

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, December 14, 1977

The **PRESIDENT (Hon. F. J. Potter)** took the Chair at 9.30 a.m. and read prayers.

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:

Magill Home Conversion,
Port Lincoln Hospital Redevelopment.

QUESTIONS

SOUTHERN DRUG COMPANY

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

The **Hon. R. C. DeGARIS**: In the financial page of yesterday's News is a report headed "Wholesale chemist battle looms", part of which is as follows:

A storm is brewing in the local wholesale pharmaceutical industry over a change in control of the Southern Drug Company Limited. The founder of Southern Drug, Mr. A. E. Williamson, has sold control to the major Victorian based Sigma Company Limited.

Mr. Williamson has sold his 800 "A" class shares, which have special voting rights, for an undisclosed sum. These are the sole "A" class shares and outweigh the remaining issued 125 125 ordinary "B" class shares held by retail pharmacists and others who have had no say in the matter.

I do not object to normal commercial transactions between interstate companies. However, I consider that in this case, where an interstate company is buying 800 shares against the wishes of the vast number of retailers who also have a large interest in Southern Drug Company Limited, it is a matter that should engage the Government's attention. Will the Government examine the matter to see whether the wishes of the vast majority of shareholders in Southern Drug Company Limited can be heard in this matter and so that this company remains under South Australian control?

The **Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD**: I am interested that the Leader is at least taking an interest in share transactions amongst companies. It is a pity that the same interest has not been shown in relation to other companies. I will certainly refer the matter to the Government for investigation.

WINGFIELD DUMP

The **Hon. J. E. DUNFORD**: I seek leave to make a statement before asking the Minister of Health a question regarding the Wingfield dump.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. J. E. DUNFORD**: I have spent much time in recent years in the vicinity of Mansfield Park. Indeed, I was driving through that suburb at 7 a.m. today, when I witnessed the pollution from Wingfield dump. Although I am not a judge of area, I think that the whole area stretching as far as one could see had a thick and polluted atmosphere nearly a mile high, and this was emanating from the Wingfield dump. I have not received a complaint

about this, and I do not normally complain about something in the Council unless my constituents have raised it with me. However, I recall, without being definite regarding specific details, that over a number of years residents in the area have complained about this matter but that, for some legal reason, the dump operator has been able to burn tyres and other refuse, resulting in the continual pollution of this area.

I ask the Minister to have the area checked as soon as possible to ascertain the amount of pollution in the atmosphere and to confer with the Attorney-General with a view to bringing about the closure of the dump until the pollution can be controlled. If the pollution cannot be controlled, I believe that no burning should be allowed in this vicinity. There is no doubt that it is a regular occurrence, and is polluting the atmosphere. I should have been lacking in my duty to my constituents in the area if I had not brought to the attention of the Minister the conditions I saw there this morning.

The **Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD**: The Wingfield dump has been a source of concern to the Enfield council and to the department for some time. Efforts have been made to see what can be done to stop the polluting of the atmosphere. The extent of waste disposal is an important question which has been looked at by a waste disposal committee, through which it is hoped to control dumping so that it occurs in locations where it will not be offensive to people in the area. We will keep a close watch on the situation to see what can be done.

MARLA BORE

The **Hon. A. M. WHYTE**: Will the Minister of Health seek a reply from the Minister of Community Welfare to a question I asked almost two months ago regarding the possible establishment of a roadhouse at Marla Bore and the type of licence that would be granted to such an enterprise, since it is of concern to the people living at Indulkana, who would like a reply?

The **Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD**: I shall get a reply and post it to the honourable member.

TWO-INCOME FAMILIES

The **Hon. ANNE LEVY**: I seek leave to make a short statement before directing a question to the Minister of Agriculture, representing the Minister of Education, on the subject of a letter in this morning's newspaper.

Leave granted.

The **Hon. ANNE LEVY**: In this morning's paper there appears what seems to me a rather extraordinary letter from the Chairman of the Board of Advanced Education, in which he deplores two-income families, particularly in relation to the teaching profession, and suggests that if each family has only one income this would lead to an increase in employment opportunities. Whilst undoubtedly this is the case, I feel that it is a quite unwarranted attack, in particular, on married women. People who put forward these arguments rarely carry them to the logical conclusion of suggesting that any adult child who is employed should leave home so that there are not two incomes in that household, which is just as logical a conclusion from the premise from which they started. It seems to me quite unwarranted to make scapegoats—

The **PRESIDENT**: Order! I think the honourable member is debating the whole matter, and this is not allowed in explanation.

The **Hon. N. K. Foster**: I thought the debate was over on

the other side of the Chamber. You can hear their conversations clearly.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The honourable member need not join in.

The Hon. N. K. Foster: You don't disagree with me either.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: Will the Minister assure us that it is not Government policy to encourage two-income families to become one-income families, however the two-income families may be defined, and that the provisions of the sex discrimination laws will be firmly adhered to by the Government?

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: I will refer the question to the Minister of Education and ask him to reply to the honourable member by letter.

HOSPITAL INTERPRETERS

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I ask the Minister of Health whether he has a reply to my recent question concerning hospital interpreters.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: After examining the case report relating to the patient concerned, I am satisfied that this Russian gentleman was well catered for and that the services of the Translator and Interpreter Service of the Federal Department of Social Security were not required in this instance. Hospital staff are very much aware of the need to arrange for interpreters to assist non-English-speaking patients.

HEALTH FUNDS

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I seek leave to make a statement prior to asking a question of the Minister of Health, as Leader of the Council.

The PRESIDENT: The subject matter is?

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Health insurance funds. Leave granted.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Members will recall that in the past few weeks I raised the matter of the possibility or otherwise of an increase in contributions to health insurance funds, reports of which were published in almost all sections of the media. Indeed, the Federal Minister for Health (Mr. Hunt) denied that there would be any increase in almost any area of health benefits, whether private funds or Medibank. We have seen reports of what might have happened if the newly-elected Government was in office or what might happen if it had been defeated. Even Max Harris got on the bandwagon last weekend and praised the Leader of the Opposition. We could refer to Max Harris as "Max Murdoch's Mail molecule," or something of that kind. I suppose he is a man of some little substance, but the fact remains that there has been talk by the private health funds about there being an increase of about 15 per cent or 20 per cent. I ask what authority or influence remains with State Government instrumentalities about ensuring that the public of South Australia can be protected in some way against the proposed increases in private medical fund contributions that seem likely to occur because of a press statement in the *Advertiser* on Monday by Mr. Moon, a prominent official of those funds. Further, I ask whether it is a fact that the sole right and responsibility rests with the funds and the Federal Minister, or whether any State Minister can exert influence on the position.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The State Government cannot exert any authority over the Federal Government: the funds are under the dictates of the Federal

Government. It is interesting to read that there may be an increase in contributions to the funds. It seems that contributions may increase by \$1, and possibly by \$2, a week.

STATE CORONER

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: I understand that the Minister of Health has a reply to a question I asked recently regarding the State Coroner. Will the Minister please give that reply?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: It is proposed to appoint a stipendiary magistrate as a deputy coroner to assist with the coronial work during the annual leave of the State Coroner.

PARLIAMENTARY BUSINESS

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: I seek leave to make a statement prior to directing a question to you, Mr. President, on the subject of the possible publication in the *Advertiser* of the daily list of business and proceedings in Parliament.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: You will recall that, soon after my election to Parliament in July, 1975, I raised with you the question of the *Advertiser*, or the daily press generally in this State, including a list of Parliamentary business so that the citizens of South Australia would have a better idea of what matters were currently before the Parliament. When I first asked the question, you undertook to take the matter up, particularly with the *Advertiser*, to find out whether anything could be done. On November 11, 1975, you received from the Editor-in-Chief of the *Advertiser* (Mr. Colquhoun) a letter that stated:

Dear Mr. Potter, Thank you for your letter of September 24 informing us of Mr. Sumner's suggestion that we publish a brief summary of the Notice Paper of the day in both Houses of Parliament. I must apologise for my delay in replying. We have looked at this proposition a number of times, and we are still considering it. There are internal and domestic reasons why it is more difficult than it would appear on the surface, and I'm afraid we cannot do it immediately. However, the Editor, Mr. Riddell, is interested and asks me to assure you that he has the service very much in mind.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: Does that include regulations as well?

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: That would be a good idea. Any action taken to make the proceedings of Parliament, including regulations currently under review, better known to the public would be highly desirable. Following receipt of that letter, I asked supplementary questions and you, Mr. President, said that there might be some difficulties, and that you had attended a Presiding Officers' conference at which the matter had been discussed. You said that this practice had been tried in Tasmania, but difficulties had arisen because the Notice Paper was not followed precisely every day, thus causing some confusion. I understood that the matter was still being considered. Can you say, Sir, whether there have been any further developments in this matter and, if there have not been, would you be prepared to take the matter up again with the *Advertiser* or the *News*?

The PRESIDENT: There have been no further developments, but I will take up this matter again with the *Advertiser*, in particular, because that newspaper prints the daily business of the courts, and it seems to me that

that is the appropriate newspaper with which to discuss this matter. I will try to ascertain whether something can be done, and I will convey to the *Advertiser* Editor the statements made by the honourable member.

GOVERNMENT CARS

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Has the Minister of Health a reply to my recent question about Government cars?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The type of cars best suited for Government use is a matter that is continually monitored. The Government holds the view that the Ford LTD car is best suited to the tasks required to be performed by Ministers.

HOUSING DEALS

The Hon. J. E. DUNFORD: Has the Minister of Health a reply to the question I asked some time ago concerning housing deals?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I have been advised by the Attorney-General and Minister of Prices and Consumer Affairs that his Consumer Legislation Advisory Committee is currently giving consideration to the question of making it mandatory for prospective purchasers to be supplied with details of rates of repayments. Consideration will also be given to the honourable member's suggestion in relation to advertisements of home package deals.

HOSPITALS DEPARTMENT

The Hon. J. A. Carnie, for the Hon. M. B. CAMERON: Has the Minister of Health a reply to the question recently asked about the Hospitals Department?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: In reply to the Hon. Mr. Cameron's question on October 13, I point out that the police were seeking persons suspected of malpractice in Government hospital food services. Mr. Baker, Director of Management Services of the Hospitals Department, verbally alerted the police to the possibility of the theft of foodstuffs from the Northfield Wards, late in February, 1975.

FAMILY TRUSTS

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Has the Minister of Health a reply to my question concerning family trusts?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: In reply to questions asked by both the Hon. Mr. Foster and the Hon. Mr. DeGaris, I inform them that details of family trusts are not available, as they are not required to be registered as such.

FURTHER EDUCATION

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking a question of the Minister representing the Minister of Education about further education matters.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: Some years ago the Barossa Technical School was amalgamated with the Gawler Technical School, which has now become known

as the Gawler College of Further Education. Recently the Barossa branch of the Gawler college has been granted the use of the old Nuriootpa Primary School, following completion some months ago of the new primary school in that town. The old primary school may serve a purpose for further education, but it needs considerable alteration to make it suitable for night classes, especially regarding the provision of adequate lighting and certain other facilities. Therefore, will the Minister find out from his colleague, and possibly let me know by correspondence, what arrangements are contemplated in order to make the old Nuriootpa Primary School an adequate branch of the Gawler College of Further Education?

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: I shall refer the honourable member's question to the Minister of Education and ask for a reply.

MOTOR VEHICLE TRANSACTION

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: I seek leave to make a short explanation prior to directing a question to the Minister of Health, representing the Attorney-General, concerning a chattel mortgage over a motor vehicle financed by Australian Guarantee Corporation Limited.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: I have been approached by some constituents who are invalid pensioners and who have found themselves in an unfortunate situation as a result of the purchase of a motor vehicle. In August, 1976, my constituents purchased a 1970 Morris sedan, the finance being provided by A.G.C. Limited, and the purchase price was \$2 495. About a week after the purchase, on August 10, 1976, my constituents were involved in an accident in which the vehicle was damaged to the extent that it was a write-off. The value of the vehicle was then assessed by independent valuers at \$1 400.

A.G.C., in addition to advancing money for the purchase of the vehicle, the purchase price being some \$1 000 in excess of the vehicle's market value, insured the vehicle. The position has arisen whereby the company's chattel mortgage section is now claiming from my constituents the balance of the money due to it, although A.G.C. Insurances provided the comprehensive insurance cover for the vehicle, and A.G.C. Limited provided the credit (\$1 000 in excess of its market value). It was quite clear that both the dealer—the seller of the vehicle—and A.G.C. Limited—the credit supplier—had in fact been involved in the sale of the vehicle to the constituents at a price of about \$1 000 above its true market value.

The situation now is that, as the insurers (A.G.C. Insurances) have paid only the market value of the vehicle, the chattel mortgage section of A.G.C. is claiming the balance due of about \$690. The five questions I would like referred to the Attorney-General are as follows:

1. Has the attention of the Attorney-General, in his capacity as Minister of Prices and Consumer Affairs, been drawn to this matter?
2. Has the Minister or the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs been able to take any remedial action?
3. Does the Government have any intention of altering the law to extend its consumer protection laws to cover this situation?
4. Does the Attorney believe that A.G.C. has acted fairly and reasonably in this matter?
5. Would the Minister be prepared to ask A.G.C. to waive the amount owing to it?

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

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Council at its rising do adjourn until Tuesday, February 7, 1978, at 2.15 p.m.

As this is the last sitting before Christmas, I take the opportunity of extending season's greetings to you, Mr. President, and all members of the Council, the Clerks at the table and across on the other side of the Chamber, (including Mrs. Jan Davis, who adds some beauty to this place), members of the *Hansard* staff, who, we see next day, always give us a good story, and the newspaper reporters, whose efforts (although we may complain about these people from time to time) we appreciate. I extend season's greetings to all the staff, including the messengers and the people looking after the dining-room.

It has been a good session so far. From time to time we may not have been able to convince everybody that we were right in our discussions, but this should not take anything away from our expressions of goodwill at this time. Again, I extend to everyone the season's greetings.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS (Leader of the Opposition): I have much pleasure in supporting the remarks made by the Minister of Health. On behalf of the members I lead in this Council, I extend season's greetings to you, Mr. President, and all members, officers at the table, and all

the staff of Parliament House. I thank them for their assistance during the past 12 months. I think we appreciate that, because of the early election called in South Australia, we have not completed much work up until the present time: that is to be expected with the session not beginning until October 6. Most honourable members realise that the major part of the session will occur in the autumn of 1978.

We look forward once again to the co-operation of the Leader of the Government in this Chamber, as indeed we have received such co-operation on most occasions in the past. I assure him of co-operation from this side of the Council in considering legislation as expeditiously as possible in the interests of all people in this State. Again, I support the Minister's remarks and extend season's greetings to all members of the Council.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Leader of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition for the season's greetings they have extended to me, and I join with them in extending my greetings to all members of the Council and to all members of the staff of this place who help us considerably throughout the year, this year certainly having been no exception.

Motion carried.

At 10 a.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday, February 7, 1978, at 2.15 p.m.