regarding clause 2, I support the second reading of the Bill.

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

HOUSING AGREEMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 30. Page 616.)

The Hon. C. M. HILL (Central No. 2): I support the Bill, which is the vehicle by which the Housing Agreement that was recently drawn up between the States and the Commonwealth will be ratified. Each State must agree to the execution of the document and then this new arrangement will come into force: there will be a five-year housing agreement and it will take the place of the existing agreement, which has operated from July 1, 1971.

The outstanding feature of the agreement is that it gives special consideration to a form of housing known as welfare housing, and this special consideration is a concept that I support. State instrumentalities should give every possible consideration to people in the lower income groups so that they may be able to rent or purchase satisfactory housing accommodation.

It is a worthwhile concept. I recall the original principle behind the setting up of our own housing authority in this State, the South Australian Housing Trust. I read with some interest that, when the South Australian Housing Trust Bill was introduced on November 10, 1936, the then Premier and Treasurer, the Hon. R. L. Butler, said, amongst other things:

> The functions of the trust will be to provide dwelling-houses. There will be two types of houses, namely, those included in group A and those included in group B. The houses of group A will be designed for families in receipt of the basic wage and margins, while those in group B will be designed for persons on lower incomes.

So all the time the emphasis has been on people in the lower income groups being assisted by the State and State instrumentalities.

There are only two points on which I comment. The first is house ownership compared to rental accommodation. I was pleased to see in the agreement which has been drawn up and which is printed as a schedule to this Bill that there is in paragraph 9 (3) an opportunity for the State, under certain conditions, to increase the proportion of money lent for the purpose of house mortgage grants from the 30 per cent stipulated in the agreement to a higher figure, in some circumstances. Of the total of $32,750,000 that has been granted to the State in this financial year by the Commonwealth for housing, the amount allocated for mortgage loans is $17,250,000 or 52.7 per cent. Tn the past, we have always endeavoured to keep the proportion at about 50 per cent of funds available for mortgage loans.

The reason why I support a high allocation being maintained for mortgage loans is simply to try to maintain the percentage of house ownership compared to rental accommodation. I support those endeavours because I have great faith in the benefit of house ownership compared to rental accommodation. We often hear academic arguments about the advantages or disadvantages of these two forms of occupancy from sociologists and other academics, but their views seem to be changing towards supporting rental housing.

However, if we ponder the subject deeply, we must call on our own experience and observation and what we know of our own friends and members of our families who have had practical experience of house ownership over many years. If we do that, we must agree that people are more secure and happier in their family life with house ownership rather than rental accommodation. As the years pass, there is great contentment and security in retirement when the house is owned, and then in later life there is definitely more protection and satisfaction especially in the case of the widow remaining and living in a house purchased while the family was living in it. House ownership is always an influence for keeping the family together. It generates a pride in possession and ownership that does not occur within families living in rented accommodation.

If we take the matter further and compare our Australian community with what we observe in other countries, we must agree that in the social fabric of a community that enjoys a high percentage of house ownership there is a stability that is not found under other conditions where occupancy is mainly of rented accommodation. In South Australia whilst our average of house ownership compared to total housing is not very much higher than the Australian average, it is a little higher: based on the census statistics for 1971, it is 71 per cent compared to an Australian average of 69 per cent.

That is for house ownership compared to all housing and flat accommodation. It would be in the best interests of South Australia to retain and maintain this percentage higher than the Australian average, and that will be accomplished if the State uses the opportunity provided in this agreement and continues to allocate to this sector more than the stipulated 30 per cent.

The other point I highlight is that, when one reads the Bill, in this housing allocation from the Commonwealth we see again the problem of centralism and the situation where the Commonwealth Government allocates money for use by the States and at the same time attaches a never-ending list of strings to the proposal.

The old Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, which terminated on June 30, 1971, was a satisfactory arrangement. The new Commonwealth legislation, the State Grants Housing Act, which came into force after that date, operated from July 1, 1971, and it was to continue until 1975-76. Under that arrangement the States were responsible for financing their housing programmes from Loan allocations received from the Commonwealth Government, and at the same time, under new legislation, Commonwealth grants

were made toward the debt charges involved. That second housing arrangement has been completely done away with, and this new proposal, in keeping with so many of the measures that the new Commonwealth Government is adopting, is coming into force.

We see all kinds of restriction being placed on the money allocated, such as a means test on an income basis and restrictions in regard to the number of houses that can be built with the money, as compared with the number of houses being built by the whole State. Further, there is a requirement in connection with 25 per cent of the houses being reallocated by the State authorities and being financed from this money. Also, there is a requirement that the State must review rentals, which must be proportionate to income.

There are limits on interest, and a purchaser may not dispose of any of these houses within five years of purchasing them, unless he sells the house back to the Housing Trust. If he sells after the expiry of that period, the trust must be given the option of purchasing the house at fair market value. Also, minimum deposits and limits on advances are laid down.

All these strings are evidence of the way of life we are entering when we obtain financial help from the Commonwealth Government. It is a classic example of the centralism exercised through the new financial controls that we are experiencing today. The whole point is that the States should be given the opportunity to exercise their own initiatives, to plan and venture with their own local knowledge and expertise, and to act in accordance with their knowledge of the needs of the families with lower incomes. When we think of the record of the South Australian Housing Trust in assisting people in the lower income groups, it seems rather cruel that the trust must yield to so many restrictions and that it is not to be trusted to show its proven expertise in the proper allocation of the Commonwealth money.

Everyone will agree that the record of the trust in connection with helping people in the lower income groups is second to none in Australia. I have at times criticized the trust, but I have never criticized its ability to house people in the lower income groups. I have been critical in that at times it has ventured into high-cost housing and other types of development, such as factory construction.

The Housing Trust has built a vast empire in many respects, and that aspect can be subject to genuine criticism. However, in connection with assisting people with limited means and limited income, the record of the trust is second to none, and I am sure that it will continue to use wisely the money granted by the Commonwealth.

There is no need for all the conditions placed on the allocation of money in this agreement, which this Bill ratifies. So, I hope we will see the day when we will be able to make new housing agreements, and I hope that when that day comes there will be less interference in the way the money is spent and that the Housing Trust will be given the opportunity to use the money without restriction. I am sure that the trust will use the money in the best possible way to help the South Australian community. I support the Bill, and I hope that all those who will benefit from the mortgages to which I have referred and from the rental accommodation will obtain great happiness and contentment as a result.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

ELECTRICITY TRUST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 30. Page 616.)

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN (Northern): This Bill increases from 3 per cent to 5 per cent the statutory contribution of the Electricity Trust to State revenue. This contribution was introduced in 1971, and it represented a change in the Government attitude towards that great instrumentality, the Electricity Trust of South Australia. The trust has a long history. Prior to the establishment of the trust, the Adelaide Electric Supply Company supplied electric power to the metropolitan area and, to some extent, to the country. The company's service actually extended to my home town of Jamestown. However, in 1946 the present trust was set up following a move for a Royal Commission in this Council.

Following the establishment of the Electricity Trust we saw further moves to extend electricity supplies throughout the State and the introduction of the scheme whereby for each domestic connection in country areas, where it was practicable, a subsidy was paid, enabling the installation of the single wire earth return system, which is such a common part of our landscape at present, through most of the settled areas of the State; in fact, this has now extended to areas where it was originally considered uneconomic to take it. Subsidies were made available to other electricity undertakings throughout the State so that they could sell electricity to their consumers at costs comparable to those enjoyed by consumers in the metropolitan area. The price of electricity was made uniform throughout most areas of the State connected to the undertaking of the Electricity Trust.

We have seen a great deal of imagination in Government in supplying these amenities to people throughout South Australia. At one time we were very much at the mercy of the coalfields in the Eastern States, and many members will recall the anxious times suffered by domestic consumers and industry because of shortages of fuel. At one stage our railway locomotives were converted to burn oil to overcome this problem, and through the imagination of the Premier of the day and his Government we saw the development of the Leigh Creek coalfield and the establishment of the power station at Port Augusta to use the Leigh Creek coal.

The Auditor-General's Report shows that in 1972-73 the cost of production of coal from the Leigh Creek coalfield actually decreased as compared to that of the previous year, and this would be one of the few undertakings able to make such a claim. We have been fortunate in that the Electricity Trust has been able to contain its costs and its price structure so that for about 20 years no increases in tariff were necessary, and in fact tariffs for many country consumers were reduced. We saw a definite effort to improve the quality of living in South Australia by a very imaginative and progressive Government.

However, we come now to a rather different approach to the situation. First, in 1971 we saw the imposition of this contribution to the Treasury by the Electricity Trust. It was then expected to bring in about $2,000,000 a year. However, the consumption of electricity is rising and as the contribution is calculated on the gross revenue we find that, for the year 1972-73, the actual figure was $2,241,906, showing that this is a growth tax in the sense that the consumption of electricity is increasing and is likely to

continue to do so while we have an expanding population. This cost was borne by the Electricity Trust but honourable members are well aware of the recent announcement of quite substantial increases in tariff.

The Minister's second reading explanation was brief and did not make any predictions as to future revenue, but from my own figures, based on last year's gross income of the trust, I think the 5 per cent proposed should bring in more than $4,000,000. It is a growth tax, so we can predict escalating sums of money in the years to come because of the growth of the electricity undertaking. It is unfortunate that this type of tax must be imposed. The Minister, in introducing the Bill, said "the alternative, which was to decrease the range and standards of services the people in this State have a right to expect, was beyond contemplation".

This increase will adversely affect the quality of living of many people. Many on low incomes have decided whether to use electricity, gas, oil, or wood fires for heating, and those who have decided to use electricity will find their costs increased considerably because heating is one of the major uses of electricity on the domestic scene. It will also, in my opinion, affect industry and the attraction of industry to South Australia. I cannot see where the explanation justifies this increase. It is true that the Government, by grant, assists the Electricity Trust, but with the imposition of this greater tax the revenue to the Treasury will exceed increasingly the amount of money made available by way of grant. I commend the trust for the work it has done for the good of the people of South Australia, and it is wise for us to reflect on the foresight of the Government of the day which formed the Leigh Creek coalfield complex. As this is a revenue Bill, I can only say, although I deplore the increase, that I support the second reading.

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

STATE LOTTERIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 30. Page 616.)

The Hon. F. J. POTTER (Central No. 2): This short Bill changes to annual audits by the Auditor-General the present requirement for monthly audits of the affairs of the Lotteries Commission. I am sure this move would have the support of all members. When the Lotteries Commission was established a few years ago I looked with interest at the monthly statements tabled before honourable members, and at the time I wondered why it was necessary for this procedure to be carried out each month. It appears that the Auditor-General is satisfied with the overall position in the commission and considers that annual audits are sufficient; I am sure all honourable members will agree. I support the Bill.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

REGISTRATION OF DEEDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 30. Page 617.)

The Hon. C. M. HILL (Central No. 2): I support this short Bill which, as the Minister explained when he introduced it, simply tidies up a situation that should be put in order. Apparently, in 1961, when section 20 of the Real Property Act was repealed, a change should have been made to the Registration of Deeds Act along similar lines; however, that did not occur.

The change that occurred in 1961 to the Real Property Act was that the need for the Registrar-General of Deeds and other senior officers, such as the Acting Registrar-General of Deeds or the Deputy Registrar-General of Deeds, in the Lands Titles Office to make declarations was repealed, and since that date declarations have not been necessary. It appears that it was assumed then that declarations were unnecessary and, in practice, were overlooked under the Registration of Deeds Act. However, at law it appears that the declarations should have been made.

This Bill comes before us to repeal section 7 of the principal Act, that section dealing with declarations, and to validate the situation where officers have not, since 1961, made declarations or oaths. This is done in the second part of clause 2. The balance of the Bill deals with formal measures.

When I looked at clause 5 I noticed that it made amendments to the fifth schedule of the Act. I believe the fifth schedule is antiquated in many ways because it refers to "feoffment", an old term of conveyancing that is not heard much today. I believe some action should be taken to update the fifth schedule in ways other than those set out in the Bill. Happily, I have noticed that the Chief Secretary has not only returned to the Chamber but has put an amendment before us which will insert a new schedule. I support the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 4 passed.

Clause 5—"Amendment of fifth schedule of principal Act."

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE (Chief Secretary): I move to strike out clause 5 and insert the following new clause:

5. The fifth schedule to the principal Act is repealed and the following schedule is enacted and inserted in its place:

THE FIFTH SCHEDULE

MEMORIAL

	Date of Instrument	Names of Parties	Names of Witnesses	Nature of Instrument	Description of the property conveyed	(If a Conveyance or Mortgage) consideration and how paid. Or if a lease the amount of rent	Any other Particulars the case may require
This memorial was received into the General Registry Office this sixth day of Dec., 1972, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon and is entered No. ..... Book	First day of Dec. in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and seventy-two	Henry George Jones of Currie Street, in City of Adelaide, baker of the first part, Thomas Smith, of Grenfell Street, in Adelaide, aforesaid grocer of the second part and James May, of Sturt Street, in Adelaide aforesaid, gentleman of the third part	William Tripp and James Wise, clerks to Messrs. Smart & Wilson	Mortgage in fee to the said Thomas Smith with power of sale or conveyance in fee or lease for 21 years commencing on the first day of Dec., 1972	All that piece of land containing 10 hectares (be the same more or less) being parcel of section 80, district C in the Provincial Survey bounded on the north by on the south by on the east by on the west by	Ten thousand dollars whereof five thousand due from George Jones to Thomas Smith for money lent (or goods sold before the date of the deed) and five thousand dollars were paid in cash (or if a lease) five hundred dollars	The parcels mentioned in this memorial are the same as are mentioned in a deed purporting to be made between George Jones of the first part, Thos. Smith of the second and the said James May of the third part a memorial whereof is registered No. (refer to the register) which deed has been cancelled because the said Henry George Jones is therein called Geo. Jones by mistake

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: The fifth schedule to the Registration of Deeds Act contains an example of a memorial that must be lodged under this Act. This example is now somewhat out of date and certain matter included in it would no longer be acceptable in the Registry Office. It is not thought likely that conveyancers would still refer to this example which was correct in 1841. However, it is desirable, to put it no higher, that a more acceptable example should now be included. This amendment in effect repeals and re-enacts the fifth schedule to the principal Act and provides a somewhat more up-to-date example.

Amendment carried; new clause inserted.

Title passed.

Bill reported without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

ART GALLERY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 29. Page 563.)

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT (Southern): This Bill focuses our attention on one of South Australia's great assets. The Art Gallery, on North Terrace, is an asset of which we should not only be proud but which we must ensure will serve the community as successfully in the future as it has served the community hitherto. Only a few days ago I was in the Melbourne Cultural Centre. Our Art Gallery is nothing to be ashamed of, when compared to galleries in other States, and perhaps even to some oversea galleries. The Bill provides for the leasing of exhibits to individuals. In the past the leasing of works of art to institutions for exhibition has been arranged, but the Bill will enable an individual to be loaned a work of art by the gallery.

This may sound frightening in a way but, when one realizes the reason for it, it is quite logical. The reason is that the board of the gallery has received gifts which individual donors would like to keep in their possession until their demise, at which time they will become the property of the gallery. When the donors make the offer (provided the gallery wants to accept the gifts) the board will decide the terms and conditions under which the gifts will be loaned back to the donors.

Clause 4 makes an amendment concerning the leaving of exhibits in the gallery that had been taken originally for an exhibition or for an assessment of value. As a result, works of art accumulate, but some of them are not worth their floor space. Clause 4 enables the board to keep such articles for two years and to take steps to have the owners take possession of them. If after a year the owner does not take possession of the goods, the property passes to the board. During this time, and while awaiting a final decision to be made, the board acts as a bailee, who is a person who has the power to hold an article on behalf of someone else. After the specified time the gallery ceases to be a bailee, and takes the goods into its own possession, if it so wishes, or gets rid of them if it does not wish to retain them. The Minister's second reading explanation states:

> Although this provision is primarily intended to cover works of art, it will, in its terms, so cover small items of lost property such as walking sticks and umbrellas.

Allowing the gallery to collect walking sticks and umbrellas is again something of which we can be proud! I support the Bill.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL (Central No. 2): At the time the Bill was devised I had been a member of the Art Gallery Board for four years; consequently, I studied the subject matter of the Bill there and made certain suggestions regarding it. The substance of the Bill is contained in similar Acts elsewhere. The first part of the Bill relating to donors and their retaining the custody of gifts during their lifetime is in the Victorian Act, where it has been acted on to the advantage both of the donor and of the Art Gallery. The second clause, which relates to works of art or pseudo works of art, is also contained in other Acts of Parliament elsewhere. No doubt honourable members would agree with me that these are proper and adequate powers for the board to possess. In the first instance, it can be advantageous to the gallery's collection because, in due course, it may receive valuable works of art it might not otherwise receive. In the second instance, the provision enables the board to rid the gallery of things that could be pestilential to it. I support the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Power of board to lend exhibits."

The Hon. C. M. HILL: As a result of what the two honourable members have said and my interpretation of the Bill, I seek the Minister's assurance that the provision being inserted by this clause will be used only for the purpose for which the Minister stated it was being introduced. Parliament must act as custodian in some respects in this matter but, as I understand the Bill, loans could be made to individuals of treasures from the gallery that were not donated by the person to whom they were being loaned. Can the Minister give me such an assurance?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY (Minister of Agriculture): At present, works of art are lent by the board to individuals who require them; for example, we have some at Parliament House. I see no reason why this should not be done at the board's discretion, provided that all conditions are met. As a result of clause 3, the board will be able to receive a work of art from a donor and, under the terms and conditions that it sees fit to impose, lend back that work of art to the donor during the course of his lifetime. Indeed, it can lend a work of art to any other organization that wants to borrow in this manner, provided it adheres to the conditions laid down by the board.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Although I have not got the Act in front of me, I am afraid the Minister's explanation was not as accurate as it should have been. The amendment contained in clause 3 does not change the situation in which an institution makes a gift and then borrows back the article concerned.

The Hon. T. M. Casey: I didn't say it does.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Then I think the Minister will agree with me when I say that, if this clause passes, the board will be able to lend to individuals for whatever reasons it thinks best.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: Irrespective of whether or not they donated it.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: That is the point I am making, and I hope the Minister interprets it in that way. I merely ask for an assurance that the board will lend these gifts only to the donors thereof.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I understand the situation goes a little further than that. The honourable member is asking whether in future the board will use its discretion when lending works of art to individuals who apply to it. I understand that the board will do so. Indeed, I assure the honourable member that the board will use its

discretion in these matters and that it will certainly not lend works to just anyone. Certain terms and conditions will, of course, be laid down by the board, which I am sure can cope with the situation.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I am disappointed by the tenor of the Minister's reply. I should like briefly to read the Minister's second reading explanation, and I ask honourable members to compare that with what he has just said, because he almost implied just now that conditions exist in which the board could lend out art treasures to individuals who have not donated them. In his second reading explanation, the Minister said:

Clause 3 amends section 18 of the principal Act by providing that the Art Gallery Board may lease or make available any of its exhibits to persons as well as to institutions, loans to institutions being already provided for in the present section 18. The reason for this amendment is that it is sometimes possible for the board to receive by way of gift, valuable exhibits, although the donor may wish to have the exhibit in his own possession during his lifetime. By the use of this section it will be possible for the board to accept the gift and then, as it were, lend it back to the donor for a particular period on such terms and conditions as the board thinks fit.

What the Minister has just said widens that second reading explanation considerably. I know that the board is a most responsible body and that its members and the Director of the Art Gallery are responsible people. I merely highlight the point that Bills should not be only half explained. I hope that in future, apart from our getting proper, correct and accurate explanations of Bills, the board will exercise extreme care in using the power which Parliament is giving it.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: My colleague has a point that cannot be gainsaid: this amendment is wider than the second reading explanation suggests. On the other hand, the Art Gallery is asking for this power for the reasons stated in the second reading explanation. Perhaps that explanation should have gone further and made it clear that wider powers were being conferred. From my experience on the board over the four years to which I have referred, I know that the board is extremely careful when lending works of art.

This matter arose out of a specific offer of donation by a Melbourne man which the gallery was unable to accept because it did not have the power to do so. True, this power will enable the gallery to lend to persons and institutions, irrespective of this aspect. One may ask whether the sort of persons to whom the gallery will lend are any less worthy than the sort of institutions that are lent these works. I am happy that the board has this power, because it has under its control extremely valuable works of art, and people in this position are generally fairly cautious people.

Clause passed.

Clause 4 and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

SUPERANNUATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 30. Page 614.)

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE (Northern): I rise to support this Bill as quickly as possible. We must try to bring pension rates as nearly as possible into line with the cost of living. With the present spiralling rate of inflation, it is impossible to do that, although this Bill attempts to alleviate the position of those people who depend on superannuation pensions. An increase of 8.7 per cent in the pension rate will go some way to assist those people. When we read in today's paper that the present monetary confusion will continue for another week at a conservative estimate, that confusion could easily be more confused at the end of the week than it is now. All these people will have to pay more for their purchases because of the rising cost of living and will have to pay more in interest rates on hire-purchase payments. It is with some pleasure that I recommend to the Council that we support this increase of 8.7 per cent in superannuation pension rates.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

PARLIAMENTARY SUPERANNUATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 30. Page 614.)

The Hon C. R. STORY (Midland): I rise in the same frame of mind as the Hon. Mr. Whyte did when he spoke of inflation and the deterioration in value of the money invested, in this case by members of Parliament in the Parliamentary Superannuation Fund. Over the last six or seven years, the value of the money that people invested in insurance policies or superannuation schemes has steadily declined; now it is not nearly as good as it was when they took out their policies. Our Parliamentary superannuation scheme is not nearly as good as the Public Service scheme, under which people get a better return for their contributions than members of Parliament do under this scheme.

For some years I have thought that people who have given 25 or more years of service to this Parliament are not properly appreciated by some people outside Parliament, who have not the slightest idea whether or not we work hard. However, I assure those people that in the short time that I have been in Parliament (less than 20 years) I have come to realize that our job is not easy. We do not have much opportunity of saving money in order to provide for ourselves, other than through the Parliamentary Superannuation Fund, by which we can be assured of some sort of security in our old age. I am most perturbed to think that superannuation of this kind may be taxed by the Commonwealth Government. We must take a long look at that. I ask the Government to make sure that there is no danger of the Commonwealth Treasury deciding to tax superannuation purely because the joint partnership of a man and his wife receives more money than the old age pension—for that is what it amounts to.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Doesn't the Commonwealth Government now tax superannuation pensions?

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Yes, but it is going to be worse.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: But you were suggesting that it was not already taxed.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Oh, yes it is.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: The weekly payments are taxable.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: The 5 per cent?

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: If one takes a lump sum, 5 per cent of it is taxable; if one receives weekly superannuation pension payments, they are taxable. It has been going on for years.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: Does the Minister agree with that?

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: I did not say I was agreeing with that; I was telling you the present position.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I thought you were saying it should stop.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. A. J. Shard: I would agree with you 200 per cent if you could stop it; but you will not.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: There are many things that the State Government should be standing up for at the moment but it is not.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: You leave the State Government alone on superannuation or I will come in and tell you what your Government did.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Mr. Story.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I believe that superannuation is something one pays for all his life—

The Hon. A. J. Shard: And it should be his, I agree.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: —in order to provide for one's old age, without being taxed in the form of income tax, succession duties or any other kind of tax. That is my only point. I am grateful for this increase. It will help many members of Parliament who have retired, and their widows.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: That is right.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I believe that they will be duly grateful.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: We should not have to depend on an amendment being made to the principal Act every 12 months.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: I am sure that, if we all put our shoulders to the wheel, the system will be improved.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD (Minister of Health): I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate. The Hon. Mr. Story said that he hoped the State Government would try to get the present Commonwealth Government to resist imposing taxation on superannuation.

The Hon. C. R. Story: I said "further taxation".

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: No; the honourable member said that he hoped the State Government would take action to ensure that the Commonwealth Government did not impose taxation on superannuation.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill: Of course, the present State Government does not have much influence on the present Commonwealth Government.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Obviously a Liberal Government here did not have any influence on a Commonwealth Liberal Government, because it was when a Liberal Government was in power in this State that a Liberal Government in Canberra imposed taxation on superannuation. Again, I thank honourable members for their interest in the Bill.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.18 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, September 12, at 2.15 p.m..