

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday, December 8, 1977

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the following Bills:

Land and Business Agents Act Amendment,
Pay-roll Tax Act Amendment,
Public Service Act Amendment.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

Elizabeth Community College—Learning Resource Centre,
Gilles Plains Community College.

SAVINGS BANK OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA ACT AMENDMENT BILL

At 2.18 p.m. the following recommendations of the conference were reported to the Council:

That the House of Assembly do not further insist on its disagreement to the amendment but make the following additional amendment:

Page 2, after line 1 (clause 3)—insert paragraph as follows:

(a1) to extend the services of the bank to that body where, in the opinion of the trustees, that body is a small business only the proprietors of which are persons who could normally be expected to establish accounts with the bank;

and that the Legislative Council agree thereto.

Consideration in Committee.

The **CHAIRMAN**: I have been examining the terms of the recommendation of the conference. There seems to be some doubt whether this is the correct way of doing it. It seems that this involves a Council amendment to the Bill. Perhaps the same result will be achieved, anyway. However, I will see what the Minister says.

The **Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON (Minister of Agriculture)**: I move:

That the recommendations of the conference be agreed to. The original amendment was to delete "to extend", and it became obvious during the conference that there were two distinct interpretations of those words. They could be taken as meaning to extend the type of services provided by the bank (a concern that was expressed by honourable members opposite), or as meaning to extend the bank's services to other customers.

It became obvious during the conference discussions that the Government's intention, in relation to this clause, was to extend the services of the bank to other customers and not to extend the types of service provided by the bank. The compromise provision that the conference has recommended defines the meaning of the extension of the bank's services: it confines it to other customers, and does not include any extension of the types of service offered by the bank.

The **Hon. C. M. HILL**: I support the motion and, as one

who attended the conference, I commend the managers from both Houses for their approach and desire to seek a solution to the impasse that had occurred between the Houses. The problem lies in the effect of the legislation as originally proposed to extend the facilities of the Savings Bank into trading bank spheres.

Government members at the conference stressed that it was not the Government's intention to extend or expand the bank's trading bank activities. Accordingly, the Bill will now be reworded so that corporate clients of the bank will be limited, first, to those whose shareholders were previously clients of the bank and, secondly, to those who have small businesses and who could have been in a similar category to former depositors. I believe that the legislation is now in a much better form than it was when it first came to this place. Therefore, I support the motion.

The **Hon. D. H. LAIDLAW**: As one of the managers at the conference, I support the motion. I believe that the managers reached a reasonable compromise and the recommendations spell out more precisely what type of business the trustees of the Savings Bank will seek to undertake when accepting companies and partnerships as customers.

I think it was important that the Hon. Mr. Hill should have moved the amendment that he did move so that this place could highlight the potentially dangerous trend developing in the Australian banking system. Australian banking has built up an enviable reputation in the past 45 years since the Central Bank was established. Through Central Bank control, the community has enjoyed stable banking conditions and the word "bank" is held in high esteem.

However, several State-owned banks are not subject to the rules of the Federal Banking Act or to the Federal savings bank regulations. I refer specifically to the Savings Bank of South Australia and the State Bank, the State Bank in Victoria, which until recently was called the State Savings Bank, the Rural Bank of New South Wales, and the Rural Industries Bank in New South Wales.

The **Hon. C. J. Sumner**: Do they go in for trading?

The **Hon. D. H. LAIDLAW**: I mentioned yesterday that the State Bank of Victoria has been—

The **Hon. C. J. Sumner**: They amalgamated, and they are creating their own savings, but you will not allow that here. You do not agree with amalgamating to carry out both forms of banking.

The **Hon. D. H. LAIDLAW**: The State Bank carries out a trading bank activity, and we discussed that yesterday. It is not a question of amalgamating.

The **Hon. N. K. Foster**: You are concerned only for your former Liberal Party friend and colleague who ripped the public.

The **CHAIRMAN**: Order! Discussion of this aspect is out of order. We are discussing the recommendations of the conference.

The **Hon. D. H. LAIDLAW**: I tell the Hon. Mr. Foster that I was trained in Central Banking, having been employed by Dr. Coombs, who at one stage was associated with the Labor Party. Recently, the State Banks have sought to spread their activities, and I despair that, in their search for business, they will tend to ignore the interest rates and the volume of lending which has been set down by the Reserve Bank. To date they have exercised a voluntary restraint to accord with Reserve Bank wishes, and it is important that their trustees and directors should continue to act in this way. Otherwise, I fear that the good reputation that has been established world-wide by the Australian banking system could be in jeopardy. It was for this reason that I spoke in the debate yesterday, although, judging by some interjections from

Government members, I believed that my intention was completely misunderstood.

The Hon. J. E. DUNFORD: I was pleased to attend the conference, and I am pleased that this place is not insisting on the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the honourable member is wrong.

The Hon. J. E. DUNFORD: To extend the service of the bank?

The CHAIRMAN: It is a new definition.

The Hon. J. E. DUNFORD: Yes, but it will have the effect of enabling the Savings Bank to extend its business, and I thought that the amendment moved by the Opposition here took away the word "extend". Most of the credit for the success of the conference must go to the Chairman, the Premier, who made it clear to the managers that it was not the Government's intention to extend into the area of hire-purchase.

The State Savings Bank already has interests in Beneficial Finance in that area, and he gave assurances to the Hon. Mr. Hill that it would not infringe on private bank interests. The analogy given by the Premier was easy to follow, and after hearing it I knew that the motion would be carried. The Premier gave the example of two farmers, with farmer A already having an account with the Savings Bank. He could then incorporate his assets and borrow from the Savings Bank while farmer B, who was not a depositor in the State Savings Bank and who had already incorporated his assets, could not borrow from the Savings Bank under the present legislation.

The motion provides for small businesses in similar circumstances to have equal opportunity. Once that was explained to Opposition members there was little opposition, the only problem remaining being the creation of a motion to fit the Government's aspirations in relation to this Bill.

Motion carried.

Later:

The House of Assembly intimated that it had agreed to the recommendations of the conference.

QUESTIONS

ELECTORAL ADVERTISING

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I seek leave to make a brief statement prior to directing a question to the Leader of the Government on the subject of inflation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Members are all aware of (especially members on this side) and have been concerned over the past few weeks about the false advertising in the political campaign in the electronic media by way of speeches and through paid advertisements in most of the major newspapers in Australia. Many people in the community have become confused as a result of the constant allegations made about the Prime Minister's being a liar. People have written to the press, and I refer to the latest edition of the *News* in this Chamber and the item accusing certain political Parties of mud-slinging. That aspect in itself must be disturbing to most members in this Chamber.

However, one of the most startling disclosures that has come to hand in the past 12 hours is the fact that those people who have accused the Prime Minister of being a liar, those who have accused him of withholding the truth from the public, those who have accused the Prime Minister of falsifying almost—

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Question!

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: My question is this: is it a fact that the member for Wannon—Fraser, the Prime Minister of Australia—is engaged in blatant misrepresentation of the economic situation in Australia in relation to the inflation rate in this country?

Is it not a fact that, from time to time, the Prime Minister, when it has suited him, has taken as a guide and championed the stated opinions of the O.E.C.D. in relation to: first, inflation in the western world; secondly, unemployment in the western world, and thirdly, has declared a state of buoyancy in the Australian economy, following publication of the O.E.C.D. figures on inflation?

I further ask: is it not a fact that the figure of 9 per cent inflation claimed by the Prime Minister, in the absence of any Treasurer within his Party, in advertisements, and his claim that there was a figure of 19 per cent inflation when the Labor Party was in office, is quite false? Will the Leader of the House ensure that the Australian media publish, as a major headline, the true position of inflation in Australia? Is not that figure announced recently by the O.E.C.D. in excess of 13 per cent? Does not the Minister agree that that represents a figure of some 50 per cent above that claimed by the Liberal Party in its electoral propaganda in the past few weeks?

The PRESIDENT: I do not think the question has anything to do with this Parliament. At the very best, the Minister of Health could refer the matter to the Treasurer.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: In official publications, inflation has been shown at 13 per cent. There have been misleading advertisements claiming that the inflation rate is only 9 per cent. How can it only be 9 per cent?

The Hon. D. H. Laidlaw: They are both correct.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Neither the 9 per cent nor the 19 per cent is correct.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: You said 19 per cent.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I am saying that figure is as big a lie by the Liberals as the 9 per cent figure, because at no stage was there a 19 per cent rate for any 12-month period. That is not any more correct than a 9 per cent figure for a 12-month period under the Liberal Party; they are both monstrous lies and have been put forward by the Liberal Party. That is completely and utterly untrue. One must say this about the media: while they accept the untrue advertisements for which they are paid, they have from time to time published official figures on inflation as they came out, but they have never claimed that the figure was 9 per cent. They have indicated that it was 2½ per cent for a certain quarter, or whatever it was, but they have not blatantly said, as much as the lying advertisements have, that it was 9 per cent.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: You are worried.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I am worried, and honourable members opposite should be worried, too, because people might be fooled by the lies being put forward by members opposite.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I have a supplementary question, following the answer given by the Minister. Because the Minister has now said that the advertisements were untruthful and misleading, will the Minister take the matter up with his colleague, the Attorney-General?

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: He is busy. They cannot find him. He is lost in China.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I thought Gough Whitlam discovered China for bloody Fraser.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member is using language from the corner of the street. He must moderate his language.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: It is about time the people of the street came in here to get to the truth.

The PRESIDENT: I warn the honourable member that he must moderate his language in this Chamber.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I have moderated my language.

The PRESIDENT: You see that you do.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I have.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: What about the provocative interjections from the other side?

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Yes, Mr. President. Why don't you do something about your colleagues?

The PRESIDENT: Has the honourable member asked his question?

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Why don't you tell your colleagues to shut up? Everyone knows that the Attorney-General is overseas.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member first mentioned the Attorney-General.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Why shouldn't I? For God's sake uphold the rights of honourable members on this side of the Council! Will you please do that? I implore you, Mr. President, to carry out your duties in this regard, and I am not being disrespectful in saying that. I ask that my question be directed to the Attorney-General. Where he is at this time—

The Hon. Mr. Dawkins interjecting:

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: You spent six months in India at the taxpayers' expense for nothing.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I ask that the honourable member withdraw and apologise.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I withdraw and apologise, and I wish the honourable member would go back to India and stay there. Perhaps that is where he ought to be, with all due apologies to the people of India. Now, if you, Mr. President, can keep this place in order, I direct a question to the Leader of the Government in this Council for the attention of the Attorney-General (where he is in his business). Will the Leader take up with the Attorney-General or his departmental officers the question of whether or not local newspapers can be prosecuted or investigated for carrying out consistently false advertising?

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

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: Will the Minister also refer to the Attorney-General the Labor Party's advertising prior to this election and prior to previous elections, particularly the advertising concerning the so-called bonanza resulting from the sale of our country railways to the Commonwealth Government?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: We are very proud of the fact that we received publicity following the very good deal we did on behalf of the people of South Australia, only to see the bonanza whittled away by the Fraser Government.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Question Time in this Chamber is being abused. This is not a forum for political mud-slinging. The purpose of Question Time, as I have told honourable members before, is to question Ministers sitting in this Chamber about public affairs related to their portfolios. I do not intend to allow this Chamber today or in the future to become a forum for political mud-slinging.

FLINDERS MEDICAL CENTRE

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Can the Minister of Health give the Council further information on the article in today's paper stating that the Minister has sought a deferral of the fourth and final stage, costing \$60 000 000, of Flinders Medical Centre? I ask this question especially in view of

the fact that, when I, as Shadow Minister of Health, last month in this Council sought a reassessment of priorities affecting Flinders Medical Centre, the Minister in reply castigated me and said, in effect, that there was no case whatever for such a reassessment.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Let me put the position correctly. There is no \$60 000 000 stage outstanding as far as Flinders Medical Centre is concerned. I have warned the honourable member previously about trying to pin his faith on what newspapers say.

The Hon. Mr. Hill interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Interjections are out of order, as all honourable members know.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The newly formed commission sent around a recommendation to me that it would like an opportunity to assess the position in relation to the supply, demand, and distribution of hospital beds throughout the State. The commission wanted an opportunity to make a survey, and the Government believed that this was a reasonable request. With that in mind, we have said to the commission, "We will call a moratorium on the building of extra beds around the places until the survey has been completed." They believe their survey will take between nine months and 12 months to complete, and we are prepared to have a moratorium where extra beds are to be supplied. This does not mean there will not be upgrading in other hospitals where extra beds are needed. That is why we have informed the board of the Flinders Medical Centre that this moratorium is on before tenders are called.

SEXIST ADVERTISEMENTS

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I seek leave to make a statement before directing a question to the Leader of the Council about sexist advertisements.

Leave granted.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: In yesterday's *News*, on page 4, there was an advertisement of a steel radial tyre company advertising its products and showing, as well as three-quarters of a steel radial tyre, an apparently naked female with her breasts pressed against the tyre in question. I personally find this advertisement very offensive, and I am sure that other people in our community and members of this Chamber feel likewise. The Hon. Mr. DeGaris yesterday spoke against sexism in our society, so I assume he would support me in this.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: *A quid pro quo.*

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I mention this in an attempt to achieve publicity for the fact that such advertisements are very offensive to many people. A woman has nothing whatsoever to do with the sale of a tyre, and the advertisement can be only in the category of being one using a woman as a sex object, and a sex object alone. I and many other people object to such attitudes. In asking this question, I hope publicity will be given to such advertisements.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! Interjections are out of order.

The Hon. N. K. Foster: Mr. Dawkins started it.

The PRESIDENT: I don't care who started it. The one who starts it and the one who replies are equally to blame. The Hon. Miss Levy.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I raise this matter in the hope that publicity will indicate that many people find such advertisements offensive. While I in no way advocate censorship or infringement of the freedom of the press, I think that if the press and the company concerned in this case are aware that such advertisements are offensive,

they may change their attitude and not purposely offend members of the community. Will the Minister agree that advertisements such as this one are offensive and sexist?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I agree that the advertisement is both offensive and sexist, and I see no reason for introducing that aspect into an advertisement to sell an article if it is a good one. I raised this matter when I was a back-bencher; I referred to the fact that I saw in an advertisement a charming lady on a motor car; I went to buy the lady but found she was not for sale; only the car was for sale.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I see no reason for exposing the body of a female for selling an article. I agree with the honourable member that this advertisement is sexist and can be offensive too.

UNSWORN STATEMENTS

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: I understand the Minister of Health has a reply to a question I asked recently about unsworn statements.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The question of accused persons making unsworn statements from the dock was reported on by the Mitchell committee in its third report. However, the recommendation of the committee on this matter has not yet been considered by the Government. It is the Government's intention at this stage to introduce amendments giving effect to the Mitchell committee's report in the latter half of next year. The question of unsworn statements will receive further consideration when this is being done.

BOATING FEES

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: I understand the Minister of Health has a reply to a question I asked recently about boating fees.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I have a statement prepared in accordance with section 37 of the Boating Act, 1974, and seek leave to have it inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

BOATING ADMINISTRATION

Receipts and Payments Statement for year ended June 30, 1977
and Estimated Receipts and Payments for year ended June 30, 1978

	1976-77 Actual	1977-78 Estimated	1977-78 Estimated with increased fees from 1/11/77
	\$	\$	\$
Receipts:			
Registrations	156 366	167 850	219 450
Licences	46 874	8 800	11 800
Sundries	12	20	20
	203 252	176 670	213 270
Less refunds—registrations	5 902	6 370	8 000
—licences	34	—	—
Total Receipts	197 316	170 300	223 270
Expenditure:			
Salaries, travelling expenses of boating officers and expenses whilst on patrol	84 600	100 100	100 100
Advertising	4 832	500	500
Cleaning and caretaking	1 391	1 460	1 460
A.D.P. services	6 736	5 500	5 500
Lighting, heating, etc.	282	310	310
Office furniture and equipment—purchases	774	200	—
Office furniture and equipment—repairs	10	100	100
Rent	1 224	2 080	2 080
Maintenance and repairs to boats and trailers	7 288	7 870	7 870
Printing, stationery and postage	15 003	17 600	17 600
Workmen's compensation premiums	2 925	5 090	5 090
Telephones	3 611	3 900	3 900
Salaries—Office staff	52 069	53 460	53 460
Treasury charges for interest	3 600	3 750	3 750
General expenses	3 663	4 000	4 000
Interest on plant	3 251	4 060	4 060
Depreciation on plant	9 205	10 600	10 600
Total Expenditure	200 464	220 580	220 580
Balance of Receipts against Expenditure	3 148DR.	50 280DR.	2 690CR.

BULK BILLING

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I seek leave to make a statement before directing a question to the Minister of Health about bulk billing and fraudulent practices by the medical fraternity.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I do not want to dwell on any facts or use any names in the medical profession of those who have been prosecuted in the courts. I am of the opinion that, having appeared before the court and having been sentenced, that is their lot and their punishment; but in a particular case one of the doctors concerned is no longer permitted to practise. What concerns me is a statement made in the media by the President of the South Australian Branch of the Australian Medical Association (if not the Federal President of that trade union, if I may refer to it as that), Dr. Pickering, who has gone on record as saying that bulk billing should be abolished because it is a temptation to the medical fraternity, and it should be abolished to protect that fraternity. That is carrying it too far. One would expect Myers and other large stores, which do not have enough assistants, to take measures to deal with the temptation to customers to shoplift, but I ask the Minister whether or not the statement of such a person as the President of the A.M.A. in South Australia has a bearing on what the future policy of bulk billing will be under Medibank.

The PRESIDENT: I do not think that the honourable member's reference to stores has anything to do with bulk billing.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The A.M.A. is against bulk billing. This is not the time to argue against bulk billing but, if a doctor is so weak that he has to resort to committing an offence, I suggest he is not a proper and suitable person to be a doctor in the first place. This matter should be looked at but I do not think that, because of that, hundreds of people should have to put up with the inconvenience of having to pay postage on accounts to the doctor, and then go back to Medibank or the private funds to get a refund on the payment they have made. I believe that the doctors (and there are quite a number of them) who do bulk billing are satisfied with the system. Their patients are happy with the fact that the doctors are co-operating with them, and I cannot agree with the President of the A.M.A. who suggests that, because two or three doctors have erred in this regard, the system should be abolished.

URANIUM

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: Has the Minister of Agriculture, representing the Minister of Mines and Energy, a reply to the question I asked on November 24 regarding exploration for uranium in the Adelaide Hills?

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: The Minister of Mines and Energy reports that monitoring by the Engineering and Water Supply Department of waters following the French atomic tests indicated a slightly anomalous radioactivity in rainwater. However, later measurements of reservoir water showed only normal background levels. No abnormal radioactivity is now believed to be present in the waters of the catchment areas. As a consequence, the Government believes there is no basis for any change in the present moratorium against the mining of uranium.

PREFABRICATED SCHOOLS

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: Has the Minister of Agriculture, representing the Minister of Education, a

reply to the question I asked on November 22 regarding prefabricated schools?

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: The Minister of Education reports that the Education Department has recently completed a review of the design of Demac facilities and a number of features of the future design of Demac will be altered as a result. However, all these features refer to internal aspects of the buildings. The Public Buildings Department's Demac programme has been very successful in meeting the need for high quality relocatable buildings. In recent discussions with the Public Buildings Department, particularly in relation to the cost of Demac units, it has been agreed that we should concentrate on standardising our requests in relation to the type of unit. If Education Department requirements can be concentrated on standard classrooms, for example, rather than custom-built specialist accommodation, it is expected that the per-unit costs will be significantly reduced. In the context of this cost control development, we would be somewhat reluctant to introduce external treatments which were not already part of the existing production line.

The question of the aesthetics of the Demac units is open to some debate, although many would agree with the honourable member that the outside appearance of the units, particularly in some settings, is not as pleasing as it might be. In many cases, the planting of trees and shrubs and the landscaping of the surrounding grounds has created a very much more pleasant appearance, as well as affecting the need for air cooling.

In summary, the design, both internal and external, of Demac units is continually under review. The remarks of the honourable member, as a member of the Public Works Standing Committee, will be taken seriously in further considerations of the outside appearance of Demac units, but when cost considerations are made in relation to future Demac requirements it may prove more practical to concentrate on landscaping and planting processes than significantly to alter the capacities of the existing Demac production line.

PRIME MINISTER

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I seek leave to ask you, Sir, in your capacity as President of the Council, a further question for my guidance.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I ask the question because a few moments ago you made a rather remarkable statement. You accused certain people, when asking questions in this place, of indulging in political mud-slinging. So that I cannot again be falsely accused of that practice, I ask whether I am permitted to ask the Leader of the Council a question regarding a report, issued on behalf of Friends of the Earth, which appeared in this morning's edition of one of Australia's most responsible newspapers, the *Melbourne Age*, and in which the Prime Minister was referred to as being a greater pest than the rabbit. We all know that three things have ruined Australia: sheep, rabbits, and the Country Party; that is almost universally accepted. I ask whether you, Sir, will permit me to ask a question on that subject, and whether you have seen the report in the *Melbourne Age* to which I have referred.

The PRESIDENT: No, I have not seen that copy of the *Age*; nor have I the faintest idea what the honourable member is asking.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Friends of the Earth accuse Mr. Fraser of being a bigger pest to the environment than the rabbit, and you, Sir, accused me of mud-slinging. If I

asked whether we should get a more virulent strain of myxomatosis to wipe out that pest, you would probably go off the deep end.

The PRESIDENT: Order! If that is the question that the honourable member is going to ask, I certainly will not allow it.

MINERAL SEMINAR

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Has the Minister of Health, representing the Minister of Mines and Energy, a reply to the question I asked on November 29 regarding a proposed mineral seminar?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The Minister of Mines and Energy opened the seminar on South Australia's mineral and petroleum potential at 11 a.m. today. The latter part of the honourable member's question, as reported, does not make sense. One can only presume that the honourable member was trying to misrepresent the uranium potential of the areas mentioned in a manner similar to other misrepresentations by his Party colleagues. Recent examples of such misrepresentations have even reached the stage of presenting to the press a photostat copy of a "doctored" brochure. I am surprised that the honourable member is willing to be associated with such misrepresentations.

SOUTH-EASTERN FREEWAY

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: Has the Minister of Lands, representing the Minister of Transport, a reply to the question I asked on November 24 regarding further extensions to the South-Eastern Freeway?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: The Minister of Transport reports that the final section of the South-Eastern Freeway, namely, Callington to White Hill, has reached the following stage:

(a) Roadworks 50 per cent completed.

(b) Three bridges are under construction and tenders have been called for the fourth and last structure.

Completion of the freeway is anticipated by April, 1979, simultaneously with the completion of the Swanport bridge and Swanport deviation.

ITALIAN FESTIVAL

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Has the Minister of Health a reply to the question I asked on November 23 concerning the Italian Arts Festival?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: My colleague reports that the Italian Festival Society Incorporated, which organised the 1976 Italian Festival in Adelaide and is organising a similar festival for October, 1978, will be able to apply for funds from, first, a fund of \$40 000 available this financial year for ethnic-based festivals and administered by the Ethnic Affairs Unit; secondly, the Arts Grants Advisory Committee; and, thirdly, (for publicity), the Tourism, Recreation and Sport Department. All other ethnic festivals will be able to apply from these sources. A limit of \$10 000 will be placed on individual grants from the fund administered by the Ethnic Affairs Unit. The Italian Festival Society Incorporated received \$7 000 from State sources in 1976, and expects to mount its 1978 festival over a period of two weeks as it did in 1976.

It is believed that the grant of \$10 000 from Federal

sources was to the Italian Arts Festival Society, a body which has been established to co-ordinate festivals and artistic activities at the national level and which has representation from all six States. It is understood that the proportion available to this State from the Federal grant is in the process of being worked out by the Federal Immigration and Ethnic Affairs Department.

RADIUM HILL

The Hon. F. T. BLEVINS: Has the Minister of Agriculture, representing the Minister of Mines and Energy, a reply to my question about the mining of uranium at Radium Hill?

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: My colleague reports that the following replies to the honourable member's questions are in the order in which they were lodged. The Radium Hill operation commenced in April, 1952, reached full scale production in late 1954, and closed down at the end of 1961. The operation was conducted as the Radium Hill project under the direction of the then Minister of Mines. Mine workers were constantly monitored by the Health Department, and the mine ventilation and radiation level standards were based on the internationally accepted standards at the time.

There were 630 workers directly involved with production work, as well as others not directly involved with production. Altogether, there was a population of about 1 000 at Radium Hill. Records are available at the Mines Department of all persons who were employed at Radium Hill and of their occupations while at Radium Hill. A follow-up study of a sample of these employees has been under way for nearly a year. This work is being undertaken by the Public Health Department. The Maralinga operation was a Commonwealth Government matter.

MR. E. CONNELLY

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: Has the Minister of Lands a reply from his colleague regarding the employment of Mr. E. Connelly?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: No money is at present allocated by the Commonwealth Government to these outback areas, because they are still not incorporated in any form. The \$1 000 000 mentioned in the Premier's statement regarding the proposed establishment of the Outback Areas Community Development Trust is to be provided by way of borrowing. At present it is envisaged that loan servicing will be underwritten by State finances but no details have been worked out as to exact methods of operation.

FURTHER EDUCATION

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to the question I asked on November 24 about further education?

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: The situation regarding enrichment classes has been influenced by the necessity to take into account the large increase in enrolments which has taken place in recent times. For example, in 1976, there was approximately a 33 per cent increase in enrolments of the vocational programme; that is, approximately an additional 19 325 students seeking either basic or improvement in vocational skills. In the current economic climate, it is essential that priority be

given to assisting those who require vocational skills and this has resulted in the 1977 funds having to be diverted from programmes such as enrichment to those which will assist people to obtain jobs. The honourable member's figures regarding the increases in grants to South Australia are not exactly accurate. The situation is as follows:

1. TAFEC grants for South Australia have increased by 20 per cent.
2. Increases for Australia as a whole have been 24 per cent consisting of approximately 10 per cent for inflation and 14 per cent real increase.
3. TAFEC grants in the main are a direct assistance to vocational education programmes.

In an endeavour to maintain enrichment classes, Cabinet has given approval for an increase in fees of approximately 30 per cent to 60c an hour for the 1978 academic year. However, because of the amount of funds which must be committed to vocational courses, the increase in fees referred to above will not enable all enrichment subjects to be continued within the existing budget. Consequently, some colleges have, in response to student demand, introduced self-supporting classes, and I would presume the \$26 for a woodcarving class at Underdale comes within this area.

MINERAL SEMINAR

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: On behalf of the Hon. Mr. DeGaris, I ask the Minister of Health whether he has a reply to the Leader's question about a mineral seminar.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The seminar to which the honourable member refers was organised by the Australian Mineral Foundation, a body established by the mineral and petroleum industries, not by the South Australian Government. As the honourable member must have appreciated when he asked his question, his suggestion for a further seminar is not relevant, in view of the Government's policy on the mining and development of uranium.

FROZEN FOOD FACTORY

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: Has the Minister of Health a reply to the question I asked during the debate on the Public Purposes Loan Bill regarding the frozen food factory?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The estimated cost of the frozen food factory project submitted to the Public Works Standing Committee was \$4 250 000 as at January, 1974. However, in March, 1975, this estimate was revised to \$5 200 000 to take into account cost rises, a contingency reduction, and omission of the cost of land. When approval was given to proceed, the estimate was updated to allow for cost escalation up to the date of completion. The escalated cost estimate was \$7 000 000. In January, 1977, approval was given for an additional \$986 000 to provide for the following:

Devaluation of the Australian dollar in October, 1975 (12 per cent) and November-December, 1976 (12.5 per cent), which had the effect of increasing the cost of imported equipment by approximately \$350 000.

Additional professional fees estimated at \$400 000 for the complete project management service being provided by the Construction Manager, Austin Anderson (Aust.) Pty. Ltd.

An additional \$120 000 to build up the site to provide adequate grades for sewers and stormwater pipes.

Additional client requests of \$116 000 and including two gas convection ovens and three steam jacketed kettles, a

blast freezer and trolleys, a product conveyor to the frozen food store, and a semi-automatic "Modul" packaging line. It is clear that the cost of the project has escalated significantly since the submission to the Public Works Standing Committee in January, 1974. The same inflationary pressures during this period have also escalated the cost of food services in the individual institutions, and the economies of the frozen food facility, and its associated savings to the Government remain valid.

URANIUM

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to my question of November 24 about uranium?

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: No mining has been undertaken by Esso in this or any other area. Mining is not permitted under the terms and conditions of an exploration licence and, under the present ban on uranium mining in South Australia, no mining leases for these minerals are being granted. The material referred to by the Hon. Mr. Hill, which is stored at Yunta, is a selection of samples of cuttings from exploration drill holes put down on an exploration licence held by Esso and which are being held there temporarily pending transport to the laboratory for routine analysis. During the exploration phase of the Radium Hill operations by the South Australian Mines Department, a large number of holes was drilled and sampled and the samples stored in bags for transmission to the laboratory. The procedure for drilling, sampling and sample storage presently being used by Esso is a standard exploration procedure.

RURAL COSTS

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES: On behalf of the Hon. Mr. DeGaris, I ask the Minister of Agriculture whether he has a reply to the Leader's question about rural costs.

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: Before the recent State election, the Leader raised the question of rural costs in South Australia. At the time, I said he had a reputation for selective quoting of figures and I would look into the B.A.E. figures to see what the overall position is for South Australian farmers. The comment I made then is just as relevant now with the latest B.A.E. figures that are available and which the Hon. Mr. DeGaris has been studying in great detail. The first question he asked states that South Australia has the highest increase in the index of farm cost in Australia. This is not true. I suggest that he ask the Parliamentary research staff to look at the B.A.E. figures again, and they will show him that Tasmania had a greater increase in the index of rural costs. The actual level of the index is the highest in Australia but, as I pointed out before, the ratio of prices received to prices paid is a more relevant indicator of the financial position of the rural community.

The Hon. Mr. DeGaris admits this in his second and third questions, which relate to the ratio. Again, I am unable to agree with his calculation. The index of prices received is 191, and the ratio by simple division is .65, which is equal with Western Australia and the best in Australia. The national average is .62, and Tasmania is the lowest, at .59. In his last question, the Leader admits that his first question was not factually correct and that the rate of increase of rural cost in Tasmania is higher than South Australia. He highlights some of the areas where cost increases have occurred but fails to point out (and this reinforces my argument on selective quoting) that in the area where Governments have the greatest impact the rate

of increase has been significantly lower. The rate of increase in rates and taxes in South Australia over the past 12 months has been low, reflecting the Government's decision to abolish rural land tax, and electricity costs have been below the national average.

SAMCOR

The Hon. R. A. GEDDES (on notice):

1. What export markets are being supplied by Samcor?
2. What are the tonnages of respective meats, both bone-in and boneless, sent to those markets?
3. Has Samcor been exporting to these markets in its own right and/or on behalf of other exporters, including the Australian Meat Board?
4. What quantities of meat has Samcor exported in its own right and for other exporters?
5. What are the financial results of these export trading operations?
6. To what extent were the financial results of these operations included in the corporation's annual report for 1976-77 as tabled in Parliament?

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: The replies are as follows:

1. During 1976-77 Samcor or its joint venture partners shipped meat to the following principal markets: Israel, Egypt and Japan. Meat produced by Samcor and sold through export agents was also shipped to the following countries: Mauritius, Russia, United States of America, United Kingdom, and the West Indies.

2. Main contracts and tonnages under joint venture arrangements were:

Country	Type	Bone-in (tonnes)	Boneless (tonnes)
Israel	Beef	650	
Egypt	Beef	1 000	40
Japan	Mutton	2 700 carcass	1 000

Other overseas sales were:

Mutton	750	
Goat	250	75
Beef		350

3. All the main contracts were produced under joint venture arrangements with other operators, although the Israel contracts were obtained by Samcor. The meat was actually shipped in Samcor's name. The other overseas sales were sold through export agents, and records as to the destination are not readily available.

4. See 3 above.

5. Financial results of such trading activities are fully accounted in the 1976-77 report as tabled in Parliament. Trading would have operated at about a break-even position taking into account the benefits and effects on the total works activity.

6. All 1976-77 trading transactions are included in the financial results for 1976-77.

CLASSIFICATION OF PUBLICATIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Consideration in Committee of the House of Assembly's message intimating that it had disagreed to the Legislative Council's amendments.

Amendment No. 1:

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

That the Council do not insist on its amendment No. 1. This amendment increases the size of the board, nominating certain people to it. As the Government believes that nothing came forward as a result of the debate on this matter and that the board is doing a satisfactory job, it cannot see the necessity to extend the board's membership at present. I appreciate the points made during the debate but, because the board is doing such a good job, I ask that this Chamber do not insist on its amendment.

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: There was a case for broadening the representation on the board, but at this stage I do not oppose the motion.

Motion carried.

Amendment No. 2:

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I move:

That the Council insist on its amendment No. 2. This amendment provides that an annual report be made by the board to Parliament, and the Government sees no objection to Parliament's receiving such a report.

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: I am glad that the Government has now agreed that there can be no harm in an annual report. I hope that the report will keep Parliament and, therefore, the public, informed as to the manner in which the board is carrying out its duties.

Motion carried.

Later:

The House of Assembly intimated that it did not insist on its disagreement to the Legislative Council's amendment No. 2.

STATE CLOTHING CORPORATION BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from December 7. Page 1238.)

The Hon. C. M. HILL: This Bill has run the gauntlet of a Select Committee in another place, and the committee has given its approval. The Bill represents an effort by the Government to help people in Whyalla who are unemployed. Unemployment in Whyalla is of grave concern to all South Australians, because this region has suffered through the collapse of a major industry in that city.

The Hon. F. T. Blevins: Fraser closed it down.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: That is a long story, and I would not want to put it as callously as that. I do not want to go through the pros and cons of the shipbuilding industry in Australia, but I am facing the facts of life—there is a large body of unemployed people in Whyalla. I want to do all I can to help solve that problem there and, as I said, it is a matter of grave concern. Any genuine long-term measure to help unemployment in that city should be looked at seriously by Parliament and this Council. This Bill establishes a Government clothing factory in Whyalla, and as a result a number of people will be employed, thus alleviating unemployment there to an extent.

I commend the Government for making a positive move to alleviate unemployment. However, some serious aspects of the proposal concern me, and I intend to ask the Government about them. I intend to move amendments in Committee in order to change the Bill and, in my opinion, to improve it considerably. I also seek further information from the Government about planning and developing a clothing factory in Whyalla. In representations made to me, I have been told that there are very few trained people for clothing manufacture in Whyalla.

The Hon. F. T. Blevins: That's not true.

The Hon. J. E. Dunford: Why not train them under the Government training scheme?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: There are not trained personnel in Whyalla in this industry presently. Also, it will not achieve its object if trained personnel move from the metropolitan area into Whyalla when such a factory is built. The Hon. Mr. Blevins says it is not true that there are no trained people, or very few, in Whyalla. I do not know in which industry they have been trained in Whyalla.

The Hon. F. T. Blevins: Clothes manufacturing. Who said they were trained in Whyalla? They are rather an international breed there, and are trained in various places.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The honourable member makes the point that they are in Whyalla in other employment, but at some stage over the years they have been trained in the clothing industry.

The Hon. F. T. Blevins: Yes, and if you read anything about the industry, instead of standing there not knowing what to say, you'd know. It's all here in *Hansard*.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Can the honourable member tell me where I should read that information? Is it an authoritative source?

The Hon. F. T. Blevins: What about Mr. Rainsford?

The PRESIDENT: Order! It would be much better if the two honourable members, now conducting a discussion across the floor of the Chamber, were to contain their impatience. The Hon. Mr. Blevins will have plenty of time to speak in this debate.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The unemployment situation in Whyalla will not be assisted if people from Adelaide transfer to Whyalla, seeking job opportunities in this development. I want some assurance from the Government that this is unlikely to occur. If there were trained people in Whyalla, or people who could possibly be trained in a relatively short time, I would be much happier than I am now. If Parliament approves the establishment of this body, and if a clothing factory is constructed at Whyalla, we should be assured that the unemployed people at Whyalla will benefit by such a development. It serves little purpose if, after this legislation is passed and the factory is built, people from Adelaide are employed in that activity.

I have been informed that certain sheltered workshops in metropolitan Adelaide—and I know the Minister in charge of the Chamber is very interested in this subject and has always shown a deep concern for such workshops—may suffer if any of their work is taken from them and transferred to the proposed clothing factory at Whyalla. If that is likely to occur, then I think this Chamber has to look seriously at the whole legislation. It would be completely improper and unjust if contract work now enjoyed by sheltered workshops in the Adelaide metropolitan area was transferred, even at the expiry of existing contracts. In other words, when their renewal time came, if new contracts were made with this new factory in Whyalla that is a serious point upon which Parliament should satisfy itself before officially approving this scheme. I make no apology for being concerned that Government enterprises of this kind do not produce as efficiently as private enterprise.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: Like T.A.A.? What about the Savings Bank and the Commonwealth Bank?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I believe this will be another Government instrumentality where the standard of efficiency achieved will not be as high as that where private enterprise is totally involved. However, I balance that point against the need for some action to be taken by the Government to assist these people in Whyalla,

although it is an aspect I cannot overlook. I noticed in the Bill that Parliament was not given any indication about the people to be appointed to the corporation. Clause 6 provides:

(1) The corporation shall consist of five members appointed by the Governor.

That means that the Government will appoint these five members. I would like Parliament to amend that clause, so that at least one of these people should be experienced in this industry. That would give me some assurance that the industry, if it is ultimately established, would be more efficient than it otherwise would be.

It is possible, under this very wide proposal in the Bill, that five members might be appointed with no experience whatsoever in the specialised industry of clothing manufacture, and that would be a very grave error. Parliament should try to lay down at least that category and perhaps others from industry or the commercial world to be corporation members. That would tend to guarantee eventually a more efficient operation. When I read of the Government's intention, in its election policy, to establish this factory, I was under the impression that it was to be a Government-owned factory, manufacturing clothing for Government purposes.

I was under the impression that the State Clothing Corporation would assist in meeting the clothing requirements of Government departments and semi-government instrumentalities. Looking at it from that viewpoint, I thought that the State Clothing Corporation would be like the State laundry or the State frozen food factory, which organisations specialise in meeting the demands of Government instrumentalities. However, on examining the Bill carefully, I found that, whilst the corporation's functions include that form of service for Government instrumentalities, they are wider and involve the corporation's competing with the private sector.

Information supplied to me indicates that there is unemployment in the clothing industry and that demand for its products is weak; indeed, machines are idle in many clothing factories. So, if this corporation is to compete with the private sector as well as supplying the public sector, one must question whether it will be able to sell its products.

Whilst we want to alleviate unemployment in Whyalla, the people in Whyalla who are employed by this corporation will not hold their jobs for long if goods produced for the private sector cannot be sold. With the private sector in the doldrums, it would be proper to limit the corporation's activities to meeting the requirements of Government departments and instrumentalities.

The Hon. F. T. Blevins: Why not require Trans-Australia Airlines to carry only public servants?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I am not concerned with T.A.A. at present. I am concerned about the question of long-term employment for the people of Whyalla, and it will not be long-term employment for the people employed by the corporation if that corporation competes with the private sector and finds that there is no demand for its products. The Government knows that there will be a continuing demand for products required within the Government sector, and it might therefore be prudent to ensure permanency of employment by producing to satisfy the demands of that sector.

Not only is employment at risk if the corporation cannot obtain sufficient orders but also the finance made available, which is guaranteed by the Government, will be in the risk category, and I stress that that finance is the people's money. If we are to act responsibly, we should satisfy ourselves that the losses, if any, are not never-ending. I stress that any such losses would have to be

funded by the taxpayers. The financial aspect must therefore be examined very carefully.

Clause 14 provides that the corporation shall be subject to the general control and direction of the Minister; in other words, the corporation must report to the Minister annually, and its annual report will be tabled in Parliament. I support that approach, because Parliament can then question the Minister about the corporation's activities.

I have serious fears about this proposal and they are mainly based on two points: first, in view of the present depression in the clothing industry, one must seriously question whether such an operation will be viable if it competes with the private sector; and, secondly, I am concerned that losses might be incurred by the corporation.

I am also concerned about the question of the work that has in the past been made available to sheltered workshops. Will people transfer from the metropolitan area to take up employment in Whyalla? If people transfer for that purpose, that will defeat the purpose of setting up the corporation. I foreshadow several amendments to this Bill, and I shall closely follow the remainder of the debate.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): The Bill provides for a State corporation to be known as the State Clothing Corporation. According to the second reading explanation, from which I will quote to show the functions that the Government proposes for this corporation, we see:

The functions of the corporation are to be the manufacture, supply, and delivery of clothing, linen, and other textile goods required by Government departments or agencies and to carry out repairs of textile goods and other sewing work for Government departments and agencies.

I place on record that I believe the decision of the State Government to set up such a corporation is a decision that cannot be supported by the facts, if one examines them. It is an unwarranted use of taxpayers' funds in a project the viability of which is more than highly suspect.

At present, the clothing industry in South Australia has a substantially unused capacity and is more than capable of fulfilling any orders received. What case is there for public funds to be used to expand that unused capacity in South Australia? Based on that fact alone, the Bill should be defeated because, if we examine this, we find that in South Australia there is a capacity in the clothing industry to employ an extra 500 employees. That capacity is not being used, yet here is the Government about to spend probably \$1 000 000 of taxpayers' money and it will probably lose in its operation \$1 000 000 a year when already there is a capacity—

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is too much audible conversation on my right. The Hon. Mr. DeGaris.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS:—in this State that is unused. It is ridiculous when the taxpayers are to be called upon to find this money to establish another industry in Whyalla in competition with existing industry that is working well below capacity. Also, in this excess capacity in South Australia at present there are the operations of the sheltered workshops for the handicapped. The clothing industry in those sheltered workshops provides those people with a significant part of their work. There is a limitation on the variety of work that can be undertaken in such workshops, and the removal of Government contracts from these workshops must be difficult for the Government to sustain. Once the Government establishes this factory at Whyalla (or if it does that), how will the Government handle this matter, when already in some of these sheltered workshops a significant portion of the

work being done is on Government contracts dealing particularly with clothing? What has to happen is that this work has to be transferred to Whyalla. It is totally unjustified that this work now being done in sheltered workshops should be transferred to a Government clothing factory.

The Hon. J. E. Dunford: It is decentralisation; you are always talking about that.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I believe in decentralisation where it is logical but, if anyone can show me logic in spending \$1 000 000 of taxpayers' funds in establishing a new clothing factory, with the capacity already existing—

The Hon. N. K. Foster: More money than that has been spent on ventures in Whyalla; what about the pipeline?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I put this to the Hon. Mr. Foster, who is interjecting not from his seat: if the Government wishes to establish a new industry in Whyalla, if it turned to a private enterprise organisation in Adelaide at present with surplus capacity and said "We will give you \$200 000 a year to move that surplus capacity to Whyalla and we will give you contracts there", the taxpayers would be millions of dollars better off in the ensuing 10 years.

The Government is saying here, "Let us forget about the excess capacity in the industry in South Australia; let us use the taxpayers' money for purely political purposes to establish a new industry at Whyalla." If it wants to decentralise, as the Hon. Mr. Dunford says, there is a much more efficient way of doing that. It would be just as sensible if the Government decided to shift the Government laundry from Adelaide to Whyalla and carted all the dirty washing up to Whyalla and all the clean linen back. In South Australia there are about 50 clothing manufacturers. As I said, presently there is a vast excess capacity in that industry. About eight of those manufacturers are involved with Government contracts.

During its inquiries, I am informed that the first committee appointed to examine this project did not seek any advice from the clothing industry in South Australia. Indeed, the services of the representatives of the industry in South Australia were offered to the Government, but the only acceptance they received was a formal acknowledgement of the fact that they had offered their services to the Government in formulating policy on this matter.

The feasibility study made by a committee, members of which had very few qualifications to make any study of the clothing industry, was clearly rubbish. That is hardly the right word, but it was questioned strongly in the inquiry by the Select Committee on this Bill. There has been no resolution of the criticisms levelled at the feasibility study. In a press statement earlier this year, the Premier made an interesting comment which shows the appalling lack of knowledge on his part, not only of the industry, but of this particular matter. I have no doubt now that he was advised in this matter by the committee appointed to look at it. It shows an appalling lack of knowledge by the Premier and by the committee. I quote from a press article:

The committee has found areas in which the present system of tendering is unsatisfactory and excessively costly to the Government. In one instance, the South Australian Public Service is being charged between \$40 and \$50 above the New South Wales Government clothing factory charges for a comparable uniform.

That was a statement made by the Premier in the press. I believe that the first part of what the Premier said is probably correct, that the present system of tendering is unsatisfactory and excessively costly to the Government, but that is not all the fault of the private industry people. It has a lot to do with the Government itself and its method

of putting things out to tender. I repeat part of the Premier's remarks, in which he stated:

In one instance the South Australian Public Service is being charged between \$40 and \$50 above the New South Wales Government clothing factory charges for a comparable uniform.

On inquiry, I found that the comparison between New South Wales and South Australia is related to police uniforms. The Premier did not say, nor did the committee advise him, that in New South Wales police uniforms are standard machine finished, whereas in South Australia police regulations require tailored hand-finished garments. The increase in price in this case is related purely to that factor. It is perfectly obvious that if police regulations require hand-tailored garments, one will have a price in excess of the New South Wales price, where standard machine finish is the requirement. The reason for the discrepancy is obvious. That was the only discrepancy the Premier quoted and is the only variation the committee could find in prices at the New South Wales Government factory and those available in South Australia from private industry.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: Where did you get that information?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: People have a means of getting information. If the Hon. Mr. Sumner likes to do the same homework as I did—

The Hon. F. T. Blevins: We all got the same letter.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I am glad you did. It surprises me that the honourable member even read it. According to the Select Committee, if one read that report, as honourable members no doubt did, the actual working committee which made the feasibility study was not very interested, nor was their information accurate regarding the feasibility study. That is borne out by a study of the evidence of the Select Committee. There was no expertise, as far as the clothing industry was concerned, on that committee. If ever a report needed checking, it was that one. It would need an expert committee involved in the clothing industry to advise on the misinformation contained in that feasibility study.

The decision of the Government to establish this industry at Whyalla is a move that no-one closely associated with the clothing industry can understand. Already we have seen failures of the clothing factories in country areas, in establishments of this type; we have already seen a clothing industry established in Whyalla, and have seen what occurred in that industry. Other clothing industries have been established in decentralised areas in South Australia. One was at Kadina and could not exist there; it finally moved back to Adelaide. Fletcher Jones was established in Warrnambool and Mount Gambier quite successfully. That case is different, because in Warrnambool over the years, Fletcher Jones established an industry with a reservoir of expertise; they later opened a factory at Mount Gambier, which is fairly close to Warrnambool.

It does not matter how one looks at the question; if one assesses all the facts, in South Australia there is an excess capacity in the clothing industry and to expend capital funds in expanding that capacity in this State in a district where taxpayers will need to subsidise that operation substantially, one can see that this legislation is no more than pure window dressing, which will cost the taxpayers of this State a good deal of money, not only in capital funds but in maintenance after its establishment. With that evidence before me, I have only one course, and that is to vote against the second reading of this Bill.

The Hon. J. A. CARNIE: I rise to speak briefly to this

Bill, and intimate that I intend to oppose its second reading, because of one basic belief: the Government should not enter into a field which is adequately provided for by private industry. There is no question of this; this industry is adequately catered for by private enterprise. I have no objection to a Government entering into fair competition at times with private enterprise, but in this case it is not in fair competition, because merely to exist this State Clothing Corporation will have to take contracts away from private enterprise. I quote briefly from a letter received by us all today; it was evidence given by manufacturers to the Select Committee set up to study this Bill in another place.

About 40 per cent of manufacturer A's business is on Government work; 59 per cent of manufacturer B's business is on Government work; and 60 per cent of manufacturer C's business is on Government work. For the State Clothing Corporation in Whyalla to be viable, all of this work would have to be taken away from those three manufacturers and, of course, we must bear in mind that other South Australian manufacturers, too, do Government work. Evidence presented to the committee indicates that 88 people would be laid off as a direct result of this move. To lay off 88 people to provide 60 jobs in Whyalla is not very good value. If the Government says that the corporation's work will be extra work, I point out that there is unused capacity in the industry at present. The Hon. Mr. DeGaris dealt with this point.

Manufacturer A has 45 per cent unused capacity in his plant, with 24 machines currently idle; he could employ 30 additional employees if he was working at full capacity. He recently installed, at a cost of \$8 000, a hot-head press, which was purchased at the Government's request. Manufacturer B has 55 per cent unused capacity, with four machines currently idle; he could employ six additional employees if he was working at full capacity. Manufacturer C has 40 per cent unused capacity in his plant. So, there is no shortage of capacity in the industry. It can meet the Government's requirements but, for some reason, the Government wants to set up a clothing corporation and unfairly take business from private enterprise at a time when there is already unemployment in the industry.

There is also the question of the sheltered workshops. The Hon. Mr. Dunford asked whether we believed in decentralisation. Of course we do, but we also believe in protection for the under-privileged and the incapacitated people in this State. A significant proportion of the work of Bedford Industries is associated with Government contracts. This morning I spoke to the Secretary of the Phoenix Society, which had been looking forward to increasing its capacity to provide sheets for the Government. It already has a contract, which it expects to lose, because no assurance has been given that this work will continue. The society had hoped to employ additional people on this section of its work. I have sympathy for the unemployed people in Whyalla and I would support any move to provide employment for them in Whyalla, but I am not willing to do so if jobs are created in Whyalla at the expense of jobs in Adelaide or anywhere else. Of course, the number of jobs to be provided in Whyalla is smaller than the number of jobs that would be lost in Adelaide; that is not very good value.

At what cost would these jobs be created? The Government has been very cagey about this point, and no firm figure has been given. I heard that \$600 000 would be the cost of setting up the factory, but the sum of \$1 000 000 has also been mentioned. No-one seems to be sure, but it will be a fairly substantial sum, and there will be a net loss of between 25 and 30 jobs.

It has been claimed that setting up the State Clothing

Corporation in Whyalla was mentioned in the Labor Party's policy speech prior to the last State election and that, therefore, the Government has a mandate for this venture. I will not accept, and I never have accepted, that everything mentioned in the policy speech of a Party that wins government provides the Government with a mandate. Someone may believe in all the other policies of the Labor Party but not believe in setting up this clothing factory; such a person would be unlikely to change his vote because of this one issue. So, I do not believe that the Government has a mandate on this issue.

Grave doubts exist about the feasibility study and whether the factory at Whyalla will be viable. If we set up this factory, we will have to subsidise it year after year, because there is no possibility of its being a paying proposition. In the name of free enterprise in South Australia I oppose the Government's moving into a field that is already adequately catered for by private enterprise. This venture could mean that some existing factories will be forced to close their doors. I therefore oppose the second reading.

The Hon. D. H. LAIDLAW: I oppose this Bill for somewhat different reasons from those put forward by my colleagues who have already spoken in this debate. I recognise that the Government is no doubt in a difficult position because it has had to set priorities. On the one hand, there is major unemployment in Whyalla because of slack demand for steel, the rundown in the shipyards, and the closure of several metal fabricating shops, including that of Perry Engineering.

Ever since the steelworks was completed in about 1961 Whyalla has suffered from a surplus of female labour, and it is a pity that the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited did not adopt a policy at the start of using a larger percentage of female operatives, as that firm has attempted to do in recent months. If that policy had been adopted, fewer families would have moved to Whyalla over the years. Therefore, the situation confronting the Government at present is merely an accentuation of a long-standing problem.

The Government set up a working party, headed by Mr. Roy Rainsford, who was until recently Deputy Chairman of Chrysler Australia and prior to that was that firm's Chief Engineer. He is a most experienced businessman. The working party supported the establishment of a clothing factory in Whyalla and supplied a list of 40 residents, most of whom had had experience in the clothing industry and wished to work in the industry.

I do not know whether the Government approached any or many clothing manufacturers in the private sector to start operations at Whyalla, but ultimately the Government chose to establish a State clothing corporation.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon. R. A. Geddes): Order! It would be appreciated, for the benefit of *Hansard* and others, if there was less audible private conversation in the Chamber.

The Hon. D. H. LAIDLAW: The aims of the corporation in the terms of this Bill are to make and repair clothing and other textile goods required by the Government and any State instrumentalities and, in addition, to perform other such functions as are approved by the Minister; this means, in other words, to compete on the open market. I said that the Government had to set priorities, because it must have realised that handing Government clothing contracts to a new factory in Whyalla would create unemployment elsewhere. Evidence was given to the Select Committee in another place that up to 88 operatives in factories in Adelaide would lose their jobs, whilst it is claimed that only 60 would be employed at Whyalla.

The discrepancy in numbers has arisen because some factories in Adelaide are apparently running at low capacity, and this is common to most textile firms in Australia. They depend on Government contracts to cover their overheads, and without this baseload they would have a non-viable operation.

Bedford Industries, which is well known for its outstanding work in rehabilitating sick and injured people (and I am interested in it, because I was involved with its committee), made representations to the Select Committee. Apparently, it has recently invested \$15 000 in the purchase of new sewing machines to make industrial garments, overalls and dust coats for the Government. It said that between 15 per cent and 17 per cent of its factory output was for the State Government. It is all undertaken by handicapped persons, and they do not want to lose this work.

The Phoenix Society and Flinders Industries also make clothing for the Government using handicapped operatives. Whatever the needs of the unemployed at Whyalla may be, I do not think that their priority is as high as helping to rehabilitate, and for that reason I will, in Committee, support an amendment to protect the position of these sheltered workshops.

I said at the outset that I am opposed to the concept of this Bill. This is because we must strive to make industry in Australia more efficient, and this depends on skill and modern equipment. If Governments set up new factories in order to overcome a problem in a decentralised area (and the South Australian Government is certainly not alone in this respect), they will most likely cause experienced workers in established factories elsewhere to be retrenched or under-employed, and that is counter-productive.

It is immaterial whether the new factory is State owned or Government subsidised. To give an example, we have heard recently that the Federal and State Governments would like to examine, or are examining, the possibility of turning Whyalla into the major rail rolling stock manufacturing centre in Australia, and that up to 1 000 jobs could be created. That sounds fine. However, what about the 1 000 school operatives in factories of Comeng and Clyde in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, who are already producing rolling stock needed by the Australian National Railways and the State rail authorities? What becomes of them? They will not want to move their families to Whyalla and, even if they did, it would nullify the Government's efforts to employ those people who need jobs in Whyalla. Such a decision would merely deprive Australian industry of a group of skilled operatives and burden the State with the cost of new training.

I believe that the future of Whyalla depends, unfortunately, on a revival of the steel market and hopefully, with the new export incentives that are being offered by the Federal Government, Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited will be able to gain more export orders. It must be remembered that over half of its output goes overseas already, so that it has the capability to compete on overseas markets.

Whyalla has grown too large for the jobs available, and I should prefer to help move families from Whyalla to capital cities as jobs became available rather than establish a State clothing factory there at the cost of the jobs of experienced operatives elsewhere. I oppose the second reading.

The Hon. A. M. WHYTE: I rise to speak on the Bill without at this stage declaring what attitude I will adopt. This enterprise would be farcical if it was not going to cost

so much money. It will cost \$1 000 000 in the first year and the enterprise has to pay nothing more than interest on the money. There is no provision for repayment of the loan: I assume that it could be termed a grant.

I understand the position in Whyalla, and it is a tragedy that a work force of that size has little opportunity for the employment of women. However, I doubt that the unemployed women in Whyalla will be very enthusiastic about the establishment of a Government clothing factory as an alternative to the type of employment for which they have been trained. I doubt that the factory would make the position any better. Whyalla needs a lift in the world price of steel, and all the ballyhoo about Charlie Jones and his henchmen trying to blame the present Federal Government for closing down the shipyards is so much piffle.

The Hon. J. E. Dunford: It's the truth.

The Hon. A. M. Whyte: That Charlie Jones closed the shipyards down?

The Hon. J. E. Dunford: No. Fraser closed them down. A proposition was put up for Newcastle that the men could not accept. There were to be no increases and no strikes.

The Hon. A. M. Whyte: Every enterprise has peaks and troughs and, unfortunately, the trough at Whyalla has extended further than was expected. We assume that the 60 employees will be women, but nothing in the Bill lays down that they must be women.

The Hon. Anne Levy: The Sex Discrimination Act will cover that. If only women apply, only women will get the job.

The Hon. A. M. Whyte: I think the honourable member is right and that that Act would prevent any detailing that the work force be either women or men. Many men in Whyalla are unemployed, and this factory will not necessarily be a boost to the female work force. The feasibility study had a limited field to look at. All its members had to establish was that a clothing factory could be established in Whyalla and that Whyalla had the necessary facilities to conduct such an enterprise. Whatever enterprise was being taken to Whyalla, if it was to be funded from General Revenue and without any need for repayment, it could be operated there. The feasibility study means little in the overall picture of what the factory will do for Whyalla.

Evidence shows that, as a result of suggested Government contracts intended in this Bill for Whyalla, at least three of the metropolitan clothing factories will have to curtail their business, and they are so hard-pressed now that the loss of any contracts almost spells doom for them. There would be a redundancy of 80 people from those three factories.

If we talk about decentralisation, I do not know whether it is wise, at a cost of \$1 000 000 in the first year and \$1 000 000 in the second year, to transfer 60 positions to Whyalla and lose 80 in the metropolitan area. That hardly makes sense to me. I belong to the Whyalla area and have many friends there. I suppose I should not tell them that they should not have \$2 000 000 spent there. However, most of them are sound-minded people and they would not appreciate my voting for a Bill involving payment by the taxpayers of \$2 000 000 on a political false premise.

These people have fresh in their mind the glove factory, which was a fiasco. I understand the value of material that is there is almost enough to pay for a clothing factory that was never used. No-one knew how it came to be there or what it was for. Members of the South Australian Police Force have been receiving a uniform allowance, and it is now envisaged in the evidence that they will have tunics factory-made in Whyalla. I wonder what the reaction of the policemen in South Australia will be to that. I am also

wondering about the new pistols that the police are requesting to wear on the hip. My memory of factory-made uniforms is such that they would miss on the draw because the sleeve went over the hand. I do not think that members of the Police Force will react kindly if the points that have been made in favour of this factory are acted upon.

I have said all along that, even if this Bill is passed, I question the Premier's soundness of mind in entering this enterprise. He went to Malaysia and suggested bringing rice straw costing \$28 500 000 to South Australia for stock feed, but I believe he was only joking about that. If the Bill before us is placed on the Statute Book, I think the Premier will think carefully before he puts it into operation.

If we can create a situation where, say, 600 people are employed, let us do it without hesitation. That will make a difference to Whyalla, but it is unlikely that the employment of 60 persons in a clothing factory will make any real difference to the economic situation in that city. I do not think it matters much whether or not we vote for the Bill, as I am sure that the Premier will have given careful thought to the introduction of such a fantastic enterprise. I reserve my judgment until a later stage in this debate, as some honourable members have indicated that they have amendments on file and, if those amendments make the Bill workable, perhaps I will support it.

The sheltered workshops have already been touched on, and Whyalla has such a workshop, too. I refer to the wonderful efforts of citizens who have engineered and spent so much time establishing that workshop. I have not asked them what they think of this move into their field.

The Hon. F. T. Blevins: Do you know whether or not they manufacture this type of material in Whyalla?

The Hon. A. M. Whyte: Whyalla is only part of the overall complex, and 15 per cent of the present enterprise of sheltered workshops is garment fabrication for Government institutions.

The Hon. F. T. Blevins: Is that not done by just Bedford Industries?

The Hon. A. M. Whyte: No. There is the Phoenix Society, Bedford Industries, and the Whyalla group is entering into this field.

The Hon. F. T. Blevins: Does it actually make those products now?

The Hon. A. M. Whyte: So far as I know, it does.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It manufactures dust coats.

The Hon. A. M. Whyte: True, and it is an area that sheltered workshops could enter. It would not cost \$2 000 000 in two years, either. I will look carefully at the amendments. The project is a fantasy, and I do not believe it will be a profitable enterprise. It must cost taxpayers at least \$1 000 000 in the first year and possibly another \$1 000 000 in the second year. I leave my options open at this time.

The Hon. R. A. Geddes: I rise briefly to oppose this Bill in the same way as this Council opposed the Government when it had a Bill before it three years ago, in November, 1974, for the Treasurer to provide \$200 000 to help the Trades Hall get out of its financial difficulties. This Bill is an instance where the Trades Hall has given instructions to the Treasurer to establish this clothing corporation, regardless of the needs of the State's economy or of manufacturers and workers in other parts of the textile industry, particularly in the metropolitan area, who are already, as we know full well, suffering from the results of the 25 per cent tariff cut made by the Whitlam Government, which increased the imports of overseas clothing into the country to such an extent that

the total textile industry is depressed.

I therefore believe that the Treasurer has not the moral fortitude to say "No" to those who can pull the strings behind the scenes for the establishment of this expensive corporation which, one would assume, would be doomed from the beginning. This is my argument. Other honourable members have said that they felt the Government, if the Bill was passed, would not go much further, and delay the setting up of the corporation. I am certain that the instructions from Trades Hall will be to get this factory going as quickly as possible. I am opposed to it.

The Council divided on the second reading:

Ayes (13)—The Hons. D. H. L. Banfield (teller), F. T. Blevins, J. C. Burdett, M. B. Cameron, T. M. Casey, J. R. Cornwall, C. W. Creedon, J. E. Dunford, N. K. Foster, C. M. Hill, Anne Levy, C. J. Sumner, and A. M. Whyte.

Noes (5)—The Hons. J. A. Carnie, Jessie Cooper, R. C. DeGaris (teller), R. A. Geddes, and D. H. Laidlaw.

Pair—Aye—The Hon. B. A. Chatterton. No—The Hon. M. B. Dawkins.

Majority of 8 for the Ayes.

Second reading thus carried.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 5 passed.

Clause 6—"Constitution of corporation."

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

Page 2, line 16—After "Governor" insert "of whom two shall be persons experienced in the manufacture of clothing or other textile goods".

The amendment requires that not only shall the corporation consist of five members appointed by the Governor but two of such people shall be experienced in the manufacture of clothing or other textile goods. That is a proper and responsible requirement that should be in legislation of this kind.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clauses 7 to 12 passed.

Clause 13—"Powers and functions of the corporation."

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

Page 4, lines 27 to 29—Leave out all words in these lines. This amendment deals with the functions of the corporation which, as stated in the Bill, are exceedingly wide. The purpose of this amendment is to limit these functions, to require the corporation to deal with a Government instrumentality, but it has been pointed out to me, for example, that perhaps some district hospitals on the West Coast could give work to a factory of this kind which, if it was limited entirely to Government activities, should not carry out that work. Subject to the Minister's approval, the amendment will now permit that kind of work to be done in a factory of this kind.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 14 passed.

New clause 14a—"Minister to ensure that operations of corporation do not appreciably affect operations of sheltered workshops."

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): I move:

Page 5, after line 15—Insert new clause as follows:

14a. The Minister shall give such directions to the Corporation (which shall be binding on the Corporation) as are in his opinion necessary to ensure that the operations of the Corporation do not appreciably reduce the volume of work performed by workshops or institutions to which section 89 of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1972-1975, applies.

I am totally opposed to this Bill, but the House having accepted the idea of a Government clothing corporation, I

move on to the matter of amending the legislation. I am concerned that the establishment of an industry in Whyalla could be used seriously to affect the work of sheltered workshops in South Australia. This amendment preserves for them the work they are doing at present.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD (Minister of Health): The Government supports the amendment because it merely puts into the Bill what the Government intended. As a matter of fact, this measure could mean more work for the sheltered workshops. Also, it is possible that a sheltered workshop in Whyalla is training a very good machinist, who may be able to come out into open industry.

If we can encourage machinists to be trained by the workshop, and this can be done by getting work from the Government in this area, it will be beneficial not only to the trainee but also to the workshop, which receives a grant from the Federal Government for every trainee taken in.

New clause inserted.

Remaining clauses (15 to 28) and title passed.

Bill reported with amendments; Committee's report adopted.

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

That this Bill be now read a third time.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): Although the Bill has been amended, and is a better Bill than when introduced, I record my opposition to the establishment of a clothing corporation, and oppose the third reading.

The Council divided on the third reading:

Ayes (13)—The Hons. D. H. L. Banfield (teller), F. T. Blevins, J. C. Burdett, M. B. Cameron, T. M. Casey, J. R. Cornwall, C. W. Creedon, J. E. Dunford, N. K. Foster, C. M. Hill, Anne Levy, C. J. Sumner, and A. M. Whyte.

Noes (6)—The Hons. J. A. Carnie, Jessie Cooper, M. B. Dawkins, R. C. DeGaris (teller), R. A. Geddes, and D. H. Laidlaw.

Majority of 7 for the Ayes.

Third reading thus carried.

Bill passed.

Later:

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

[Sitting suspended from 6.30 to 8 p.m.]

BULK HANDLING OF GRAIN ACT AMENDMENT BILL

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

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

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

The Hon. T. M. CASEY (Minister of Lands): I move:
That this Bill be now read a second time.

It has been necessary to introduce this Bill into the Council as a matter of urgency. Honourable members are probably aware that a serious dispute has occurred in the District Council of Meningie between the majority and minority of the council and the staff over the dismissal of the District Clerk. At present the South Australian Local Government Act, unlike the Acts of all of the other States, makes no

provision for the Minister to step into a council area where for any reason the operations of local government appear to be seriously and substantially jeopardised.

From information provided to me it would appear that there is a real possibility in the District Council of Meningie that staff and creditors may not be paid over the Christmas period. I have a clear indication that the majority of the District Council of Meningie would in fact refuse to operate as a district council in the ordinary manner and would therefore place at risk employees and creditors in the approaching Christmas season and the following weeks or even months.

Honourable members will note that the proposed Act would have a very limited life and would cease to operate on May 31, 1978. Early in the next session I hope to bring in as part of amendments to the Local Government Act a suggested provision for providing the Minister with permanent power to intervene where the operations of a council are seriously and substantially jeopardised. However, this present legislation is designed to enable the Minister to handle what could otherwise be a most difficult situation in the ensuing weeks while reserving the opportunity for full Parliamentary debate of any permanent amendment to the Local Government Act.

Honourable members will note that this Bill contains a proclamation provision. If the Meningie council problem is resolved through commonsense negotiations the Minister would not recommend the proclamation of the Act.

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal. Clause 3 enacts new section 9b in the principal Act. Under subsection (1) the Minister is empowered to recommend to the Governor that a council be declared to be a defaulting council where the council fails to discharge its statutory duties or where the council is prevented from attending properly to its affairs by reason of failure of members to attend meetings of the council. Where a recommendation has been made, the Governor may, by proclamation, declare the council to be a defaulting council, and may appoint an administrator of the affairs of the council. Upon the making of the proclamation the powers of the council are suspended and the administrator takes over the conduct of the council's affairs. Any liability incurred in the course of the administration is to be satisfied out of council funds. The Minister is empowered to give directions that are necessary to facilitate the administration of the affairs of a council under the new provision. Clause 4 provides that the new Act shall expire on May 31, 1978. I ask honourable members to give this Bill a speedy passage.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): This matter has come before this Council with some urgency because of developments in the Meningie District Council. I understand the Government's position; it is unable at this late hour to bring legislation before this Council dealing only with the Meningie council's present position. Therefore this Bill applies the principle to all councils in South Australia.

In all States except South Australia and Victoria there is power for the Governor to substitute for an elected council a paid commissioner if that step is justified by the council's unsatisfactory performance. The circumstances in which the power can be exercised vary from State to State. In Queensland the power is very wide, while in New South Wales and Tasmania the power is somewhat limited. In this Bill the power is reasonably limited, although I will seek in the Committee stage to amend one clause. There are nine elected members of the Meningie District Council, and I have been informed by its Chairman, Mr. Bannon, that the five councillors who voted for the

dismissal of the District Clerk are not happy with this Bill. That goes for those who support the present Chairman and for at least some of those who have expressed their opposition to him. The Minister's second reading explanation states:

Clause 3 enacts new section 9b in the principal Act. Under subsection (1) the Minister is empowered to recommend to the Governor that a council be declared to be a defaulting council where the council fails to discharge its statutory duties or where the council is prevented from attending properly to its affairs by reason of failure of members to attend meetings of the council.

As I understand the position, there is a difficulty with the principal Act in that, if a majority of councillors wish to bring the work of a council to a standstill, they can do so simply by not attending council meetings. The procedure available in the Local Government Act is that some time must elapse before the Government can take any action to overcome this problem.

In the case of the Meningie District Council, the only thing preventing the discharge of its statutory duties has come about because of strike action. There is no suggestion that council members have failed to attend meetings or that the business of the council has been abnormally disrupted by the behaviour of the elected councillors. I am informed that it is more likely than not that the council employees currently on strike will return to work in the morning.

I am told that Judge Olsson has said that the Clerks' application in the Industrial Court for action for wrongful dismissal will be heard at first instance tomorrow morning. It is therefore hoped that there will be no need for the Government to implement the new powers given to the Minister in this Bill. A similar power exists in varying degrees in all other Local Government Acts in Australia, with the exception of the Acts in South Australia and Victoria. I believe that such a power should exist, but that it should be used by the Minister only in extreme circumstances.

It should not be used without much thought because in all council areas difficulties will arise at some time. We do not want to see a position in which the Government can capriciously step in and appoint an administrator when such an event would, in the normal course of events, be able to be solved at the local level. New section 9b (5) provides:

The Minister may, by notice in writing, give directions to any person with a view to facilitating the administration of the affairs of a defaulting council under this section.

That subsection goes too far, providing as it does that the Minister may give notice in writing to any person. I believe that what the Government intends is that it can give notice in writing to any councillor or officer of a council. There may be certain information or, say, books, which the administrator may require and which are not available. However, such books, which must be in someone's possession, should be available to the administrator. This power should be restricted to any councillor or officer of the council, so that the amendment is a perfectly fair one.

The position in Meningie is indeed unfortunate. Much heat is being generated between those who support the Tailem Bend councillors and those who are advocating the Meningie case. There is no doubt that there will soon be an inquiry into an application to change boundaries in that area, and this may well influence the events that have occurred. However, in this respect, as power exists elsewhere in Australia to varying degrees, I hope that this Bill will help to solve the problem that has developed. In Committee, I will move the amendment to which I referred.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: This Bill highlights the fact that the Government has not revised the Local Government Act as it should have done. I recall that back in 1966-67 the Labor Government established the Local Government Act Revision Committee which was given the task of—

The Hon. F. T. Blevins: You were the Minister at about that time.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I will come to that. That committee was given the task to decide how the Act should be revised. That committee sat during 1968 and, towards the end of the reign of the Hall Government, its findings were brought down and printed. When the present regime came to power in 1970, it had carried out a full inquiry regarding what should be done in relation to the Act. However, despite that, it has done nothing in the past seven years.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: Did you agree with the findings of that inquiry?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I agreed with many parts of it. However, for seven years the Government has twiddled its fingers in relation to amending the Act. Now, the chickens are coming home to roost, as the Government is in a pickle regarding Meningie. It is obvious that the Government and the Minister have not taken any notice of the report. Indeed, the Minister spends too much time at the Trades Hall. Had the Minister acted previously in this respect, the Act would by now have been amended.

In a state of panic, the Government must, as a matter of urgency, rush this Bill into the Parliament to enable it to cope with the situation relating to a relatively small council in the Meningie area that has got into trouble. The Government should be ashamed of itself for having done nothing in the past seven years about amending the Local Government Act to cover the situation.

Time and time again in this place and in another place the members of the Party of which I am a member have asked what has been or is being done about this matter. Indeed, they have urged that something be done regarding the report which the Government has had in its hands for seven years and which was indeed an expensive report.

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: Will the honourable member give way?

The PRESIDENT: That rule does not apply this session.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Government members cannot deny that in seven years the Government has done nothing about satisfactorily revising the Local Government Act, and they should therefore be ashamed of themselves. This is indeed an example of the problems that can arise as a result of the Government's inaction on this matter. I think we will see the day when further urgent measures will have to be introduced simply because the Minister has done nothing about amending the Act. As I have said, he spends too much of his time at the Trades Hall.

In this instance, I am willing to assist the Minister in his difficulties by supporting the Bill. The Minister will receive the usual co-operation that emanates from this side of the House, despite the fact that Government members always claim that members on this side obstruct the Government. I hope that Government members will try to bring some pressure to bear on their Minister urgently to revise the Act and to pay more attention to the important aspects of his office.

I make the point that Parliament should not have to consider a measure of this kind. Indeed, had the Act been kept up to date in order to cope with the modern-day situation, there would have been no necessity for this Bill to be introduced. Government members cannot deny that this illustrates that the Act is outdated, especially bearing in mind that the report of the committee set up by the Government was made seven years ago.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I think the honourable member is becoming repetitious.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Very well, Sir. I now move to my final point, which relates to new section 9b(5) to which my Leader referred. It deals with subsection (5) of new section 9b, by which the Minister still wants to retain power to keep his finger in this pie. He will appoint the administrator, but he should then give him necessary power to carry out his duties in an emergency such as this.

However, the Minister gives some control to the administrator and then says, "I will keep a surveillance over this." The subsection provides that the Minister may, by notice in writing, give directions to any person with a view to facilitating the administration of the affairs of a defaulting council. What point is there in giving power to an administrator if the administrator is not given power to put the council affairs in order?

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: What happens if the administrator goes off the rails?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Is the honourable member suggesting that a Minister would appoint an administrator who would go off the rails?

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: No, but the council did.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: That has nothing to do with a Ministerial appointment. The administrator ought to be allowed to keep a check and put things in order, but that is not the case here. I compare this somewhat to the precedent of Whyalla, where a Commissioner was in charge of the whole of the affairs.

The Hon. F. T. Blevins: He was not in charge of them at all.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: It was not local government under the Local Government Act.

The Hon. F. T. Blevins: It was not a single administrator, either, and you, as a Minister at one time, ought to know that. That body was partly elected and partly appointed.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The Commissioner had all the power. The Minister ought to keep out of the scene and allow the administrator to carry out his responsibilities. That would be a far more satisfactory arrangement than the proposal in the Bill. However, I want to co-operate with the Government.

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: I support the second reading for the reasons that have been given by the Minister and the Hon. Mr. DeGaris. The Hon. Mr. DeGaris was concerned about how wide the powers in subsection (5) of new section 9b were, and I share his concern. I will support the amendment. I am concerned about the lack of definition of the circumstances in which the Minister may exercise this power. Clause 3 provides that where, in the opinion of the Minister, a council has refused or failed to carry out the duties or functions imposed upon, or assigned to, the council under this Act, the Minister may recommend to the Governor that the council be declared to be a defaulting council.

That gives no definition of the circumstances in which he may make the recommendation. In any circumstances at all, if the Minister forms the opinion that the council has failed to carry out the duties or functions imposed on it or assigned to it under the Act, he can recommend to the Governor that the council be declared a defaulting council, and then wide powers would operate. It seems that there needs to be some definition of the circumstances, facts and particularity of where a council may be in default.

I am pleased to support the second reading because it is an emergency Bill and applies for a limited period of six months. I trust that, when a permanent Bill is introduced,

the provision about whether or not a council has failed to carry out its duties will not let the power rest only with the Minister, and I hope that the provision as now set out in subsection (5) will have more particulars about the circumstances that have justified the Minister in deciding that the Council has failed to carry out its duties.

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: I support the Bill. The fact that the Government in South Australia is taking this action does not mean that a precedent is being set in Australia. Most States have set the example and some have set a far worse example than others. The Hon. Mr. DeGaris has said that some States have provisions of this kind. He mentioned New South Wales, Tasmania and Queensland.

The provision in the Queensland legislation should be read for the information of honourable members. In that State, the Governor-in-Council may dissolve a council and substitute a Commissioner "in his absolute discretion". In Western Australia, the position is different. There, the Governor's power to replace a council by a Commissioner is limited to the case in which the Governor is of the opinion that the council is not properly carrying out local government or the powers conferred and duties imposed upon it by an Act. Although the Western Australian legislation is expressed in the form of limitations upon the power to substitute a Commissioner for the council, those limitations are stated so broadly that they are not very much more restrictive than the Queensland legislation.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: They are much more restrictive.

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: That is not in accordance with my information. Some provision to meet situations such as the affairs of the Meningie District Council should exist. I know that the Government at present intends only to make this a temporary provision, but hopefully the future will see the possibility of internal dispute and open strife by elected members or staff members catered for by a firm provision in the Act. I feel that I can now raise the matter of the Royal Commission that inquired into local government boundaries.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: That is what the Hon. Mr. Hill has spoken about.

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: He forgot to say that anything raised by the Labor Government about local government areas is so watered down by the Opposition as to be useless. I have no intention of being critical of the elected members or the staff members in this issue. Had the report of the Royal Commission been acceptable to the Opposition, it is doubtful (in fact, extremely unlikely) that this dispute would have arisen, because the "bottom end" of Meningie District Council would have become associated with Coonalpyn Downs and the Tailem Bend section would have joined with Murray Bridge, with which the people would have been more compatible.

That is not the wish that they have expressed at present. Those from the Tailem Bend District Council have expressed a wish to sever from the present council and to join their adjoining council, the District Council of Peake. Perhaps that is something that should have to be considered in future. Probably they have had negotiations with the Peake District Council and hope to join it. Perhaps they have found out how difficult it is to overcome the obstacles of severance in the Local Government Act and this is their means of precipitating matters.

I reiterate that the Act is so watered down from the Government's intention to make it possible for local government areas to sever from a council and join another, despite the good intentions of the Opposition,

that it is practically impossible to achieve that end. Whatever the facts of the dispute are, the Minister has an urgent and serious matter on his hands and, if he is to solve it by negotiation, he must have the power to ensure that functions of local government continue without hindrance in the council area. In supporting the Bill, I hope there is no hindrance from members of the Opposition.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY (Minister of Lands): I thank honourable members for their consideration of the Bill at such short notice. I refer to points raised by honourable members opposite, especially by the Hon. Mr. Hill, who always talks with a forked tongue and who tries to make political capital out of any legislation that comes before this Chamber. The honourable member referred to the time available to the Minister of Local Government to introduce legislation, yet I have often heard the honourable member compliment local government on its shining example in the community as if nothing was wrong with it. There have been many times when amendments have been made to the Local Government Act in this Chamber when the honourable member could have moved amendments, or could have even introduced a private member's Bill. He did not, and all he does is criticise the Minister and try to gain political capital whenever he gets on his feet on local government matters. When the honourable member was Minister of Local Government he was too busy running his business. References by the honourable member about the Minister of Local Government are ill founded and I hope that, when amendments come in in the autumn session of Parliament to cover this problem, the Hon. Mr. Hill will support them in their entirety.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Defaulting councils."

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): I move:

Page 2—Leave out from subsection (5) of proposed section 9b the passage "any person" and insert "any member or officer of a defaulting council". Leave out from the same subsection the passage "a defaulting council" and insert "the council".

First, I support the views of the Hon. Mr. Burdett.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: Do you agree with the Queensland situation?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: No, I do not. I believe there is a necessity for such power to be in the hands of the Minister, but it should be exercised under strict guidelines that should be incorporated in the principal Act. If there is any obstruction to the ability of an administrator appointed under the new amendment, the Minister may, in writing, facilitate the administration of the affairs of that council. It may be that certain books have been removed from the council office, or a number of things, but this provision should apply only to a councillor or an officer of the council. The words "any person" are too wide in relation to the powers of the Minister.

The Hon. T. M. CASEY (Minister of Lands): The Government has no objection to the amendment. I see what the Leader is getting at and I am willing to accept the amendment on the Government's behalf.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 4 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

Later:

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

VERTEBRATE PESTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL**ADJOURNMENT**

Returned from the House of Assembly without amendment.

At 9.5 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, December 14, at 9.30 a.m.