LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday, August 27, 1974

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

PETITION: LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE presented a petition signed by 86 ratepayers and residents of the District Council of Lincoln, the Corporation of the City of Port Lincoln, and the District Council of Tumby Bay, expressing dissatisfaction with the first report of the Royal Commission into Local Government Areas and praying that the Legislative Council would not bring about any change or alteration of boundaries to the area of the District Council of Lincoln and that the city of Port Lincoln be preserved as a city area and not incorporated into a rural area.

Petition received and read.

QUESTIONS

GREYHOUND RACING

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Can the Acting Chief Secretary say whether any request has been made from those associated with the greyhound industry for an inquiry into the conduct of greyhound racing in South Australia? If such a request has been made, does the Government intend instituting such an inquiry?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I have received a request from a greyhound owner that is still being considered and, when it has finally been considered, I will bring down a reply.

VITICULTURAL INDUSTRY

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. R. STORY: On August 20, I asked the Minister of Agriculture a question regarding the committee that had been set up by the Premier to inquire into the rehabilitation of vines in irrigated areas, during which I suggested that the inquiry should be broadened to encompass other areas of the State including the Barossa Valley, Clare and Southern Vale. The Minister was kind enough to say that he would take up the matter with the Premier and that it would be considered. I now ask the Minister whether that consideration has been given and, if it has, whether it was responsible for the announcement made on the air over the Murray River radio stations this morning that the Government intended to extend the inquiry over the whole State so that it could deal with the whole viticultural industry. Will the Minister also say whether honourable members who make suggestions in this Chamber might have the courtesy of receiving a reply in the Council?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: There is a reply to the honourable member's question in my office. Indeed, I have in my bag a note to the effect that the answer to the honourable member's question would be in the bag. However, it is not there and has apparently been mislaid by my departmental officers. Briefly, the reply to the question was that the committee's original terms of reference covered the whole State. Therefore, although I did not hear what came over the air this morning, I assure the honourable member that the committee's original terms of reference did cover the whole State. The Government was not therefore drawing any kudos from the honourable member's question: although the committee was examining irrigated areas as a first step, the whole State would have been covered. I will definitely ensure that a reply to the honourable member's question is in my bag tomorrow.

LAND AND BUSINESS AGENTS ACT

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: In the *Sunday Mail* of August 25 there was a further comment from the Government, through the Attorney-General, regarding the Land and Business Agents Act and the regulations thereunder. The Attorney-General, Mr. King, was reported as having said:

> The Land and Business Agents Act is a major change in the law designed, among other things, to make the laws relating to the purchase of a home meet the needs of the ordinary home buyer and seller. The sweeping nature of the reforms makes it necessary to keep the details of the regulations under review to assess their operation. This will be done and changes made where necessary.

There have also been press announcements and other indications that the Government intended forthwith to introduce amendments. As a result of representations made by the Real Estate Institute of South Australia to the Premier, acting as he was for the Attorney-General in the absence of the Attorney-General overseas, is the Attorney in the course of preparing amendments to the Act and new regulations that will supersede the existing regulations that are now on the table of this Council? If the Attorney-General is preparing such amendments and regulations, what will the purport of those changes be?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I will direct the honourable member's questions to my colleague and bring down a reply.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking a question of the Minister representing the Attorney-General.

Leave granted.

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: It has come to my attention that, prior to the introduction of the new legislation, a number of persons could not be licensed as land agents under the old provisions because they did not have sufficient background knowledge and experience to be so licensed; instead, those persons were given business agents' licences, and they operated with business agents' licences prior to the coming into operation of this legislation. I am now informed that, on the coming into operation of this new legislation, those persons have automatically been granted land agents' licences and business agents' licences without any further question whatever as to their suitability. In introducing the legislation, the Minister said that one of its purposes was to improve the status of land agents generally, yet here we have something that appears to me to achieve exactly the opposite. Will the Minister ascertain what the Attorney-General's views are concerning this matter and whether the Government intends to do anything in the proposed amendments to rectify the situation?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I will refer the honourable member's question to my colleague and bring down a reply.

UNEMPLOYMENT

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking a question of the Minister representing the Minister of Labour and Industry.

Leave granted.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Various sources have estimated that Australia could be facing a situation where up to 200 000 people are unemployed. I presume that a considerable proportion of those people would be in this State. Can the Minister say whether this Government is satisfied that it has sufficient retraining facilities for dealing with the number of unemployed people who may need retraining in the coming months?

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

CONTROLLED ACCESS ROADS

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: Has the Minister of Health a reply from the Minister of Transport to my recent question about controlled access roads?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The Highways Department is well aware of the problems caused by section 30c (*f*) of the Highways Act relating to the movement of livestock on controlled access roads. Consideration is at present being given to the desirability of amending the legislation to enable the Commissioner of Highways to grant permission for the movement of livestock on controlled access roads under certain conditions.

CAR-RAIL SERVICE

The Hon. C. M. HILL: 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. C. M. HILL: On September 11 last year I asked a question concerning the possibility of a car-rail service being commenced between Adelaide and Melbourne, so that people could place their motor cars on the train and have them transported between the capital cities. Such a service would be very convenient to many people and it would increase the patronage of the Overland train. The principle involved is similar to that system applying with the Commonwealth Railways when people take their cars by train across the Nullarbor Plain. Now that the State Transportation Authority in many respects is in charge of the South Australian Railways system, I ask that the whole question be looked at once more. I am not convinced by the problems pointed out in reply to the question I asked last year. In view of the change in circumstances brought about by the introduction of the new authority, will the Minister look into the matter once again?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I shall refer the question to my colleague.

LAND AND VALUATION COURT

The Hon. F. J. POTTER: My question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture, representing the Attorney-General. Recently, I have had a complaint that some inordinate delays are occurring in Land and Valuation Court hearings. What is the period at present elapsing between the date of setting down and the actual hearing of contested matters before the court?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I will refer the matter to the Attorney-General and bring down a reply.

COMMUNITY WELFARE

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Has the Acting Minister of Lands a reply from the Attorney-General to the question I asked on August 6 regarding community welfare?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: My colleague, the Attorney-General, informs me that it is correct that court action to obtain preliminary expenses for the mother of an illegitimate child cannot be initiated after the child has been adopted. Consideration is being given to amending the legislation to overcome this difficulty. In the few such cases that do arise, the Community Welfare Department gives assistance where needed. If the Leader will be good enough to supply the name of the applicant to the department, I am sure it would be pleased to investigate the particular circumstances of this case.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Has the Minister of Health a reply from the Minister of Transport to my recent question regarding metropolitan bus transport, with particular reference to the possibility of the terminal points of many of the Municipal Tramways Trust bus routes being linked to form a loop system ?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: My colleague states: I am pleased to be able to inform the honourable member that the two points he raised regarding cross-suburban transport have been receiving considerable attention for the past year. Consideration was given to the introduction of a circular suburban bus service operating at 15-minute intervals over a route along arterial roads some four to eight kilometres from the city centre. This circular service could have been operating this year but for the fact that, due to a metropolitan private bus proprietor withdrawing his buses from suburban service during the recent resumption of private bus fleets, there are no spare buses available to operate such a service. It is hoped that sufficient spare buses will be available for its introduction by October next year. With regard to the joining of terminals of suburban bus routes, the bus service planning group, set up by the Director-General of Transport, is examining several such linkings. Many linkings are not possible, however, due to the unsuitability of roads or the need to allow for extensions to routes. A preferred system of linking radial bus routes to allow for more cross-suburban travel is to do so at regional shopping centres. There are many such cases of this in existence at present, and more are proposed by the bus service planning group. As an example, 10 different bus routes pass through Marion shopping centre, allowing for travel on public transport both to that centre and across the suburbs by transfer through linking routes.

LANDS DEPARTMENT

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Has the Acting Minister of Lands a reply to my recent question regarding the cost of the planning section facilities at Netley?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: The reply I gave the honourable member on July 31 referred to the whole of the Lands Department. The cost of the new building erected for the mapping branch of the department was $836 500.

SAVINGS BANK LOANS

The Hon C. M. HILL (on notice):

1. Is it a fact that the Savings Bank of South Australia requires borrowers of housing loans to undertake house insurance with the State Government Insurance Commission?

2. Is it a fact that the Government consumer transaction legislation insists that where a consumer is required under a consumer contract, credit contract or consumer mortgage to insure goods, he is not to be required to insure with a particular insurer?

3. If so, is there, in the Government's view, a conflict in principle between the bank's policy and the consumer transaction legislation?

4. If so, is it the intention of the Government to take action to remedy this anomaly?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: The replies are as follows:

1. Following the announcement by the Commonwealth Banking Corporation that it was introducing its own insurance scheme covering homes mortgaged to that bank at substantially lower rates than those normally available to the general public, the Savings Bank of South Australia agreed to make it a condition of all future mortgages that insurance be effected with the State Government Insurance Commission, at premium rates comparable with the Commonwealth Banking Corporation.

2. The mortgage contracts entered into by the bank relate to real property. Accordingly, there is no breach of the consumer transaction legislation, as section 40 of that legislation relates only to goods.

3. See 2 above.

4. See 2 above.

HORWOOD BAGSHAW PROPERTY

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE (on notice):

1. What property was acquired by the Highways Department from Horwood Bagshaw Ltd. at Mile End in recent years?

2. What was the acquisition price?

3. What is the purpose for which this property was acquired?

4. When is it intended that the property will be used for the purpose for which it was acquired?

5. What is the annual rental paid by Horwood Bagshaw Ltd. for this property?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: The replies are as follows:

1. The factory premises and land comprising about 4·99 ha, being the whole of the land in certificates of title volume 1936 folio 145, volume 2026 folio 165, volume 868 folio 16, volume 1193 folio 38, volume 1189 folio 151, volume 3508 folio 125.

2. The sum of $1 500 000.

3. A portion of the property is required for the Hilton bridge project and a portion is affected by the proposed central north-south transportation route as shown on the Authorized Metropolitan Development Plan (as amended by Supplementary Development Plan No. 1).

4. Not within five years.

5. The sum of $56 000 a year, with the lessee paying all rates and taxes.

HILTON PROPERTY

The PRESIDENT laid on the table the report by the Ombudsman on the acquisition by the Highways Department of property at Hilton.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORTS

The PRESIDENT laid on the table the following reports by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence:

Croydon Park Technical College—Extensions to School of Automotive Engineering,
Salisbury Major Trunk Sewers.

BEVERAGE CONTAINER BILL

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD (Minister of Health) moved:

That the time for bringing up the report of the Select Committee on the Bill be extended until Tuesday, October 15, 1974.

Motion carried.

PAY-ROLL TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The introduction of this short Bill follows a recent agreement between the Premiers of the States of the Commonwealth in June of this year, to the effect that pay-roll tax, which is uniform throughout the States, be lifted by one-half of 1 per cent, that is, from 4½ per cent to 5 per cent of taxable wages. The agreement between the Premiers to raise the level of pay-roll tax by the amount indicated was taken in concert when it became apparent that the Australian Government did not intend to increase its financial assistance to the States, and that all States would need to increase their revenues to meet expected revenue deficits in the forthcoming financial year.

The effect of this increase will be an estimated additional $5 000 000 of revenue accruing to this State for the remainder of this financial year and an additional $7 000 000 of revenue in a full year. In form, the Bill is similar to a measure passed by this House in 1973, and once again provision has been made to guard against the somewhat remote possibility that wages will be liable to tax at both the old and the new rates. This could occur only where wages were "returned" as payable in the August, 1974, return or in some previous month, and again "returned" as paid in September, 1974, or in some subsequent month. Nevertheless, to put the matter beyond doubt, an appropriate provision has been inserted.

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

MOTOR VEHICLES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD (Minister of Health): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill, which increases motor vehicle registration fees, driver's licence, permit and testing fees, is necessary for two principal reasons. First, the Australian Government's new roads legislation, which has been passed by the House of Representatives and is currently before the Senate, requires South Australia to provide additional funds for matching requirements and, secondly, to offset the effect inflation has had on our proposed road programme. I deal with the second point first. In the financial year 1973-74, the Highways Fund had a total of $52 890 000 available for roadworks, made up of $31 000 000 from the Australian Government in terms of the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act; $702 000, again from the Australian Government, for work on the Eyre Highway and the Traffic Engineering and Road Safety Improvement Programme; and $21 190 000 from the State sources of motor vehicle registration, licence fees and similar related charges, including road maintenance contributions.

If members accept, as I do, the view of the Highways Department that road building costs have been subject to 15 per cent inflation, it is clear that, to achieve the same effort in 1974-75 as was achieved in 1973-74, additional funds to the extent of $7 930 000 must be provided. Under the present terms of the Motor Vehicles Act, and the Australian Government's proposals, South Australia in this financial year will have available for road building purposes the sum of $54 500 000, made up of $31 000 000 from the Australian Government and $23 500 000 from State sources. When compared to $60 800 000 which is necessary after taking into account the effect of the

inflation at 15 per cent to achieve the same effort as was achieved in 1973-74, we find a short-fall of $6 320 000 for this financial year. This short-fall is, as previously stated, due entirely to the inflationary pressures to which we have been subjected and, unless steps are taken to either remove or reduce this short-fall, it is clear that our road programme will have to be drastically cut. This is a step which the Government is not prepared to take.

I turn now to the first point, namely, the requirements of the Australian Government's new road legislation. As stated earlier, South Australia received in accordance with the terms of the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act $31 000 000 in 1973-74. Members would know that the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act is an Act which provided Commonwealth funds to the various States for the five-year period prior to June 30, 1974. Well over two years ago, the Ministers responsible for road building in all of the six Australian States, together with their appropriate officers, commenced negotiations with the then Commonwealth Minister (Hon. P. Nixon, M.H.R.) and his officers and, following the change of Government, these discussions were continued with the present Minister (Hon. C. K. Jones, M.H.R.) and his officers. In addition, the basis for the provision of funds has been the subject of very serious and lengthy considerations by the Commonwealth Bureau of Roads, which, on Novebmer 22, 1973, presented its report, together with recommendations, to the Australian Minister for Transport. This report is an illuminating document and, although there are recommendations in it with which I and my fellow Ministers from the various States violently disagree, it does constitute a new approach to the question of finance for roads and contains many desirable and long overdue reforms.

The recommendations of the bureau have been substantially followed by the Australian Government in the legislation which has been introduced into and passed by the House of Representatives and which is currently before the Senate. However, there are three important areas where the Australian Government did not adopt the bureau's recommendations. These are as follows:

(1) The sums recommended by the bureau to the States have been markedly reduced by the Australian Government.

(2) The amounts of the matching quotas recommended by the bureau have also been reduced.

(3) The life of the current legislation is for three years, whereas the bureau recommended the continuation of the five-year legislative period that has previously applied.

I now deal with each of these points in some greater depth. The decision to reduce the amounts to the States means that the South Australian recommended entitlements for the three-year period from 1974-75 to 1976-77 have been reduced from $36 000 000, $39 000 000 and $41 000 000 to $31 000 000, $33 000 000 and $36 000 000 respectively. It is clear that, when compared with the sums made available in previous years, the sums for this and the next two financial years are quite inadequate for our needs, unless we are willing to reduce savagely our road-building programme.

I turn now to the second point, namely, that of the matching requirements. Although the level of matching recommended by the bureau has been reduced by the Australian Government, we are still required this year to provide a sum of $25 400 000 for matching purposes. Likewise in 1975-76 we must provide $28 400 000, and in 1976-77 $31 400 000, making a total for the three-year period of a matching requirement of $85 200 000. Without increases in motor vehicle registration fees and other like charges, it is not possible to raise this amount. As stated earlier, the expected income in this financial year from State sources eligible for matching purposes is $23 500 000. It can thus be seen we are about $2 000 000 short of that required for matching purposes. The short-fall in the next two succeeding years is even grater. Having taken into account all of these facts, the Government was faced with making one of four decisions, namely:

(1) not to increase State revenue and thereby forgo Commonwealth finance that would otherwise be available, and at the same time drastically reduce the road-building programme;

(2) to increase State revenue only to the extent required of us by the Commonwealth legislation and to reduce the road-building programme proportionately to the amount of finance available;

(3) to increase State revenue not only to meet the demand of the Australian Government legislation but also to ensure that our own programmes are not drastically cut; or

(4) to increase State revenue to the extent necessary to ensure an expansion in our road programme.

The Government has chosen the third alternative, believing that it is in the best interests of the people of South Australia to do so. Accordingly, this Bill seeks to increase the following:

(*a*) drivers' licences from $3 to $5 a year, other than for pensioners, who will still have to pay only $2;

(*b*) learners' permits from $1 to $3;

(*c*) registration fees for trailers over 5 cwt (254 kg) by $10;

(*d*) fees for driving tests conducted in accordance with sections 72 and 79a from $1 to $3; and

(*e*) registration fees of all vehicles by about 25 per cent with the provision that the pensioner rebate will be increased from 15 per cent to 30 per cent so as to maintain their approximate present level of payment.

It has been estimated that by adopting these increases as from October 1, 1974, the amount available for road-building purposes for 1974-75 will be $59 220 000, for 1975-76, $63 720 000, and for 1976-77, $67 750 000. From information I have been able to glean, it is clear that most of the other States will be forced to take similar action. For instance, in Western Australia, I understand that the Court Liberal Government intends to increase motorists' taxes by 65 per cent; in Victoria the Hamer Liberal Government expects to include in its Budget a provision increasing motorists' taxes by 50 per cent; whilst in New South Wales the Askin Government currently is considering recommendations of a very substantial nature but, as no decisions have been actually taken, I am not at liberty to disclose the extent of the recommendations.

There is one further point I wish to make before dealing with the clauses of the Bill. There have been, from time to time, questions asked of me both in this House and by direct contact by councils in relation to the likely level of grants to local government bodies for this and succeeding financial years. I regret I have not been able to provide the information sought but, from this second reading explanation, members will realize that I had no alternative. Only yesterday, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition expressed his concern at the delay in

determining the level of grants for local government. Many of the points that he made would have my concurrence and I cerainly concur in his view as expressed that the legislation necessary to provide this Commonwealth money has still not been assented to by the Senate of the Australian Government. I thank the member for Gouger for last evening drawing my attention and that of the House to the letter which apparently has been forwarded to the Mayors and Chairmen of all local government areas by the Australian Minister for Urban and Regional Development and the Australian Minister for Transport. It appears that the Australian Ministers forgot to send me a copy or even notify me that the letters were being sent.

(This is the letter that the Minister for Transport sent to local government, which has been referred to several times in the second reading explanation.)

However, because of the excellent relationship existing between local government and me, as Minister of Local Government, I have now been provided with several copies of this letter, and I thank those who provided me with this information for their thoughtfulness. It is stange that the Ministers forgot to send me a copy, when a perusal of the letter addressed to the Mayors and Chairmen reveals a recommendation that they should contact the State Minister. I am concerned that a letter of this nature should be sent to local government (or to anyone) without a proper explanation of all of the factors. It appears that the two Ministers have decided that they will put their hands on the handle of the big wooden spoon that some people are using to stir up strife between State Governments and some areas of local government.

Whilst the Australian Ministers labour the point that interim finance had been made available to several States, including South Australia (and that is true, it has), what they conveniently forget to tell local government is that the Prime Minister has advised the Premier of this State (and, I presume, the Premiers of other States) that, unless the legislation currently before the Senate is passed in the current session, he will immediately withdraw the interim financing arrangement into which he entered. From the tenor of the letter, it would appear that the two Australian Ministers expect the States to ignore the threat that has been consistently made by the Australian Minister for Transport regarding the availability of funds. As late as August 8, the Minister for Transport concluded a press statement with the following words:

I repeat the statement I made last week: Funds for the State and local government roads programmes will dry up if the Government's roads grants Bills are rejected by the Senate.

The Hon. M. B. Cameron: You should have given this speech last week.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I know I should, but I did not have the opportunity last week, as honourable members know. In the light of this statement, it would be an act of complete irresponsibility for the State Government, through the Highways Department, to enter into any agreement on the level of funds for local government until the level of financial assistance had been clearly and properly clarified by the Australian Government. I can assure the House that we have acted (and will continue to act in the future) responsibly in all matters, including these. I can certainly completely agree with the final paragraph of the letter from the Australian Ministers when they say the following:

With a co-operative approach the three levels of government can work together to ensure that a greatly improved transport system can be devised and implemented.

I hope that, in the light of the explanation I have given, honourable members will realize that the course of action I took was unavoidable. However, subject to, first, the level of financial assistance from the Australian Government to the State being as proposed in the legislation currently before the Australian Parliament; secondly, the conditions attached to the expenditure of Australian Government, State and local government authorities permitting the allocation of grants to councils in accordance with needs as assessed by the Highways Department; and, thirdly, increased revenue being made available to the Highways Fund through higher registration and licence fees, it will be possible, and it is intended, to allocate to local government authorities in South Australia grants so that permissible expenditure during 1974-75 will be $200 000 above that actually expended during 1973-74. Grants are those funds allocated for expenditure on roads which are the prime responsibility of local government and which do not include debit order allocations that are for expenditure on roads where the Commissioner of Highways accepts the prime responsibility. I emphasize that these assurances (indeed, the whole road-building programme of the State) are completely dependent on the passage of the three Bills dealing with finance for roads which are currently before the Australian Senate.

Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 provides that the Act presaged by this Bill will come into operation on a day to be fixed by proclamation. It is the intention of the Government that this measure will have effect from October 1, 1974. Clause 3 inserts in section 5 of the principal Act a definition of "caravan", and I would commend it to honourable members' attention. Clause 4 repeals and re-enacts section 29 of the principal Act which sets out the general scale of motor vehicle registration fees. For the convenience of honourable members, I have had circulated a summary of the alterations proposed so that the extent of the increases will be apparent. As I have indicated, the increases are of the order of 25 per cent.

Clause 5 amends section 38a of the principal Act which provides for concessional registration of a motor vehicle owned by certain pensioners. The concessional reduction has been increased from 15 per cent to 30 per cent, with the result that actual fees payable by these pensioners will be only marginally increased. Clause 6 makes an amendment in the same terms as the amendment proposed by clause 5 to section 38b of the principal Act which relates to a concessional registration fee for certain incapacitated persons.

Clause 7 amends section 57 of the principal Act by recognizing that the fee payable on the transfer of registration of a motor vehicle was previously increased from $1 to $4. Clause 8 repeals and re-enacts section 63 of the principal Act and increases the fees payable in respect of (*a*) general traders' plates from $50 to $62·50; and (*b*) limited traders' plates from $10 to $12·50. Clauses 9 and 10 are drafting amendments. Clause 11 merely relocates the definition of "authorized examiner" which was formerly set out as subsection (2) of section 79a of the principal Act. The definition is now expressed to relate to the whole of Part III of the principal Act. Clause 12 enacts a new section 72a of the principal Act empowering the Registrar to issue a temporary driving permit to enable a person lawfully to drive a vehicle in order to undergo a practical driving test. The provision is, it is suggested, quite self-explanatory.

Clause 13, by amending section 76 of the principal Act, increases the driver's licence fee from $3 to $5, and

the fee for a learner's permit from $1 to $3. Clause 14 is a consequential amendment. Clause 15 provides that a fee of $3 will be payable for every practical driving test conducted under the Act other than tests carried out internally by public authorities and tests carried out for the purposes of sections 80 or 87 of the Act.

I apologize to honourable members because this second reading explanation was drawn in the expectation that I would have been permitted to present it on Thursday last. I am not complaining about the action the Council took, but I trust that honourable members will not complain that a couple of paragraphs are outdated as a result of the action taken by the Council. I commend the Bill to honourable members.

The Hon. C. M. HILL (Central No. 2): I disagree with the Minister when he says that the prepared speech he has just read would have been in order had he given it on Thursday; it would have been just as poor on Thursday as it was today. One is not being unkind if one says that liaison between the Ministers certainly needs looking into so that the same state of affairs does not exist again, with a Minister in the Council giving the same second reading explanation of a Bill as that which was given in another place in which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in another place was referred to.

The whole second reading explanation should have been put in order for presentation to the Council. However, I am pleased to continue with the debate. I have had an opportunity to examine the Bill, which was placed on my file last Thursday.

The Hon. C. R. Story: Did you hear the Minister refer to the term "Australian Government"?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I heard him mention that term on more than one occasion. If he is referring to people in Canberra as "Australian Ministers", I wonder what he calls the Ministers in this State. It seems that the adoption by the Commonwealth Government, and apparently also by the Government in this State, of the terms "Australian Government" and "Australian Ministers" is an acceptance which is quite improper and which, indeed, is yet another step in the direction taken by many members of the Australian Labor Party in Government today who want to move this country farther and farther away from Federation towards a unitary system of Government.

The few days that we have had since last Thursday have provided an opportunity for the picture to be made much clearer regarding the Commonwealth Government's attitude towards the State in relation to road grants. On Friday, I heard with much interest that agreement had been reached in Canberra on the three road Bills, namely, the Transport Planning and Research Bill, the National Roads Bill, and the Roads Grants Bill, so that now, at last, after the ballyhoo—

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: I thought it was "hoo ha"!

The Hon. C. M. HILL: —that has been going on regarding the States, with money being dried up unless the second Chamber in Canberra agrees to certain legislation, and with money for local government being dried up unless the second Chamber in Canberra agrees to the legislation, the air has been cleared and agreement reached. I am pleased to see that some of the most restrictive legislation one could ever have imagined, under which the Commonwealth Government needed to approve the planning, construction and maintenance of minor roads in small council areas and to approve the purchase of relatively minor roadmaking equipment by local councils, has been defeated and that, with the exception of the one matter dealing with the Commonwealth Government's approval being needed for urban arterial roads, the situation regarding Commonwealth control over Loan funds in principle remains about the same as it was previously.

Now that that picture is much clearer, we can turn to the problems that face this State regarding the money that it is to receive. It is indeed disheartening for me, as a South Australian, to see that the Commonwealth Government in this current year is going to supply road grants totalling only $31 000 000. This is identical to the amount provided for the year ended June 30, 1974. For as long as I have been associated with this area, there has traditionally been some increase in our road grants from Canberra under the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act, but now for the first time we are being restricted to this sum by Canberra, despite a recommendation by the Commonwealth Bureau of Roads in its 1973 report that $36 000 000 be allocated to South Australia.

This highlights once again the point that, when Commonwealth money is granted to this State and when it may be needed for other purposes in this State that do not come under the same heading, we are always told, "Money doesn't grow on trees, and extra money cannot be found." Only a few days ago the Commonwealth Government announced that it intended to give $4 700 000 directly to local government in South Australia. This sum is very close to the $5 000 000 which, based on the recommendations of the Commonwealth Bureau of Roads, has been cut from road grants to South Australia this year.

One cannot help asking, "Under what headings is local government to spend the sum of $4 700 000, and are any of the purposes included under the heading of roadworks?" Then, the position becomes still more interesting; we must ask, "Whom must we ask that question?" We certainly cannot ask the State Government, because again we see the unfortunate trend toward centralism: the Commonwealth Government has dealt directly with the third tier of government in this State.

Not even the Minister in charge of roadworks can tell me whether the $4 700 000 will be spent by councils for roadworks. Who finally pays when changes like these are made in the system? The taxpayers of this State pay but, in addition, the motorists will pay under this legislation, because the $6 320 000 that must be found, if we accept the Government's viewpoint (and it is not an unreasonable viewpoint—that inflation at the rate of 15 per cent will apply throughout the year for road expenditure), must come from somewhere. The sum will come mainly through increases in driver's licence fees and vehicle registration fees. If the $4 700 000 which the Commonwealth had to spare could have been allocated as it should have been, through the State Treasury, such harsh taxation increases would not have been necessary.

The Hon. M. B. Cameron: Who allocated the $4 700 000?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The Commonwealth Government allocated it to councils in South Australia.

The Hon. C. R. Story: Selected councils.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Yes, selected councils. Local government was asked by the Commonwealth Government, which by-passed the State Government, to put in claims to the Grants Commission. I am not against local government's receiving adequate finance, but the principle I favour is that of finance to local government coming

from the Commonwealth Government through the State Treasury. The sum of $4 700 000 is part of a total of $56 300 000 which the Commonwealth Government is giving to local government throughout Australia.

The Hon. M. B. Cameron: State Governments were not consulted.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: That is correct. A further $23 500 000 can in normal circumstances be found from State sources, and that means that in total $54 500 000 will be available. However, that sum is $6 320 000 short of the funds that will be required in this State, subject to certain conditions, one of which is that we have a 15 per cent rate of inflation, and I do not altogether disagree with that condition. It is also subject to the efficiency of the Highways Department being at its very optimum at present.

In other words, not only should the Government of the day look to finding sufficient money for works that it believes should be carried out but also it must ensure that more work cannot be completed by the same amount of expenditure through the efficiency of the department being improved. I have always believed that the department's efficiency is very high. I admire the Commissioner of Highways, his senior officers, and the total staff of the department. However, I have always believed that we will not be working at top efficiency unless we have the maximum amount of roadworks being carried out through the department under a private enterprise and private tender system.

I do not have many statistics to support my point, but in the first two years of this Labor Government the number of weekly-paid employees in the Highways Department increased from 2 143 at June 30, 1970, to 2 329 at June 30, 1972. That does not indicate to me that the Labor Government, when it came to office four years ago, set about giving more work still to private enterprise. I believe that the policy which was supported and enunciated strongly in 1968 and 1969 will get the maximum benefit from the department with the available funds.

The sum of $59 220 000 is expected to be available for road-building purposes. The Commonwealth Government has demanded that our matching requirements be increased by $2 000 000, which is included in the figure of $59 220 000. When the Commonwealth Government holds this State back to exactly the same amount of grant as that which applied in the previous year, while at the same time it insists that we find an extra $2 000 000 from our own resources, we have further evidence of very harsh treatment being meted out to South Australia.

The increases proposed for licences are quite severe. The cost of drivers' licences will rise by 66 per cent, of registrations generally by about 25 per cent, of learners' permits by 200 per cent, of general traders' plates and fees by 25 per cent, and of limited traders' plates by 25 per cent. The increase in registration fees for trailers ranges from 25 per cent to, in some instances, 166 per cent.

When such things happen we must look closely at whether we are getting full value for money spent. Some of these increases will be most burdensome on South Australians who, generally speaking, are not in a financial position to meet increases of this kind. Some individuals in this State are in a very grim financial situation indeed, and many South Australians cannot live conveniently or happily (in fact, where cars are needed for essential services they cannot live at all) without their motor vehicles. They will find these increases most severe.

The Minister has said in his explanation that local government authorities will be granted throughout South Australia (and now I am talking about grants by the South Australian Government) $200 000 more this year, and that that amount will be exclusive of the usual debit order work. Although the amount is not great, at least it will be heartening to councils, which recently have been in a most difficult financial position. Meetings and conferences have been held throughout the length and breadth of the State by councils fearing the future and having to plan to curtail and retrench staff because of their financial predicament. The sum of $4 700 000 mentioned earlier may help to some degree, but by the same token local government wants a fair deal from the State Government in grants.

Particularly have the fears of local government worsened during the past month or two, because in July in South Australia councils were not able to get any grants from the State Government, nor were they able to obtain any temporary finance. It is little wonder that councils were completely amazed when they recently received letters from the Commonwealth Minister stating that temporary financial arrangements had been made between the Commonwealth Government and the State Government; in effect, the Commonwealth Minister told councils he hoped this arrangement was working satisfactorily and that some of their immediate worries were over.

Councils had been told by the Minister in this State that no money was available, so the letter was in complete contradiction in the situation outlined by the Commonwealth Minister. It is understandable, then, that the Minister, in introducing this Bill, has tried to make some explanation of the conflict that has been existing between the Commonwealth Minister and the State Minister. I am not satisfied with the State Minister's explanation. He told the councils in this State that he did not have any money for them and that he did not have any temporary finance for them, whereas in fact he did; it is as simple as that.

Further explanation is necessary by the State Minister to the councils before he can get out of the situation from which he is trying to extricate himself, as is evidenced in the speech before us today. If the Minister has any further explanation of the situation, I should like to hear it when the debate is closed.

The next matter deals with caravans. Many representations have been made by people involved with caravans in relation to the provisions of the Bill. For the first time, caravans have been separated by definition from trailers, and a separate registration fee is now fixed for caravans; in some cases it is not to be increased to the same extent as is the fee for trailers. The people making the representations are pensioners or people acting on their behalf. I am pleased to see that the Bill provides for the reduction to pensioners in the registration of motor vehicles to be maintained, despite the increase in overall registration fees. Many pensioners have put their life savings into caravans, which are their only real means of holiday making and of spending their leisure and recreation time. Some of these pensioners own their houses and strike out from there for caravan excursions, but in many cases pensioners who have not been able to afford houses live in their caravans. The plea being made (and I think it is justified) is that pensioners should be able to enjoy a formal reduction in the registration fee for their caravans.

If this was to be provided in the Bill, pensioners would not have to pay increased registration fees for caravans. That is what would apply in principle; it would depend

on the percentage. To make it a round figure to compare with the other pensioner reductions relating to motor vehicles, a reduction of 25 per cent would have to be allowed. However, the other percentages have been reduced to 30 per cent, and perhaps from the point of view of administration a 30 per cent reduction would be most easily administered by the department.

Pensioners with caravans comprise a section of the South Australian community supported by the caravan clubs, a section of the community with extremely limited financial resources. Little revenue would be lost in totality if registration fees for the caravans of pensioners were to be reduced to the same extent as fees for motor vehicles owned by pensioners.

Further, representations have been made by pensioners who have trailers. Pensioners have never enjoyed the same reduction for trailers as they have on other motor vehicles. I do not argue on the past application of that provision, but in view of the steep increases in relation to trailers provided in the Bill the position of pensioners certainly must be considered.

When we see some of the increases in trailer registrations now mooted, we see some of the vast increases to which I have referred. The registration fees for trailers with a weight exceeding 260 kg but not exceeding 1 020 kg is increased from $6 to $16. For slightly larger trailers the increase is from $8 to $18. That annual fee is high to a pensioner who uses his trailer to go to the country to get wood to provide his winter warmth, or who uses his trailer at weekends for camping and short holidays at the beach. It is a harsh increase indeed.

I make a plea to the Government to consider reducing these fees. Although I am not seeking a total reduction in the fees, I seek a reduction in relation to trailers commensurate with the reduction always allowed pensioner motor vehicle owners. Not only do I ask the Minister to look into those questions and to reply to them at the close of the second reading stage but I also intend to place amendments on file so that these questions can be debated fully in Committee. I do not oppose the Bill, although I do not agree to it with any enthusiasm. I am most disappointed at the Commonwealth Government's harsh treatment of South Australia by keeping our road grants at $31 000 000, the identical sum granted us last year.

I assume that the $4 700 000 allocated to local government in South Australia is related in some way to the total allocation South Australia should have received in keeping with the recommendation of the Commonwealth Bureau of Roads in its 1973 report, which recommended an allocation of $36 000 000. I hope the Government accepts its responsibility and ensures that the maximum amount of road construction is carried out by private enterprise under a tender system. In that way the Government will ensure that all the money that is to be spent on roads in this current year will give the maximum benefit for the people of this State.

Lastly, I refer to the steep percentage increases that motorists must face if this Bill becomes law. I highlight the need for consideration being given to pensioners who own caravans and enjoy their leisure pursuits by caravanning and other activities involving the use of a trailer, as the registration fees applying to caravans and trailers are being increased enormously. Many of these vehicles are essential equipment to help pensioners get by on their limited budgets.

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

PUBLIC PURPOSES LOAN BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 22. Page 640.)

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): I will not be long dealing with the Loan Estimates this year, as I intend to look at them broadly. The intended expenditure totals $181 000 000. Last year the total actual expenditure was $168 500 000. However, as has been pointed out in the second reading explanation, a direct comparison cannot be made, because $14 750 000 included in the $168 500 000 was related to tertiary education expenditure, the responsibility for which has now been assumed by the Commonwealth Government. In seeking to make a comparison between last year and this year, an adjustment must be made in respect of this figure. Intended expenditure this year is $26 900 000 more than the expenditure of last year, although it is only $23 000 000 higher than last year's Estimates. This represents an increase in allocations from Loan funds of about 14·7 per cent.

However, taking into account the current inflation rate and population increases during the same period, it is clear that there will be a substantial downturn this year in the actual work achieved through expenditure under the Loan Estimates. When speaking on a similar Bill last year, I pointed out that the increase then over the previous year would not take into account the inflation rate then applying, and that situation applies even more so this year. I now refer to the disturbing large variations that occur in the actual expenditure when compared with the Loan Estimates presented to us. True, reasons were given for this in the second reading explanation. However, the actual expenditure of $168 500 000 last year was $11 040 000 higher than the original estimate placed before this Council. Despite the explanations provided, I draw the Council's attention to the large variation, which varies both ways for many items. Is the practice of presenting a full year's Loan Estimates and Budget Estimates to Parliament practicable in the modern context? Perhaps this method of practise should be changed to allow the accounts to be presented more regularly.

In the current financial situation, large variations will occur within the next 12 months, and I believe it will become necessary for us to consider a procedure whereby examination of accounts is made more frequently than on a 12-monthly basis. The Australian Loan Council, which comprises all States and the Commonwealth, supported a Loan programme for State works of $925 000 000, and the total Loan programme for 1973-74 amounted to $1 085 000 000 for works, services and housing. Allowing for housing and the assumption of direct Commonwealth financing of tertiary education, Loan allocations from the Loan Council increased by about 10 per cent. However, as we know, the States bitterly complained about this when they met with the Commonwealth to discuss Loan Fund allocations.

Moreover, the current rate of inflation is between 15 per cent and 20 per cent, yet there is a mere 10 per cent increase in Loan Council allocations, and that does not even maintain an increase equal to the rate of inflation. To that must be added not only the matter of inflation but also the large increase that has taken place in building costs. These increases are even greater than the rate of inflation, and the programme we see put before us this year is associated mainly with construction projects, thereby representing a downturn in the work that will be achieved. In respect of housing, the total allocation has increased from $32 750 000 last year to $38 400 000 this year, an

increase of about 17 per cent. What I have said previously about inflation in regard to other lines in the Loan Estimates applies equally to housing, and I point out that costs in relation in housing have increased by much more than 17 per cent.

The Government intends channelling more funds to the Housing Trust from the housing allocation and, as was pointed out in the second reading explanation, particularly in relation to the Redcliff proposal. Funds for rental housing will be increased. It has been said that the restriction will be about 30 per cent for families in a dwelling that the trust may sell, so we see a movement to the area providing rental housing rather than houses for sale. Perhaps I should compare the allocations of some of the important ones. Loans to producers increase from $2 250 000 in 1973-74 to $2 450 000 in 1974-75; advances to the State Bank remain static at $2 000 000; roads and bridges fall from $4 000 000 to $1 000 000; afforestation and milling rise from $3 300 000 to $4 200 000; railways show a staggering increase from $7 900 000 to $12 600 000; waterworks and sewers rise from $33 120 000 to $35 860 000; Government hospitals rise from $18 500 000 to $21 000 000; and school buildings rise from $28 500 000 to $42 700 000. That is a brief comparison of this year's allocations with last year's.

Having touched briefly on the main lines in these Loan Estimates and having demonstrated that there will be a considerable downturn in the building work achieved in the next 12 months, I now turn my attention more specifically to the Redcliff proposal, with which I dealt in my Address in Reply speech and which is covered by allocations in these Loan Estimates. As stated in the second reading explanation, the provision for rental housing is largely related to the proposal at Red Cliff Point, and the Government must provide funds for housing there if it is proceeding with the proposal. I quote from the *News* of August 23 this year, under the heading "Redcliff's pollution: three agree to tough law". This deals with the fact that the Redcliff petro-chemical consortium and the South Australian Government have reached agreement on crucial pollution controls necessary for the establishment of a $420 000 000 complex near Port Augusta. I will not quote the whole article, but it deals with the fact that agreement has been reached between the three members of the consortium and the Government on clause 15 of the proposed indenture Bill. Towards the end, the article states:

The process of requiring new or tighter discharge standards will be carried out through regulations. Mr. Broomhill said he believed the environmental requirements had established a pattern that would set the style for the future—interstate and even overseas.

We know that over the past few months considerable concern has been expressed about the Government's proposals in clause 15 of the indenture Bill, and a letter in the *Advertiser* of August 24 from Mr. C. Warren Bonython, President of the Conservation Council of South Australia, reads as follows:

Late last year, a spokesman for the Department of Environment and Conservation publicly promised a full environmental impact statement on the Red Cliff project for release early this year; it has not eventuated. More recently, my council was confidentially told by the department of the intention to substitute for this environmental safeguard an environment protection clause or clauses in the indenture agreement—a device which would commit the State to the Red Cliff project before it had been shown that it was environmentally safe and in the public's overall interest. We were unable to comment publicly at the time because of its being confidential. We openly objected last week only when the subject was burst open by Mr. Dunstan's statements that only the concurrence of the Australian Government stood in the way of final agreement; adequate environmental considerations had clearly been overridden. We still object to this backdoor method designed to sidestep full environmental protection. Our environment has been put at risk in the absence of proper knowledge of the ultimate impact of the project on it. The public has a right to be satisfied as to such safety before it is committed to such a large industrial project.

I draw attention to these two statements: first, the letter of Mr. Bonython, which states that the Conservation Council could not comment on the original clause 15 because of its being confidential; and on August 23 the statement by the Minister (Mr. Broomhill) that the Government has had a second look at clause 15 before bringing it to Parliament. No doubt, the pressures that have been exerted in Parliament have had an effect upon the Minister, who has now re-examined clause 15 and come to a new agreement with the three parties involved in the consortium for a toughening up of that clause.

The point that still worries me is that so far no impact study has been made upon the environment, and even in these Loan Estimates there is provision for Loan funds for providing houses for Red Cliff. All that is being done is that an indenture Bill will be before us and clause 15 has been strengthened to overcome "any pollution problem", whatever that may mean. Surely that is putting the cart before the horse. Surely this Parliament should know—

The Hon. G. J. Gilfillan: It is not to prevent pollution but to discourage it.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: That may be so, or for providing fines for any pollution that takes place. I know that in some petro-chemical industries in other parts of the world fines of up to $10 000 000 a year are paid by companies for their own pollution. Parliament is entitled to know the full facts of the Redcliff proposal in regard to the environment before the indenture Bill comes before us. We are faced with allocations in these Loan Estimates for the development of Red Cliff and I believe that Mr. Bonython's letter in the *Advertiser* takes us right back to square one. I see little advantage in having protection in a clause in an indenture Bill when Government expenditure of many millions of dollars and private expenditure of up to $500 000 000 may be incurred in the establishment of these works. We still appear to be putting the cart before the horse.

No matter how strong clause 15 may be, the indenture Bill will commit the State to the establishment of this industry and to State expenditure of millions of dollars before we are certain that this project is environmentally safe. This is the very point I made in my Address in Reply speech, and I make it again today. The story in the *News* of August 23 only leads me to believe that the Government intended to proceed with this proposal with little or no examination of the environmental factors involved. Indeed, looking through the records so far, it appears to me that an interesting statement has been made. I quote the Minister of Environment and Conservation who, in the 5DN news broadcast on May 28 of this year, said:

The Minister (Mr. Broomhill) said the publication of the document—that is, the impact study document—is in line with his statement to Parliament last year that the Government was prepared to make the fullest possible disclosure of information on Red Cliff. No time table had been given for the carrying out of this assessment.

We know how long such an assessment will take. I now refer to the Director of the department, Dr. Inglis, who said that the study would be a mammoth task. He continued as follows:

The environmental investigation will be on three fronts, the early stages of construction, early operation and continuous monitoring.

He continued:

We don't anticipate any major problem at this point. What we in fact did was because of the complications of setting up a complex such as Redcliffs was to approach it in a slightly different way from the ideal and perfect one which is to carry out monumental studies long beforehand and continue for quite a long time. What we did was looked at the possible effects of the site, decided that they were not going to be major and that the first preliminary stages would go ahead; studies were done in relation to that were almost a year ago now and showed that this was O.K. The next stage of course is now to ensure that the stuff produced from the plant is within the limits which are acceptable which are not going to cause major changes or even major-minor changes within the area of it. Having done that, however, it's essential that you continue to monitor so that you know what the long-term effects are. The world has little experience of this. We know what can happen with very bad plans. The Japanese have shown this very clearly. We don't know what minor long-term effects may be. We don't anticipate that they will be bad.

That statement was made in May this year, and it concerned the establishment of a petro-chemical industry in the rather confined waters at the top of Spencer Gulf. I refer now to the following transcript from the June 2 programme of *Newscope*, when Dr. Inglis, the Director of the Environment and Conservation Department, was interviewed:

Q. What is an environmental impact study? . . . The work which you do studying an area; what's in it, what are the consequences of actions you carry out in it; what will happen after you have completed construction. You want to know what is going to be damaged. It will also include provisions for cutting down effects as much as possible. It's a large study of almost everything involving a tremendous amount of work and is fairly expensive.

Q. Will it be possible to enforce the conditions that the Government require in this area? . . . Yes, I think so. There are of course two parts to that question. If we felt or if it were felt that the problems to be faced were of tremendous difficulty, of tremendous danger than that type of process or that type of product wouldn't be allowed or we would certainly oppose it.

Here we are faced with a situation in which no study has been done, yet honourable members have before them the Loan Estimates, under which money is being channelled into the development of this project. Despite this, we do not even know what problems will be faced in future. If there are tremendous dangers, this type of programme should not be permitted. I point out once more that we are putting the cart before the horse in relation to this matter. Dr. Inglis continued:

What we are talking about is the enforcement of fairly low-level pollutants incomparable to the kind of enforcement which applies to most industrial plants in this State already or which will apply to it very soon.

Referring to the previous establishment of such a project in this State, Dr. Inglis continued:

This will not apply to the Redcliff situation, so we are talking about knowing what's happened, going to happen, making sure that it's going to be minor and then pushing and, if need be, enforcing fines and other sanctions against the company.

I point out strongly once more that I believe the Government has already changed its mind on this project. This is borne out by the report in the *News* of August 23. However, I am still concerned that we appear to be proceeding with this project without Parliament or the department carrying out any investigation that might inform the public of exactly what could occur with this industry. This is borne out by the Premier's statement which was quoted by Mr. Bonython, as follows:

Only the concurrence of the Australian Government now stands in our way.

I again ask the Government whether we are going to receive all the information necessary, and whether studies are going to be made regarding the possible pollution of this area. I believe the Government still has to convince the public that adequate research has been undertaken and will continue to be undertaken before the State is irrevocably committed to the indenture on this matter.

I am not opposed to industrial development on Spencer Gulf. Indeed, I want to see development occurring in South Australia. However, in this respect we must be absolutely certain that we do not produce a situation in which the industry has been established, with millions of dollars being invested by private organizations and the Government, and find it is then impossible to do anything about any pollution of the environment that may follow its establishment.

I am concerned that the Government has not informed the public or this Council of what is happening regarding this matter. Although I support the second reading of the Bill before us, I reiterate that there will be a downturn in the amount of work that will be achieved as a result of the allocations in the Estimates, first, because of the tremendous rise in building costs in this State and in the country generally and, secondly, because of the 15 per cent to 20 per cent inflation rate.

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT secured the adjournment of the debate.

HOUSING LOANS REDEMPTION FUND ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It makes amendments to the Housing Loans Redemption Fund Act, 1962, in order to enable the Act to be consolidated and reprinted under the Acts Republication Act, 1967, and to make certain improvements in the administration of the Act. Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 merely extends the reference in section 4 (5) of the Act to the Housing Agreement executed in pursuance of the Housing Agreement Act, 1956, to cover all amending agreements executed in pursuance of the Housing Agreement Act, 1961, and of other subsequent relevant enactments. This would catch up the amending agreement executed in pursuance of the Housing Agreement Act, 1966, and any other amending agreements, if any.

Clause 3 amends section 5 by specifically providing that a borrower (other than a joint borrower) may become a contributor in respect of a part of an advance. Although the section as it stands provides that a borrower may contribute for "the advance in respect of which the borrower applies to become a contributor", it has for many years been Treasury policy to enable a borrower to become a contributor in respect of a part of an advance, and this amendment covers a long-standing practice. Clause 4 amends section 6 by extending the principle enacted by clause 3 to joint borrowers who become joint contributors.

Clause 5 enables a contributor to contribute in respect of an increased proportion of an advance, subject to approval of the approved authority and to satisfying the Treasurer and the approved authority that he is less than 36 years of age and in good health. The Act as it stands provides that a contributor may reduce the amount of the advance for which he is contributing, but at present there is no provision for him to contribute for an increased proportion of the advance. This clause supplies that omission.

Clause 6 amends sections 8 (1) (*a*) and 8 (1) (*b*) by allowing interest for a period not exceeding one month after the death of a contributor to be met from the fund. The Act at present allows interest for a period not exceeding one month which would have accrued to the date of death of a contributor to be met from the fund. The Government considers that this principle should be extended to interest accruing for a period not exceeeding one month after the death of the contributor as, in most cases, contributors would be making progressive arrangements to meet mortgage payments during their lifetime and there would be more logical reasons for the fund to meet the interest liability of a borrower for a period not exceeding one month after his death. It is during that period that arrangements are usually required to be made for effecting the discharge or reduction of a mortgage and the documentation therefor.

Clause 7 repeals the existing schedule which prescribes the rates of contribution referred to in section 7 of the Act. Those rates are at present expressed in shillings per annum per £1 000 of advance which is outstanding at the time contributions are commenced, and the clause replaces it with a new schedule which expresses the same rates in dollars per annum per $1 000 of advance. The rates, although differently expressed, have not been altered in any way, but the schedule of rates has been adapted to meet the situation where the proportion of the advance in respect of which contributions are made is increased as provided for in clause 5.

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

STATE LOTTERIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This short Bill is intended to arm the Lotteries Commission of South Australia, established under the principal Act, the State Lotteries Act, 1966-1973, with powers to borrow money under a guarantee of the Government of the State. The guarantee provided by this measure will ensure that the rate of interest applicable to the proposed borrowings will be somewhat lower than would otherwise be the case. The intention is that, if a suitable opportunity arises in the future, the commission will be able to purchase its own accommodation should this prove to be an economically desirable arrangement.

It goes without saying that the surplus of income over expenditure of the commission is and will be in the future fully committed to transfers to the Hospitals Fund kept in the Treasury. Accordingly, expenditure of the nature envisaged can properly only come from borrowings by the commission. However, any entry into the borrowing field will be dependent on the overall borrowing programme by Government and semi-government instrumentalities. This programme is, of course, determined by the Australian Government in consultation with the States and is clearly necessary to preserve the proper balance between Government and private borrowings. Accordingly, the passage of this Bill is not to suggest that the commission will be able to borrow immediately but rather to ensure that should a suitable opportunity arise then, within the constraints indicated above, the commission can take advantage of it.

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

TRANSPLANTATION OF HUMAN TISSUE BILL

The House of Assembly intimated that it had agreed to the Legislative Council's amendments.

NATURAL GAS PIPELINES AUTHORITY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 22. Page 641.)

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS (Midland): I have had a fairly good look at this Bill and also at the original legislation, passed in 1967. In speaking to the Bill, the Hon. Mr. Gilfillan said that he found much in it that concerned him. The Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill said that, in dealing with such a Bill, it was wise to compare it with the original legislation, and I have endeavoured to do that. Like some honourable members who have already spoken on this Bill, I am very concerned about the escalation of powers, which I believe are very wide indeed. Because the Natural Gas Pipelines Authority seems to have worked very well, one wonders why so many alterations are required after such a relatively short period, the original legislation having been passed a mere seven years ago.

In 1967 we wisely granted the authority very wide powers. This important undertaking conferred great benefits on South Australia through the provision of large quantities of indigenous fuel. In view of the size of the undertaking and the powers then granted, I and some other honourable members who have spoken wonder why so many alterations to the legislation are now required. One of the main alterations contained in the Bill is the alteration of the title of the legislation to "Pipelines Authority Act". Also, the definition of "natural gas" is struck out and a definition of "petroleum" is inserted. I wonder why this is so necessary, in the Government's view. The definition provides:

> "petroleum" means—
>
> (*a*) any naturally occurring hydrocarbon, whether in a gaseous, liquid or solid state.

Of course, the original Bill referred only to a hydrocarbon in a gaseous state. The alteration from "natural gas" to "petroleum" greatly concerns me for reasons which I will mention later.

Another matter which concerns me, and which was highlighted by the Hon. Sir Arthur Rymill, is what I would describe as the socialistic concept of an authority completely appointed by the Governor—that is, really by the Government. What is wrong with the present set-up? The Chief Secretary (Hon. A. F. Kneebone) in introducing the Bill on March 20, 1974, said that the word "petroleum" would be defined widely so as to include gaseous or liquid hydrocarbons. He stated:

> At the same time the opportunity is being taken to reconstruct the authority by removing the necessity of particular interests being represented in its membership. At the present time both users and producers of the product transported (that is, natural gas) are represented. With the best will in the world, the economic interests of producers and users of a product may well be in conflict, and indeed this is a natural situation. This then is one good reason for drawing the membership of the authority from a wider field.

It may be that the Minister considered this a good reason for drawing the membership of the authority from a wider field. I would question that statement. I believe that the set-up of the authority as now constituted has been successful, and there is no really good reason for any alteration or for the Government's intention to appoint all the members of the authority without the necessity for representation from either the producers or the users. One of my colleagues, in speaking last week in this debate, said that he

referred only to the powers in the Bill and that there were many other features in it. I am not contesting that statement. I believe it is so, but it is the drastic change in the powers contained in the Bill that concerns me. The Hon. John Burdett made one or two comments in which I concur. He said:

The powers of the authority are greatly extended by this Bill, and this is an alarming situation because of the changes made to the constitution of the authority.

I do not believe the Hon. Mr. Burdett exaggerated in any way in making that statement. The change in the appointment of the authority is a serious step indeed. Remembering once again the alteration of the words "natural gas" to "petroleum", and remembering that the Minister said (as I quoted) that "petroleum" will be defined widely, I think that, whereas it was the Government's desire to have the Emergency Powers Bill (which now seems to have lost its emergency and its urgency), if in effect that Bill was concerned largely with petroleum (and, of course, that was denied by members of the Government, but nevertheless it was widely held that the emergency powers were concerned largely with petroleum and its distribution), surely there would be no need for any emergency powers legislation if the Bill we are now considering were passed in its present form.

I draw the attention of honourable members, as those who have spoken before me have done, to section 10 (1) (*e*) of the principal Act, which provides that the authority may:

purchase, take on lease, or otherwise by agreement, acquire, hold, maintain, develop and operate any natural gas storages and the necessary facilities, apparatus and equipment for their operation.

And, of course, for "natural gas" we must now substitute "petroleum". If that is not a wide and all-embracing clause, I have never seen one. I believe that it could well be taken to mean that the Government, under this legislation, if passed in its present form, could well control all the storages for petroleum or similar gases in this State from Port Stanvac to Birkenhead, and probably down to the smallest storages in country areas, even possibly underground storages on primary producing properties.

The provisions of that paragraph are all-embracing, and such an extremely wide clause to my mind is dangerous; I would not support it. If the Emergency Powers Bill was needed only for the distribution of petroleum in an emergency, certainly it would appear that here the Government would have all the powers which were needed in that legislation, and more. I could not support the Bill as it stands. I may be prepared to consider its continuance into the Committee stage so that it may be suitably amended. I find some very real concern in the way in which this Bill was presented to the Council.

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

ADJOURNMENT

At 4.13 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, August 28, at 2.15 p.m.