

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

Wednesday, September 22, 1976

The PRESIDENT (Hon. F. J. Potter) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: DROUGHT RELIEF**

The Hon. T. M. CASEY (Minister of Lands): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: This Ministerial statement is on drought relief measures in operation in South Australia currently being administered by me. It is important that the drought relief measures in operation be clearly understood and, to this end, the following information is given.

**Transport:**

1. Subsidies by way of grants on a \$1 for \$1 basis.

(a) Breeding stock to and from agistment.

(b) Fodder to starving stock.

Commenced July 1, 1976.

2. Subsidies by way of grants on a \$1 for \$1 basis, relating to dairy stock in the Adelaide milk supply and the Golden North milk supply areas.

(a) Transport of dairy stock to and from agistment.

(b) Fodder to dairy stock, being hay; this excludes supplements and prepared feed mixes. No subsidy payment will apply to the first 50 km of transport.

Commenced September 6, 1976.

3. Cartage of water to drought areas. This will only apply to the Far West Coast. Action will be taken to provide essential supplies of stock water, without cost, to central distribution areas.

**General measures:**

4. General stock slaughter programme—sheep and cattle. Payment by way of grants to meet the full costs incurred by district councils for the destruction and disposal of surplus unmarketable sheep and cattle. This programme is under the control of district councils.

Commenced August 10, 1976.

5. Cattle slaughter programme. Grants at the rate of \$10 a head will be made, being \$9 to the stock owner and \$1 to the district council. This programme will be operated in conjunction with, and in the same manner as, the general stock slaughter programme for sheep and cattle. The \$1 payment to district councils will be offset against costs incurred in the general stock slaughter programme. Calves below weaning age, six months, are excluded. Councils will make payments to stock owners.

This programme will apply from August 10, 1976.

6. Carry-on finance. Primary producers affected by drought who are not able to obtain carry-on funds from normal lending sources are eligible to apply for assistance by way of repayable loans. Assistance may be given towards living expenses, seeds, fertilizer, fuel, shearing expenses, etc.

Negotiations are now in progress with the Commonwealth Government on the whole aspect of drought relief.

**QUESTIONS****WATERCOURSES**

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation prior to directing a question to the Minister of Agriculture, representing the Minister of Works.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Some time ago I directed a question to the Minister in relation to the effect of the Water Resources Act on the proclamation of watercourses under that Act. In the debate on the Eight Mile Creek Settlement (Drainage Maintenance) Act in this House, I directed a question to the Minister, who has kindly replied by letter to that question. In regard to watercourses, part of the letter states:

The Act enables any watercourse, including any drain, to be declared a proclaimed watercourse. A person may withdraw water from a proclaimed watercourse only if licensed to do so. However, there is no intention of proclaiming any watercourse unless competition for its waters is such that the beneficial use of those waters may be impaired. I understand that there is no evidence that such a situation is occurring or is likely to occur in future in relation to any drainage system in the South-East.

Is the Minister satisfied that the Government has power under the Water Resources Act to proclaim any drain, particularly a drain which is covered under the South-Eastern Drainage Act and which is virtually a freehold title of the council involved?

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

**TOURISM REPORT**

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking a question of the Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Sport.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Some weeks ago I asked a question about a report dealing with the Tourist Department. The report, which I understand was prepared by Mr. Tattersall, was a supplementary report to the Corbett report, which is a public document. I was very disappointed with the Minister's rejection of my request that the supplementary report be made available to honourable members because, of course, the supplementary report should be read in conjunction with the Corbett report; without the supplementary report, the Corbett report, as it pertains to tourism, cannot be fully studied. I understand that another very comprehensive report dealing with the tourist industry generally in this State is in the Minister's possession. I have not been able to verify this point, but I have been informed that the preparation of the report cost about \$80 000, half of this sum being borne by the Federal Government and half by the State Government. I think this latter report, which was prepared by Pak-Poy and Associates, is in the Minister's hands. Is he willing to make this report available for honourable members to study?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: The honourable member said that the Commonwealth Government was involved in this report to the extent of \$40 000. I can assure the honourable member that the Commonwealth authorities are studying the report now, and we hope to discuss it with them. Until we get the green light from the Commonwealth authorities, we cannot release it. I do not know what will happen in connection with the report; it depends on the Commonwealth's attitude.

**FISHING INDUSTRY**

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: During the debate yesterday on abalone fishing licences, I asked the Minister who the

departmental officer was who made the biological survey as to abalone stocks, but the Minister could not recall the officer's name at that time. I also asked what were the officer's qualifications in marine biology, and I suggested that the officer's name might be Mr. Shepherd. If it was Mr. Shepherd, I understand that he has legal qualifications, but I am not aware that he has any substantial qualifications in marine biology; indeed, I believe he does not have any such qualifications. I ask the Minister: (1) Who was the departmental officer who made the biological survey as to abalone stocks? (2) What are his qualifications in marine biology? (3) Between which dates was the biological survey as to abalone stocks conducted? (4) In what areas was the biological survey conducted? (5) What was the method, in detail, of conducting the survey? (6) What were the findings of the survey as to abalone stocks? I concede that the Minister could not possibly answer some of these questions now; he will have to seek information from his department before he can do so. However, I ask that the Minister answer now those questions to which he can reply.

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: From memory, I think about 120 people in the Agriculture and Fisheries Department are involved in research work, about 20 to 25 of whom are involved in fisheries research. As I cannot remember the names of all the people involved in abalone research, I will obtain that information for the honourable member. The matter of the biological survey, which was raised by the honourable member, was adequately covered in yesterday's debate, when I explained to the honourable member that the term "biological survey" which has been thrown around recently is something of a catch-cry. No-one can say how a biological survey of stocks can be carried out. The divers with whom I have had discussions have admitted that no-one can go around and count all the abalone. This is not a feasible proposition, as we would need many more divers than those currently operating in the industry to enable this to be done.

I have asked the divers what they mean by the word "assessment", and it is difficult to get them to be precise about it, or about how abalone stocks can be assessed in any meaningful way so that management decisions can be taken on the number of divers that should be allowed into the industry. The assessment that has already been made is based on the divers' own figures in relation to catches.

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: But they are based on returns, not on what is there.

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: This goes round in a circular argument. There is no way of assessing what stocks are there. We want to know what is the sustainable yield from that stock. It is impossible to assess the number of abalone that exists and, if we are to do an assessment of a sustainable yield, the figures produced by divers of their own returns (which go back over a period of years) are a relevant ground on which to base management decisions in this industry. Those returns are, in some cases, open to dispute, and I am willing, as I said before, to discuss these questions on any occasion with the divers. If they are prepared to say that these figures are not accurate and that they can draw different conclusions from them, I am willing to discuss all these matters with the divers. I do not think, however, that it is meaningful to talk about a biological survey until it can be laid down precisely what that sort of survey and assessment will be, and what data, which will be meaningful in terms of making management decisions regarding the abalone industry, will come from such a survey.

The Hon. J. A. CARNIE: I seek leave to make a statement before asking the Minister of Fisheries a question. Leave granted.

The Hon. J. A. CARNIE: The Minister will be aware of a regulation that prohibits prawn fishermen from taking home for their own consumption any other fish caught in a prawn trawl. Having spent some nights on a prawn trawler, I point out to the Minister that usually the fish are killed in the trawl or, if they are not killed, they are dead by the time the catch is finally sorted. Therefore, the enforcement of this regulation means that dead fish must either be thrown back, which achieves nothing, or be consumed on the boat. They cannot be taken home to the families of the crew. I further point out to the Minister that the quantities of saleable fish caught is usually small. On the two nights I was out, we caught a reasonable quantity of squid, which, when divided amongst the crew, would not have provided more than three or four meals for their families, as well as four or five whiting and some crabs. The rest of the catch, apart from the prawns, was made up of leatherjackets and similar unsaleable fish. Does not the Minister agree that this regulation has led to the ridiculous situation where men who catch fish nightly cannot take those fish home to their families, and will he take steps to repeal this regulation?

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: The situation that the honourable member mentions causes considerable difficulty, but the purpose of the regulation is quite clear and, I think, justified: people involved in prawn trawling are not trawling for other species of fish. That is not allowed and it is not right that people trawling for prawns should be allowed to trawl for other fish. The honourable member says they are trawling for prawns and they catch other fish inadvertently in the prawn trawl; but allowing them to sell the fish that they have caught in the trawl would make it difficult to enforce the prevention of trawling for those fish. This is the dilemma in which we have been caught and to which there is no easy solution. It would be difficult to accept the word of a fisherman who caught a lot of fish and said, "I did not intend to catch these fish; they were caught in the trawl." How would we know that he was not trawling with the intention of catching fish? That is the dilemma we are faced with and we do not see an easy way of resolving it. Obviously, with a few fish caught in the trawl, it would be sensible for the fisherman to use them but, faced with that dilemma, if we allow a situation in which fishermen can freely sell fish that have been caught in the trawl, it is difficult to know whether or not they were trawling for fish.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Following the Minister of Fisheries' reply to the Hon. John Burdett, has the Minister any reliable information that the issuing of 10 extra licences for abalone fishing will not deplete the abalone stocks in South Australia?

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: The reliability of the evidence that we have depends on the reliability of the divers' own returns. I think it is an extremely difficult situation if we are to query the divers themselves, the people who have got the most at stake in the industry. It is upon the evidence that they supply to us that we can base our management decisions. That is the reliability of the evidence. It is based on the reliability of the divers' evidence.

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: The Minister said that he relies on the returns of fishermen and that it is on that basis that he is proposing to grant additional licences. The returns clearly establish that the catch has fallen, not that it is increasing. The Minister has placed reliance on the figures of catch per hour, and it has been explained that catch per hour has been increased because of the increased expertise used and the better equipment available. How is the Minister satisfied, from the figures which show a falling catch (although there is an increased catch per hour), that the abalone stocks are sufficient to justify the granting of 10 more licences?

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: It seems that we are continuing yesterday's debate, and most of the points being raised today I answered fully yesterday. However, I will answer the honourable member's question. I think the fall in the total catch within the abalone industry is accounted for by the smaller number of days that are being worked, and this is clear from the figures that are available. The number of days of diving has fallen a great deal more than the catches have, and this is the reason why the catch rate per hour has risen. An important point that should be made is that the catch rate per hour is only an indicator, and is not the reason that we are proposing an additional number of licences. If the catch rate per hour had fallen that would be a matter of concern. If the rate has risen it indicates the ability with which they can catch abalone is not diminishing.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: What is the total annual take?

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: The present abalone catch is about 200 tonnes a year. The other important thing is the abalone divers' own attitude. While they are suggesting they cannot support an increased effort of 10 extra divers on the one hand, on the other hand they are saying they would like relief divers working permanently in the industry. That would be a great increase in the effort. This is what is so inconsistent in the argument put forward by the Abalone Divers Association. It suggests that 10 extra permits are too many, and yet it is saying in the next breath that 32 extra divers working on a relief basis is not too many. I cannot reconcile those two statements. They seem to me to be totally inconsistent. If the industry is incapable of taking that effort in those extra divers, then how is it capable of taking the extra effort in the form of relief divers? This seems to me to be an argument that must be resolved, and those concerned must make up their minds clearly as to which statement they are really backing.

#### KANGAROO ISLAND TRANSPORT

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: Has the Minister of Lands a reply to a question I asked on September 8 about the provision of transport to and from Kangaroo Island?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: The Director-General of Transport has submitted an interim report to my colleague the Minister of Transport relating to transport to Kangaroo Island and he has provided me with a copy of this report, which I am only too pleased to pass on to the honourable member if he wishes to have it.

#### MIGRANT EDUCATION

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to a question I asked on August 17 about migrant education?

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: The Education Department provides special teachers, books, equipment and buildings to assist children in primary and secondary schools to develop skills in the English language. The Minister of Education informs me that, at the end of August, 110 teachers were engaged in conducting English classes for 6 842 migrant children in 97 schools. The organisation of classes in schools varies but it is a basic assumption that children needing help with English be not unduly isolated or set apart from their peers. Migrant English lessons are commonly given to small groups requiring specialised attention to enable them to relate successfully to the usual curriculum and the multicultural society of which our schools are a part. The Further Education Department, through its Migrant Education Centre, offers the following range of activities for teaching English to migrants. I ask that this list be incorporated in *Hansard* without my reading it as it gives the courses that are available under the Further Education Department.

Leave granted.

#### MIGRANT ENGLISH COURSES

Full-time accelerated course: The course covers a wide range of activities designed to improve mastery of the basic structure of the language and extend vocabulary in the most useful areas for conversational and vocational needs. Duration is a 10 week (30 hours per week) programme.

English courses for migrant workers in industry: These are courses which take place at the work place, entirely or partly in employers' time. Language content is geared to the needs of a particular industry, but this does not preclude language for general conversational needs in the wider community.

Classes for hospital patients: The most notable success occurs where patients are long term. This permits the development of an effective programme incorporating a stronger educational component as opposed to supportive and social contact with short term patients.

Women's day classes: These classes endeavour to assist women who are seeking to improve language skills at an advanced level in order to keep up with their children and take a more active part in the Australian community.

Home tutor scheme: This programme provides opportunities for migrant women to learn English in their homes with the help and encouragement of a volunteer who may also be seen by the students, as a contact person with the Australian community.

Advanced classes: Cater for migrants whose command of English is sufficient for basic communication, but who wish to improve their English further.

Part-time accelerated courses: These are conducted in a number of country towns. Part-time regional advisory teachers have been appointed in the northern Spencer Gulf region and the South-East. Their task is to assist and advise new teachers, as well as co-ordinate classes in the region and liaise with community groups, etc.

In addition classes for refugees and a correspondence course are available.

#### YATALA VALE SURFACE WATER STORAGE TANK

The PRESIDENT laid on the table the report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence, on Yatala Vale Surface Water Storage Tank.

#### ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: I move:

*That this Bill be now read a second time.*

In doing so, I ask for the full support of honourable members.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Have we a copy of the second reading explanation?

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: Yes.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Where?

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: In *Hansard*, at page 711. This short Bill needs little explanation. It repeals section 51 of the Road Traffic Act, which provides that a person shall not drive a motor cycle with or without a sidecar attached carrying any person in addition to the driver at a speed greater than 70 kilometres an hour. The reasons, I believe, are obvious. The present speed limit of 70 km/h (which is equal to 47.3 miles an hour) is a safety hazard to the motor cyclist and the pillion passenger, as well as to other road users, because any experienced motor cyclist knows that a motor cycle has much better stability with a pillion passenger than if the rider is riding solo.

Any experienced motor cyclist also knows the danger that this practice entails when other road users on the open road are permitted to drive at a speed of 110 km/h. One sees cars with trailers and caravans hooked on to them, mainly at weekends and during holiday time, and heavy transports, semi-trailers, and buses permitted to travel at 110 km/h. The riders of motor cycles with pillion passengers must, to keep alive, break the law on the open road. I would say that all of them at some time have exceeded the legal speed limit of 70 km/h on the open road. In the main, these are good and responsible people. We have some excellent motor cycle clubs in the State and most are members of the main association, the Federation of Australian Motor Cyclists (South Australian Branch), under the chairmanship of Mr. Bob Gaston, and whose Secretary is Mr. Peter Gray. The member for Glenelg in the other place understands that both gentlemen and the association have communicated many times with the Minister of Transport, as they have with the honourable member. They have put their case to the honourable member, and I am sure to the Minister, extremely well. My colleague understands that the matter has been placed before a committee of the Highways Department, the Road Traffic Advisory Board, under Mr. Bishop, and it is believed the board has recommended in favour of speed limits being increased and brought into line with that of other vehicles using the road.

I draw to the attention of members that in Queensland, the Australian Capital Territory, and in Tasmania the speed limit has been increased to that of other traffic on the open road. Victoria is not a good example: the speed there has been raised from 70 km/h to 80 km/h, but I do not think that serves much purpose, and seems to be a waste of time. Clause 1 is formal, and clause 2 repeals section 51 of the principal Act. All I ask is that motor cycles carrying pillion passengers should be allowed to travel at the same speed on the open road as do other vehicles, and I ask for the support of honourable members.

The Hon. F. T. BLEVINS secured the adjournment of the debate.

#### PUBLIC PURPOSES LOAN BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 21. Page 1102.)

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Yesterday, before I sought leave to conclude my remarks, I had made the point that, in the current economic situation, revenues should not be funded for capital purposes, and I went on to tell the Council that South Australia's position compared to that of the

other States, regarding allocations of Loan money from Canberra, was quite good. Lastly, and perhaps more important because the issue has been raised with considerable prominence in the suburbs in the south-western part of the metropolitan area of Adelaide, I discussed the proposed hospital that the people in that region generally required. I stated that the Treasurer, as part of his policy speech in February, 1973, made the following commitment:

The hospital is already in our building programme.

I then referred to questions that had been asked in this Council since then, and the replies given by the Hon. Mr. Banfield did not give much promise about fulfilment of this target. I also referred to claims by local people in the area and to the evidence they had produced to justify their claim that a hospital was badly needed in that part of metropolitan Adelaide. Later, I stated that the allocation under "Hospitals" in the papers that the Treasurer has given us for the purposes of this debate totalled \$33 000 000. I note that this sum is not an increase on the allocation made for hospitals in the preceding year. The proposed expenditure for 1975-76 also was \$33 000 000.

I suppose that the Minister of Health may well claim that that justifies his attitude of taking no action at present on this project. However, I hasten to point out that the funding for hospital expenditure in 1975-76 was 57.14 per cent more than expenditure for 1974-75. The amount allocated for expenditure in the latter year was \$21 000 000, which was an increase of 13.51 per cent over the amount allocated for 1973-74. In 1973-74, the Government increased its proposed expenditure over 1972-73 by 32.14 per cent. As one goes back, one sees a handsome increase in expenditure year by year. Surely in 1975-76, when the Government allocated 57.14 per cent more than the sum for the previous year, the Government must have been in a financial position at least to make some move regarding preliminary planning for the project.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Which other proposal would you have cut out?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I would not say that I would have cut out any hospital project. I am not saying that I would have shaved off any expenditure in connection with hospitals, but I will point out some areas where expenditure could well be reduced so that money could be allocated to the very important project to which I have referred. The Minister of Lands knows about the proposed expenditure of \$750 000 for an aircraft. I am not certain whether we could have hired a more modern aircraft than the aircraft we previously hired, but I query the capital expenditure.

The Hon. N. K. Foster: What do you—

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The honourable member ought to think of the people who want hospital facilities.

The Hon. N. K. Foster: You never gave a damn about them.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: We should carefully consider whether we could have hired an aircraft and used the capital allocation for the hospital to which I have referred. The sum of \$1 400 000 has been allocated to Monarto, which, of course, is a white elephant.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: You want Adelaide to sprawl.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: We are down to zero population growth now.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Will the honourable gentleman give way?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Yes.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Even if one accepts that there is zero population growth today or even a reduction in population today, the needs of the people should cause the honourable member concern: the need for schools, housing and hospitals is still there. The honourable member's Party built only one hospital, apart from Royal Adelaide Hospital, in 33 years.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I find it difficult to follow the honourable member's reasoning. I was challenged to say what expenditure I would reduce.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: You were asked to say which hospital work you would reduce, and you have not answered the question.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I doubt whether the \$1 900 000 allocated to the Land Commission is required. Could a sum be shaved from the allocation for the Engineering and Water Supply Department? In connection with the allocation of \$111 400 000 for Government buildings, land and services, I find that, apart from hospitals and schools, there is a sum of \$27 500 000, and I am sure that some of the items covered by that sum could be reduced.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: What services could be cut back in that connection?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The Minister says that he wants more money if he is to move ahead with the project, but I point out that he did not even spend the allocation of \$33 000 000 last year: he finished the year with \$1 125 000 in credit. In his Financial Statement, the Treasurer says:

Hospital Buildings—\$33 000 000. Expenditure from Loan Account in 1975-76 was \$31 875 000.

So, the Minister cannot find ways and means to spend the money allocated. Apparently, \$1 125 000 was not spent last year, and some of the plans, which would have involved an expenditure of \$33 000 000, for some reason have not come to fruition. Therefore, the Minister cannot claim that his allocation is not sufficient to enable him to consider the question of a hospital in the Port Noarlunga and Christies Beach area. Under the heading "Hospital buildings" in connection with the proposed allocation, the Treasurer also says:

It also makes an allowance of about \$5 000 000 for the commencement of a number of new projects.

The Minister's programme certainly has not reached the stage where finance demands that only current work be finished, because, as can be seen from the Treasurer's Financial Statement, new plans are to be implemented. However, no action is being taken in connection with a hospital in the Port Noarlunga and Christies Beach area.

The Minister is spending \$6 000 000 this year on a frozen food factory. I am not saying that there is no need for better facilities for patients' meals but, when there is such a dire need for hospital facilities in a rapidly expanding section of metropolitan Adelaide, I wonder whether or not it might not be more prudent to go ahead a little more slowly with the frozen food factory and thereby provide some funds for the vital project to which I have referred.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: And let patients die in the meantime!

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The Minister is trying to say that the patients will starve if they do not get pre-cooked meals. I hope that the Minister, in his reply to this debate, will give us further details about the \$6 000 000 allocated to the frozen food factory.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Didn't you read the Public Works Committee's report on it?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: If the Minister really wanted to start a hospital in the Port Noarlunga and Christies

Beach area, he could, even within his own guidelines, have found some money for this purpose.

The Hon. B. A. Chatterton: Are you going to say what is being spent on the Flinders Medical Centre?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I mentioned the Flinders Medical Centre yesterday. The sum of \$12 640 000 has been allocated to that centre. A sum about equal to 50 per cent of that allocation is to be used for the Minister's frozen food factory. The people in this expanding area south of Adelaide are not getting anywhere at all with their demands for their hospital.

The Hon. B. A. Chatterton: Do you think we ought to finish one thing before we start another?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Yes, but the Minister is not finishing one and starting another. The Treasurer said that about \$5 000 000 was to be spent this year on new hospital projects, so he is starting new work.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: But that could be additions and renovations.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The Minister of Health is grasping at the air to try to get out of this difficulty, by saying that this might involve the expansion of existing developments. What about the heading "Purchase of land and properties", the expenditure for which is expected to be \$1 300 000 this year? Does the Minister say that that does not involve new planning and work? It is on the list and is part of the \$33 000 000 total allocation. The Minister cannot tell me that that is related to expansion. New projects are involved, and the Minister is starting on new work. However, he has forgotten about that vast area of the south-western section of metropolitan Adelaide.

The Minister is not only going to spend \$1 300 000 on the purchase of land and properties this year and exclude from his thoughts the poor people in that area but also is spending \$1 400 000 on preliminary investigations and design. Has he the effrontery to say now in the Council that he is going to spend that \$1 400 000 on preliminary investigation and design, and that this hospital in the Christies Beach and Port Noarlunga area is included in that appropriation? If it is not included, the people in that area will be in the queue for years and years to come.

I do not think any of the expenditure of \$1 400 000 on preliminary investigation and design includes a hospital in this area. So, the Minister's hospital programme is not as tight as the Government claims it is. It is as simple as that. It is a progressive programme, moving from the planning stage to the purchase of land, and it involves the expenditure of \$5 000 000 on new work. There is a progression from planning and activity in relation to new work, but not a word about the new hospital. The Minister has room in which to include this venture in his planning.

There is no doubt, from the figures disclosed in these papers, that this work could be included if the Government was at all interested in the vast number of people in this area. It is not only the Minister of Health of whom I am critical in this matter, because when the question was raised in the Council a few weeks ago the Treasurer got his publicity machine going on the subject. In a report entitled "Money cuts stop new hospital" in the August 15 edition of the *Sunday Mail*, we found a rebuttal of some of the claims and statements made by the Treasurer. Part of that report was as follows:

The proposed Christies Beach hospital has become a "sometime, never" project because of Federal Government cutbacks and the increased cost of Flinders Medical Centre.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: There you are. That's where the blame is: the Federal Government.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I will discuss that in a moment. The report continues:

The Premier, Mr. Dunstan, cited these reasons when asked to explain why work had not started on the hospital, which he had stated in a 1973 policy speech as being in Labor's building program.

In a statement to the *Sunday Mail*, Mr. Dunstan said: "We reserved the land for a hospital building and a hospital building was, as I said in 1973, in our programme. But, of course, the total programme has to be looked at from time-to-time, given current commitments."

I cannot help recalling when the present Federal Government explained some of the reasons for not being able yet to fulfil a few of the promises that it had made.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: A few: about 70 per cent of them!

The Hon. C. M. HILL: It has fulfilled 39 of its 51 promises.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: It has put my taxes up.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The 70 per cent figure, mentioned by way of interjection, is absolute rubbish.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: How have you calculated that?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I will list them if the honourable member wants me to.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: I would like you to.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: And so would I.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The Minister has also challenged me to list them. I am willing to list the 39 promises that the Federal Government has fulfilled although I do not know whether it is particularly relevant to the debate. Perhaps the Minister might agree to my incorporating them in *Hansard* without my reading them.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: No, I want to hear them.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: That's right. You read them out.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I am being challenged to read them out. However, I seek the Government's approval to have them incorporated in *Hansard*.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: No. You read them out. This debate is closing this afternoon, and we want the opportunity to answer this.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: I think if we kept quite we might get there.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The Federal Government has already honoured 39 of its 51 promises, the first of which was to get the economy moving again. I will read the result flowing from that promise. The Federal Government has tackled inflation as a first priority in getting people back to work.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Will you give way again?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: No.

The Hon. N. K. Foster: Would you give us your definition of a political promise?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I have not got time to give way. As I said, the Federal Government tackled inflation as a first priority in getting people back to work, and the Budget was designed accordingly. Both consumer demand and national production began to grow again in the first half of 1976, and major new development projects are under way. I refer, for example, to the \$76 000 000 Ford expansion. Also, Nissan is establishing an engine plant. I refer also to the expansion of the chemical industry. Unfortunately, that does not relate to this State, although that is not the Federal Government's fault. The Federal Government has halted the increase in the Government's share of the gross domestic product, and clear foreign investment guidelines, equitable to all Parties, have been adopted.

The second promise was to give specific help to business to provide jobs; to introduce an investment allowance, initially at 40 per cent (which has been done); to relax conditions under which interest on convertible notes is deductible (which has been done); and to suspend quarterly tax payments for the duration of the crisis (which also has been done).

It is under the same second promise that the Federal Government undertook to introduce stock valuation adjustments in line with the Mathews report recommendations. It has implemented a 50 per cent introduction, and the full implementation has been promised before its term is up. It also promised under this second bracket of promises to increase the retention allowance for private companies, and that has been done.

Also, it promised that the Mathews depreciation allowance recommendation would be fulfilled, and that is under study. It also promised to allow partnership option for shareholders in private companies, and that is still under discussion. The third promise was to follow consistent economic policies. The result of that is that the strategy outlined at election time has been followed consistently. The Federal Government has been unswerving in its priority to reduce inflation and eliminate unemployment.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: Tell us what progress it has made.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The Minister knows that the economy was in a shocking state, and one cannot see overnight the results of the present Federal Government's corrective action.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: How many fewer unemployed are there? You said this promise had been carried out.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The strategy outlined in a promise to introduce consistent economic policies has been followed. Despite all the Minister's cries and the cries of his supporters, the Fraser Government, as I have said, has been unswerving in its priority of reducing inflation and eliminating unemployment. The fourth promise was that the Federal Government would intervene in wage cases to ensure that national economic objectives were considered. It has satisfied that. The Federal Government has argued before the Arbitration Commission for wage restraint, and some measure of success in the last two national wage cases has been achieved. It has stressed the link between wage rises, inflation, and unemployment. The fifth promise was to support the wage indexation agreement. The answer to that is that the guidelines have been observed. The Federal Government has argued that wage rises should be moderated in the light of current economic circumstances. The sixth promise was to abolish the Prices Justification Tribunal, and an inquiry has been established on the future of that tribunal. Its abolition has been deferred until after consultations with the unions and business.

The seventh promise was that it would examine the mass of Labor-imposed rules and regulations and abandon those that damaged prosperity and jobs. To fulfil that promise, guidelines have been laid down for matters to be covered specifically in future Industries Assistance Commission reports. The Federal Government has set up a Trade Practices Review Committee, and the Commonwealth is to co-operate with the States to introduce corporation and securities industry legislation.

The eighth promise was to end the secret tax rip-off caused by Labor's inflation. It has done that. Full personal tax indexation has been introduced—100 per cent in the first year instead of over three years. The ninth

promise was that it would pay special attention to the disadvantaged people and those in need. Unlike my opponents, the Federal Government cares for people. Child endowment has been expanded into a family allowance scheme that helps most of the 300 000 low-income families with 800 000 children not able to benefit, or benefit fully, from previous arrangements. Under this heading, too, the handicapped child allowance has been increased from \$10 to \$15 a week in the Budget.

Also, the handicapped children's benefit has been increased from \$3.50 to \$5 a day in the Budget. Under the same heading, a three-year \$121 000 000 programme for handicapped people has been put in train. The tenth promise was to introduce a home savings grant to assist first-home buyers bridge the deposit gap, and that has been done.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: How much?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I know the Minister does not want to believe it, but it has been done. He does not even read the paper; all he does is criticise the Federal Government and cling to hope and disillusionment, contrary to the opinion of those people who have a high opinion of the Fraser regime. Also, under that promise and in response to it, a scheme has been introduced that is more generous than originally promised. The home loan interest deduction scheme is also retained, but on a more effective basis. The eleventh promise was to increase tax exemption where an estate passes between husband and wife. That tax exemption has been made. There is a special \$50 000 deduction on estates passing between spouses. A policy has been introduced whereby no duty is payable on an estate of up to \$90 000 where the estate passes wholly to the surviving spouse. It is \$98 000 for primary producer estates. The twelfth promise was to maintain and improve Medibank.

*Members interjecting:*

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: That's a beauty.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Medibank is maintained. A universal scheme has been retained on a sound, economic basis. A choice has been introduced, and a high standard of health care is now guaranteed. The thirteenth promise was to help single-income families. In response to that promise, the Federal Government has increased the level of tax rebate for the spouse, and the sole parent rebate has also been increased. The fourteenth promise was to institute tax rebates for child care expenses. That is still under study. The fifteenth promise was to remove injustices from Labor's tax scales; that, too, is still under study.

The Hon. J. E. Dunford: Still under study?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Yes. That is one of 12 out of the 51 promises that have not yet been fulfilled. Under the general heading "Industrial relations", the sixteenth promise was that secret ballots for office bearers under Electoral Office supervision were to be introduced. That has been done. Secret postal ballots legislation was introduced with effect from August 9.

The Hon. J. E. Dunford: We've had it for 20 years.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: That is in one union to which you are referring. The ballots will be conducted by the Commonwealth Electoral Office and will be paid for by the Commonwealth; unions that choose to conduct their own secret postal ballots may do so at their own expense. That was a compromise with the trade union movement, as I am sure the Hon. Mr. Dunford will agree. The seventeenth promise was to improve industrial relations.

*Members interjecting:*

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Two tripartite conferences have been held with the Australian Council of Trade Unions and the employers. There is continuing consulta-

tion on matters of joint concern with employers and the A.C.T.U. Then, coming back to the need to care for people, I refer to a section of the community that concerns us all—the aged. The eighteenth promise was to maintain the real value of pensions and other benefits. That has been done. Pensions increase automatically in line with price increases, measured by the consumer price index, and on that score legislation is to be introduced. In addition a three-year \$225 000 000 programme for aged persons homes and hostels is being implemented.

The nineteenth promise was to replace the means test with an income test with a view to not penalising those people who have saved. That has been done. The property component in the means test for pensions will be abolished from November 11, 1976. The twentieth promise was to stand by its commitment to abolish the means test on pensions. The Federal Government still stands by that. The twenty-first promise was that the Federal Government would ensure that all Australians had access to primary and secondary schools, which provide equal opportunity for personal achievement. There have been real increases in spending on education, an increase of 15.3 per cent in 1976-77. Also, we have restored triennial funding with real increases.

The twenty-second promise was to retain the tertiary education assistance scheme, a matter that we debated recently in this Council. That scheme has been retained; conditions and benefits are being reviewed. An announcement was made only last week that in 10 areas, when the committee's report is finally studied during October, there will be benefits under the tertiary education assistance scheme. We all recall how 12 months ago Mr. Whitlam and his Government did not increase the allowances under that scheme one cracker over the 1974 year, despite the fact that Mr. Whitlam's committee recommended such increases.

The Hon. J. E. Dunford: When is Fraser going to increase it?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: In October. The twenty-third promise was to retain this scheme, and it has been retained. The twenty-fourth promise was to place particular stress on meeting the needs of the disadvantaged, including handicapped, isolated, migrant and Aboriginal children. The conditions and benefits for isolated children and Aborigines are under review. Expenditure on child migrant education in 1976-77 will be higher than in 1975-76. The twenty-fifth promise was to introduce a basic grant to children at all schools. This programme is under study. Under the general heading "Effective Government", the twenty-sixth promise was to economise in Government spending and improve administrative efficiency. In answer to that promise, Cabinet and administrative machinery has been established to review spending. Immediate cuts in Government spending of \$60 000 000 were announced in January, and further cuts of \$300 000 000 were announced in February. Spending is to grow 11 per cent in 1976-77, compared to 23 per cent in 1975-76.

There was a further review leading up to the Budget, and that resulted in \$2 600 000 000 in savings. The Expenditure Committee was established to improve Parliamentary scrutiny of departments. Reductions in Public Service staff levels occurred for the first time in 24 years. The twenty-seventh promise, under the heading "Decentralised Government", was to provide increased financial independence and responsibility for the States and local governments. This is well under way.

The Hon. J. E. Dunford: We're sick of listening to it, it's that crook.



The Hon. C. M. HILL: You are listening to it because you asked for it.

The Hon. D. H. L. Banfield: We wanted it read, because it's good stuff. We want this. Twice I had to ask you to read it.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I am very happy to read it.

The Hon. B. A. Chatterton: What is the document?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: It is simply a list of 51 promises, 39, of which, I repeat, have already been carried out. The June Premiers' Conference settled arrangements between Federal, State and local governments on a basis for sharing personal income tax collections. General revenue grants to the States are up by 21 per cent. Total grants to States, on a comparable basis with last year, are up 14.59 per cent. The States have more flexibility than ever before. Funds for local government through the States have been increased by 75 per cent to \$140 000 000.

The twenty-eighth promise was to establish an independent council for inter-governmental relations. Virtual agreement has been completed between the Federal, State and local governments on this matter, and the council will shortly be established. Dealing with the important area of the rural community, the twenty-ninth promise was to continue the reserve price scheme for wool at not less than 250c a kilogram through the 1976-77 season, and this has been done.

The Hon. J. E. Dunford: Labor brought that in.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Yes, but did not lift it. The reserve price has been lifted to 234c a kilogram on a whole clip basis (equivalent to 275c a kilogram on the old basis). There has been an undertaking to continue the floor price in 1977-78 at not below the level approved for this year. The thirtieth promise was to re-establish the superphosphate bounty and give assistance to the depressed beef industry. The bounty has been reintroduced pending consideration of the final report of the Industries Assistance Commission. Assistance for the beef industry has been provided in accordance with I.A.C. recommendations. The thirty-first promise was to introduce a farm income reserve fund, and this has been done. An income equalisation deposit scheme has been announced. The thirty-second promise was to establish a rural bank for long-term finance. The Government is still investigating this proposal.

The Hon. J. E. Dunford: Under review!

The Hon. C. M. HILL: That is quite right. The thirty-third promise was to ease the eligibility provisions for unemployment assistance to farmers, and this has been done. Provisions have been eased, and 3 300 additional farmers and farm workers are now receiving unemployment benefits. In the general area of the environment, the thirty-fourth promise was to strike a responsible balance between conservation and growth. In regard to this matter, no decision on uranium development is being taken until after a current inquiry is completed. The environmental impact statements produced, or called for, on major projects cover, for example, open-cut coal mining in Queensland, the Concorde and the new container terminal at Botany Bay.

The thirty-fifth promise was to continue urban programmes, and the Federal role in urban affairs is under review. In the area of Aborigines, the thirty-sixth promise was to maintain the present levels of assistance, and \$153 000 000 has been allocated in the Budget for direct assistance to Aborigines. Some current programmes have been curbed to eliminate inefficiency. Family allowances will provide an estimated \$16 000 000 direct to Aboriginal families. Additional sums will be provided as soon as reviews

concerning these programmes are complete. The Hay Report Commission has been commissioned with a view to improving the delivery of services by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

The thirty-seventh promise was to introduce land rights legislation for the Northern Territory based on justice for all, and this legislation has been introduced in Parliament; it will probably become law before Christmas. Under the heading "Migrants", the thirty-eighth promise was to establish a separate Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, and this has been done. The thirty-ninth promise was to make available adequate bilingual staff at Government departments and public hospitals. Additional positions for interpreters and translators have been advertised. The Public Service Board is completing a survey of needs for interpreters' and translators' work and qualification standards.

The fortieth promise was to encourage the teaching of ethnic languages and cultures in schools, and the forty-first promise was to assist migrants to overcome the language barrier. Concerning both these promises, programmes are being developed. In the area of women's activities, the forty-second promise was to eliminate discrimination. A Special Minister has been appointed to assist the Prime Minister on women's affairs, and a Government working group on women's affairs has been set up. A programme of consultation with women's organisations is planned for September to identify forms of discrimination and possible remedies.

In the area of arts and culture, the forty-third promise was to maintain an active interest in and support for the creative and performing arts. Government support has been maintained, and the Australian Council has been reorganised and strengthened. There has been an increase in purchases of Australian art through Australian galleries, and this has been encouraged. A Special Minister has been appointed to assist the Prime Minister in connection with the arts. In the area of civil liberties, the forty-fourth promise was to ask the Law Reform Commission to recommend appropriate laws to protect individual privacy. That commission has been asked to recommend accordingly.

The forty-fifth promise was to ensure that no person was denied legal aid because of lack of means. Legal aid is being maintained at current levels, and the system is being completely reviewed. The forty-sixth promise was to rid Australia of discrimination based on sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin. All Federal legislation is being checked by the Human Rights Division of the Attorney-General's Department to ensure that discrimination is eliminated. The appointment of an Ombudsman is under way. He will investigate complaints against bureaucratic maladministration, incompetence and neglect. The Administrative Appeals Tribunal has been proclaimed, with power to reverse decisions taken by bureaucrats.

In the area of foreign affairs and defence, promise number forty-seven was to build up Australia's defences, and a defence programme of \$12 000 000 over five years was announced in May. Promise number forty-eight was to rebuild the alliance with the United States and New Zealand, and a joint communique issued after the Prime Minister visited the President of the United States in July reaffirmed the importance of the alliance to both countries. In addition, close working relations have been established with the New Zealand Government.

Promise number forty-nine was to maintain close ties with countries in the region. In that regard the Federal Government has signed a treaty of friendship with Japan, we have had the visit by the Prime Minister to China, Malaysia



and Singapore, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs visited regional countries as a first priority. Further, the Government has concluded multi-year aid agreements with Papua-New Guinea and Indonesia. Promise number fifty made by the Fraser Government was to not give money to African terrorists, and it has not given it to them. Promise number fifty-one was to reverse the recognition of Soviet sovereignty over the Baltic States, and this, I am proud to say, has been done.

The Hon. N. K. Foster: What difference does that make?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The honourable member should ask the people concerned what they have to say about that. In conclusion, I say that I was sidetracked and I am sorry if I have taken up the time of the Council. I am also sorry for the embarrassment that this has caused members opposite! I refer again to the hospital for the Christies Beach and Port Noarlunga region, and I point out that only this month the Treasurer gave two reasons why no action had been taken. He said that it was because of the Federal Government's cuts and the increased cost of the Flinders Medical Centre. He went on to say that work had not started, but in the 1973 policy speech he stated that the hospital was in Labor's building programme.

Later he said that, with the escalation of the cost of the Flinders Medical Centre, the programme became decidedly tight. He referred to cutbacks in Federal Government funds for hospital development, but funds have not been cut back. There is an amount of \$33 000 000 this year for hospital buildings, and there was \$33 000 000 last year. The Treasurer could not spend that amount of money last year but he has said that the programme has become tight. He also stated that the programme necessarily became a long-term one. After the 1973 election, the Minister of Health stated that he would look into the position when the Flinders Medical Centre was completed, and he has consistently given that as the reason why the Government has turned its back on the people in the south-western suburbs.

Surely in 1973 the Minister could not foresee a cutback in 1976 in the real value of Federal funds, nor could he then foresee what inflation we would have in 1976. The reasons that have been given are inconsistent and the Government is grasping at straws to find excuses for not taking action in this matter. Since 1973, the people have been deceived by this Government. An election promise has been broken, and the people are entitled to better treatment than they have been given by the Treasurer, the Minister of Health, and the remainder of the Government. This Government does not seem to care about people in the vast new area covered by Reynella, Morphett Vale, Christies Beach, Port Stanvac and Port Noarlunga. I call on it to reach a definite decision to commence that hospital and to announce its plans without delay.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD (Minister of Health): I am grateful to the Hon. Mr. Hill and I am sorry for the embarrassment that we have caused him. I would have asked him to have that document incorporated in *Hansard* without his reading it, except that the debate was to conclude today. The honourable member stated that 39 of the 51 promises made by Fraser before the election had been carried out and then he read a document that obviously had been read at a recent conference of the Liberal and National Country Parties, because those Parties would not have been game to put that document out to the public and to say that it had carried out 39 of its 51 promises.

The Hon. Mr. Hill stated that one of the promises was that the Federal Government would reduce unemployment, and unemployment is higher now than it was when Fraser came to office. If the Hon. Mr. Hill thinks that that promise has been honoured, we think the same way about the other 38 promises. Although the Fraser Government stated that it would reduce the inflation rate, inflation is just as high now as it was at this time last year, and the Hon. Mr. Hill knows that. That honourable member also stated (and no doubt it is true) that the economy was moving. He did not say which way, but we know that it is moving backwards. He also said that one promise was in relation to better service through Medibank. However, he did not tell us where the better service would be or what it was. He tried to speak about lower taxation, and we must put the two matters together.

Fraser, when in Opposition, saw to it that there would not be a levy of 1.5 per cent imposed for Medibank, yet immediately he came to office he imposed a Medibank levy of 2.5 per cent. We have seen the effect of this on taxation, and I will quote my own case, so that there will not be any misunderstanding. Previously I was covered by the private funds at a cost of \$120 a year. For every \$1 of the cost, I received a taxation rebate of 65 cents, so hospital coverage cost me about \$50 a year.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: Who changed that?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: We can lay at the foot of the Fraser Government that that coverage will now cost me \$368 a year, of which I will not get one cent in taxation rebate. Yet the Hon. Mr. Hill tries to say that taxation has been lowered! This situation has been brought about by the Fraser Government's actions. This is one of the great promises that the Fraser Government has carried out!

The Hon. Mr. Hill also referred to the promise relating to a better working relationship with the trade union movement. Let us not forget that since the Fraser Government took office we have had the first national strike in our history, as a result of the Fraser Government's policies. The Hon. Mr. Hill also referred to the promise to abolish the means test; he said that Liberal members still stood by the promise. Of course, we know that the means test has not been abolished. When we examine the Hon. Mr. Hill's claims, we find that there is no credibility in his statement. Consequently, what credibility can we give to any other matter raised by the honourable member during this debate? I say that we should not give his contribution one skerrick of credibility.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: What about the hospital?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Liberal members are so naive that they think they are going over well with the public. They say that they are still standing by their promises, but I say that they are not doing a blessed thing about them. I now know why the Hon. Mr. Hill was most anxious to have his magnificent document incorporated in *Hansard*: at first glance, the document makes it appear that the Liberals have carried out 39 promises, and the honourable member wanted the document incorporated in *Hansard* so that a reply to it could not be given today.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: What about the hospital?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: In the debate on the Public Purposes Loan Bill, the Leader of the Opposition raised a question concerning the future of the Australian Loan Council. Reference was made to comments of Sir Kenneth Bailey and Professor Geoffrey Sawer and to a research monograph by R. S. Gilbert of the Australian National University on the "Future of the Australian Loan

Council". The concern for the continued existence of Loan Council seems to stem from the 1927 Financial Agreement between the Commonwealth and the States which is so worded that all but one of the powers of the Loan Council are dependent on the proviso "while Part III of the Agreement is in force". That concern seems to arise from the sinking fund arrangements specified in clause 12 under Part III of the agreement. Whilst Gilbert points to some aspects of the Financial Agreement which might cause the Loan Council to lose its powers somewhere between 1980 and 1985, he also states in his monograph:

In the author's view, the whole of Part III is legally valid and operative while any sinking fund commitments are being made, that is, for 53 years after the last loan raised for a State by the Australian Government as agent for the Loan Council. The Loan Council would, on that interpretation, retain all of its powers indefinitely. This opinion can be supported with evidence from the structure and the wording of the Financial Agreement of 1927.

Under the 1976 amendments to the Financial Agreement, which took effect retrospectively from June 30, 1975, clause 12 has now been deleted and replaced by clauses 12a, 12b and 12c, which provide new sinking fund arrangements in perpetuity. The only commitment in Part III which will cease (in June, 1985) is the payment by the Commonwealth to the States each year of an aggregate amount of \$15 169 824 by way of an interest offset.

Quite apart from the continuity which the 1976 amendment now provides, from the viewpoint of national economic management it would seem unlikely that the Commonwealth Government would contemplate a situation in which each State and the Commonwealth could compete on the domestic and overseas capital markets. It is also a situation which would seem to have limited attraction for the less populous States.

The Leader of the Opposition commented yesterday on the allocation made to the Land Commission and in doing so made reference to: (a) an allocation of \$34 800 000 to the commission in 1975-76; and (b) the fact that only \$20 100 000 of that allocation was spent in 1975-76 and that it had been reduced to \$1 900 000 in 1976-77. As to (a), it is true that the commission envisaged an expenditure programme in 1975-76 of \$34 800 000, which was to be primarily funded by the Commonwealth Government and from the sale of land by the commission. No allocation was made from State Loan funds during 1975-76, although the commission took up \$700 000 available to it under the smaller semi-government borrowing programme.

In regard to (b), the lower level of spending in 1975-76 reflects a slower than anticipated development programme (restricted by available resources) and protracted negotiations on some acquisitions. In respect to 1976-77, the commission is envisaging a programme of \$23 600 000, of which \$1 900 000 is to be made available from State Loan funds and a further \$4 100 000 from the major semi-government borrowing programme. The balance of the commission's 1976-77 programme is to be financed by Commonwealth Government funds and the commission's own internal funds.

In connection with the Hon. Mr. Hill's reference to the question of a hospital in the Port Noarlunga and Christies Beach area, as I have informed him previously, the question of hospital facilities in that area is constantly under review.

The Hon. J. C. Burdett: But nothing has been done.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Is the honourable member saying that, if it is under review, nothing is being done? He should read the 39 promises in the document referred to by the Hon. Mr. Hill. Perhaps he should put the same construction on this matter.

The Hon. J. C. Burdett: We are talking about the hospital.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Let us get back to the 39 promises. I refer honourable members to an article in today's *News* headed "Critics warn: solve problems, or else". Members opposite do not want me to read this article. They are embarrassed because they know what a shabby deal the Fraser Government is giving the people of Australia.

The Hon. J. C. Burdett: There's nothing wrong with the Australian Government.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The report states:

After a dream run into office and nine months without significant opposition, the Fraser Government has found itself bogged down by all the problems it set out to solve.

However, when its members go out to the people, they say, "We will be the saviours of Australia." The report continues:

The result has been an astonishing series of attacks upon the Government from sections normally regarded as its closest supporters. Critics inside and outside Parliament are even warning of an election disaster unless things improve rapidly. The criticism has come from two important areas: backbenchers who are alarmed by Australia's growing dole queues.

Yet the Hon. Mr. Hill had the audacity to get up and say that the unemployment figure was lower. The report continues:

Industry groups who say that the economy is as badly off today as it was at the beginning of this year.

That is contrary to what the Hon. Mr. Hill has said. He virtually admitted that he did not know what he was talking about. Industry has come out and said that the economy is as badly off today as it was at the beginning of this year. They are letting their own Party down gently. We know that the economy is worse today. Even the Hon. Mr. Hill admitted that the economy was moving, but he did not shake his head when I said it was moving backwards. However, industry has indicated that that is the position.

Honourable members opposite have got up and applauded the Australian Government for not proceeding with capital expenditure and work. Yet here, we have one of the leading lights of the Liberal Party advocating that we should spend more money on capital work, contrary to his Leader's statement that the Government is doing the right thing because it is tackling inflation. Despite that, the Hon. Mr. Hill has said that we should be spending millions of dollars at Christies Beach and all around the place, but not spending money similar to that being spent by Mr. Fraser.

It is for exactly that sort of reason that members opposite are on the Opposition benches. They say, "Do not spend money, but produce more buildings. We want those sorts of service, but we do not want you to spend money on them, because that causes inflation." What do they want?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I told you: to readjust your priorities.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Tomorrow, they will say that Fraser is doing a good job because he is reducing expenditure. Members opposite are not constructive; they want it both ways. They say that they support Mr. Fraser's actions in restricting capital expenditure, yet they spend 14 hours telling us why we should spend money in the Christies Beach area. The Government knows that it is desirable to have a hospital in that area, but I have told the honourable member three times that that matter is being examined. I assure him that the matter of hospital facilities at Christies Beach is constantly under review,

along with the other needs of the State. Do members opposite think that the Government must confine itself to one area? Do they not think that the whole State has needs that must be examined? I know that the Hon. Mr. Hill, when acting more as a statesman than as a snide politician, will agree that we must examine the interests of the whole State and not just one section of it. It so happens, however, that the Christies Beach area is constantly under review.

The honourable member referred to relative distances. I remind him that it would not matter which site was chosen for a hospital: its services would also be geographically closer to some than they would be to others. The Hon. Mr. Hill, when referring to a Christies Beach hospital, forgot all about the McLaren Vale Hospital, because it did not suit his line of reasoning. He said that the people in that area had to go right down to the Flinders Medical Centre, despite the Government's having spent money on upgrading the McLaren Vale Hospital.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: How many beds has it got?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I do not know, but the beds that it has got are not completely occupied. It does not matter, in those circumstances, how many beds the hospital has got, unless the beds are 102 per cent occupied at all times. Let us be honest about it.

#### *Members interjecting:*

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: If the hospital has 38 beds, for example, the Leader knows that in the event of an accident involving five or six persons, beds can be set up in the hospital's corridors. Members opposite know very well that that has happened on occasions. It is all very well for the Leader to smile when I talk about a 102 per cent bed occupancy, but he can see how that could happen. The Leader knows that if he was involved in a tragic accident (and I hope that he never will be), he would be happy to go to any hospital, whether he was placed in the corridors or in a main ward, in order to get attention. Being a former Minister of Health, the Leader would realise that fully.

I now refer to the problem of the treatment of minor injuries, which will have been considerably assisted by the establishment of the community health centre in short-term accommodation at Christies Beach. Honourable members opposite know that the position is under review and that the Government has taken steps, on a short-term basis, to help that area. The Hon. Mr. DeGaris seems to think that at no time will any hospital be full. That is the sort of planning the honourable members opposite would undertake with money which is not coming forward and which they say should not be spent anyway because of inflation. Members opposite ought to make up their minds.

With the escalation of the cost of the Flinders Medical Centre, the programme became decidedly tight. With the Federal Government's severe cut-back in funds specifically allocated for hospital development, the programme necessarily becomes more long-term. The Hon. Mr. Hill should not leave the Chamber which he seems to be doing as he will be interested in what I am about to say. He agreed that inflation was still running rife, and he said that, because we are spending as much this year as we spent last year, we should get the same results.

We are effectively cut back overall by at least 15 per cent a year as a result of the inflation that the Fraser Government has done nothing to check. No doubt the honourable member is aware of the actions of his Canberra colleagues in this regard; he has applauded them from time to time, and so has his Leader and other honourable

members opposite. They have applauded the cut-backs, which are contrary to the promises given by the Fraser Government. He does not mention this. Why did he not mention the promise given in 1973 that we could go ahead with our planning, because we had been given an assurance by the Australian Government that it had a building programme for hospitals and funds would be available? That was an assurance given by the Australian Government and it was also an assurance given by the Fraser Government, but it has completely welshed on its promise.

We are attempting to keep as near as possible to our previously announced building programme but, when funds that come from other sources are reduced, over which we have no control, we have to cut back, because we can no longer rely on the undertaking of a Government that said it would stand by agreements made with the States; we can no longer depend on a Government that says that sort of thing. The Hon. Mr. Hill referred to the fact that we were going to spend \$6 000 000 on a frozen food factory. What does the Hon. Mr. Hill want us to do? We spent \$1 008 000 on the commencement of the building of the frozen food factory last year. Does he want that money lying idle? Does he think we should start projects and leave them lying idle and start on other projects?

Does he want half-completed projects, or does he think it is more economic to complete a project that has been started? Does the Hon. Mr. Hill think we should get one-quarter of the way through the frozen food factory building and three-quarters of the way through the building of the Flinders Medical Centre and then leave those projects? Is he saying we should leave a project unfinished once we have started it so that we can use funds in other areas? That is what the honourable member says, and he claims to be a responsible businessman. He claims we should have \$500 000 tied up in uncompleted buildings—

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I did not say that.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: —rather than complete them. The Hon. Mr. Hill says that he did not say that at all. He distinctly said we should not be spending \$6 000 000 on a frozen food factory. I point out to the Hon. Mr. Hill that last year we spent over \$1 000 000 on it, and the honourable member did say that we should divert the funds from there. We can put only one construction on that suggestion, that the Hon. Mr. Hill thinks we should leave the project in mid-air and not complete it. Is that a good business idea? Is that what the Hon. Mr. Hill would do? He is so scatter-brained that he goes from here to there and does not complete a thought; but we are not like that. That is why today South Australia is in the best economic position of any State in Australia, including those run by the Liberal Party.

The Hon. J. E. Dunford: Ruined by the Liberals.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The Liberal Government in Victoria looks across the border and says, "How do you do it? I wish we could do it like South Australia." But that does not suit the Hon. Mr. Hill; he wants to see a half-completed building; he does not want any straight-out planning. He also complains that we do not propose to purchase land and property. What does he think we should do? Does he think we should not do any planning? Surely the honourable member knows that it takes between 12 and 18 months from the time we start on a project before the first brick is laid, in the bigger projects. He would not know anything about that. He complains because the Government was forward-looking and we were taking steps to make sure that with the growth of population in South Australia we would be ready to meet that contingency.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Where is the hospital at Christies Beach?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The Hon. Mr. Hill wants to know where the hospital is at Christies Beach. He knows very well that the land is all ready. Does he want to know where the hospital will be at Christies Beach? He is not interested. He wants to put up a smoke screen around the place as though we were not doing anything. We have already purchased land at Christies Beach for a hospital.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: You have reserved it, not purchased it.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: We have got land reserved.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: You did not purchase it.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: We have land reserved.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I know you have, but you have not purchased it.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: On a point of order, Mr. President, whilst you are engrossed in the *News*, I should like to hear what the Minister said over and against the shocking interjections we have had from someone who has already spoken on this matter for about three hours. It is deplorable behaviour. I ask for an assurance that the Leader of this Council gets a fair go from the Chair and from the Opposition.

The PRESIDENT: I think everyone gets a fair go from the Chair. Everyone today has been interjecting.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The Hon. Mr. Hill says we have not given one thought to Christies Beach. What he says is as far from the truth as some of the information he gave on other things, because he knows very well that land is reserved for a hospital at Christies Beach. He knows that preliminary planning is going on for the hospital there. Does he want me to go to Millicent and not give them any money to go ahead with their rebuilding programme? Does he want me to go to Whyalla and say they cannot have any money there? Does he want me to go to Ceduna; does he want me to stop the building plans for the upgrading of the Ceduna hospital? If those are the sorts of projects that the Hon. Mr. Hill wants to deal with, does he want us to cut these out? It would be most interesting if the honourable member would state which hospitals he would like us to deal with, which hospitals he does not want us to go ahead with. He would not be game to go to Millicent and say, "What about not taking the money that has been made available?" The honourable member was not in Government for very long.

The Hon. J. E. Dunford: Thank goodness!

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Already the Fraser Government has lost the support of its back-benchers and of industry, which put it in power in the first place. Fraser will not have much opportunity to know what Government is all about. The Hon. Mr. Hill knows very well that only a certain amount of money is available through loans for these projects; yet he says that we should cut out work on sewerage projects and those sorts of things. He named the Engineering and Water Supply Department as spending too much on that line. I think he said that it could cut out some of the sewerage plans.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Depots.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Now he is saying something different. These are the sort of things which the Hon. Mr. Hill said in his speech, and I am sure he is pleased that I have answered them. I thank honourable members opposite for the attention they have given to the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Interpretation".

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): I thank the Chief Secretary for the reply he gave to the matter concerning the Loan Council. Although R. S. Gilbert has said that in his opinion the Financial Agreement continues in perpetuity, other strong legal opinion, from both Bailey and Sawyer, puts forward the view that the agreement does not continue in perpetuity. I asked what the Government had done to investigate this matter, and I put the question again. Will the Chief Secretary ask the Government to investigate this matter further to see whether any action is needed to discuss as quickly as possible the actual future of the Financial Agreement and whether another agreement needs to be negotiated, or whether it is necessary to wait for a High Court decision on the matter, in which case there could be constitutional chaos?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD (Minister of Health): The Government is watching the position all the way through, but I will put the Leader's specific question to my colleague.

Remaining clauses (4 to 11) passed.

First schedule.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: In the Treasurer's statement he says under the heading "Bus and Tram Division":

During 1975-76 an amount of \$5 000 000 was advanced from Loan Account towards the capital works programme of the division. That programme included the purchase of buses, acquisition of land for depots and the construction of depot buildings.

I know that land has been purchased for a depot in the Morphettville Park area, where a depot is under construction. I should have thought that that land would be purchased prior to 1975-76. If this is so, it means that land must have been purchased for other depots elsewhere. The choice of sites for such depots and the purchase of land for that purpose is a very important matter to the people living in the vicinity of the proposed depots. I do not think a decision to establish such depots should be made without consulting with the public at large, and certainly not without allowing local residents an opportunity to express their views on the proposal. I also think that environmental studies should be undertaken before a final decision is made to establish depots, and that the public should be given the right to participate in all the investigations in this area of environmental studies. Could the Minister tell me, therefore, all the details relative to the acquisition of land for bus depots which occurred last year and which is mentioned in general terms in that expression "acquisition of land for bus depots", involving an expenditure of \$5 000 000? If the Minister cannot give me that detail now (I appreciate that he may not have it at his fingertips), could I in due course receive the information from the Minister, or from the Minister of Transport in another place?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY (Minister of Lands): I will endeavour to get the information for the honourable member.

Schedule passed.

Second schedule and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

#### SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GRANTS COMMISSION BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 15. Page 1026.)

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I welcome this Bill which should, in my opinion, have been introduced much earlier, because the Government had known such a commission as is suggested by this Bill would be needed following the Premiers' Conference last April. I believe that the commission should be entitled, as I think the Hon. Mr. Hill said in his second reading speech, the Local Government Grants Commission rather than the South Australian Grants Commission. I sought action by the Minister on this matter some months ago. I discussed the matter in the February session, and I asked a question on it in June.

I have noted that the Minister of Transport did not take action in the June sittings, but I believe he should have. His counterpart in Tasmania did so, and I believe the Tasmanian Government is to be commended. Unfortunately, perhaps of necessity, we have had to appoint an Interim Grants Commission, which has operated without any real authority, and which needs the passage of this Bill to make it really effective. That is by no stretch of the imagination any criticism of the present Interim Grants Commission. As I said, the legislation should have been passed much earlier, but nevertheless I welcome it at this late stage because it will enable a commission to be appointed on a permanent basis, and will enable local government to take the place where it formerly belonged, as a third tier of government established under State law. I believe that is a very important step in what I term the re-establishment of local government on a proper basis. Once again, local government will obtain its moneys through what probably will be three main sources. The rates and licence fees levied by the local government body concerned will be one source; the Government grants which were provided in the past by the State Government through the Highways Department, and Federal grants, which will be made available no doubt through this Grants Commission will be the other sources. The Hon. Mr. Hill said, if I remember correctly, that the State Government should be enabled to make allocations to the fund that will be established as a result of this Bill. Does this mean, if the State were empowered to add its highways grants to the said fund, that all grants available could come from the one fund provided for in clause 5? There has been much loose talk in recent years about the suggestion that local government should be able to stand on its own feet through its own rates and licence fees.

I believe that such talk has come from people who are inexperienced in local government. Much of the money allocated from "outside" sources has been received as "grants" from State Government and Federal Government sources. In my opinion, road tax money, petrol tax money, and motor registration and licence fee money are largely the property of local government in the first place. In considerable measure, those moneys can be levied by local government itself in some other countries, and that did obtain also in at least one Australian State, although I am not sure whether it still obtains. I believe that such money received by councils should not be regarded as a hand-out: it should be regarded as the rightful revenue of local government, and it can be used effectively by local government bodies.

The Hon. J. C. Burdett: In most cases.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: Yes, I believe that it can be, in most cases. The rates that local government can collect on the local scene are quite insufficient for the services that it can provide. Local government must have a predetermined share of revenue, and that money must be distributed through the State Government, because the States give authority to local government. As I have said previously,

local government does not exist in a statutory way except through the State. Therefore, I believe that the introduction of the Bill is relevant and that its introduction is to be commended. It will provide an improvement in the working of local government.

I commend my colleague, the Hon. Mr. Hill, who made a worthwhile speech. He brought forward several matters to which I intended to refer in any case, and I make no apology for referring to some of them, because I consider that what he said was correct and that those matters can be underlined. I wish to examine the Bill not in great detail, but in some detail, and I wish to mention some points that I consider could be improved. I refer first to clause 4, and the Hon. Mr. Hill also has raised the matter that I wish to mention. In that clause, "council" is defined as follows:

"Council" means a council as defined for the purpose of the Local Government Act, 1934-1976, and includes any person or body prescribed as a council for the purposes of this Act.

I know that there are many bodies outside the local government area. In Coober Pedy, Andamooka, and Penong, just to mention three places, there may be progress associations in lieu of a council, and it could be appropriate to assist those associations. However, I do not believe that it should be possible to prescribe a body within the local government area of South Australia other than an existing local government body. Therefore, I support the Hon. Mr. Hill's suggestion that the Bill should be amended to provide that it shall be possible to prescribe a body that is not specifically a council, only so long as it is outside the local government area. Clause 5 establishes the account and subclause (2) provides:

To the credit of the account shall be paid in each financial year such moneys received or receivable from the Government of the Commonwealth for the purposes of this Act. I am fully in accord with that provision, and I think the Hon. Mr. Hill said that such moneys as were provided by the State Government also could be added to that fund. In the 14 years that I was in local government, there were three sources of revenue. I have referred to them earlier, and they were the rates and taxes levied by a council, money received from the State Government in grants, debit orders from the Highways Department, and money allocated by way of Federal grants.

I presume that the Hon. Mr. Hill is suggesting that the second and third sources could be amalgamated. I am interested in the suggestion, and I should like to consider further the possibility that all money returnable to a council could come from the one source, namely, the fund referred to in clause 5. I ask honourable members to realise that, as I have previously indicated, much of the money received is not a grant if we consider a grant to be a hand-out. Clause 6 provides:

The Minister shall as soon as practicable after the commencement of each financial year by notice in the *Gazette* specify—

- (a) the total amount that is available from the account for payment of all grants pursuant to this Act;
- (b) the amount that is available from the account for the payment of per capita grants pursuant to this Act;
- (c) the amount that is available from the account for the payment of special grants pursuant to this Act.

I do not believe in a system of per capita grants for local government. It could be inequitable, because it overlooks the varying rating capacity of councils and ignores the extent to which councils can use that capacity. Nevertheless, we seem to be stuck with the provision that portion of the

money that will be granted will be granted by way of per capita grants. I am concerned that there is not a specific percentage. I have heard that 30 per cent of the money may be by way of per capita grant and 70 per cent by way of special grant. I would prefer to see a more realistic suggestion regarding the way in which the per capita grants and the special grants are divided. I am not happy about clause 9 (2), which provides:

(2) The commission shall be constituted of three members appointed by the Governor of whom—

- (a) one shall be a person nominated by the Minister and who shall be appointed Chairman of the commission;
- (b) one shall be a person nominated by the Minister; and
- (c) one shall be a person nominated by the Minister after consultation with the Local Government Association of South Australia, who in the opinion of the Minister is capable of representing the interests of local government in this State.

Under this clause the Minister has the final say in connection with the nomination of all three members of the commission. The Local Government Association, which was given statutory effect by this Government a few months ago, now represents practically the whole of local government in South Australia. Therefore, one member of the commission should be a person nominated by that association: the Minister should not have the final say in the nomination of that member. I stress that the Minister has the final say in the nomination of the other two members, and we must remember that two members form a majority. I am unhappy about clause 10 (1), which provides:

Subject to this section, a member of the commission shall hold office for a term as specified in the instrument of his appointment in any case not exceeding five years.

This means that a member could be nominated for any period up to five years, and it therefore does not give a sufficient degree of permanency to the commission. Further, it allows the possibility of Ministerial pressure; in saying this, I do not mean to reflect on the present Minister. We must bear in mind that this legislation will be on the Statute Book for a long time. I do not believe that there should be any possibility of a Minister's exercising pressure as a result of a member being nominated for, say, only one year and his renomination being dependent on his pleasing or failing to please the Minister of the day. I therefore believe that, in clause 10 (1), "in any case not exceeding" should be struck out and "of" inserted. I believe that the Hon. Mr. Hill has foreshadowed an amendment in this connection. Subclauses (3), (4), (5), and (6) of clause 10 are the usual provisions, and I do not object to them, nor do I object to clause 11. Clause 12 provides:

The Chairman, deputy of the Chairman and the members and deputies of the members shall be paid respectively such fees and allowances (if any) as the Governor may from time to time approve.

I agree with that provision, but I wonder whether the words "if any" are superfluous. The clause says that the members shall be paid such fees and allowances (if any) as the Governor "may" (not "shall") approve. The Governor would approve payment only if Executive Council recommended it, so the words "if any" are superfluous. In some instances, work could perhaps be done by public servants, who are paid by way of salary. Therefore, the wording of the clause is satisfactory, provided the words "if any" are deleted. Clause 13 provides:

(2) A quorum of the commission shall consist of the Chairman and one other member.

(3) The Chairman shall in the event of an equality of votes have a second or casting vote.

Those provisions may be of the usual type, but I point out that, when a member of the commission is absent, the

Chairman will have the opportunity of having the final say, because he has a second or casting vote. The drafting of clause 18 is satisfactory. Clause 18 (2) provides:

(2) In making a recommendation to the Minister under section 16 of this Act the commission shall ensure—

- (a) that the total of the amount of special grants recommended in any financial year is equal to the amount of moneys specified pursuant to paragraph (c) of section 6 of this Act in relation to that year;

That is an obvious requirement; without it, the commission could be in real trouble. Clause 18 (2) continues:

and

- (b) that as far as is possible the amount of the grant will be sufficient to enable the council by reasonable effort to function at a standard not appreciably below that of other councils that are in the opinion of the commission similar to the first mentioned council in relation to such factors as the commission considers relevant.

This good provision ensures that the commission will do its best to be fair in distributing money. I approve of subclauses (3) and (4), which reinforce the situation. Subclauses (1) and (4) of clause 19 provide:

(1) On receipt of the recommendations referred to in subsection (5) of section 18 of this Act, the Minister may—

- (a) approve the recommendations;

or

- (b) refer those recommendations back to the commission with a request to the commission to consider such matters and take such other steps as are specified in the direction either in relation to the whole or any part of the recommendations.

(4) The commission shall thereupon resubmit its recommendations with or without amendment to the Minister and the Minister shall thereupon approve those recommendations.

In this connection, security of tenure is important for members of the commission, because pressure may be brought to bear on them. Further, the Minister will find that pressure is brought to bear on him. It is usual that the person chosen to be Minister of Local Government in any Government, whatever its political complexion, is someone experienced in local government; that means that he has been a councillor or mayor. Therefore, the Minister may have pressure brought to bear on him. Furthermore, there must be some independence in the commission itself. That is why I stress once more my opposition to clause 10(1) as it stands, where it gives the opportunity for a short-term appointment of a commissioner. If pressure is exerted on the Minister (and councils are entitled to exert pressure on him, and to put their cases as strongly as possible), it is important that the commission have this security of tenure and, therefore, the independence which I believe is necessary to ensure fairness in every case. I refer now to clause 23. I am pleased to see that an amendment thereto has been placed on file. That clause provides:

The Governor may make such regulations as he thinks necessary or expedient for the purposes of this Act.

I am pleased to see that the amendment on file, which I believe is to be moved by a Government member, seeks to delete the words, "he thinks" and to substitute "are". That is far better. If I were doing something further about it, I would be inclined to take out the words "or expedient", because I think "necessary" is all that is necessary in the circumstances.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: You do not think it should contain the words "or expedient"?

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: If one looks at one of the definitions of "expedient", one will see that it is "politic rather than just". I think that may be a fairly accurate

definition of "expedient". I doubt whether that word is necessary and whether the clause would not be better if it provided, "The Governor may make such regulations as are necessary for the purposes of this Act." I do not intend to pursue that matter any further, but merely draw it to honourable members' attention.

I welcome the Bill, although I am sorry that the Minister did not introduce it three or four months ago. Then, he would not have had to go through the process of appointing an interim commission, but could have appointed a commission, on a permanent basis, from the outset. I believe that the whole arrangement for this Grants Commission is a good one, and that we will have a better distribution of money for local government as a result of it. I support the Bill.

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: I, too, support the Bill. I am surprised that members opposite have not said that they object to being forced to consider such a Bill. Many times in the past they have complained bitterly if it seemed that the State Government was using force against councils. However, that objection has not been raised in relation to this Bill.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: What's your point?

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: I support the Bill, because I know that we must support it. We are being forced to do so by the Federal Government.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: You don't believe that local government—

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: I think local government should have all the funds it can get, and I do not care from which source they come. I do not believe that the ratepayers can meet the demands necessary to keep their communities in the order in which they should be kept. For years, we have had a Federal Grants Commission, staffed by competent people and, when the Federal Labor Government decided to fund local government and to include it in the sharing of Federal revenue, the Federal Grants Commission did an outstanding job in making fair allocations of the funds available to local government. Hardly a murmur was raised, although I know that some councils received no funds. I have no doubt that the Grants Commission had evidence available to it that influenced its decision. Who is to say that exactly the same thing will not happen under the new Grants Commission?

In forcing the States to set up separate Grants Commissions, the Australian Government is responsible for a duplication of commission members and the staff necessary to operate such organisations. This is a costly procedure, and only the taxpayer can lose as a result of this manoeuvre. The actions of the Australian Government in recent times have shown how reluctant it is to part with the funds that are derived from the taxpayers, and its actions seem to be endorsed by the Liberal Party at a local level. Money is being stopped for, or at least short supplied on, all sorts of projects, and the States are being told to find their own funds if they want to continue with these projects. Yet there has been no real attempt that I can see to lessen the effect that taxes have on the pay packets of the people. Earlier today, the Minister of Health pointed out in the Council that we will have a new form of taxation in the next couple of weeks to cover Medibank. That involves a fair hit at the taxpayers' pockets.

The Hon. Mr. Hill cast doubts on the intention of the South Australian Government and the Minister of Local Government. However, if there are any doubts to be cast, they should be cast in the direction of the Federal

Government. Who can be sure that, as has happened in many other cases, on a whim, after the commission is established, its Federal funding will not be curtailed or stopped, and that the States will be told that, if they want it to continue funding local government through the Grants Commission, they must provide the funds themselves? I hope that that does not happen, as local government needs and depends on support. It is an admirable effort on the part of the Federal Government to provide funds for local government.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: You are praising the Federal Government?

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: I am suggesting that the 1973 Federal Labor Government began this process.

The Hon. N. K. Foster: You're quite right. There's no doubt about that.

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: The States, with their limited revenue and means of raising it, would be unable to support local government, and local government would return to the doldrums that it was in three years ago. The 1972 Australian Labor Government realised the terrible plight of local government and instantly sought ways to increase the revenue received by local government. This was the first attempt made by any Australian Government to help the people at the local level through their councils. Federal funds available to local government through the Federal Grants Commission increased by another one-third in 1974-75. These grants were an immense boost to local government, and were certainly good for the morale of elected people and the officers who serve in local government.

The money available to local government through the Grants Commission is expected to be greater this financial year, although many councils will suffer greatly because money that has been made available through the various unemployment schemes and from other grant sources will not be available this year. The Federal Government has shown great ability in avoiding its responsibilities by opting out in all cases where it could be reasonably expected to assist the community with financial aid.

The Hon. Mr. Hill made the point in his speech that local government always had money made available to it from Government sources. Perhaps it did, but it was in meagre quantities. There were times in the past when money was made available from Federal sources for the Highways Department, and that sort of organisation. Many of the councils missed out. Certainly, some district councils got large sums but, generally speaking, councils were not given Government grants. This sort of money has been available to them in the last few years.

It is also claimed that the money allocated this year represents a large increase on last year's allocation. During the last year, money available to local government in Australia from various grants exceeded \$270 000 000, and the money available this year is said to be \$140 000 000 plus some other tied grants, but it is certainly less than \$200 000 000. The Hon. Mr. Dawkins has claimed a 75 per cent increase this year over last year. There are other ideas about that. He mentioned a sum for last year of the total finance exclusive of Regional Employment Development scheme finance (that is, \$180 000 000) on a comparative basis being \$195 000 000. Dr. Tonkin said that in the other place. I cannot see how that can be accepted.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Dr. Tonkin also stated a 75 per cent figure.

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: He may have. I do not know.



The PRESIDENT: Order! There is too much audible conversation.

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: Unemployment relief came close to \$120 000 000, which gave a great boost to council expenditure on works. It was needed by councils. This year only \$300 000 is being spent on unemployment relief, so extra grants will be needed by local government. The extra money is said to be a 75 per cent increase. I hope that proves to be right. I know it is necessary to have this State Grants Commission. However, I do not agree that we should be forced into this position. Fortunately in the past this money has been made available to the South Australian councils through Ministerial sources and also from other sources. It is a pity that we could not have gone on in this fashion for it would have saved this State and other States much money. All States must set up separate grants commissions.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: Do you think the State could place money into this account as well?

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: This is an innovation on your part. You were in Government for years but you did not pay anything into local government. The States are restricted in the way in which they can raise money. When petrol taxes and licence fees for vehicles are raised to try to get more revenue to help maintain the council areas, the first people to scream out is the Liberal Party, if taxes are increased. The only way in this State to make allocations to local government is to increase taxes. We cannot have it both ways.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: I do not argue with that. Do you think that in future money for this account may well come from the State as well as the Commonwealth?

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: It could be considered. Funding on a separate basis (Mr. Hill mentioned Tea Tree Gully) should be something that is allowed to happen. It has always happened, and in any case it takes time to change these things. When councils have a case to put forward that they have no money to complete works, they have a right to approach Government sources. We read in the newspaper of numerous council areas—

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Don't you think that in future they should be able to approach the commission rather than a specific Minister or department?

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: I have no doubt that, when the Grants Commission gets into action, it will take evidence from councils, and all these things will be put before the commission by the councils. Whatever happens, the councils can appear before the Grants Commission, and it is a good idea that they can advertise what they need. They may make the commission aware of things happening and how poor local government has been. My main concern is that we are forced into a position where we must agree to a Grants Commission. I support the Bill.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr. DeGaris. The Hon. Mr. Foster.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Is the honourable member not going to take part in this debate, after saying that he earns his \$16 000 a year? We have heard much about this matter now before the Council suggesting what should be the future of providing finance for local government. We have heard much of the record of the present Federal Government in regard to its attitude to federalism. Because of the hypocrisy shown in this debate, I want to change it back to the basis of what was said by Judge Else-Mitchell in opening a local government conference in this city a few months ago. For the benefit of the Hon. Mr.

DeGaris, the Hon. Mr. Hill and the Hon. Mr. Burdett, I quote from the address given by His Honour:

If one can talk in historical perspective, the year 1972 may, however, be seen as a turning point in the fortunes of local government, for the Labor Party which succeeded at the polls in November of that year had pledged itself to positive action for the assistance of local government in various ways.

I could go on and quote from this document two paragraphs dealing with the effect of the policies of the Labor Government and what was said about them; I could quote from the document containing this gentleman's address, but I will not take up much time in the debate in doing so. However, I suggest to honourable members opposite that, if they failed to read the address given by Judge Else-Mitchell or if they have lost their copy of that speech, I will be only too happy to have the gentlemen opposite informed by procuring copies for their benefit between now and the time the Bill goes into Committee. I say that because I have had a quick look at some of the amendments proposed to be moved to this Bill by members opposite.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Do you agree with all the views of His Honour?

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I do not necessarily have to agree with all the views of His Honour, if you put that question to me.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I do.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I say, in all fairness, that he was giving credit where credit was due.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I am concerned with his view about leasehold land being issued in growth centres throughout South Australia.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: That is another matter altogether, which we have heard you on in regard to another debate. That does not necessarily come within the ambit of this Bill, in respect of which His Honour made some references. You were not prepared to give way to me the second time you were on your feet in the debate on the previous measure before us when we could have dealt with that. You were talking about the mythical aims of the Fraser Government. Let me also remind the gentlemen opposite that the amount of money available to local government, or the saving made to people in local government areas, was tremendous in the time of the previous Government; there is no question about that.

One has only to read of the previous Australian Government's financial assistance alone throughout South Australia, and members opposite have heard me on this before. I am talking about many areas in which local government would have had to continue to burden their ratepayers in order to provide services or accept the form of assistance given by the previous Government in regard to these matters. I might say that the areas that were covered were not only city and urban areas, but I would think, looking at the document casually, that the percentage in the country areas was far beyond that spent in the city and urban areas, even though some council areas in South Australia received considerable grants. If the honourable members opposite push me on this matter I can read the whole of the document. The Brighton City Council in Kingston got \$62 000. In one hit the Campbelltown council got \$160 000 from the previous Federal Government, and the Payneham City Council got \$56 000. The Tea Tree Gully City Council, in the same Federal district as Payneham, got \$192 000. I merely quote these figures to indicate the tremendous amount of money given to local government. Whether credit was given or not is not important at this time because today we are discussing the financing of

local government generally and the fact is that we find that there is—

The Hon. M. B. Cameron: But do you—

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: The honourable member who is interjecting would know that in the South-East in the past 12 months \$274 000 was allocated to the Beachport, Lacedpede, Millicent, and Mount Gambier councils.

The Hon. B. A. Chatterton: He doesn't come from the South-East.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: He used to. He deserted them. He has now moved to a palatial residence at Kensington.

The Hon. T. M. Casey: I thought it might be Springfield.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Then the honourable member has moved close to John McLeay. He is the Minister for Housing or "Misdevelopment". We never hear of him now. In the Murray Mallee the councils got \$260 000. It goes on and on, page after page after page, and not only local government areas, but areas that are outside the area of the National Assistance Grants. Angas got \$125 000. For park land acquisition, an amount of \$150 000 was received from the South Australian Government. In the Beachport-Coorong area the South Australian Government gave \$5 000 for land acquisition for the Beachport-Coorong road. The same story goes on and on, and I do not intend to total it all up, but it is a considerable sum. What I want to say is that those sums of money are no longer going to be available under the present Government in Canberra.

The Hon. A. M. Whyte: It wouldn't be available if the other mob stayed there!

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: They did at least get the money.

The Hon. M. B. Cameron: That Government was cutting down on expenditure.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Mr. Hullick is going to take over as Chairman of the Local Government Association. Let me quote from an article in the *Guardian* of September 8, 1976, as to what he says.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Mr. Jim Hullick?

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I do not know his Christian name. I am paying him the respect, to which he is entitled, by mentioning him in this Chamber. The article states, under the heading of "Government assures relationship":

An assurance that the Federal Government would maintain a working relationship with local government was made recently by Environment, Housing and Community Development Minister, Mr. Kevin Newman.

Speaking at a meeting of metropolitan regional council representatives, Mr. Newman said he had established a section for local government within his department.

He invited members to make as much use as possible of this section.

Basically the future of local government rested with the States. But the Federal Government had made an honest attempt to provide new sources of revenue for local government, all of which would be channelled through the State system.

The Federal Government had made \$11.8 million available to local government in South Australia. Allocation is to be determined by an interim grants commission set up by the State Government.

Western Regional Council secretary, Mr. Jim Hullick said: "I think we view the situation with some cynicism.

In effect, any direct links with Canberra have been severed except in the area of information-sharing.

While we feel the Minister genuinely expressed concern for local government we feel that the new Federalism policy has created new obstacles. It has limited local government's access to the Federal sphere."

Mr. Hullick said the WRC had been "well aware of the decisions being made about local government with little or no consultation with it."

Mr. Newman's statement came as a little surprise to members.

Mr. Hullick added: "Generally the meeting was very successful. The Minister was keen and willing to work with regional councils.

We feel that we could establish a very good working relationship with the Minister and his department.

The area of most use will be information-sharing and an opportunity to advise him of local government programmes.

But the cloud over the whole issue is the availability of funds."

The meeting, held at Henley and Grange council and arranged by the western regional council, was attended by many of the top names in local government in South Australia.

Let me go on and explain what he is saying in that report: "Never mind about your double talk. Never mind about your false promises. Put your money where your mouth is." They are given no assurances. He put it as a feeler and did not get any feedback which would remove the doubts that were in the minds of the local government people in the south-western region at that time. On September 15 he follows with a further report in the *Guardian*. That report reads, under the heading "Councils misled"—grants to drop?", as follows:

Local councils have been "misled" by the Federal Government, Western Regional Council secretary Mr. Jim Hullick claimed this week. The gross amount of money for local councils in S.A. was being reduced. And local government was being effectively denied the chance to make its point of view known to the Federal Government.

Mr. Hullick, who returned recently from a fact-finding mission to Canberra, said councils in S.A. would only receive 2.5 per cent of the revenue allocations to State and local governments. This compared with 4.5 per cent in each of the past three years, and it confirmed the fears expressed recently by Local Government Minister Mr. Geoff Virgo (*The Guardian*, July 14).

Mr. Hullick said: "The Federal policy has been deceptive because the share of the grant from the Grants Commission has risen by 75 per cent from \$80 million to \$140 million. But this is countered by a reduction in special purpose grants like area improvement programmes. It is possible that special purpose grants might not come through at all. In money terms local government will be worse off.

The predictions made by Mr. Virgo appear to have been absolutely correct." And local government was being inadequately represented at national level, said Mr. Hullick.

An Australian Council for Inter-Governmental Relations has six Federal and six State members and six community representatives but only three local government members. It was "almost impossible" for local authorities to get their views represented. Mr. Hullick said: "If the Western Region, or any other local government body, wishes to have an item placed on the agenda of the Australian Council, it first has to convince the Premier that the item is worthwhile. The Premier then has to convince the other Premiers at their next conference that the item is worthwhile."

"It may or may not then appear on the Australian Council's Agenda."

Mr. Hullick said: "It's quite apparent that the new-won ground for local government has been cut from under our feet."

Local government would have to spend more time trying to find different methods of political persuasion—through Members of Parliament for instance.

As the situation became more widely known through local government circles it would bring an "angry response," said Mr. Hullick.

The Western Region would be "endeavouring to work closely with the Department of Local Government and the Local Government Association to see what measures could be introduced to rectify the situation."

This gentleman's position is such that it is more than reasonable to say that he is speaking for almost the whole of the local government area of South Australia. I conclude by referring to the great assistance given by the Federal Government over the three years before 1975, compared to the non-event of the present Federal Government's

grants in real terms. Is it any wonder that the *News*, with which I do not often agree and of which I am often critical, refers, on page six today, to the fears and misgivings of people who have supported the Federal Government and now have almost demanded their money back for having that Government elected?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): I should like to comment briefly regarding local government's share in the tax raisings of both the Commonwealth Government and the State Government. Over many years in this Chamber, I think I have established that capital taxation, as such, comes to local government in the form of rates on property. Local government revenue in South Australia is made up of capital taxation to the extent of 90 per cent of the revenue. At the State level, there is such capital taxation as that in the form of land tax, water and sewerage rates, drainage rates, and stamp duty. The impact on people from taxation at both the State Government level and the local government level is largely based on a capital taxation system.

The Hon. B. A. Chatterton: How are you including all those things on a capital taxation basis?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I refer to some degree of water and sewerage rates. A charge is made on a capital taxation basis for water and sewerage services. There is a charge for excess water, but the basis of the taxation is a capital tax. One can argue the question about water and sewerage rating but, if members look at the position clearly, they will see that it is on the basis of capital taxation.

However, that does not cut across my point. In the early days of the infliction of taxation in this State and in the Commonwealth sphere, the reliance on these forms of taxation was reasonable, because about 100 years ago land was the wealth, and the only wealth, and therefore it was necessary to impose a capital form of taxation. However, our society has changed dramatically. We have a much more equalitarian system, but the basis of our taxation has not changed since those times. I look on the formation of the Grants Commission as an important step in recognising that point.

At this stage, I am dealing only with local government, and in South Australia the total revenue raised by local government by way of a direct rate on property is about \$50 000 000 a year. A limited number of people is making that contribution to the well-being of all the people. As I have said, in a more equalitarian type of system, there is a need to move to a more equalitarian type of taxation.

The Hon. B. A. Chatterton: What would you suggest?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I suggest that, with this position now, where there will be a recognition of local government in funding from the general tax purse, that is one way to do it.

The Hon. B. A. Chatterton: I thought you were going to suggest some other form of tax.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: In South Australia we have seen the movement of pay-roll tax from the position where it played a minor or insignificant part to one where it is a major part of our tax system. I may be corrected on this, but I think that pay-roll tax raised about \$30 000 000 when it was introduced as a State tax and that this year it will raise about \$130 000 000. This movement from a capital form of taxation is occurring now and the Bill takes this one step further, into local government, where there will be funding in the general tax area, and then reimbursement to local government. I see the Bill as an important concept.

The Hon. Mr. Foster said something about our turning the corner in 1972. I give full marks to the recognition by the Federal Government of that policy in 1972, but for many years there has been a funding of local government, under the control of the Highways Department, by money going to it for road purposes. The amount involved was significant, but there has been a turndown in that funding since that change was made. The Hon. Mr. Foster also stated that the new arrangement was providing less money for local government, but the funds available for local government, through the States, have been increased in this Budget by 75 per cent, so the argument that there has been a turndown cannot be justified.

The Hon. N. K. Foster: Don't talk rubbish!

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I think there was an increase.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: To \$140 000 000.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: The figure was \$140 000 000.

The Hon. N. K. Foster: There is a second figure being thrown at you already. Make up your mind.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: The Grants Commission will serve the important purpose of improving the financial situation of local government. The fund can be financed not only by the Federal Government but also by the State Government, if it so desires. The last important corner was turned in 1975; the Federal Government will no longer determine the reimbursements to local government and, instead, the Grants Commission will determine them. The Federal Government or, if one takes it a step further, the Canberra bureaucrats liked the idea of dominating under section 96, but it is far better that the money be made available through a local Grants Commission. I am happy to see this development taking place. The whole Council would like to see local government strengthened so that it can play a more important part in our community life; of course, local government cannot do that without the provisions of this measure. I support the Bill, which will give tremendous support to local government in South Australia.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY (Minister of Lands): I thank honourable members for their contributions to the debate. The Hon. Mr. Hill asked a question in relation to the definition of "council". The definition is as follows:

"Council" means a council as defined for the purpose of the Local Government Act, 1934-1976, and includes any person or body prescribed as a Council for the purposes of this Act:

The sole purpose of the definition is to make it possible for the Government to examine a form of local government for the present unincorporated areas in order to take advantage of Federal financial funds. In no way could this definition be used to create some form of alleged council within an already incorporated area. Any such action by the Minister would be properly challenged.

The Hon. Mr. Sumner asked a question in relation to legislation by other States. New South Wales has pre-existing legislation dating to 1968 which will require some amendment. Only Tasmania has enacted legislation, while South Australia is slightly ahead of Victoria in getting legislation through State Parliament.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The legislation is not yet through this Parliament.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: Queensland and Western Australia are most reluctant to legislate, but will do so before 1978 in order to meet Federal guidelines. Both of these States would rather do it administratively.

The Hon. Mr. Hill asked about the ability of the State Government to distribute other funds through the commission. Section 21 of the Act enables the Government to ask the commission to report on any matters referred to it on any matter of local government finance; this can include a request to recommend on the distribution of any additional revenue assistance.

The Hon. Mr. Hill asked questions in relation to clause 6 concerning the proportion of the amount to be paid by way of per capita grant and special grant. He is accurate in that the Premiers have agreed that not less than 30 per cent of the whole shall be by per capita distribution. As the Bill stands, it is the Government that will decide on the proportions in this State. However, it is obvious that the Grants Commission would have a considerable informal involvement in the advice given to the Minister on this matter. It is the clear policy of this Government that the per capita amount should be kept to a minimum.

The Hon. Mr. Hill asked a question in relation to clause 9 (2) (c). Although the interpretation placed on it by the honourable member is a possible one, it is simply a form that ensures that a person with the proper technical knowledge from local government is appointed to the commission. For the interim commission, the Minister asked for five nominations from the Local Government Association, two of whom were to be non-elected persons. From this list Mr. Colin Wirth, District Clerk of the District Council of Stirling, was appointed. He is proving a most acceptable appointment.

The Hon. Mr. Hill raised a question in regard to clause 19, which refers to the recommendations of the commission. This machinery has been adopted to provide for the rights of the elected Government in the matter while ensuring the independence of the commission. Honourable members will note that the commission need not accept the reasons of the Minister and may return their recommendations to him unaltered, which he must accept. This seems to be the best way to maintain both the interest of the Parliament and the independence of the commission.

The Hon. Mr. Hill asked a question in regard to the possibility of the commission attaching conditions to the grants. It is the principal condition laid down by the Commonwealth and accepted by Premiers that this money is unconditional revenue assistance to councils. This continues the tradition established by the previous Federal Government when it introduced for the first time assistance to local government. This State cannot attach any conditions whatsoever to grants.

Some confusion appears to have arisen over the amount available for this year. South Australia's share of the \$140 000 000 allocated by the Federal Government this financial year is \$11 925 000. It is expected the recommendations for the distribution of this will be available within two weeks.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1—"Short title."

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I move:

Page 1, line 5—Leave out "South Australian" and insert "Local Government".

It is proper that the Grants Commission should involve itself in local government matters and not involve itself in any other matters. I take into account that some help will be given to areas outside local government areas, but that is only temporary, because ultimately the whole State will be covered by local government. I therefore fail to see why the commission should not be called the Local Government Grants Commission. The reference

to a South Australian Grants Commission must surely give the impression to some that it deals with matters pertaining to South Australia generally and to the funding and allocation of public money into general areas of administration throughout the State. Therefore, I think the best possible legislation that we can achieve at this stage will involve our giving this commission the best possible name. I believe that the best possible name for the commission would be the "Local Government Grants Commission". This would further cement the respect which the Government and, I am sure, Opposition members have for local government and which Parliament as a whole should show to the third tier of government, by letting it have the words "local government" in this title.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY (Minister of Lands): I thank the Hon. Mr. Hill for raising this matter. Although he has a good point, I should like to go a step further and call this organisation the "South Australian Local Government Grants Commission". This is done in the other States. New South Wales, for example, calls its commission the New South Wales Local Government Grants Commission. Although I am not sure what Victoria calls its organisation, it is probably the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission. It would be appropriate for our commission's title to be so amended, as it would single it out as applying to this State only.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I always want to be as co-operative as I can in these matters. It seems to me that, if the name was changed as the Minister proposes, it would be generally accepted in the market place as the Local Government Grants Commission. The South Australian Housing Trust, for example, is generally known, at least in the South Australian community, as the "Housing Trust". To enable the Minister to move that amendment, I seek leave to withdraw my amendment.

Leave granted; amendment withdrawn.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I thank the honourable member. I therefore move:

Page 1, line 5—After "Australian" insert "Local Government".

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 2 and 3 passed.

Clause 4—"Interpretation."

The Hon. C. M. HILL moved:

Page 1, line 15—After "South Australian" insert "Local Government".

Page 2, line 1—After "South Australian" insert "Local Government".

Amendments carried.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I move:

Page 2, line 4—After "person or body" insert "(not being a person or body exercising any powers within the area of a council as defined for the purposes of that Act)."

I made the point earlier in the debate that this wording was unique in the legislation which was being considered or which had been passed throughout Australia. Although I accept the need for a difference, because obviously the Government had in mind that it wished to give special grants to organisations outside local government areas, there was room for argument that some organisations of a community nature within council boundaries might well apply for, and be found to have, a right to be deemed a council for the purposes of this Act. My amendment puts the Government's intention in clear terms.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: The Government is pleased to accept the amendment.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 5—"The account."

The Hon. C. M. HILL moved:

Page 2, line 14—After “South Australian” insert “Local Government”.

Amendment carried.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I move:

Page 2, line 17—After “this Act” insert “and such moneys as are appropriated by Parliament for the purposes of this Act.”

This matter touches on the important change which can take place if this amendment is carried and which has been referred to today as well as previously. I am sure that the Hon. Mr. Creedon will be interested in this amendment, as it will fulfil one of his aims to open the door for an improved method by which the State Government can make allocations to local government.

Instead of giving, by the present method, bits and pieces throughout the year to those councils that apply for grants, the Government can assess what it deems to be a total allocation that local government ought to receive in the following year, and it can pay such a sum through its Estimates, which come before us, into the fund.

Local government can then see how much is available to it for the year, and can apply through the commission for that money. I am sure that any Minister or Government in office in future would find that machinery better than that which exists at present. Whether the present Government will use this amendment and change its policies is entirely a decision for it to take. However, the new Act which we are fashioning ought at least to contain a provision giving the Government the right to adopt this policy if it thinks fit.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: Does the Hon. Mr. Hill think it will be possible for all moneys now allocated by the Highways Department by way of debit orders and Government grants to councils, usually on the recommendation of the district engineer, to go through this fund?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: No. The funds which go to councils for debit order work and which come from the Highways Department emanate from the Highways Fund, which is made up in the main of Federal grants under the Commonwealth-State road grants arrangements that apply. That system will not be affected. My proposal would involve such matters as those to which I referred in the second reading debate, such as, for example, Tea Tree Gully obtaining a special grant of \$8 000. I have no doubt that if one looked at the records one would see many instances of special grants coming from Ministers' offices. It is those grants that could be grouped together into the one parcel arrangement under this scheme, but it would

not affect the situation to which the Hon. Mr. Dawkins has referred.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I thank the honourable member for his explanation. I support the amendment.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: The Government is happy to accept the amendment.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 6—“Available moneys.”

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I move:

Page 2, line 20—After “The Minister shall” insert “, after consultation with the commission,”.

This situation is the first step in the distribution of funds. As the Bill reads, although the Minister is given some guidelines by the Commonwealth, it is entirely the Minister's responsibility to announce the amount of money to be given on a per capita basis and the balance of the allocation to be given as special grants. It is a responsibility which the Minister would have to shoulder and which could bring some criticism of him by councils; some controversy would develop, of course, once this machinery was established. I say that bearing in mind that some councils may feel they have not got a fair deal, and others may think they should have received as much as the neighbouring council. Therefore, the Minister, before he decides how much money should be given as a per capita grant and how much as a special grant, should consult the commission. If he does that, he will obtain the commission's view of what its experience is and what it thinks should be a reasonable apportionment between those two grants. It is not binding on the Minister to follow the commission's recommendations; it is simply binding on him to consult it. It is better legislation if this amendment is inserted.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: Yes; the Government is happy to accept the amendment.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 7 and 8 passed.

Clause 9—“Establishment of commission, etc.”

The Hon. C. M. HILL moved:

Page 3, line 14—After “Australian” insert “Local Government”.

Amendment carried.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

#### ADJOURNMENT

At 5.45 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, October 5, at 2.15 p.m.