

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday, September 27, 1973

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

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: BUS ACCIDENT

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE (Chief Secretary): I ask leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: The South Australian Government wishes to extend its sympathy to all relatives and friends of persons who were killed in the tragic accident near Cabramurra yesterday and also to relatives and friends of those who suffered injury. I desire to inform members that the Government has taken action to assist relatives in every possible way and expresses its gratitude to the New South Wales Government, which yesterday announced that it would meet the cost of air travel for relatives to travel to Cooma. The South Australian Government has co-operated through the Police Department in making the necessary arrangements, and relatives have departed from South Australia. Some travelled on the 7 a.m. Ansett Airlines of Australia flight and others on the 11 a.m. flight, with the exception of those who wished to travel by their own means. The South Australian Government has formally approached the Australian Government requesting that an aircraft be made available to transport the bodies back to Adelaide and the Prime Minister has agreed to this request. From other inquiries made this morning it appears that the bus involved in this tragedy was subjected to the regular six-monthly inspection at the Government Motor Garage on May 31, 1973, when a certificate of roadworthiness was issued for the usual six-month period. The Government Motor Garage operates an inspecting authority for the Transport Control Board. The Minister of Transport has this morning requested the New South Wales Minister of Transport (Mr. Morris) to take such action as is necessary to ensure that a coroner's inquiry is conducted so that all the facts surrounding this tragedy may be made public. Mr. Morris has agreed to this request.

In addition, the Minister has arranged for the Manager of the South Australian Government Motor Garage (Mr. O'Donnell) together with an investigating officer of the Crown Law Department to proceed immediately to the scene of the accident.

The Government regrets very much this unfortunate happening, and I repeat its expression of sympathy to all those people who have suffered in this tragedy. I wish to convey to the Council that the following telegram has been received by the Premier of South Australia from the Acting Prime Minister of New Zealand:

New Zealanders were shocked to learn of yesterday's tragic bus accident in New South Wales. May I extend our sympathy to the relatives and families of those who lost their lives or were injured in the mishap. (Signed) Hugh Watt, Acting Prime Minister.

I might also add that the South Australian Government has sent an expression of sympathy to the President and members of the Brighton Elderly Citizens Club.

QUESTIONS**LYELL McEWIN HOSPITAL**

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I seek leave to make a brief statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Health.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: The decision to close the casualty section of the Lyell McEwin Hospital between midnight and 8 a.m. from next Saturday in most disturbing. The Minister of Health has already made a statement to the media on that and it appears to me a rather offhand comment on a serious situation. Can the Minister say what action the Government has taken to provide an emergency service in the Elizabeth area, or can he give any other information about this situation?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The statement I made to the media was not offhand, nor was it completely reported. I share the concern of the Leader in that this decision has had to be taken by the Lyell McEwin Hospital. We have done everything possible to avoid this situation, but unfortunately we were not able to overcome the obstacles. This morning I contacted the Administrator (Mr. Joel) and he assured me that the Hospitals Department had done everything possible to assist. It is true that vacancies exist at the hospital for two doctors. These positions have been advertised in this State and in other States in the past few months, but as yet the hospital has had no result. However, it is continuing with its endeavours to recruit doctors from South Australia or from other States, and personal contacts are being made on behalf of the hospital.

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital has been assisting the Lyell McEwin Hospital by providing two doctors on rotation, and this is in addition to the doctors already operating there. Of course, I have not heard any comment from the Leader about this, but had the same type of ban been put on by the workers in the district (I am referring now to an overtime ban by doctors in the area) there would have been a hue and cry from members opposite asking what the Government was doing about the overtime ban existing at Elizabeth. It is this overtime ban by doctors in the district that has seriously affected the running of the Lyell McEwin Hospital. On a tape recording, the doctors say something like this:

We regret that we are unable to visit you or attend you tonight or to give you medical assistance, because owing to Government intervention—

and I do not know what they mean by that, but they then go on to say—

we advise you to go down to the casualty section at the Lyell McEwin Hospital.

This has aggravated the position considerably, but we are making every effort to overcome the difficulty. Although it appears certain that the casualty section at the hospital will close at night from midnight to 8 a.m., starting on Saturday, we are taking further steps which we hope eventually will overcome the existing problems.

Like the Leader, I regret that this action has been necessary. Those doctors who have been working consistently around the clock are now about to collapse unless they are given some relief. They are not able to go out to golf, as are some other doctors who have now cut out night work. It is necessary for the present doctors to be given relief, and the only way around it at present is to close the casualty section between the hours of midnight and 8 a.m. Those hours were selected because, in the event of an accident or if it is necessary to get a patient quickly into hospital, the roads are not so congested during that time and it would not take so long to get to either the Queen Elizabeth Hospital or the Royal Adelaide Hospital. That is why those times have been selected for the closing of the casualty section.

PINE POSTS

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: During the past few months there has been a considerable shortage of treated pine posts. Can the Minister of Agriculture report on the present position?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: It is true that there has been a heavy demand from agricultural people on the Woods and Forests Department over the past few months for treated pine posts. The posts mainly sought are 6ft. (1.8m) in length and of diameters between 4in. (101 mm) and 5in. (127mm). Other posts are available, but for some unknown reason they are not acceptable to agriculturists seeking these posts. I believe that one of the factors responsible for the shortage is the shortage of labour in the forests and in the mills themselves. Also, other industries establishing in the South-East (particularly the viticultural industry) are taking considerable quantities of treated pine posts for that side of agriculture as against the farming and grazing side. Naturally, we have the wet winter months to contend with, and this makes for difficulties in processing the treated pines in the actual drying-out of the timber. However, I believe that there will be a better supply soon, now that the warmer months are approaching.

INTEREST RATES

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Has the Chief Secretary a reply to my question of September 18 regarding interest rates?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: The matter of the likely effect on building societies in South Australia following the announcement of increased interest rates is still unclear. The Australian body representing all permanent building societies met with officials of the Reserve Bank on September 21, 1973, for discussions with the view of establishing a policy on house mortgage lending rates. No finality was reached at this meeting, and further discussions were held in Sydney on September 26, 1973. It is expected that a public announcement of the decisions reached will be made towards the end of this week.

TAXIS

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Will the Minister of Health ask the Minister of Transport whether he is completely satisfied with the operations of the Metropolitan Taxi-Cab Board and whether, as a result of a recent report compiled by the Taxi Industry Association of South Australia, he intends to introduce any changes regarding the administration of taxis in metropolitan Adelaide?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I shall be happy to refer the honourable member's question to my colleague and bring down a reply when it is available.

CHILDREN'S HOMES

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Has Chief Secretary a reply to my question of September 12 about children's homes?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: In the last few years the number of children needing residential care has declined and this has emphasized financial problems in non-statutory children's homes. Many of the homes have realized the need to provide standards of care in accordance with modern concepts; they have been faced with problems of buildings and facilities established many years ago, and the need for adequately trained staff. Because of the many problems, the Minister of Community Welfare appointed an advisory committee in May, 1972, to investigate and make recommendations regarding the adequacy and co-ordination of residential child care services and the role of and standards for children's homes in South Australia.

The committee was chaired by Rev. K. Seaman, Superintendent, Central Methodist Mission, and included representatives of organizations that conduct children's homes.

The committee submitted its report in February, 1973, and this was made public. The report has been used as a basis for discussions with organizations that provide residential care for children. Recommendations made in the report cover aspects of accommodation, standards, staffing, specialization, assessment of children and rationalization of services offered by the various homes. A continuing committee will study the way the recommendations should be implemented, including financial considerations. Pending final decisions on the recommendations made in the report, the amount the Community Welfare Department can pay to licensed children's homes will be increased by \$1 a week to \$10.80 a week each child from October 1, 1973, in line with increases in foster subsidy rates.

VOTING SYSTEM

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I seek leave to make a statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Health.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I notice that the Minister is one of the few avid readers of the journal called the *Herald* which is distributed in South Australia, an issue of which contains a long article by the new Minister of Development and Mines (Hon. D. J. Hoppood) detailing matters concerning the new voting system for the Legislative Council. It was interesting to read this article in which its author states that at each election 12 honourable members are elected to the council. I draw this matter to the attention of the Minister of Health and, knowing his close association with the author of this article, I ask him to draw it to his colleague's attention and tell him that, if he wants an accurate summary of the new voting system for the Legislative Council, I am certain that Opposition members will supply it for him.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I am pleased that the Leader also reads the *Herald*, which I can recommend to every honourable member. As sometimes happens, editors make mistakes. However, this was not intended by my colleague. I should also draw his attention to the latest article headed "Liberal cure: sack", which is a summary of what occurred in another place recently and what the new member for Alexandra suggests as a cure for inflation: to sack the employees. I should like all members to read this article, as I would be interested to see whether they agreed with the cure that has been suggested by the member for Alexandra.

The PRESIDENT: Is that a question or a reply by the Minister, and does the Leader wish to reply to it?

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: No.

WEST LAKES

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I understand a public meeting was held last night in the Albert Park area which at least two Ministers of the Crown attended and which discussed the proposed West Lakes boulevard and acquisitions therefor. I also understand that the Minister of Transport gave an undertaking to the gathering that the Government would have an independent consultant inquire into the whole matter and then it would examine it again. Will the Minister of Health, representing the Minister of Transport, tell the Council the name of the consultant, the terms of reference he will be given and whether the consultant's report will be made public?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I shall be happy to refer the honourable member's question to my colleague.

FOOD POISONING

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: Will the Minister of Health comment on today's press report that a number of serious cases of food poisoning occurred at the church camp for children in the Cudlee Creek area?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The latest information from the acting Director-General of Public Health, Dr. Keith Wilson, reveals that 53 children and one teacher have been admitted to either the Gumeracha, Northfield or Children's hospitals. In all, 160 children from the Mitcham Girls Technical High School were attending the camp. They were all first year students. Two of the six teachers were ill, and one was admitted to Northfield hospital. The medical health officer at Gumeracha has arranged for the remaining children at the camp to be evacuated to two St. John centres; 50 students will be transported to the Tea Tree Gully centre; and another 50 will go to the Prospect St. John centre. The Public Health Department has taken samples of food eaten at yesterday's lunch and evening meal for bacteriological testing. Samples have been sent to the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science and the Adelaide Children's Hospital laboratory for testing. This will enable the source of the poisoning to be located more quickly. The department hopes to have located the source within 48 hours.

LAND COMMISSION BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE (Minister of Lands): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It deals with an important aspect of the Government's policy of arresting spiralling land prices, and of promoting orderly and efficient urban expansion and development. The establishment of a Land Commission to acquire and release land on a large scale reflects the principal recommendation of the Government's Working Party on the Stabilization of Land Prices. The basic object of the South Australian Land Commission will be to ensure that residential land is freely available at fair prices. In pursuance of that object, the commission will attempt to promote integration and economy in the development of land for urban expansion in both the public and private sector. The commission will have power to provide, or to arrange for the provision of, community services, facilities and amenities so that urban expansion and development can take place with proper regard to those human values that are involved, but unfortunately are so often neglected, in the implementation of urban development programmes.

The commission will assemble, hold and manage large parcels of land that is presently, or potentially, required for urban expansion. It will have power to develop and improve land for that purpose, ensuring that the land is properly serviced before being made available for its planned purpose. The South Australian Government will co-operate with the commission in the performance of its functions. To this end, the activities of various State public utilities will be co-ordinated to provide an integrated development programme. In particular, the State Planning Authority will co-operate closely with the commission to ensure that the planning of the commission's projects will be of a very high order. The development of land acquired by the commission will be undertaken in various ways. The work will be allocated both to public utilities and

private contractors with a view to achieving maximum efficiency in the commission's operations. Serviced home sites will be made available to the public on a leasehold basis, the fee simple of the land remaining in the commission. Care will be taken to ensure that the value of the land, as a security, will not be impaired.

These policies which the commission is to implement are based on the belief that the only effective way to stabilize land prices over an extended period is to ensure that the supply of serviced blocks matches the demand. An analysis of the land market over the past few decades discloses a cyclical fluctuation in the supply of new allotments. In these existing conditions, one cannot rely on a constant equalization of production with demand for any lengthy period. At times there are periods of intense activity, resulting in glut of land flooding the market, and a consequent waste of community resources in servicing allotments for which there is no immediate demand. At other times (and this has been the position in recent times), production of new allotments falls far short of demand. In these circumstances some land speculators have been deliberately withholding land from the market with the intention of creating an artificially intense demand for land. This position cannot be allowed to continue, and the commission is accordingly invested with powers for compulsory acquisition where that course is necessary.

In addition to the problems to which I have already referred, it is clear that where the development of land is left entirely in the hands of private operators, development occurs sporadically and in scattered areas. This leads to inefficiency in the provision of public resources. It is obvious that there must be some central authority with power to initiate and carry through developmental projects. The existence and proper operation of such an authority should ensure that urban expansion occurs in the most economic manner possible. Only with substantial direct Government involvement in the land market can orderly and efficient development be achieved. The Commonwealth Government and all State Governments have agreed that this is the most effective way to solve the land price problem. The Commonwealth Government has made undertakings to assist the establishment and development of land commissions in all States.

In particular, technical assistance and substantial financial assistance will be made available to the South Australian Government to ensure that the vitally important aims of the Land Commission are realized. Already, as a result of prompt action, the price of broad acres in the Adelaide Metropolitan Planning Area has fallen below the high speculative levels existing early in the year. When the Land Commission has acquired sufficient land to enable it to ensure that the supply of serviced allotments will continuously meet demand, speculative booms will be a thing of the past. This can only result in general benefit to home buyers and to the public as a whole.

Clauses 1, 2, and 3 are formal. Clause 4 sets out a number of definitions required for the purposes of the new Act. Clause 5 establishes and incorporates the commission and deals with its legal capacity. Clause 6 sets out the membership of the commission. Two of the members are to be appointed upon the nomination of the Premier after consultation with the Prime Minister. The remaining member of the commission is to be appointed upon the nomination of the Prime Minister made after consultation with the Premier.

Clause 7 deals with the terms and conditions upon which the members of the commission hold office. The clause is framed to permit the appointment of a full-time

Chairman. Clause 8 deals with the salary of the Chairman and the allowances and expenses that are to be paid to the other members. Clause 9 deals with the procedures of the commission. Clause 10 provides that the commission may act notwithstanding a vacancy in its membership.

Clause 11 provides that a member of the commission who is in any way interested in a contract or proposed contract made by the commission, or in contemplation of the commission, shall disclose the nature of his interest to the commission. Such a person is not entitled to take part in the deliberations of the commission in relation to that contract. Clause 12 deals with the powers and functions of the commission. The commission is to acquire land required for present or future urban expansion or development, for the establishment of new urban areas, or for other public purposes. The commission is empowered to develop or redevelop land so acquired. From time to time, as prevailing circumstances require, the commission is to release land for the purpose of orderly urban expansion or development. In exercising its powers the commission is required to promote as far as possible integration and economy in the development of land for urban purposes. The commission is empowered to provide, or arrange for the provision of, services and amenities for the use or benefit of the community in new urban areas. The commission is required to conduct its business in accordance with established principles of sound financial management and economy.

Clause 13 empowers the commission to delegate its powers to any member, officer or employee of the commission. Clause 14 deals with the appointment of staff to the commission. These may be appointed either pursuant to the Public Service Act or, with the approval of the Minister, by the commission itself. Clause 15 sets out the borrowing powers of the commission. Clause 16 provides for the establishment and administration of the South Australian Land Commission Fund. Clause 17 empowers the commission to invest moneys that are not immediately required for its purposes. Clause 18 deals with the keeping of proper accounts, and the auditing of those accounts. Clause 19 provides for the commission to report to the Minister and requires the Minister to lay copies of the report together with audited accounts before each House of Parliament. Clause 20 empowers an authorized officer of the commission to enter land for the purpose of conducting surveys, tests or examinations that may be necessary to determine whether that land is suitable for the purpose of urban development. Clause 21 empowers the Governor to make regulations for the purposes of the new Act.

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

MONARTO DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE (Chief Secretary): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Honourable members will recall that, following the passage of the Murray New Town (Land Acquisition) Act, 1972, and its subsequent amendment, the Government, through the State Planning Authority, was authorized to acquire not more than 16 000 ha of land for the purposes of establishing a new town. Subsequently, it was decided to call this new town "the city of Monarto". Honourable members will, again, be aware of the reasons for establishing this new city in the area nominated as the "designated site" under the Murray New Town (Land Acquisition) Act and it is sufficient here to say that the site selected is

from all points of view the best one. This Bill, then, creates the body that will be responsible for the development of the new city of Monarto, a development that we hope will be the forerunner for others in this State. Apart from Canberra, there have been no cities in Australia that have been planned from "the ground up", as it were, and it is hoped that the commission created by this Bill will bring to its task a freshness of approach that will be as exciting for the proposed residents of the new city as it will be for the people of the State generally.

The site is well chosen. The proposed new city is near enough to Adelaide to draw on its industrial base; it is on a main transport corridor to the Eastern States; it is well situated in relation to its water supply, and the undulating ground on which it will be established should make for a pleasant environment. It will be separated from Adelaide by the Mount Lofty Range which, of itself, provides a natural rural buffer and should ensure that the two urban areas develop separately. In aid of this, the Government will use its planning powers to ensure that as far as possible ribbon development does not occur along the South-Eastern Freeway and its adjacent towns and villages and that the unique part that the Mount Lofty Range plays in the present environment of Adelaide will be preserved.

The Monarto Development Commission has had imposed on itself a great task, and the aim of this measure is to provide it with the powers necessary to fulfil its obligations and duties. However, responsibility for its activities must lie somewhere and it is appropriate that a responsible Minister will be provided for in the Bill. The selected Minister, of course, must answer to this Parliament. Before I engage in an examination of the individual clauses of this measure, I should mention that it is the second of a series of three measures connected with the establishment of the new city. The first, the Murray New Town (Land Acquisition) Act, provided for the acquisition of land for the city; this Bill provides for an authority to develop the city, and there will be a third measure, which will provide for the types of landholding that will be permitted within the city. This third measure will be placed before you in due course.

Clauses 1 to 3 are formal. Clause 4 provides the definitions necessary for the purposes of the Act. Clause 5 establishes the Monarto Development Commission. The commission will consist of three Commissioners, of whom one shall be appointed to be Chairman of the commission. The commission will be a body corporate and have the usual powers of such a body. Clause 6 provides that a Commissioner may be appointed for a term of not more than six years but is eligible for reappointment. Clause 7 provides for the remuneration and allowances of Commissioners. At this stage, it may be appropriate to mention that, by reason of the most significant financial assistance that it is expected will be provided by the Commonwealth Government, it is likely that one of the Commissioners will represent the interests of that Government.

Clause 8 is a usual clause and provides for the vacation of office by a Commissioner. Clause 9 provides for the appointment of acting Commissioners. Clause 10 is formal. Clause 11 provides for the conduct of business by the commission and again is usual; two Commissioners will constitute a quorum at meetings of the commission. Clause 12 ensures that no act or proceeding of the commission will be invalid on the grounds of any vacancy in the office of a Commissioner or any defect in his appointment, and again is a usual clause for a Bill of this nature. Clause 13 sets out in broad terms the functions of the commission, and

subclause (3) gives the commission power to carry out its functions. Here, I emphasize that the commission will be enjoined to encourage public participation in all its activities to the greatest extent possible. Cities, after all, are really agglomerations of people and the more that the people are involved in planning their physical and social environment the more likely they are to be satisfied with it.

Clause 14 provides that the commission shall be subject to the general control and direction of the Minister to whom the administration of this Act is committed and, as I have mentioned before, that Minister is responsible to this Parliament. Clause 15 gives point to my remarks in relation to clause 13 by providing that the commission may appoint committees to investigate and advise the commission on any aspect of its functions. It is expected that extensive use will be made of these committees, which will provide a close link between the commission and the people for whom it is responsible.

Clause 16 provides a power of delegation and specifically provides for the commission to delegate its powers to bodies of persons—that is, to committees as well as to individual persons. Clause 17 permits the commission to employ persons for the carrying out of its functions. It is not thought that it will be necessary for the commission to have an excessively large staff. It is, however, assumed, that the staff employed by the commission will be skilful and technically competent in their respective disciplines, for it is on the staff, as much as on anybody, that the success or failure of the enterprise will depend. Certainly, the principal executive officer of the project, who has been provisionally designed “General Manager”, will have a most important and crucial role in the project.

Clause 18 suggests a reason why a large staff should not be necessary since, under this clause, the commission will be empowered to make arrangements with Government departments and statutory authorities for the use of at least some technical and professional officers as may be necessary for the development of the city. Clause 19 ensures that this Parliament will be informed of the activities of the commission by means of annual reports. Clause 20 enjoins the commission to keep proper accounts and ensures that they will be audited. Clause 21 gives the commission power to borrow on the security of its assets and, most importantly, gives the Treasurer power to guarantee the repayment of moneys borrowed by the commission. This should enable the commission to have access to loan funds at reasonable rates of interest.

Clause 22 indicates the areas in which the commission may be expected to obtain money, and an important area is pointed up in subclause (1) (d) of this clause. There are indications that significant Commonwealth financial assistance will be available. Clause 23 provides that the commission will maintain a budget in order that expenditure will be properly controlled. Part III of the measure, which comprises clauses 24 to 28, is intended to arm the commission with the necessary planning powers to enable it to ensure that the development of this city proceeds in systematic and orderly manner. In fact, it will have the same planning powers as a local government council. It will also have the powers of a local government council under the Building Act.

Clause 28 is of particular importance. As I said earlier, we are still in the early stages of planning cities from the ground up, and it is possible that past legislative solutions to problems in the planning and building area may not be the best ones and may even inhibit the planning and carrying out of the scheme in the manner that we would all wish. Against this possibility, clause 28 is intended to

build some flexibility into the planning area by providing that the provisions of the applied Acts in so far as they relate to the new city may be modified by proclamation. To ensure that this Parliament is fully and formally informed of the use of this power of modification, proposed subclause (3) of clause 28 provides for the tabling in this Chamber of any modifying proclamations.

Part IV of the measure sets out the steps that will be followed by the commission along the road to full local government. It is clear that full elective local government in the area is not possible until there is sufficient population resident therein to enable local government to be established on a firm base. Accordingly, until a population of this size is established the commission itself will, after the day appointed for the purposes of Part IV of the Bill, exercise the powers of local government in the area.

Clause 32 covers certain transitional matters during this period, the designated site being originally part of the District Council of Mobilong. Clause 33 enables existing local government authorities to be asked to carry out tasks that would otherwise fall on the commission in its local government capacity. Clause 34 represents the final step along the road to full local government and provides that, at any time after the population reaches 60 000 people, full elective local government may be established for the area. The figure of 60 000 has been selected as being a figure at which it should be possible for local government to operate without too much difficulty. Any figure under this would cause difficulty because of the comparatively large annual accretions of population that are expected in relation to Monarto.

Clause 35 is intended to cover the transition to full local government, and clause 36 is intended to aid in the resolution of disputes that may arise. Clause 37 is a formal provision. Clause 38 provides that the works of the commission will not be public works so as to require examination by the Public Works Standing Committee. It is suggested that this is a reasonable provision, since the works of the commission will have to be considered in the totality of the budget of the commission already adverted to and an appropriate degree of preliminary scrutiny is already provided for in this Act.

Clause 39 is a most important provision and is proposed only after the most careful consideration by the Government, and I draw honourable members' special attention to it. It is a considerable dispensing power and again is intended to ensure that the approach of the commission to its great task is not inhibited by what in ordinary circumstances may be regarded as technically legal difficulties. Again, Parliament will be forthwith informed of the use of this dispensing power. Clause 40 is a formal clause. Clause 41 confers on the Governor a usual regulation-making power.

The Hon. C. M. HILL secured the adjournment of the debate.

PHYSIOTHERAPISTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned from the House of Assembly without amendment.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2)

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 26. Page 960.)

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT (Southern): In speaking to this Bill, I think it is worth looking at what one might call its focal theme. We get that focal theme from the Financial Statement made by the Treasurer a short while ago, when he said that the primary aim of the

Government was to improve the lives of all South Australians whilst leaving the individual the right to determine what life style to pursue. Following that, the first thing that struck me was the cost of living today compared to that of a year or so ago. How does that match up with improving the lives of all South Australians and leaving the individual the right to determine how his life style shall be pursued?

I have with me some pamphlets issued by a builder of houses, and I have also comparisons of costs between the present month and January of this year. A house which would have cost \$16,950 in January last, built in exactly the same way, would now cost \$19,490, an increase of \$2,540. Another house that would have cost \$17,600 in January would cost \$20,250 now, an increase of \$2,650. The list I have shows the prices of other houses, and they all show almost 15 per cent increase between January, 1973, and the present time. What is the life style likely to be of young people, just married, seeking to buy a house? They planned to get married and spend \$16,950 on a house that now costs \$19,490. This suggests to me that their life style would be a very long period of penury.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill: Inflation will look after them, though, won't it?

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: And it will take them goodness knows where. Two or three weeks ago I was speaking with a young man who told me that, when he got home from his holidays, a letter was waiting for him to tell him that he had received an increase of \$1,000 in salary. He was delighted. However, he worked out the tax that would become due and the extra superannuation he would have to pay, together with certain other incidentals, and he was left with just over \$300.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: He was lucky.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Perhaps he was.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: Some get nothing.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: The honourable member has emphasized it more than I have by saying that.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill. Some of them lose.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: Yes; some public servants lose.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: What is the life style of that man? Surely he will have second thoughts about whether he should be sufficiently enthusiastic to put a little extra into his work to rise further in the financial scale yet drop a little more in the final income scale. I believe that everyone would agree that these two extracts illustrate how money is becoming more and more an item of little value, most of all to the fixed-income earner, the retired person, and those who invest for their old age. Investments are like ordinary savings: they are coming to be of less value.

The Treasurer also said that there would be easier access to health facilities of a higher standard. I had hoped that the Minister of Health would be present to hear my comments, but he is absent at the moment. I question the Treasurer's remark. What more can this Government or any Government offer with regard to the quality and standards of medical services? That kind of remark misled many folk in the United Kingdom back in the 1940's when the catchery was, "You have a right to specialist care"—by inference suggesting that such had not been the case previously. Almost overnight, after the National Health Service had been introduced, it became more difficult to obtain specialist treatment than it had been previously. Certainly it was more difficult to obtain the doctor of one's choice, and the scheme still has considerable difficulties. Give a man limitless funds and a free hand, and what more could he offer by way of quality and standard of

personal medical care? In Question Time today reference was made to the doctor shortage at Elizabeth. Doctors can work on and keep things going, but they then become more and more tired and less and less efficient.

Honourable members will recall a visit last year by members of the U.K. Parliament, one of whom was a House of Commons Labour Party spokesman on health matters. I asked her, "What do you do with people when there are not enough doctors to go around?" She said, "Some patients have to go to the wall, because it is far better that they should not be treated by overtired doctors." Is that what we want here? I hope not. I agree that there is a shortage of personnel of all kinds in the medical and allied professions to give a full service to the public, but how can any Government make these services easier of access except on a long-term policy? It is foolish for anyone to suggest that, at the drop of a hat, on one side of where it lands the people get bad service, whereas the people on the other side get good service. I agree with the Treasurer that the Government will suffer a heavy budgetary impact as a result of medical services. Until Flinders University starts to turn out a steady and uniform flow of doctors that will add to the other sources of recruitment we will not meet this State's needs however much we may camouflage the shortage with fine turns of phraseology. A few months ago I attended the opening of a St. John Ambulance Brigade centre in the country by His Excellency the Governor, who said:

We have in Australia a medical service which cares for the people. It is as good as anywhere in the world, and I have been to many parts of the world. It is as good as anywhere in the world, despite what some folk say.

I agree with His Excellency's remarks. It is misleading for people to suggest that increased control is synonymous with a better service. Steady and continuing progression by alteration must always be made but we should not denigrate the quality of service which has been given in the past and which will be given in the future. Party dogma and political motivations are creating the misconceptions that Britain had to face in the 1940's. I remind honourable members that the then Minister of Health in Britain (the late Aneurin Bevan) stirred the pot as much as he could, with great advertising skill. Members of the public were encouraged to believe that doctors were all a bunch of crooks, that the poor gullible public was being duped all the time, and that he was a knight in shining armour whose only purpose in life was to save the people from the injustices they were suffering at the hands of the unscrupulous doctors.

Fundamentally, we have a good health service in this country (this State I am thinking of more particularly), and there is nothing wrong with it that common sense and carefully adjusted reviews could not put right, and keep right for as long as is necessary. Meanwhile, I remind honourable members that anywhere in the world where the Government takes over the running of existing health and medical services it almost always makes a bad job of it.

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill: Perhaps the health scheme will go the way of the 35-hour week.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Perhaps, but considerable money will be spent before that happens, Sweden, with medical Socialism, is in a quandary, and Canada, with which we are more allied, is not too happy with its health scheme. Britain certainly is not. Last year, when I was in London, I spoke with an official of the Ministry of Health. I said, "How is the service going?" He replied in two words, the first of which I am not permitted to use, but the second was "awful".

The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill: You're permitted to use six-letter words in the Chamber.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: But I do not know many of them. The Hospitals Department is expecting to spend \$64,700,000 on health services this year. Curing sickness is an expensive business, and no doubt the Minister of Health would agree with that.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Yes.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: The Public Health Department is expecting to spend \$2,850,000 this financial year. It has always fascinated me that this department, which cares for the environment and its effects on the safety and protection of people against infectious exotic diseases, occupational health hazards, etc., manages on such a small budget. Yet it does, and it does a very good job, too. The department is concerned with children who are admitted to hospital following infection, which was the subject of a question asked today. One of the fine things for which the department has been responsible and for which Ministers of Health on both sides of politics can take credit is the establishment of the school dental service and the way in which the service has been proved. The service has improved, until now children will be cared for dentally up to the age of 15 years. The original 16 dental therapists have been increased to 48, and we have been told that, in 1975-76, there will be more than 45 trainees.

Of all the public health problems which annoy, disturb, and irritate us, perhaps the greatest in importance is that which is neither felt nor seen, namely, noise, which unfortunately cannot be completely eliminated in some firms, factories and processes, but which can certainly be controlled in some other sources. We have known for years that the decibel level achieved by musical groups in fairly confined areas, particularly of the cellar type where the sound given out by the players reverberates and re-echoes, is the cause of early deafness. Workers in noisy environments, such as those using mechanical drills to dig up the road, people who work in airports, or people who dig up Parliament House, as they are doing at present, are all the creators of a considerable amount of noise, though perhaps it is not their fault. However, it is interesting to speculate on the reaction of such workers if they are not provided with ear muffers to deaden sound where it is possible to do so. Patients in hospitals have complained, having lost their hearing, that they did so because they were not given muffers. However, many have lost their hearing not because of the continual use of such things as vibrating machines but because of listening to extremely loud music in a confined space.

I have not said anything about many items of the Budget. However, it is fair to say that medicine, in its broad concept, will account for much of the money that is available. Finally, I refer to the numerous charitable bodies which are alarmed at the prospect of the Commonwealth Government's removing the right of a donor to have his donation made tax deductible. If the Commonwealth Government does this, many affected organizations will be in dire straits and will, I am sure, look to the State Government for more help than they now receive. Will they receive this help from the State Government? Budgets are all about money and, although it is said to be the root of all evil, the real evil comes in how the money is spent. I am sure that in this respect the Government could do with a little more evil; I know I could. I am sure the Government will do the best it can. One hopes so, because as the years go by it is getting tighter and tighter for everyone. I support the Bill.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE (Northern): I rise to support the Bill and to point out some of its defects. I am sorry that I am not debating the Commonwealth Budget, which it would be easier for one to condemn than it would the State Budget. However, the two are linked to a large degree. The Budget was described by the media as a mild one. I am sure those concerned have not fully recognized that many of the taxes referred to in it had already been imposed before the Budget was introduced. It was also described by some as a sneaky Budget for this reason. Increased marine and harbor charges, electricity charges and pay-roll tax had already been introduced. Perhaps the Treasurer needs some assistance in this respect as his friends in Canberra have not treated him very well, having short-changed him by about \$20,000,000. The Budget contains the necessary ingredients to allow the Government to reap an extra \$18,400,000 to assist it to balance its expenditure. It has not been stated that these imposts cannot be further increased and I should be surprised, therefore, if by the end of this financial year further charges are not levied on our incomes.

All honourable members realize that we must pay for the services we receive, and that this State's service system is not by any means the worst in the world. However, I am concerned about how much we pay and how much of it is recouped in services rendered to us. In other words, one wonders how much of the taxation levied against the citizens, not just of South Australia but of Australia generally, is wasted. Each year one sees a huge escalation in the cost of services. The Leader of the Opposition and the Hon. Mr. Hill made splendid contributions to the debate, outlining how much these costs had increased in the last 12 months. It is interesting to note that Hospitals Department expenditure has increased from \$28,000,000 in 1970 to an expected \$64,721,000 in this financial year. When one considers that this increase must be absorbed by the public, it is no wonder that people strike for higher pay; they simply have no chance of coping with the cost of services (one of which is hospitalization) which they have to pay.

One wonders where it will all end and when the escalation will cease. Although we have wonderful hospitals, it is a pity that we still cannot keep abreast of today's needs. However, when it is not possible to provide all the necessary facilities of the standard that we at present demand, we will have to consider providing accommodation of a lower standard. The people most affected are those not sick enough to be kept in hospital, where they would reap the benefit of expert nursing and medical assistance. Having been discharged from hospital, these people often find that they are too sick to look after themselves and that they have nowhere to go. Recently, a private nursing home in the eastern suburbs was closed because it did not comply with the requirements of the Building Act. Its patients were concerned about where they would go and who would care for them. They all spoke highly of the efficiency and comfort of the home. If we cannot have the best all the time, perhaps we should use the second best rather than go without.

Contributions to the Hospitals Fund from the Totalizator Agency Board and the Lotteries Commission were significant this year. Perhaps horse-racing, dog-racing and trotting (all currently being investigated by a three-man committee) will benefit from the inquiry and, as a result, encourage contributors to the T.A.B. and the lotteries to contribute even more. I was surprised when I learned that the three-man committee has already drawn funds amounting to \$15,000 and proposes to draw a further sum of \$34,000

(both sums are included in the Budget). I hope that the committee will reach a decision soon, or it will eat into the profits that may be derived from its findings.

There is much need throughout the State for hospitals, and the Minister of Health has my sympathy. We all realize he has a difficult task to perform in trying to catch up the lag, this ever-increasing demand for better facilities. I believe it is time to look closely at the administration side. I cannot understand how it can cost \$70 a day for each patient in a Government hospital; however, I am not a financial expert, but it does seem a large sum to me.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: I wish you would show me how to cut it down.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: I wish I could, too, because I believe the Minister would be prepared to listen to me. However, there is probably someone who could do it. I turn now to that evergreen and inviting topic of the South Australian Railways, something one can speak about at length at any time. The railways is one of those services that is not really expected to produce surplus revenue for the State: very few services do and the public has to compensate them to some extent. The poor old Railways Department now has a deficit of \$296,000,000: it incurred a \$30,000,000 deficit in this last year. There is no doubt in my mind that the railways is not the most efficient section of the State services. Personally, I believe that it receives too much protection and that it has never been prepared to compete. When that department is in real trouble it calls on the State Government to introduce further restricting legislation on its competitors. All honourable members know that if a person down the road sells something more cheaply than we can there is no point in putting up our price: this is what the railways has always attempted to do. When things are not going well for the department it immediately increases its charges and thereby immediately decreases its volume of traffic.

I believe there are many avenues of transport the Railways Department could enter; it could consider a road-rail co-ordinated system that would give service from the store or farm to the railway siding and delivery at the other end. The service has not been good in the passenger area either, and one must doubt whether many of these services are worth entertaining; however, some services are successful. With modern air-conditioned road transport and buses, which are so much quicker, more comfortable and competitive, there is no doubt that few people are using rail passenger transport; indeed, fewer will in the future. When it comes to hauling articles from point A to point B for a known tonnage of any commodity then, of course, I agree that the railways is the only system that should be supported, but that is where it ought to stop.

There are many contributing factors to the Railway Department's deficit, and it would take much time to outline them. The department must be prepared to enter more competitively into the field of transport and ask for less protection. The committee that investigated the transportation system made certain recommendations that have raised great controversy throughout the State. If the Minister of Transport introduces a Bill modelled on the recommendations of that committee I believe there will be fierce debate in this place. Restrictions placed on road transport are not funny or economic; indeed, they impose a severe burden on many in the producing community, especially primary producers. If one follows closely the recommendations of that committee one will notice that a farm truck which, up until now has been allowed to carry 70 bags of wheat (mostly on unmade roads and

causing little trouble on highways or to anyone), will be restricted to between 45 and 50 bags. I believe that the extra cost and inconvenience of such an imposition will further curtail road transport, the major competitor to the railways.

The Hon. T. M. Casey: You only wish to use the railways when it suits you; that is what you are saying.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: And I suppose that is exactly what the Minister would do, too.

The Hon. T. M. Casey: It is what you are implying.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: I do not imply anything.

The Hon. T. M. Casey: Well, tell me what you were saying. You want to use the railways only when you wish to use them.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: Yes.

The Hon. T. M. Casey: When it suits you to use them.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: That is the logic of it; that is what you would do.

The Hon. T. M. Casey: But that is what you said.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: But that is what you would do, too.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Let's toss!

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Is the Minister saying that he should use them when he doesn't want to?

The Hon. T. M. Casey: I can't follow what the Hon. Mr. Whyte is saying; he is going around in circles.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: The Minister was talking about an inference. I do not think there was any inference in what I said.

The Hon. T. M. Casey: I do not think there was anything in what you said.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: What I said was quite plain. This is one of the fields in which the railways could improve their present rather sick financial position. Later this year, no doubt, we shall be able to test the Minister of Agriculture's approach to transport, because I understand that that is exactly what will happen: there will be legislation dealing with transport, and we shall hear then what the Minister will do with the railways.

The Hon. T. M. Casey: Where did you get that information from?

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: You wait and see. It is just a premonition I have.

The Hon. T. M. Casey: You've got a lot of premonitions, haven't you?

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: Most of them are a good deal smarter than yours, too.

The Hon. T. M. Casey: Most of your cases are hypothetical, I grant you that.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: The Highways Department, too, has an increased burden, as each year it has to cope with a greater volume of traffic, which is extending into the far-flung parts of the State, mostly in the form of tourism as well as heavy traffic. This has been one of our best seasons for rain and one of the heaviest seasons for traffic; the roads have not been able to cope with it, so at present they are in a deplorable state in many areas. We know that the money made available to the Highways Department is insufficient, but we question the way in which it is spent. The people living in some areas are almost positive that Highways Department money is not spent to the best advantage. Recently, over \$300,000 was allotted for the Birdsville track, and of that money \$266,000 was to be spent on the Cooper crossing, which is covered with water once every six or seven years in sufficient depth that it becomes impassable to traffic, so the Birdsville track is not open to traffic for several weeks in that year. The

local people believe (and I agree with them) that, if the bog-holes along the rest of the track were filled in, it would reduce the number of times people were denied their mail; and they would not be inconvenienced to so great an extent each year.

The Engineering and Water Supply Department faces the problem of not being able to supply all the services required; nor is it able to recoup sufficient money by way of revenue to meet requirement costs. It is necessary, therefore, that it be subsidized, as in the case of the railways and certain other services. I was able to attend the opening of the Kimba-Polda main recently. After some 40 years of political and industrious endeavour by the people of that area, they were rewarded by a system that will supply the large production areas around it. It took a long time and I was pleased I had played some part in bringing the scheme to fruition. I hope the Engineering and Water Supply Department will find sufficient money from its funds to continue a number of projects on Eyre Peninsula. Some of those areas have been without permanent water ever since their development began about 40 years ago, so there are schemes that should still have a high priority.

Much more money is needed to be spent on and many more investigations should be made into the waters in the South-East flowing into the sea. Local people are starting to condemn much of the drainage that has been carried out and are asking for it to be stopped. This is a field that deserves attention, because South Australia, being so dry, cannot afford to have these billions of megalitres of water pouring into the sea each day. There must be some way to conserve it and pipe it to the land where it is most needed. I support the Bill. There is very little that can be done with a Budget except to point out that we hope the moneys produced by it will be spent wisely.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: The honourable member can rest assured on that.

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON (Midland): I rise to support the Bill. In doing so, I think it is an indication of how good a Budget this is and how lacking the Opposition is in any real ammunition when the Hon. Mr. Hill has to use the dial-a-bus episode as one of his main bullets to fire at the Government. He says that the experts advised against the experiment, and presumably he believes the Minister should be a puppet of his advisers.

One way not to make mistakes, as Liberal Governments in the past have proved, is not to make decisions. Anyone who is prepared to make decisions and take decisive action must also be prepared to make mistakes—not that we know whether or not dial-a-bus was a mistake, as the experiment was too short to prove success or failure. The Hon. Mr. Hill's main attack was on the huge deficit of the South Australian Railways.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: In which he played a part.

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: It surprised me that anyone who had been a Minister of Transport in this State could make such a shallow and superficial analysis of the problems facing the railways. The impression he gave was that all our problems would be solved by chopping a few passenger services and axing a few country lines.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: He went further than that.

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: At least, he admitted that railways throughout Australia (and, he might have added, throughout the world) are losing money. South Australia is perhaps losing more—at least, on a per capita basis. I doubt whether there is any place in Australia or

in the world with South Australia's problems. Not only do we have a multiplicity of railway gauges but we have competition from sea transport and road transport.

There are, however, much deeper questions about the railway deficit that were totally ignored. Contrast the attitude of the previous Commonwealth Government to air transport. It was prepared to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on airports and aircraft while railways were neglected. It is hardly surprising that air transport is a glamour industry, whereas railways struggle with out-dated plant and equipment. Air travel is a very elitist form of transport catering for very few people in the community and, if the true costs were passed on, it would be a very expensive form of transport. I want to look at the railway deficit from another angle—and let me say I am not trying to justify the deficit but am merely pointing out some of the complexities of the problem. I refer to the question of subsidies. The Hon. Mr. Hill asked us to look at passenger trains in the metropolitan area and to say to ourselves that each passenger receives a subsidy of 47c from State revenue. What he should have pointed out was that each passenger is a potential car driver. What would be the cost in terms of road congestion, delays, and increased capital expenditure if they transferred from rail to road travel? Perhaps the community could be getting a bargain at 47c.

Of course the Government is worried by the railways deficit, and of course the rate of increase is alarming, but this does not mean that we will be stampeded into short-sighted decisions. In the long term, the dismembering and dismantling of the railway system would be a disaster for transport in this State. The alternative, in terms of road transport, would cause greater pollution and destruction of the environment. I support the Bill.

The Hon. JESSIE COOPER secured the adjournment of the debate.

STATE BANK REPORT

The PRESIDENT laid on the table the annual report of the State Bank for the year ended June 30, 1973, together with profit and loss account and balance sheets.

POTATO MARKETING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 26. Page 956.)

The Hon. C. R. STORY (Midland): I support this measure, which is fairly short although in many respects quite far-reaching. The Potato Marketing Board was set up in 1948 following the decision of the first Menzies Government to return power to the States. The board has functioned in varying ways, and when I was a Minister it caused a good deal of discussion. We reorganized it to a fairly large degree and appointed a new chairman, and as far as I can see the board is doing a reasonably good job at present. A quantity of 110 lb. (49.90 kg) or almost 1 cwt. of potatoes is consumed per capita in Australia at the present time, making potatoes one of the staple diets of the Australian people. When compared with onions (about 14 lb. (6.35 kg) a head) it is quite an important part of the diet of the community and represents an important item in the cost of living index, together with bread and other similar commodities.

I understand that, in the near future, the board will be bringing down some other amendments. Perhaps the Minister will tell me about that later. Just at present the amendments before the Council deal with increased, fines for certain offences, and in any orderly marketing scheme one always sees the smart Alec who will find a

way around the orderly scheme of things. Potato marketing is no exception. I have not checked this measure thoroughly, but I think it is brought about because one potato washer in this State, in the opinion of the board, is acting illegally. The price of potatoes at present is extremely high, running at about 11.5c a pound (.45 kg). I remember as a small boy being sent to buy 7 lb. (3.18 kg) of potatoes, which was the normal quantity to buy in those days, and which cost a shilling—a far cry from almost 12c a pound today. They were first-grade potatoes, too.

In the newspapers in the past few days I have noticed several references to the apparent price of potatoes in other States, but if some people checked their facts it could be found that those prices were not accurate; the gentleman who wrote about the price of potatoes in New South Wales certainly was not on the ball. Potatoes are not being sold there at that price at present. The position as stated in Western Australia could be right because that State is self-sufficient and sometimes exports potatoes to South Australia, and probably the situation there is not as grim as it is here. The price of potatoes is likely to remain high for perhaps six weeks to eight weeks until the new crop comes on the market.

I think the board is doing all in its power to keep the situation stable. It is not easy when people are operating on what one might call the black market. The purpose of the amendment to section 21 of the Act is to impose a minimum fine of \$50. Previously no minimum was stipulated, and consequently people could thumb their noses at the board if they got the right sort of justice of the peace to let them out for \$10. Now the minimum is \$50 and the maximum \$400 for the first offence, and certainly that will be a reminder to the people who are breaching the law that it is worth looking at the situation before jumping in.

The other provision is a wise one. The committee is empowered to charge the total amount at the current daily rate of potatoes if a person is found with potatoes unlawfully in his possession. This would apply especially to washers. I see no reason to disagree with the amendment. This legislation provides for orderly marketing, and I have always said, "If you are going to make yourself a Socialist, make a good job of it", and that is what this does. I support the Bill.

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

UNDERGROUND WATERS PRESERVATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 26. Page 955.)

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): In 1969, following an extensive examination of the problems arising from the use and exploitation of underground waters, as the then Minister of Mines I introduced a Bill to repeal the Underground Waters Preservation Act, 1959-1966, and to enact new provisions relating to the preservation, protection and control of underground waters. The previous Act was incapable of providing the control needed if rational use was to be made of the most precious commodity in the State, that is, our water resources. In most countries of the world it has been found necessary to enact legislation to control the use of underground waters. It is vital to the future of this State that reasonable control of this resource is undertaken.

As South Australia has a low annual rainfall, people in many areas rely almost entirely on underground water supplies. In some countries in the world, control legislation had been delayed until it was too late, and the

resource had been exhausted or severely polluted. When introducing the existing legislation, I said:

A very serious situation exists in this State in respect of the northern Adelaide Plains ground waters and this area is receiving very close attention by the Government. It is extremely important, therefore, to ensure that a similar situation is not permitted to develop in other areas.

There was a need at that time for new legislation to provide more positive control in some spheres, to simplify administrative procedures for the benefit of landholders, and to provide more acceptable provisions for the examination and licensing of drillers. Regarding the northern Adelaide Plains, an advisory committee was appointed to assist me, as Minister, to consider the situation of the plains. The committee was not only to advise me of its deliberations but also to act as an informing local body to keep landholders affected by the problem informed of the situation. I shall return to this point later in the debate.

I shall not deal specifically with the northern Adelaide Plains problem, except to illustrate the point that there is seldom any real problem, provided that the Government takes the advice of local people and keeps them informed of current departmental knowledge. The trading of information is a two-way process. Regarding the legislation to preserve, protect and control this resource, about which, as Minister, I introduced to Parliament the current legislation, I express my thanks to my late colleague, Harry Kemp, whose knowledge of this matter was extensive. His ideas on the rational use not only of our underground resources but also of the use of waters presently running to sea were well worth examination. Regarding the hydrology of South Australia, particularly of the Murray Basin, probably the best work is that of Mr. E. P. D. O'Driscoll, contained in Mines Department Bulletin No. 35, printed in 1960, when you, Mr. President, were Minister of Mines. I commend this work to all honourable members so that they may acquaint themselves with the problems of the use and preservation of underground water supplies in South Australia.

Although this work is slightly dated, nevertheless it is still an extremely important survey of underground water resources in South Australia. As the use of underground waters for irrigation continues to expand (in the South-East particularly), the problems that have appeared in other areas and other countries will inevitably begin to appear there. In some areas it is necessary to have strict control of the amount of water used because of the depletion of the basin, whereas in other areas there does not appear to be any actual depletion of the level of water, but there is a gradual increase in the basin's salinity. In other areas again, strict control is needed on bore construction, because a salt aquifer may have to be passed through to reach a fresh aquifer. Any poor boring construction will unfortunately connect the two, with drastic results, as any honourable member can realize. Although control and increasing knowledge of the resource is necessary, at the same time shotgun administrative measures to impose unnecessary wasteful and unrealistic controls are not required. Communication between those affected and the department, which is a two-way process, is absolutely essential if control measures are to succeed and be rational.

As I understand the Bill, it makes two changes. The first gives effect to a decision to transfer the major part of the administration of the principal Act from the Mines Department to the Engineering and Water Supply Department. In introducing the principal Act into Parliament in 1969, I opposed the transfer of the administration of the

Act to this department. I still do not favour the move to transfer these controls to it, although I will not vote against it. This is a matter of administration that it should be the responsibility of Government to decide. The Engineering and Water Supply Department should be responsible for the provision of water and sewerage facilities, and it should have that responsibility only.

The control of underground waters including the control of bores and wells, the licensing of drillers, research, and investigation, is the ordinary responsibility of the Mines Department. However, I do not intend to debate this issue, because, as I have said, I do not intend to vote against it. I support the idea of a water resources committee, which should be an inter-departmental committee charged with the responsibility of co-ordinating the work of all departments involved with the usage and provision of, or the research into, any water resource. However, on balance I do not favour the transfer of the administration of this Act to the Engineering and Water Supply Department.

The second amendment is contained in clause 9. I have studied this clause for some time and I think it is satisfactory, although I should like the Minister's assurance on the matter. If they look at it, honourable members will see that this clause has been drafted in an interesting way. Recently, regulations were tabled in this House, in relation to which a motion for disallowance is at present on the Notice Paper. I moved that motion of disallowance, as it appeared to me that, although in many respects they were required, the regulations went so far as to be unrealistic. When an area is defined it appears that the regulation-making powers provide that the regulations cannot apply to any well of less than the prescribed depth. In other words, the regulation-making powers do not allow the regulations to exclude certain types of wells, or wells used for a certain purpose. Although the clause is hard to understand, I think this is what it does. As the second reading explanation does not give enough information in this respect, I ask the Minister to clarify the point.

The real objection in the South-East to the regulations is that the controls proposed therein go beyond what is realistic and reasonable. If this is the purpose of this amendment, I also ask the Minister whether the Government intends to promulgate further regulations to allow the exclusion from control of certain types of wells and wells used for certain purposes. Clause 4 is also tied to clause 9, and covers the possibility of work being carried out on a well that is exempt under the regulations, which work would remove it from the exempt class. Clause 4 provides that this work shall be done by permit only. If clause 9 provides the requisite power to vary the regulations, I think clause 4 is a necessary safeguard.

I support the second reading and hope that the amended regulations coming before Parliament will be more satisfactory than the regulations that have been laid on the table. I emphasize that there is an important need in this intricate problem for a two-way movement of information: a movement of information from the department on the problems appearing in relation to the utilization and exploitation of underground waters, and the movement of information from people affected to the department. I suggest that this can best be done by appointing advisory committees to each area to provide a way for this information to travel backwards and forwards from the department doing the research to the people, and from the people

back to the department concerned with administration. With those few remarks, I support the second reading.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT secured the adjournment of the debate.

PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The House of Assembly requested a conference, at which it would be represented by five managers, on the Legislative Council's amendments to which it had disagreed.

The Legislative Council agreed to a conference, to be held in the Legislative Council conference room on Tuesday, October 2, at 2.30 p.m., at which it would be represented by the Hons. J. C. Burdett, C. W. Creedon, R. C. DeGaris, A. F. Kneebone, and F. J. Potter.

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE (Chief Secretary) moved:

That Standing Orders be so far suspended as to enable the conference on the Bill to be held during the adjournment of the Council and that the managers report the result thereof forthwith at the next sitting of the Council.

Motion carried.

TRAVELLING STOCK RESERVES: RIDLEY

Adjourned debate on the motion of the Minister of Lands:

That the travelling stock reserves adjoining section 338, section 180 and section 330 in the hundred of Ridley as shown on the plan laid before Parliament on June 19, 1973, be resumed in terms of section 136 of the Pastoral Act, 1936-1970.

(Continued from September 26. Page 955.)

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT (Southern): I support the motion. I contacted the district council of Marne, the council in the area, and discovered that it was the council that initiated this procedure. I know the area well; the Shell Hill feature, referred to by the Chief Secretary in his explanation, is notable, as is the John Christian Reserve, a pleasant place, indeed. The reserve is close to a permanent creek fed by a spring, and there is considerable timber near the creek. In fact, it is a pleasant place for a Sunday drive.

Motion carried.

TRAVELLING STOCK RESERVE: PARNAROO

Adjourned debate on the motion of the Minister of Lands:

That an area of 5¼ acres of the travelling stock reserve in the hundred of Parnaroo, as shown on the plan laid before Parliament on November 9, 1971, be resumed in terms of section 136 of the Pastoral Act 1936-1970 for railway purposes.

(Continued from September 26. Page 955.)

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN (Northern): I support the motion. It is for the resumption of 5¼ acres (2.1 ha) of the travelling stock reserve in the hundred of Parnaroo. The Minister explained that, because the rail standardization project entails the construction of a deviation line between Ucolta and Paratoo, it was necessary for the railway line to cross the travelling stock reserve in the hundred of Parnaroo. I have checked with people in the district, including a council representative, and I understand from them that this travelling stock route is leased to a local man and that the gates are in place as described by the Minister.

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.25 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, October 3, at 2.15 p.m.