

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday, February 27, 1975

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

QUESTIONS

KANGAROO ISLAND

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Has the Chief Secretary a reply to my question of February 20 regarding insurance payments to soldier settlers on Kangaroo Island?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: The State Government Insurance Commission has completed assessments of all insurances of soldier settlers, except finalisation of livestock losses. The department is involved only with soldier settlers where the insurance is in the joint names of the settler and the Minister of Lands. This may cover structural improvements only or, in addition, livestock and plant. Insurance release forms are presently being delivered to the settlers affected for signing and these forms will be returned for my signature. The commission has paid the assessed compensation to the department. The soldier settlers involved have been eligible to apply for advances for replacement of insured losses from the date of the fire. When the insured items have been satisfactorily replaced, the settler will be paid the insurance money, less any advances made for replacement.

HILLCREST HOSPITAL

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Has the attention of the Minister of Health been drawn to a report in today's *Advertiser* which states that a union threat to withdraw staff from the Hillcrest Hospital within a week had been made, unless the staffing dispute was settled? Does the Minister appreciate that a meeting of 130 members of the Australian Government Workers Association has been held at Hillcrest, that the complaint centred around the fact that three industrial therapists had supervised 120 patients every day, and that the union claimed that the number of employees should be increased to six? Also, the claim was made that the matter had been raised six months ago and again three weeks ago. Has the Minister made any attempts to negotiate in this matter and can he assure honourable members that the interests of the patients in the section involved will be properly cared for?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I have not yet had time today to read the newspaper. The union informs me when meetings are held and what the results are. Staffing of the hospital has been a problem for some time, and we do for the interests of the patients all that we can do.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Will the Minister undertake to make a special investigation into this matter and bring down a more explanatory report?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Obviously, the union has been instructed by the meeting and I have no doubt that it will make a request to me. The honourable member has put nothing specific for me to investigate, other than the staffing position, and we are currently examining that matter.

PIG FEEDING

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: I understand that there are stock disease regulations which will prohibit the practice of swill feeding of pigs and which will come into force

later this year. The practice has been for some pig growers, mainly in districts close to the metropolitan area, to collect refuse from hotels, restaurants, and so on, steam or boil it in elaborate and expensive equipment, and feed it to their pigs. This practice saves councils much money by lessening the cost of garbage collection and disposal. The practice of swill feeding has been going on for centuries, and I believe that it has never been proved that disease has been passed on to pigs when the practice has been properly controlled. After all, if the health regulations are observed, the refuse should be disease free. Stopping the practice will wipe out a number of family businesses and cause loss where expensive equipment has been purchased. I understand that the regulations are Australia-wide, that they were discussed at Agricultural Council, and that they are designed primarily to prevent the introduction of diseases from overseas through swill coming from port areas. I ask, first, whether the Government will consider amending the regulations to allow exemptions to be granted in other than port areas and, secondly, for what reason is properly controlled swill feeding injurious to health where the swill does not come from port areas?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: This matter was raised at Agricultural Council and a motion regarding it was moved by the officer in charge of animal health matters in Canberra. Ministers of Agriculture were unanimous that swill feeding should be abolished. The honourable member said that there had been no positive proof that disease had been caused by swill feeding. However, he is wrong in saying that, as it has been clearly stated many times by animal health authorities in Canberra that certain outbreaks of anthrax have been traced back to swill feeding. This is one of the reasons why steps were taken to eliminate the possibility of further outbreaks in this country. One of the problems that we have is the elimination of diseases in this country. Australia probably has the most stringent quarantine restrictions of any country in the world and, as the honourable member knows, we have foot and mouth disease on our doorstep. Indeed, it has come as far as Bali, where attempts are being made to eradicate it. We realise that other animal diseases are prevalent in this country. Indeed, there has just been an outbreak of anthrax in a kennel of greyhounds in Victoria. Whether that was because of incorrect feeding, or whether the animals were fed offal, I do not know. This disease can easily be transmitted to humans. Indeed, I believe people are actually suffering from anthrax as a result of administering these kennels. It is also easily transmitted to other animals.

The authorities in Canberra have recommended this action and all States have abided by it. We consider it to be in Australia's interest to keep the country as free as possible of animal diseases; this will be of much benefit to Australia's animal husbandry industry. It is not for me to make a decision along these lines: any decision regarding how the matter is to be tackled must come from the authorities in Canberra. However, I assure the honourable member that the department's chief veterinary officer is, in consultation with the Commonwealth and other State authorities, at present examining this matter. The honourable member says that many people have installed costly equipment to treat offal. The regulations, if relaxed in any way, would be difficult to police in many cases because, unless offal and swill are treated in the correct way, the whole purpose is defeated. This is a most serious problem, and one which will have to be resolved. The date of operation has been extended from July 1 to October 1 to give us some latitude to explore

further avenues in the hope of seeing some daylight. As the position stands at the moment, there will be a complete ban on all types of swill fed to pigs from October 1.

PENSIONER CONCESSIONS

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Has the Chief Secretary a reply to my recent question in relation to pensioner concessions?

The Hon. A. F. KNEEBONE: In 1973, the Government approved an arrangement whereby council rates on elderly citizens housing schemes would be based on a composite valuation of the housing development rather than on single valuations of each unit within the development. As a result, significant reductions in council rates have been achieved, especially when individual units have been subject previously to a council's minimum rate. In general the rating of elderly citizens housing schemes is such that the amount of local government rate included in the rent paid by an individual pensioner would be considerably less than the rate paid by a pensioner living in his own home.

Land tax and water and sewer rate concessions applying to elderly citizens housing schemes are much more favourable than the concessions for pensioners who own their own homes. In addition, aged persons homes receive generous assistance for both capital and operating costs from the Australian Government, while pensioners with income other than pension of \$6 a week or less, and who pay rent, receive a rent supplement of \$5 a week. The supplement is not available to pensioners who own their houses. When all these things are taken into account, it is very difficult to support an argument that pensioners who live in aged persons homes have a need for a further concession such as the concession in council rates applying to those who own their houses.

MEDIBANK

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: First, has the Minister of Health given any indication, either verbally or in writing, to the Commonwealth Government regarding acceptance by South Australia of the Medibank scheme; secondly, has he written to subsidised and community hospitals on the question; thirdly, if so, what offer has he made to those hospitals?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: We have verbally informed the Commonwealth Government that we are prepared to enter into an agreement, though it has not yet been finalised. We have written to the subsidised hospitals pointing out the proposals. The hospitals that might be covered by section 34 of the Health Insurance Act, 1973, include non-profit charitable and religious hospitals. In the context of section 34, the present proposals are that each non-profit and charitable hospital is to be invited to make available a declared number of beds as approved beds (that is, beds currently referred to as public or standard beds). The specific offer would, at this stage, refer to those approved beds being available for Pensioner Medical Services pensioners only. The Hospital Board is to negotiate with attending medical practitioners for payments to be made by the hospital to those who agree to directly bill the hospital for treatment and services to pensioners occupying the declared beds, on the basis that remuneration would be no greater than the benefits scheduled in the Health Insurance Act. That is the proposition that has been made to the charitable and non-profit hospitals.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: And subsidised hospitals?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: A similar proposition has been made to them. Three types of letter had to go out.

The Hon. V. G. SPRINGETT: Can the Minister say what remuneration and support will be given, first, to those hospitals that comply with the request and, secondly, to those hospitals that do not comply with the request?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: We have made the offer to the hospitals, but no reply has yet been received from them. We want to wait and see what the position is.

The Hon. A. J. Shard: We are not all Bjelke-Petersens, you know.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The position will have to be assessed in the light of the replies received.

PUBLIC SERVICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL (CONSOLIDATION)

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from February 26. Page 2569.)

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): This Bill is part of the process of consolidating the Statutes undertaken by Mr. Ludovici. The Bill contains nothing that needs debating, and I support it.

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

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from February 25. Page 2513.)

The Hon. G. J. GILFILLAN (Northern): I rise to support this Bill without any great enthusiasm because I believe that, to a large extent, it provides an unnecessary addition to the top-heavy administration we seem to be getting in Government departments, in this case the Education Department. The Hon. Jessie Cooper spoke on this matter in great detail yesterday, covering all aspects of the Bill, and there is little I can add after hearing such a fine speech.

However, I question whether such a large council is really necessary. The council will be comprised of 24 members (or 26 members if the Minister takes advantage of his option to appoint an additional two members). I question the balance of such a council because of the great emphasis on the academic side of life in the rather emotional atmosphere often surrounding education. I should like to see the council have a broader base. I refer to a recent interesting report in the *Advertiser*, which was as follows:

The Chairman of the Universities Commission (Professor P. H. Karmel) called last night for a radical change in the education system under which students would spend less time at school. He told the congress many scholastic qualifications were unnecessary in specific jobs. Less emphasis should be placed on qualifications because in many cases they were only a basis for selection. "It is probably not necessary to insist on a university qualification to get a job in an insurance company or a bank," he said. Professor Karmel, who prepared the Karmel report on the needs of schools in 1973, said the education system would adapt to change quickly. The difficulty would be outside the education system, in the labour market.

The relationship between education and labour was very close. The labour market over a long term had become conditioned to higher qualifications and this in turn led to students staying at school longer to meet those demands. It was a vicious circle. Over the past 20 years the number of young people employed in the labour market had declined.

In 1954, 75 per cent of 15 to 18-year-olds were working, whereas now it was about 50 per cent. "Over the past 10 years unemployment among young people has been a good deal higher than among adults," he said. "I think you could argue that the labour market is closing out young people."

The only question I have regarding that report is whether the labour market is closing out young people or whether the education system is doing this? Concerning the intended council members, I would have preferred to see employer representation from those areas where young people, who are being educated now, will be employed. It may be that our education system is not being geared to the needs of employers, and this is a field we cannot afford to neglect. I believe that insufficient publicity is given to the important part that primary education plays in our children's lives. Primary school years are the formative years of young people and, although they may be enticed into other ways of thought and action in later years, the formative years have such an impact on them that they tend to revert to the standards they learnt in primary school. I take my hat off to the young school-teachers, many just out of teaching colleges, who go to remote places (sometimes to one-teacher schools) and overcome problems there and give young people a good grounding in education.

I believe that more time, attention and money should be given to this side of education because, after all, many of our children do not go much further than the primary level. We must ensure that we do not have a top-heavy system that will spend large sums on unproven ideas that may not be productive. I can well see in the future that the elite in our society will be not the academics but those people who have come up through the more technical side of education, such as institutes of technology, colleges of advanced education, adult and other forms of education, which fit them for the needs of our technical and modern society.

Costs are becoming alarming: during the last 18 months the cost of building a school has increased by about 80 per cent and, by June this year, we will see a rise of about 100 per cent in the cost. If these costs continue to escalate at their current rate, the sum spent on education that looks so well from year to year will be almost meaningless, because we will be getting less and less value in return for the money spent. I question the value of legislation such as the Bill now before us, which adds again to the cost of education, by asking whether it is worth while and whether the representation on the council is wide enough. I realise that the Minister has the right to appoint certain people without nomination, but I doubt whether his advisers would request him to go into the channels of commerce and industry and other employer groups. I believe that we must take a practical view of education and not get lost in the somewhat rarefied air that surrounds some of the more emotional issues. After all, surely the role of education is to provide a child with the means of earning a living, the ability to appreciate the better things of life, and to contribute something to this country's future.

Another area in which I believe further research is necessary is the question of population trends in Australia, particularly in South Australia. As it has been realised recently that projected population trends have been exaggerated in the past, a reassessment is now being made. Obviously, as a result of smaller families, the pressure on education and other facilities will diminish and the buying power of money will also diminish; that is why extensive research is necessary into the best use of available money. A lower population growth could also affect the number of vacant positions at the primary, secondary and tertiary teaching levels.

If we are to have such a large and unwieldy research council, it must be a well-balanced one that will cater for

the needs of children throughout all sections of society, not only at the academic level but at the commercial, technological and self-employed level. For instance, children should be better taught at school in the use of credit and the part that credit and the handling of money play in a modern society. As finance has become much more complex over recent years, a basic understanding of it is important and should be given in detail in our teachers colleges and schools of advanced education so that the knowledge may be passed on to secondary students who may be going out into life without any further education. I support the Bill.

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

FAIR CREDIT REPORTS 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 at 10 a.m. on Thursday, March 6, at which it would be represented by the Hons. J. C. Burdett, C. W. Creedon, R. C. DeGaris, C. M. Hill, and A. F. Kneebone.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (CITY PLAN)

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

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This short Bill consists of only one operative clause, clause 2, which extends the life of Part VA of the principal Act, the Planning and Development Act, 1966-1973, from June 30 of this year to that day in June of 1976. Honourable members will no doubt recall that this Part provided for the establishment of the City of Adelaide Development Committee as a body to exercise planning oversight in relation to the State capital. The arrangements set forth in this Part were, and still are, intended to be of a transitional nature. Honourable members will also be aware that Urban Systems Corporation Proprietary Limited, a firm of consultants, has been retained by the Council of the Corporation of the City of Adelaide to prepare a planning study incorporating a plan for the development of the city.

This planning study has been given considerable publicity by the council and interested persons were allowed until January 31, 1975, to make representations to the council on the plan. At the same time, the Government is engaged in an in-depth consideration of the plan and its effects from its own point of view. In view of the foregoing, it is clear that neither the Government nor the council will be in a position, before the end of this session, to give formal instructions for the preparation of such legislation as may be necessary to give effect to the matters contained in the report, this notwithstanding the inclusion in the planning study of a "lay draft" Bill for a proposed "City of Adelaide Environment Act".

Orderly planning and development of the capital of our State, to the end that both those who dwell in it and those who spend their working lives in it shall benefit, is not a matter that can be undertaken without the fullest consideration, and for this consideration ample time is essential. Accordingly, this Bill proposes that the present transitional arrangements given effect to by Part VA of the Planning and Development Act continue in operation

until June 30, 1976, by which time the future basis of development of the city may, hopefully, be clear.

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

ART GALLERY ACT AMENDMENT BILL (BOARD)

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

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This short Bill proposes two main changes to the principal Act, the Art Gallery Act, 1939, as amended. First, it is intended to resolve the somewhat confused situation that exists in relation to the description of the institution which is commonly known as the "Art Gallery" but which is in some instances in the principal Act referred to as the "National Gallery". Secondly, it proposes that the functions of the Art Gallery Board will be extended to ensure that the expertise of its members will be available generally in the visual arts field throughout the State.

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal. Clause 3 amends the long title to the principal Act by striking out the reference to the "National Gallery at Adelaide" and inserting in its place a reference to the "Art Gallery of South Australia". Clause 4 makes a consequential amendment to the definition of the "art gallery" in section 3 of the principal Act. Clause 5 repeals and re-enacts section 16 of the principal Act which sets out the general powers and functions of the board. The re-enactment is, it is suggested, quite self-explanatory and in general terms enlarges the powers of the board to take in the matters adverted to earlier.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL (Central No. 2): Having had a short opportunity of examining this Bill, I intend to address myself to it immediately. As the Minister has said, the reference to the National Gallery at Adelaide does not seem to have a logical place in the Act, and I certainly agree that this reference should be altered to "Art Gallery of South Australia".

Until, I think, 1939, the Art Gallery was controlled by an Act called the Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery, and Institutes Act. That Act came into force in 1909, and that was always its title until the Art Gallery became a separately run institution in 1939.

Before then the Board of the Public Library, Museum and Art Gallery, which ran all those institutions, consisted of 14 members. Its membership was reduced to five in 1939, and subsequently it was increased, although I am not certain to what number. I do not know whether honourable members recall this, but I think I am correct in saying that for a number of years, while it was under the control of that conjoint body, the Art Gallery was known as the National Gallery. There must have been a reason for this. Later, the title was dropped.

When I served on the board, the gallery was known as the Art Gallery of South Australia, and for some time it was referred to in that way. The title "Art Gallery of South Australia" is more definitive, and clause 3 seeks to regularise the situation. Clause 4 does the same sort of thing. Clause 5 is probably more important, as it adds to the board's powers.

Section 16 of the Act is repealed and a new section is proposed to be enacted in its place. Some of that new section is the same as the former provision. Indeed, paragraphs (a) and (d) of subclause (1) are the same as previously, and subclauses (2) and (3) are the same. New section 16 (1) contains four new paragraphs. Paragraph

(e) empowers the Art Gallery Board to assist in the promotion, organisation and supervision of art galleries and collections of art and any body or association established for the promotion of art within the State.

Paragraph (d) enables the board to advise the Minister and any organisation referred to in paragraph (c) on matters of general policy relating to art galleries and collections of art, and paragraph (e) enables the board to advise the Minister, local government authorities and any other authority or body on the provision, selection and maintenance of works of art for public places in the State. Much of this work is already being done by the Art Gallery.

The gallery has been helpful to many people in the country, and it has conducted country exhibitions. Indeed, it exhibits collections of pictures in country centres throughout the State. This has been a popular and a good innovation, which was introduced about five years ago.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: In 1969.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: That is near enough to five years ago.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The Leader played a prominent part in that.

The Hon. Sir ARTHUR RYMILL: Yes, I think the member for Burnside in another place, who was then Minister of Education, was also involved. The only provision I want to question is paragraph (f) of proposed new section 16 (1), which provides:

(f) such other functions as may be necessary or incidental to the foregoing or as the Minister may from time to time specify.

I think we had an argument about this over the South Australian Museum Act, if I remember rightly. I have not had time to look up *Hansard*, but I think the Hon. Mrs. Cooper raised the point that the verbiage gave the Minister power to assign anything to the board without reference to Parliament. Let us examine these words briefly. They are:

such other functions as may be necessary or incidental to the foregoing or as the Minister may from time to time specify.

Simplifying that by the omission of a few words, in my opinion it means as follows:

such other functions as the Minister may from time to time specify.

I say that because of the word "or" being in the clause. Let us now examine the meaning of the clause if the word "or" is left out. It would read as follows:

such other function as may be necessary or incidental to the foregoing as the Minister may from time to time specify.

In other words, if the word "or" were not there, the Minister could specify only functions ancillary to those carried out at present. Personally, I think that would be preferable. However, I am speaking today so that honourable members can look at this point. I assume the debate will be adjourned, and perhaps the Minister can look at it and we can discuss it further in Committee. I support the Bill.

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

UNDERGROUND WATERS PRESERVATION 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.

The need for this short Bill arises from a decision that the use of underground water should be restricted in the hundreds of Marcollat, Parsons, and Glen Roy, often identified as the "Padthaway" area of the South-East. The form of restriction imposed is to limit the draw-off of underground water to an amount not greater than the amount required to irrigate the acreage of crops irrigated in the 1972-73 season.

However, when an appropriate draft notice of restriction for issue under section 17 of the principal Act was submitted to the Government's legal advisers they indicated, quite properly, that to comply with the terms of section 17 (2) (b) of the Underground Waters Preservation Act it would be necessary also to direct the installation of meters to record the amount of water from wells. In the

Government's view the restrictions contemplated are quite effective of themselves and the imposition of the requirement on the landholders that they install meters is in the circumstances unnecessary. Accordingly, the amendment proposed by clause 2 of the Bill, which amends section 17 of the principal Act, makes it clear that the requirement to install meters need not necessarily be made when a landholder is required to limit or restrict the draw-off of water from underground sources.

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

ADJOURNMENT

At 3.5 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, March 4, at 2.15 p.m.