

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday 17 October 1978

The **PRESIDENT (Hon. A. M. Whyte)** took the Chair at 2.15 p.m. and read prayers.

MINES AND WORKS INSPECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the Bill.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: HOSPITAL FOOD

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD (Minister of Health): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I wish to report to the Council that a failure occurred in the refrigeration plant in the food store at the Royal Adelaide Hospital which resulted in the loss of food valued at \$19 793. An interim report on the matter, which I received today, indicates that the equipment may have been sabotaged. In view of this and other matters to which I will refer later, I have today asked the Public Service Board to carry out a full-scale investigation into the incident. The Chairman of the Public Service Board (Mr. David Mercer) has been requested to draw up suitable terms of reference and nominate personnel for the inquiry team. This investigation will be in addition to the police investigation I have already initiated.

I will now cite to the house the sequence of events in connection with this incident, as reported to me. Bearing in mind that a full-scale investigation is to be carried out and that the police are also investigating this matter, there are some matters referring to specific people which I will not detail. The malfunction of the equipment was first reported at 8.15 a.m. on Tuesday 10 October, although the state of the food in the store would indicate that the fault occurred at about 3 p.m. on the previous day. Precooked frozen food in the store is normally held at minus 23°C, so it would take some considerable time for it to increase in temperature to 0°C or some temperature near this. The store is designed to hold 1 400 cartons of precooked food. On 10 October, about 400 cartons were in the store.

The store is provided with a visual alarm system: a red light is located in the kitchen, and this flashes if the temperature in the store rises above minus 15°C. There is also a dial thermometer adjacent to the alarm light and a further thermometer near the freezer door. These indicate the temperature within the store. This system was provided after discussion with the Services Superintendent at the hospital. Refrigeration for the store is provided by three refrigeration units. Normally one is sufficient, but another unit will come on automatically if the temperature rises. The third unit can be switched in manually in an emergency. The company which installed the refrigeration equipment is still responsible for the servicing and maintenance of it.

The malfunction was attributed to the disconnection of the automatic defrost from the system. This provides for ice which collects on the evaporator coils in the freezer to be removed periodically. If this is not done, the evaporator freezes solid, heat transfer drops off, the compressors ice up, and equipment stops on low head pressure. The equipment controls include a switch on each

unit which enables the plant to be operated either manually for testing purposes, or automatically for running. The serviceman reported that this switch on each unit was in the manual position when he arrived. This indicates that it is likely that someone had tampered with the controls. To do this, it would be necessary to have access to a plant room key, as this room is normally locked.

That basically is the situation as reported to me. There are several aspects of this matter with which I am completely dissatisfied. I cannot understand why, if the malfunction occurred at about 3 p.m. on Monday 9 October, it was not reported until Tuesday 10 October at 8.15 a.m. I am also informed that, despite the initial report at 8.15 a.m. on 10 October, the contractors were not contacted to send a maintenance man until 9 a.m. I am also dissatisfied at the lack of sense of urgency in obtaining remedial action. Indeed I, as the relevant Minister, was not informed of this incident until Friday last, 13 October. I immediately instructed that the police be informed, and also instigated action which led to my receiving today's preliminary report from departmental officers.

It is the disturbing information I have received in today's report that has led me to launch a full-scale investigation. I believe this is the only satisfactory way in which to confirm or disprove the serious allegations relating to sabotage and the apparent deficiencies in procedures adopted to remedy the failure.

NOARLUNGA CENTRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The **PRESIDENT** laid on the table the report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence, on Noarlunga Centre Community College.

QUESTIONS

HOSPITAL FOOD

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Regarding his Ministerial statement, will the Minister of Health bring into this Council and table in due course the reports of the Public Service Board and the Police Commissioner concerning the investigations that he has set in train?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The reports will be considered by Cabinet and, following Cabinet discussion, a decision will be made on whether a report will be tabled.

MEAT PIES

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: Has the Minister of Health a reply to my question of 23 August concerning meat pies?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Meat pies manufactured and marketed in Adelaide by various manufacturers have been tested by local boards of health to check the meat content. No prosecutions have been undertaken as a result of these investigations. The development of a satisfactory sampling method has recently been completed, and a regulation prescribing this procedure will be made in the near future when this regulation has been approved and gazetted. Prosecutions may then be undertaken. The investigation indicated that, of the 27 samples tested, 23 were below the standard prescribed in the food and drug regulations. As the manufacturers concerned have not been prosecuted and convicted, it would not be appropriate to publicise their names.

HOSPITAL FOOD

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Health a question about his Ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: In making his Ministerial statement about the wastage of about \$19 000 worth of food at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, the Minister stated:

There are several aspects to this matter with which I am completely dissatisfied . . . I am also dissatisfied at the lack of sense of urgency in obtaining remedial action.

Recently, there has been much publicity about food wastage in South Australian hospitals. When that loss was drawn to the attention of the South Australian public, was the Minister dissatisfied with the matter then, and is he concerned about the lack of urgency at this stage about the wastage of food in South Australian hospitals?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: We are concerned about any loss that takes place within the Government. Investigations are made as soon as the matters are reported.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION: FALSE ADVERTISING

The Hon. J. R. CORNWALL: I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J. R. CORNWALL: Last Wednesday, I directed a question to the Attorney-General regarding possible misleading advertising by certain major developers in the West Lakes area. In the explanation of that question, I queried the validity of inferences that have been made frequently in promoting the area concerning community and youth facilities. It has subsequently been brought to my attention that, in the West Lakes area north of the Boulevard, some facilities have been provided. The Education Department has provided primary schools at Semaphore Park and West Lakes Shore. Youth facilities at the recently restored Bower cottages have been provided as a joint effort between the Housing Trust and the Community Welfare Department. A new squash centre located behind the Leg Trap Hotel has excellent amenities. The combined West Lakes parish offers facilities for community use.

I apologise for any inconvenience or disadvantage that my remarks might have caused people of goodwill involved in these activities. However, the core of my complaint remains: there are numerous examples of broken encumbrances and bent promises. Many statements made by developers have been sufficiently vague to be interpreted as they saw fit at a later date; for example, oblique references have been made in the promotion of the area to tennis and lawn bowls clubs. Generalised and misleading phrases such as "other major facilities" are frequently used.

A specific example was the considerable publicity given to the provision of a combined church facility. It is significant that the Church of England, after considerable deliberation and discussion, did not elect to participate. Its decision was certainly not based on any lack of ecumenical spirit. It was a valid objection to the tokenism involved in setting aside only one very limited area for worship and general church activity in the West Lakes complex.

References have been made in rebuttal of my criticism to the restaurants, hotel, service clubs and numerous attractive commercial ventures and aquatic sports available in the area. This misses the point that there is still

a very large gap in the overall facilities available to adolescents and teenagers. The great majority of my complaints remain valid, particularly in the area south of the Boulevard.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: You're debating the matter.

The Hon. J. R. CORNWALL: I am not. The West Lakes development is technically an extremely successful one. The building industry has made an excellent contribution with a wide range of housing that is both functional and very attractive. I have no wish to join the ranks of West Lakes knockers. As a resident who is no more or less mortal than other human beings, I have an interest in seeing the value of my home maintained.

However, I also have a right and a duty to point to deficiencies that could lead to irreversible environmental and social problems if action is not taken now. I make no apology for my belief that the social and moral obligations of major developers should transcend their narrow legal obligations. I concede that profit must remain a prime concern, but surely it should not be the only one.

It seems incongruous that, while local residents are preparing to go cap in hand to the Tourism, Recreation and Sport Department for grants to build tennis courts, developers are spending a fortune to bulldoze sandhills adjacent to the foreshore.

CITRUS INDUSTRY

The Hon. JESSIE COOPER: Has the Minister of Lands a reply to the question that the Hon. Mr. Geddes asked the Minister of Agriculture recently regarding the citrus industry?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: A survey of multi-purpose grapegrowers, conducted by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, revealed that Riverland grapegrowers received over 60 per cent of their income from sources other than grapes in 1974-75. This was much higher than the average of 30 per cent for all regions surveyed. To be included in the above survey, growers in the Riverland needed at least 3.2 hectares of multi-purpose grapes. It was estimated that there were 895 such growers in the Riverland. It was further estimated that there were another 1 200 growers with less than 3.2 hectares of grapes. These growers would receive nearly all their income from other sources.

A further survey of citrus growers by the bureau revealed that those in the Riverland earned over 55 per cent of their income from sources other than citrus in 1974-75. The average for all regions was 41 per cent. A grower needed over 2.8 hectares of citrus to be included in the above survey. There were an estimated 716 such growers in the Riverland. There were about 500 other growers with less than 2.8 hectares of citrus. Such growers would earn nearly all their income from other sources.

RUBBER TYRES

The Hon. D. H. LAIDLAW: I seek leave to make a brief statement before asking the Minister of Health, representing the Premier, who is in charge of economic development, a question regarding the disposal of used rubber tyres.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D. H. LAIDLAW: Some years ago, the Industrial Development Advisory Council studied ways of making commercial use of about 1 000 000 rubber tyres that are discarded in South Australia each year. It is

wasteful not to reclaim the rubber when up to 33 litres of crude oil can be needed to produce one tyre, yet only 10 per cent up to 15 per cent of the rubber is used before the tyre is thrown away.

One suggestion made was to burn these tyres at a plant at Yatala and to pipe the steam emitted therefrom to the Government laundry nearby. Another suggestion was to dump the tyres into St. Vincent Gulf and create an artificial reef that might attract fish. Although this was tried as an experiment, it drew protests from ecologists.

I draw the Minister's attention to a company, Safety Surfaces Limited, which is incorporated in Western Australia and is soon to be turned into a public company and which has a rubber recycling plant. It freezes old tyres, in which frozen condition the rubber can then be broken into crumbs.

It is expanding the capacity of the plant to handle up to 1 000 000 old tyres annually in Western Australia. The rubber crumbs are being used, or will be used, when mixed with bitumen, for road surfacing, running tracks, tennis courts, cricket pitches, bowling greens, to waterproof mine shafts, to line pipes, and for weather-resistant outdoor paving mats. Is the Economic Development Department aware that a Western Australian company is freezing old tyres and making use of the surplus rubber for commercial purposes? Could the South Australian Development Corporation investigate the economic viability of this process and, if favourable, encourage a local company with expertise to establish a rubber recycling plant using the cryogenic process in this State?

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

INSURANCE COSTS

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: Has the Minister of Health a reply to the Hon. Miss Levy's recent question about insurance costs?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Any new life insurance office will incur in the early years establishment costs that represent a higher percentage of premium income than can be achieved by offices that have been operating for many years where the major part of total premium income is renewal premiums. As the State Government Insurance Commission has been operating in the area of life insurance for only six months, it is too early to assess accurately what the expense rate will be as a percentage of premium income. However, as S.G.I.C. does not pay commission to agents or salesmen, the rate is expected to be considerably lower than that of other offices where commission alone can account for 100 per cent of the first year's premium.

PENALTY RATES

The Hon. J. E. DUNFORD: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking the Minister of Health, representing the Minister of Labour and Industry, a question about Sunday penalty rates and employment in industry.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J. E. DUNFORD: I refer the Council to an article in the press on Monday attributed to the Opposition spokesman on industrial affairs, Mr. Dean Brown.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Hear, hear!

The Hon. J. E. DUNFORD: I hope the honourable member does not agree with Mr. Dean Brown's statement.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Yes; I do agree with it.

The PRESIDENT: Never mind the Hon. Mr. Hill. The Hon. Mr. Dunford should continue with his explanation.

The Hon. J. E. DUNFORD: The article is headed "Sunday penalty rates are immoral". I have followed Mr. Dean Brown's career, and there are very few people to whom I have spoken since Monday who agree with his statement. In fact, there are more employers than workers who disagree with it. I am referring to people to whom I have spoken recently. People experienced in industrial affairs know that, if employers give workers minimum rates of pay, the employers can expect only a minimum return. If employers want extra work from a person they should, in all fairness, offer more than the minimum rate of pay. If we are to have a tourist industry, many things must happen; most important of all, we must have capable staff. In some other countries, particularly Asian countries, the rates of pay are 10 times lower than those applying in the Australian tourist industry in connection with accommodation, goods and services.

This happens in the United States of America and also in London, where penalty rates are not as high as those in Australia. I believe that some matters ought to be replied to and I will put to the Minister a question in seven parts, as follows:

1. Are penalty rates paid in the tourist industry (such as in hotels) three times the normal rate on Sundays?
2. What effect would the reduction in penalty rates have had on service and the availability of labour?
3. How do South Australian costs to the tourist for such things as accommodation, food and drinks compare with those in Europe, U.S.A., and Asia?
4. How do the low penalty rates in overseas countries reflect in the cost to tourists?
5. If overtime in industry was abolished, how many additional jobs would be created?
6. If it was possible to get agreement in the application of "one man, one woman, one job", how many new vacancies could occur?
7. Is it a fact that many employers find it extremely profitable to have employees work excess overtime rather than to employ additional labour?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I will refer the matter to my colleague and bring back a reply.

LAND TITLES

The Hon. K. T. GRIFFIN: Has the Minister of Lands, in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture, a reply to the question I asked on 13 October regarding land titles?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: Neither the Minister for Planning nor any staff of the Department of Housing, Urban and Regional Affairs has given a directive, order or request to the Registrar-General not to issue new titles in relation to applications coming before him which may be affected by proposed legislation. Of course, officers of the Minister's department have consulted the Registrar-General concerning the provisions of the proposed legislation, as indeed they should. I understand the Registrar-General has devised means by which registered proprietors seeking to have titles issued may have their applications processed and be made aware of the proposed legislation. The Minister for Planning intends to introduce amendments to the Bill which is presently before the other

place in order to give some protection to those cases where plans had been prepared prior to 19 September 1978 and cases for which titles had been sought prior to that date but not issued.

GOVERNMENT LOANS

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I seek leave to make a statement prior to directing a question to the Leader of the Government in the Council, representing the Premier, regarding loans.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Doubtless, members opposite will recall the tirade of lies and propaganda that was directed at the late Rex Connor when he sought loans of millions of dollars overseas in order to build pipelines, ports, railways, roads and bridges, and to develop the natural resources of this country. Those members will recall the vilification by the then Opposition, the Liberal and National Country Parties, of Rex Connor's efforts in this regard.

We know that the policy of the present Federal Government is in contrast to the criticism to which I have referred. It has borrowed more than \$4 000 000 000 overseas and is now negotiating for a loan of about \$600 000 000 from Japan. The tragedy is that the policy of that Government does not seem to provide for any capital works that may relieve unemployment anywhere in Australia, despite these gigantic borrowings that are being made to prop up our ailing economy.

Has the Commonwealth Government given any indication of making any loans or grants to South Australia as a result of the borrowing of about \$4 000 000 000? Further, will the Minister say whether this state will benefit by the construction of any pipelines, ports, railways, roads or bridges or by the development or exploration of mineral resources as envisaged by the late Rex Connor when he was pursuing a positive loans programme for the benefit of all Australians?

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: Money, money!

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: It is interesting that the Hon. Mr. DeGaris says that, and it is also interesting that the Federal Government is borrowing this enormous amount of money. Perhaps it wants to purchase something in addition to jet aeroplanes for the Prime Minister. I will refer the question to my colleague.

PERSON'S DEATH

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I seek leave to make a statement prior to directing a question to the Minister of Health regarding a letter in this morning's *Advertiser* and also regarding the possibility of avoiding a recurrence of the tragedy which is described in the letter.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The first of the letters to the Editor in today's *Advertiser* is headed "A person died", and it states:

Yesterday a friend died. He died in hospital—a sanctuary he got to, alas, too late to help him.

It was a holiday weekend. He had been ill, was an alcoholic. But we cared. An appointment was made to visit a doctor but he felt too ill to move. A home visit was requested and refused—by his own doctor; the distance involved, 100 metres.

Attempts were made to get assistance. Social workers suggested a vicar—he wasn't available; Salvation Army—no

reply. The police didn't want to know; not a matter of life and death.

Whom do you contact? Who does care? Who will help? We tried everything to contact his relatives. No luck. At last we got a duty doctor to call. "He'll be all right until Tuesday—take these fluid pills." The man could not eat, was incontinent, couldn't walk, had nobody to look after him. But he'd be all right for two days.

Last night he died. We were friends, not relatives. We tried all we knew and came up against a brick wall. Nobody would, or wanted to help—we couldn't insist, we were only friends—so he died. His son arrived as soon as he got our message. Unfortunately he'd been away. He got his father into hospital. But it was too late. We hope everyone enjoyed their holiday weekend.

The letter was signed by P. L. Ball, Grange, and it tells not only an extremely sad story but also of a series of attempts to save a person's life. The letter reflects either carelessness or negligence on the part of those whose activities and responsibilities are to save lives. Will the Minister say whether he has inquired today about this letter and, if he has not, will he have the matter investigated and say whether he feels that any person or group was at serious fault? Will he tell the Council of any action he intends to take to avoid a recurrence of such a tragedy?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: From the signature to the letter, I cannot track down the people concerned to find out where the problem lies. At first glance, it seems that the doctor failed to attend when he was called. If the honourable member can give more details suggesting where the system may have broken down, I will be pleased to investigate the matter. What struck me when I read the letter was that, if the people concerned called those who are mentioned in the letter, why did they not call St. John's Ambulance to take the man direct to hospital?

HOSPITAL FOOD

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: I seek leave to make a brief statement before asking the Minister of Health a question about hospital food.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: When the Corbett Report was tabled recently, it indicated that a test had been done at Queen Elizabeth Hospital about meat supplied to the hospital and the quantities that were actually used or wasted. It made clear that, although only a limited amount of testing had been done, a 50 per cent wastage of meat had been detected. I accept the assurance of the Minister, in answer to a question today, that wherever the Government finds a problem in this area it does something about it. Following the information in this report that there is a potential 50 per cent wastage of meat at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, what action has the Government taken to determine whether this was a widespread problem in all hospitals; whether this problem occurred at Queen Elizabeth Hospital on a continuing basis; what was the result of the investigation; and what action has the Government taken to correct the situation?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The honourable member knows that the Government urgently inquired into this matter, and he said that an inquiry had been made regarding wastage of food. In these circumstances, the honourable member cannot continue with his allegations or misrepresentations that nothing has been done about food wastage. Inquiries have been made and action is being taken to ensure that the wastage, if any, will not occur in future.

DEMAC BUILDINGS

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I seek leave to make a brief statement before asking the Minister representing the Minister of Works a question about Demac buildings.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I refer to the relatively unimpressive and unsatisfactory outward appearance of Demac buildings. Previously, I have brought to the Minister's attention this unsatisfactory situation regarding the appearance of these buildings compared to previous Samcon construction buildings. Demac buildings may upgrade facilities at schools (they are used as additions because of their internal appointments) but they do nothing for the outward improvement of school properties: it is rather the reverse in some cases. I sought an improvement in their outward design and some months ago the Minister indicated that the matter would be investigated. Has the Minister anything to report about the outcome of the investigations, or will he call for a report on this matter?

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

NUMBER PLATES

The Hon. J. A. CARNIE: I seek leave to make a brief statement before asking a question of the Minister representing the Minister of Transport about vehicle number plates.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J. A. CARNIE: A report in last Friday's *Advertiser* states:

Personalised vehicle number plates in green and gold will be available in S.A. from January.

The plan was announced yesterday by the Minister of Transport, Mr. Virgo . . . The scheme is expected to raise about \$400 000 a year in revenue, which will be paid into the State highways fund.

It is an excellent scheme, and I am glad that the Government has initiated it. However, in July 1970 in another place, the member for Hanson asked the Minister of Roads and Transport to allow motorists to have vehicle registration numbers of their choice. In his reply, the Minister said that, under the South Australian method of issuing registration numbers, this would not be practicable, and he concluded by saying:

Clearly, there is no purpose in upsetting a very satisfactory system merely to emulate New South Wales or to sell gimmicks.

On 4 October 1972, I asked the Minister to reconsider his decision, and his reply at that time was similar to the one given two years earlier to the member for Hanson. At some length he explained why it was not practicable in South Australia, and he said:

I think the honourable member has not considered the system now used by the motor vehicle authorities in Australia to allocate registration numbers. Each State has been allotted a specific section of the alphabet for use in issuing registration numbers within the State.

Referring to New South Wales he said, "The system that is in operation there is not assisting in any way at all." The Minister obviously continued to believe that this was a gimmick because in his reply to me at that time he said:

At this stage I see the New South Wales practice as only a gimmick. I congratulate the New South Wales Government on capitalising on a few suckers . . . and the money obtained from those suckers has been put to good use.

What has caused the Minister to introduce a scheme that

he obviously regards as nothing more than a gimmick, and does the fact that he has introduced this scheme indicate that the Minister believes that there are sufficient suckers in South Australia to make it a viable proposition?

The Hon. T. M. CASEY: I can assure the honourable member that the Minister of Transport was not the first person to apply for a personalised number plate. The Hon. Mr. Carnie is quoting chapter and verse back to 1970-72, and it shows how flexible is the Minister of Transport. Because the honourable member has asked a specific question during the course of his preamble, I will refer the matter to my colleague and bring down a reply.

COMPUTER BANDITS

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: The Council should consider another method of asking questions rather than having members jumping up one after another or being handed a scrap of paper. Has the Minister of Health a reply to my recent question about computer bandits?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: A scrap of paper is a good way of advising a member that a reply is available. I cannot put a notice on the wall.

Concerning computer bandits, the Attorney-General has advised that a report referred to by the honourable member is a report submitted to the New South Wales Government, and that the honourable member should direct his inquiry to that Government.

MARIJUANA

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Has the Minister of Health a reply to my recent question about marijuana?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: There is a number of ways of arriving at a valuation of seized *cannabis* cultivations. For police purposes, however, a formula has been arrived at which is calculated to reflect the market value of the plants at maturation. The Police Department believes this to be a realistic approach since it is important to appreciate that, under the care of professional growers, these plants would most certainly have reached maturity but for police intervention.

It is known that professionally grown *cannabis* plants, when dried, have weighed up to 3 lb. each. Based on a conservative dry-weight yield, for the purposes of the recent exercise, of about 1 lb. per plant and the current market price of marijuana ranging from \$30 to \$35 an ounce (with as much as \$45 an ounce not being uncommon), a street level value for each plant of \$500 has been estimated.

The plants, 1½ to 2 inches high, were not in fact taken into the final tally of seizures in the recent Virginia and Two Wells incidents. As a point of interest, although several thousand plants were only a few centimetres tall, a significantly high number of the plants seized in the cultivations in that area varied from 15 cm to about 180 cm.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Can the Minister say, based on that formula, what is the current street value of tomatoes?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: It is about \$2.40 a kilogram.

TRUSTEES

The Hon. K. T. GRIFFIN: Has the Minister of Health a reply to my recent question concerning the widening of powers of investment of trustees?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: It is proposed to amend the Trustees Act to widen the powers of investment of trustees. This amendment will be included in a Bill to amend the Trustee Act that is now being drafted. It is hoped that the Bill will be introduced during the present session of Parliament.

Mr. MUIRHEAD

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before directing a question to the Minister of Health, representing the Premier, concerning the Royal Commission into the Non-medical Use of Drugs.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: There has been much publicity in the media in the past fortnight concerning payments to be made to counsel assisting the Commission, Mr. Dennis Muirhead. The Government provided information about the payments made or proposed to be made to Mr. Muirhead in the reports I have read, but did not make any statement to the press about any accommodation allowances to be paid to Mr. Muirhead whilst he is in Australia. Can the Minister provide me with information about any travelling or accommodation allowances for Mr. Muirhead whilst he is working in Australia?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: Some reference was made to that in an answer given in another place to which the press had access but which it did not print. Therefore, I ask the honourable member to look at that reply in *Hansard* and, if it does not cover the position, he can ask the question again.

HOSPITAL FOOD

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I seek leave to make a short statement before directing a question to the Minister of Health concerning his Ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Earlier today I asked the Minister whether he could give an undertaking to this Council that the report of the committee of inquiry into the loss of nearly \$20 000 in food and the possibility of sabotage at Royal Adelaide Hospital would be made public; that is, was it to be laid on the table of this Chamber? The Minister said that the report would go first to Cabinet and that a decision would then be made about whether or not it would be made public. In my question I also referred to the police report, which I still couple with the first report undertaken by the Public Service Board. The Corbett Report into food losses at hospitals was laid on the table in both Chambers: in other words, the report was made public. That report was the result of an investigation into the loss of food through both wastage and theft in certain South Australian hospitals. Can the Minister say whether there is any specific reason why, as the Corbett Report was made public, he hesitates and cannot give an undertaking to this Chamber now that the report that he will receive from the Public Service Board, concerning the loss of nearly \$20 000 of food (which is a loss of the people's money) and possible sabotage within the Public Service, cannot be made public?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: I have not refused to bring a report here: I said that Cabinet would consider it and would determine whether or not the report would be made public. I point out to the Hon. Mr. Hill that in such a

report many people might receive an honourable mention that could do them some damage if the report were made public, yet those people might not be guilty in such areas. If this is the sort of thing that the honourable member wants made public, let him say so. Does he believe that insinuations should be made that cannot be substantiated? If that is his attitude, let him say so. My attitude is that we will consider the report in Cabinet and make up our minds whether or not it will be tabled.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: In reply to a question I asked earlier this afternoon the Minister implied that I had alleged that no investigation had been made by the Government or that no action had been taken by it. I did not imply that: in fact, I quoted the Corbett Report. I do not know whether the Minister is deliberately prevaricating by not giving me an answer. I asked him what action the Government had taken to determine whether the 50 per cent wastage of meat at Queen Elizabeth Hospital had occurred, was occurring, and would continue to occur and, if it is still occurring, what action the Government has taken to stop it.

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: If the honourable member had read the report, he would see that it made certain recommendations, and these recommendations have now been put into operation.

ROAD LIGHTING

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before directing a question to the Minister representing the Minister of Transport on the question of lighting intersections.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I suppose that I am on the roads of South Australia as much as, if not more than, any other member of Parliament and, as a result of that experience, I believe I have reason to comment on the various safety devices installed by the Highways Department on our roads. I find that the modern tendency to light intersections, interchanges, or other traffic concentrations seems to add to the danger of that intersection, rather than improving its safety. I refer to the lighting at "T" junctions through to large interchanges in freeway systems, especially in the Adelaide Hills. First, has any research been undertaken on the lighting of intersections in relation to the safety of such intersections and, secondly, has the Government received complaints from any other organisations in relation to the safety of lighting intersections?

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

Mr. MUIRHEAD

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: I seek leave to make a short statement before directing a question to the Minister of Health, representing the Premier, concerning Mr. Dennis Muirhead.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M. B. CAMERON: I noticed amongst the various details of the sum being paid to Mr. Muirhead for assisting the Royal Commission into the Non-medical Use of Drugs that he is able to claim a \$60 an hour reading fee while overseas. I am sure that many ordinary workers in this State read that with some astonishment. Because of

the serious economic situation obtaining in this State, and as taxpayers' funds can be used in this manner if Mr. Muirhead makes a claim (although he has not yet said whether or not he will do so), is the Government willing to extend to Mr. Muirhead the offer of a speed reading course?

The Hon. D. H. L. BANFIELD: The honourable member's question needs to be answered with the contempt that it deserves.

JURIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

HARBORS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 3.12 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday 18 October at 2.15 p.m.