

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday 24 September 1981

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

RIVERLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The PRESIDENT laid on the table the report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, together with minutes of evidence, on Riverland Community College, and Mobile Workshop, (Loxton).

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: PETROL SUPPLIES

The Hon. K. T. GRIFFIN (Attorney-General): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. K. T. GRIFFIN: I am pleased to be able to advise the Council that, as a result of a decision by members of the Australian Institute of Marine and Power Engineers to end their strike, the Government will be taking action which will allow petrol to become available to the public from tomorrow. From the opening of trading tomorrow at service stations in the designated metropolitan area, limited sales will be allowed on the odds and evens basis. Tomorrow, being an odd numbered day, the owners of vehicles with a registration number ending in an odd number will be able to buy up to \$7 worth of petrol in any one sale. On Saturday, even-numbered vehicles can be supplied, and so on, until further notice. Those holding coupons issued since Monday will be able to use those coupons on any day until the current period of restriction expires.

Exemptions for the supply of fuel in emergencies will continue to be available until the expiry of the rationing period, and full details will be announced in tomorrow's *Advertiser*. The current restrictions on sales in areas outside the designated metropolitan area will be maintained until further notice. The Government is in a position to announce these decisions following a meeting that the Deputy Premier had late this morning with representatives of the oil companies to review the latest supply situation. The decisions are based on the following:

- the return to work by members of the Australian Marine and Power Engineers;
- the arrival at Birkenhead, either early this evening or early tomorrow morning, of the *Cellana*, carrying about three days' supply of motor spirit;
- the berthing at Port Stanvac, tomorrow morning, of the *Esso Gippsland* to begin to remove fuel oil in storage and a resumption of refinery operations as a result;
- there should then be full production from the refinery by next Wednesday;
- the arrival of the ship, the *Mobil Australis*, with a further eight days' supply of petrol, due at the end of next week.

When the Government is able to confirm the unrestricted availability of petrol from the refinery, and the schedule of the *Mobil Australis*, it will be in a position to consider the lifting of all restrictions on petrol sales in South Australia, and I hope this will occur very early next week.

The decision by the members of the Marine and Power Engineers Institute to return to work has relieved a very grave situation in South Australia. As the Deputy Premier informed the Assembly yesterday, it was necessary to introduce and maintain the rationing and restrictions to ensure that fuel remained available for essential services in circum-

stances where the Government did not know when, next, South Australia would obtain further supplies of petroleum products. At the same time, the arrangements which have been in force since last Wednesday have ensured that, during this period of rationing and restrictions, petrol has been available to more people and for longer than in any previous period of severe shortage of petroleum products during the last 10 years. This has been especially important in allowing people to travel to work when no other transport has been available, and allowing industry and commerce to avoid, to the maximum extent possible, the need to stand down employees. In particular, the Government wishes to place on record the role that public servants, petrol resellers and the oil industry have played in minimising inconvenience to the public.

The distribution of permits and coupons and the answering of many thousands of telephone calls have been handled, in the main, by officers of the Energy Division and other divisions of the Department of Mines and Energy, with valuable assistance from many other departments where required. These officers have worked very long hours under great pressure, and their public spirited contribution is fully recognised by the Government.

The public too have co-operated in overcoming the difficulties which have been forced on them by this prolonged strike, and the Government appreciates the level of co-operation from all sectors of the community.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT: STATE BANK LOANS

The Hon. C. M. HILL (Minister of Local Government): I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: An article in today's morning press concerning State Bank loans is inaccurate, irresponsible, and misleading, and has stimulated unnecessary fears about rising interest rates in the minds of State Bank customers and home loan applicants on the waiting list. I have obtained a report from the State Bank on this matter.

Existing home owners with State Bank loans are not affected by these recent changes, and the changes to eligibility conditions for State Bank concessional home loans will not hurt the needy. The changes to the State Bank's lending criteria are designed to give home purchase assistance particularly to those who would otherwise not be able to afford to buy a home. Couples with dependants are those in most need because of their added expenses and their reduced capacity to earn.

Nearly 90 per cent of all couples without children who have applied to the State Bank have second incomes. Because of the State Bank's practice of ingoring a wife's income if she is under 30 and has declared that she is working only until she has children, many such couples have been getting loans at high concession rates, even though their actual household incomes are not low. Indeed, 20 per cent of State Bank loans have been going to couples with incomes over \$300 a week.

In other States, home purchase assistance is confined only to couples with dependants. In South Australia, the State Bank will still lend to a couple without dependants if their combined age is less than 52 years—a reduction from the 60 combined age which has applied in the past. However, these couples will have to pay at the rate of 2 per cent below market level until they do have children.

The Hon. J. R. Cornwall: That is 10.5.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Yes. As I said, it is 2 per cent below the market value. The bank has also placed a specific value limit on a house which can be bought with a State Bank loan, costing up to \$45 000. This has been discretion-

ary in the past, but instances have been found where State Bank customers with low current incomes but access to additional capital have been able to use concessional finance to buy houses worth up to \$60 000. Again, it is considered that these people can afford to do without Government assistance, while there are others more in need.

The Chairman of the State Bank has assured the Government today that all commitments and arrangements made with applicants prior to the change in eligibility conditions will be honoured. Therefore, no existing borrowers or applicants who had confirmed arrangements with the bank prior to change will be inconvenienced. As at June 1981, 31 320 home loans were current, totalling \$393 000 000. The weighted average interest rate was 6.9 per cent, which is well below the prevailing rates from the savings banks.

The annual interest subsidy for home purchases from the State Bank is currently \$18 000 000. The State Bank has been and is still approving 55 loans per week, and this financial year approximately \$85 000 000 will be lent. Even with this high level of lending, waiting lists are unacceptably high. The State Bank and the Government must ensure that the concessional loans made reach those most in need.

There is no secret about changes in eligibility conditions for concessional State Bank loans. The bank does not make public statements, but has advertised prominently in the press, as it has done in this case. Increasing interest rates have caused difficulties for home buyers, but they have also, at the same time, increased the value of the concessions provided by the State Bank.

The number of people seeking State Bank assistance has been increasing, and the bank has moved to control assistance to those who can do with less or who can afford to buy privately, so that more can be made available for those in greater need.

QUESTIONS

CO-OPERATIVES LEGISLATION

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: I seek leave to make a short explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question regarding legislation in relation to co-operatives.

Leave granted.

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: Last week, it was reported in the press that the Attorney-General was going to amend the legislation concerning co-operatives to overcome the problems that have occurred with the travel co-operatives and holiday co-operatives in South Australia. About 12 months ago, the Attorney-General received a report from a working party that was looking more generally into the problem of co-operatives in this State. That working party report made quite a number of recommendations on how the legislation concerning co-operatives could be improved, and it recommended other ways in which co-operatives could be assisted.

Has the Attorney-General looked at that report and considered its recommendations, and does he intend to act on all or some of the report's recommendations? If the Attorney does intend to act on the recommendations, will he include amendments to the legislation recommended in the report in the amendments that he has obviously drafted in relation to holiday co-operatives?

The Hon. K. T. GRIFFIN: I have considered the working party's report, which was circulated to those who had a special interest in co-operatives, the Co-operative Federation being one. Comments were received and had been taken into account. As a result of the working party's report, and the consideration thereof by several persons and groups,

legislation will be prepared and introduced, I hope before the end of this year, which legislation will embody a number of the recommendations made by the working party.

The proposed amendments in respect of co-operatives are much wider than just holiday co-operatives, Southern Vales and Riverland. Indeed, they are intended to embrace the whole range of activities of co-operatives, and, among other things, to ensure that there is proper accountability of co-operatives and their members to the public at large, and that audit requirements are enforced and maintained. The amendments are intended to embrace a variety of other areas, in relation to which the present Industrial and Provident Societies Act is very much outdated and hopelessly inadequate.

I reassure the honourable member that the legislation that I introduce will be much broader than the limited area to which he referred and that it will pick up a substantial number, if not all, of the working party's recommendations, which will be modified to take into account any submissions that I have received since I received the report.

CENTRAL DISTRICTS HOSPITAL

The Hon. J. R. CORNWALL: I seek leave to make a short statement before asking the Minister of Community Welfare, representing the Minister of Industrial Affairs, a question regarding Central Districts Hospital.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J. R. CORNWALL: Honourable members would be aware that Central Districts Hospital is conducted by the Hospital Corporation of Australia, a subsidiary of Hospital Corporation of America. The aggressive management methods of this corporation to maximise profit from patients is well known. The corporation's establishment in South Australia is, I consider, a matter of great regret, and its ambition to expand its operation is a matter for alarm.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J. R. CORNWALL: It is interesting to examine one of the major policies which allow the Hospital Corporation of Australia (or America—whatever you like) to claim great managerial and business expertise. Recently I received calls from staff at the Central Districts Hospital. Members of the staff who have talked to me, and who have to remain anonymous for reasons which will soon become obvious, have told me that staff are being sent home early when bed occupancy is low. I understand that this is not an unusual practice with permanent and permanent part-time employees in the private profit sector of hospitals and nursing homes.

It is a regrettable industrial practice and, indeed, it is a breach of the awards. However, in smaller institutions it tends to be worked out as a co-operative effort between employer and employees. This is especially true of married women who do not mind taking an hour or two off without pay to catch up on shopping or domestic matters.

However, my inquiries concerning Central Districts Hospital have shown that their method of operation is far more ruthless. Permanent staff across the board are being stood down without pay or are being asked to take intermittent leave whenever bed occupancy rates drop. This applies across the board to all permanent and permanent part-time employees, from clerks to the nursing staff. The request to take time off is quite explicit, and the most disturbing feature of all is that it is made clear that jobs will not be available the following week for members of staff who do not co-operate.

These are quite gross and serious breaches of the industrial awards under which staff work at the Central Districts

Hospital. The staff are afraid of calling in the Department of Industrial Affairs or their trade union organisers for fear of losing their jobs and for fears of acts of reprisal. Furthermore, the Government has cut down so drastically on the number of inspectors in the Department of Industrial Affairs that there is little chance that in the normal course of events these offences will be detected. Will the Minister of Industrial Affairs issue an instruction as a matter of great urgency that these allegations be investigated forthwith? Will he particularly ensure that the time books of all permanent and permanent part-time staff are surrendered to the department forthwith for examination? Finally, will he ensure that no staff are stood down or victimised?

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: I will refer the honourable member's question to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

Dr COULTER

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question on the Coulter case.

Leave granted.

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: My question is related to the case for reinstatement taken by Dr John Coulter against the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science. This case continued for 18 days before a magistrate in the Industrial Court. It was then adjourned to enable discussions to proceed on settlement. If a settlement was not arrived at the case was to be resumed. However, I understand that if this occurs the case will have to be started again before another magistrate, and therefore the 18 days of hearing will have been wasted. Unfortunately, this was because the magistrate fell asleep regularly during the hearing.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: An ex-Parliamentarian?

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: I understand that both counsel for Dr Coulter and the Crown Solicitor agreed that the magistrate should be disqualified. I say to the Hon. Mr DeGaris that, while it may be satisfactory for members of Parliament to sleep during proceedings, I hardly think it satisfactory for a magistrate to do so. It is obviously unacceptable for the administration of justice to be conducted in this way. There would be an enormous cost involved to the State in 18 days wasted court hearings. There is the cost of the Crown Solicitor and Dr Coulter, who received assistance from the Legal Services Commission. This is a matter of some delicacy that I had been reluctant to raise until now, and I do it without naming the magistrate. However, I did approach the Attorney-General informally with the suggestion that the magistrate should not sit on any further cases, but I know from this morning's *Advertiser* that the magistrate, according to the cause list, is still sitting and hearing matters. The situation can only bring the judicial system into disrepute.

Has the Attorney investigated the allegation regarding the conduct of the magistrate in the Coulter case? If so, does he consider it proper for the magistrate to continue to hear cases, whether in chambers or not?

The Hon. K. T. GRIFFIN: The administration of the Industrial Court is not something that is under my Ministerial responsibility. It is the responsibility of the Minister of Industrial Affairs and, because of the nature of the questions, I will refer the matter to him. It is correct to say that the Leader of the Opposition did speak to me informally about this matter, and I had some inquiries made. I do not think that the facts that he has alleged in his statement leading to the questions are all the facts. I will undertake to obtain a report and give it to the Leader.

STOBIE POLES

The Hon. L. H. DAVIS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General, representing the Minister of Mines and Energy, a question about stobie poles.

Leave granted.

The Hon. L. H. DAVIS: Members will be aware that the ubiquitous stobie pole was the invention of a South Australian. While these poles have a practical application, they can detract from their surrounding environment. The Electricity Trust of South Australia earlier this year released a pamphlet that explains the cost of placing overhead service wires underground. Quite obviously, there is a significantly higher cost involved in placing them underground.

In April this year it was announced that the lopping and pruning of trees would cease and the visual appearance of Hahndorf enhanced by relocating electricity wires underground. The Electricity Trust would pay the cost of this \$90 000 project. I understand that the average cost of installing underground 11 000-volt and lower voltage distribution mains in a typical new residential subdivision is currently about \$1 100 per allotment, as against \$500 per allotment for an equivalent overhead system.

For some years now over 90 per cent of new subdivisions in the metropolitan area have had underground mains installed. For the whole State the figure is over 80 per cent. In view of the Electricity Trust's move toward underground wiring, will the Minister ascertain whether the Electricity Trust of South Australia has or will formulate a policy to place wiring underground near or around buildings or locations of historic interest, or buildings or locations which are regarded as prime tourist attractions? Will the Minister also inquire whether the rather tired looking grey stobie poles directly in front of Parliament House can be refurbished with a coat of paint of an appropriate colour, along with the replacement of the decorative caps missing from some of those poles?

The Hon. K. T. GRIFFIN: I will refer the honourable member's question to the Minister of Mines and Energy and bring down a reply.

OIL

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question about oil.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Some time ago the previous Government set up a very good and worthwhile committee in this Parliament.

The Hon. K. T. Griffin: Another committee.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Yes, another committee, and we would have more if the Attorney-General were not a member of the razor gang.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: The Hon. Mr DeGaris was a member.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Yes, the Hon. Mr DeGaris was a member, as was a former member who was well respected, the Hon. Mr Geddes.

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: They were giving me a bit of advice, Mr President. At that particular time the Hon. Mr Geddes was shadow Minister of Mines and Energy. That particular committee took a great deal of very valuable evidence, but the present Government has not had the courage to reconvene the committee to allow it to take further evidence and make a report. I recall that at the

time of the last election the committee was looking at the very wide area of the energy problem.

The Port Stanvac oil refinery is a very limited undertaking because it has no catalytic cracker. Such machinery would allow the extraction of motor spirit from crude oil to be increased by two-thirds. A cracking plant is not cheap; indeed, it is very expensive. Cracking plants of the type to which I refer already exist in Melbourne and Geelong. It is a great pity that the storage area for crude oil at Port Stanvac has been a factor in the current petrol crisis in this State.

The Hon. L. H. Davis: Not to mention the union.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: It is not only the union, for Christ's sake. What is wrong with you?

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Mr Foster is using unparliamentary language.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: The storage capacity at Port Stanvac has been used for crude oil, and very few tanks would be available there. A huge tank was recently constructed at Port Stanvac, but it is still in the testing stages. That tank has yet to be filled with water and tested, and no time limit is set for that testing procedure. It is possible that the engineers responsible for giving the green light for the use of that storage area will take three weeks, six weeks or even six months to obtain a proper reaction from instrumentation testing the foundations of such a holding capacity. That procedure is quite intricate and takes considerable time. It is necessary to look at this area so that we can understand some of the reasons for the present shortage. I stress that I am not endeavouring to score any political points in relation to rationing and the way in which the Government went about it. However, the Government deserves all the criticism it has received. In relation to this particular matter—

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Mr Foster must use this time to explain his question.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Mr President, members opposite were starting to get a bit edgy, and I thought in everyone's interest that I should stray slightly. Will the Attorney-General request the Minister of Mines and Energy to seek information from the owners of Port Stanvac oil refinery (Mobil Australia) about the provision of a catalytic cracker? Secondly, is the Minister aware that such a facility would enable a considerably higher quantity of motor spirit to be available than exists at the moment? Has the present Government been involved with the company in any worthwhile discussions in relation to the provision of a more efficient and capable plant? Is the present Government aware that the previous Government had discussions about the probability of an updated facility being built? Has the Fraser Government's policy on price parity impeded the company as regards giving any further consideration to providing such refining technology, which would be of substantial benefit to the State?

The Hon. K. T. GRIFFIN: I will refer the honourable member's question to the Minister of Mines and Energy and bring down a reply.

AID FOR AGED

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: Has the Minister of Community Welfare, representing the Minister of Health, a reply to a question I asked on 22 July about aid for the aged?

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: My colleague the Minister of Health advises that there has been local interest and a great deal of work undertaken on personal emergency alarm systems dating from at least 1976. There are now several

commercial personal radio alarms available, including Vital-call. The South Australian Health Commission has the subject under close review and has planned to introduce and evaluate a pilot scheme in 1980-81, subject to the availability of funds.

ADELAIDE LOCAL COURT

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Attorney-General a question about the Adelaide Local Court.

Leave granted.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: My question relates to the conduct of a magistrate, Mr Brown, in a case in the Adelaide Local Court on 30 July 1981 in the small claims court. The case involved Mr Wally Sulzasyk and a person who I understand is an employee of the local court. The claim relates to property damage caused in an accident between a motor vehicle driven by the other party and Mr Sulzasyk, who was wheeling his bicycle across the road. Mr Nick Alexandrides, the Secretary of the South Australian Railways Union, accompanied Mr Sulzasyk to the court to assist him.

When the case was called on, Mr Sulzasyk and Mr Alexandrides entered the magistrate's chambers and found the plaintiff, who it is alleged is an employee of the court, already sitting in the magistrate's chambers on the same side of the desk as the magistrate. Mr Alexandrides was ordered to leave the chambers, the case took about three minutes and the employee of the court won the case.

It would be most unfortunate if the proceedings had, in fact, been conducted in this manner, as justice could hardly have been seen to be done. First, the small claims provisions in the Local and District Criminal Courts Act permit a person, who is not a legal practitioner, to assist another person, yet no inquiry was made whether this was necessary, even though Mr Sulzasyk is a Polish migrant. Secondly, I do not believe that small claims proceedings are held in camera and not open to the public, and therefore Mr Alexandrides was improperly ordered from the chambers.

Thirdly, it was most improper for the magistrate to invite the plaintiff into the chambers before the defendant, particularly as the plaintiff was apparently an employee of the court. Will the Attorney-General investigate these facts and advise what action can be taken to ensure that this does not happen again?

The Hon. K. T. GRIFFIN: Quite obviously, I will need to have some inquiries made, and I will do so. I will bring back an answer for the honourable member.

PREGNANCY TERMINATIONS

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I seek leave to make a brief statement before asking the Minister of Community Welfare, representing the Minister of Health, a question about counselling for pregnancy terminations.

Leave granted.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I am sure that the Minister is well aware that 70 per cent of all pregnancy terminations done in this State are carried out in public hospitals. At all of the public hospitals there are social workers who counsel such patients prior to their booking to see a doctor or to having the operation carried out. I am sure that the Minister would agree that it is highly desirable that any patient so presenting should receive counselling from a trained social worker prior to this operation being performed. It has been brought to my attention that since 1 September all the public hospitals are charging for this abortion counselling.

A charge has been laid down which it is mandatory for all hospitals to apply. Of course, this charge—

The Hon. R. J. Ritson: Subject to a means test, though.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: It is not subject to a means test: the charge is applied to anyone who attends for abortion counselling at any of the public hospitals. Furthermore, in at least one of the public hospitals such counselling is mandatory before any termination can be carried out, although in the other hospitals it is recommended rather than mandatory. The charge that is being applied will have to be borne entirely by the patient concerned. It will make no difference whether the patient has 'hospital only' insurance, hospital and medical insurance, no insurance at all, or a health card, because no insurance scheme gives a rebate for counselling of this nature conducted by a social worker. It is not an item for rebate through any of the insurance provisions.

In view of the fact that I am sure that the Minister would agree that such counselling is highly desirable before any abortion is carried out, will she take steps to see that this fee for abortion counselling is not charged to people requesting abortions at public hospitals any more than fees are charged for general social work counselling at any of the public hospitals?

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: I will refer the honourable member's question to the Minister of Health in another place and bring back a reply.

LAND SUBDIVISION

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister representing the Minister of Lands a question about land subdivision.

Leave granted.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I want to quote from the *Guardian Weekly* of 2 August 1981, as follows:

Australia—Farmers! Now is the time to buy in Australia when you can realise on your assets here and the transfer of money is no longer restricted. Elders incorporated in Adelaide in 1839 and established in London since 1884 with more than 340 branches throughout mainland Australia, are happy to provide information to prospective migrant farmers—and also those not wishing to take up Australian residence—in locating suitable agricultural properties in Australia.

Our interstate network of branches is at your disposal. For free details without any obligation please contact Elder Smith Goldsbrough Mort Limited, 3 St Helen's Place, London EC3A 6AX, Phone 01 588 5201. Telex: 885608 (Elders G.)

Another article under the heading 'W.A. control slips to 47 per cent' refers to a rip-off and take-overs by Lebanese, Philippino and Canadian interests in regard to the Kimberleys. The article is available to any honourable member who wants to look at it. Another article under the heading 'Who owns rural Australia?' shows that there is a terrific demand for land in Queensland, the Northern Territory, and New South Wales. Now, the attention of foreign ownership is coming very close to home and, in fact, is already with us in South Australia. The article states:

South Australia seems to be the State least attractive to foreign investors: F.I.R.B. figures show only 20 purchases made in five years. According to a senior spokesman for Elders in Adelaide, the company has sold 'six or eight' properties to foreign buyers over the past year. These were in the \$200 000 to \$500 000 bracket and were usually lease-back arrangements.

I want the Council to take note that those properties worth less than \$350 000 have no restrictions in regard to the Foreign Investment Review Board. The article lists the properties that have been available. One property which concerns me greatly and which I will not name, because it is not named in the document, is a property at Victor Harbor, 80 kilometres south of the city. The article shows

the West German interests in South Australia and the properties and the areas that they hold in this State. Without any hesitation, I will convey to the Council that the property I have in mind has probably the largest area of properties within 80 kilometres of the city. It is larger than any other two or three properties together. It is the biggest single area of land that exists in that area and in the area close to the city.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: What area is it?

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: It is on the southern coast.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: What is the size of the property?

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: As I understand it, according to aerial survey, it is about 11 000 acres; it is probably nearer 16 000 acres, because aerial surveying conveys a smaller area than other means of surveying. I will not say any more because I have almost identified the property to a discerning gentleman such as the Hon. Mr DeGaris. Therefore, I ask whether the Minister will request the Minister of Lands to provide the information that his department has in respect of the surveying of certain rural land areas south of Adelaide. Will he acquaint the Council with information about the extent of and the cost involved in any Government department surveyors engaged in surveying that area?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I am quite happy to refer the question to the Minister of Lands. Whether or not he can ascertain the extent of private surveys of rural land within 80 kilometres of Adelaide, I am a little uncertain; nevertheless, we will do our best to obtain an answer.

The Hon. N. K. Foster: You went to school near it: you ought to know it.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Perhaps the honourable member could give another hint.

The Hon. N. K. Foster: Your memory has faded. Is that a good enough reason?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: A property I knew of in that area has been sold.

The Hon. N. K. Foster: You did flogging as a land agent—

The Hon. C. M. HILL: We did not do any flogging of anything as the honourable member imagines. I will endeavour to obtain an answer to satisfy the honourable member.

FUEL STORAGE

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: I direct my question to the Minister of Community Welfare, representing the Minister of Agriculture. At the last State election, the Liberal Party promised to provide assistance to enable farmers to store fuel during industrial disputes. Will the Minister ascertain from his colleague what additional storage of fuel was available for farmers as a result of the implementation of this policy during the last industrial dispute?

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: I will refer the honourable member's question to my colleague and bring back a reply.

PARLIAMENTARY TERMS

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Given the overwhelming 'Yes' vote in the recent New South Wales referendum to the proposition that New South Wales have a four-year Parliamentary term, is the Government considering conducting a similar referendum in South Australia?

The Hon. K. T. GRIFFIN: Naturally enough, in the light of public comment across Australia on the question of the term of Parliaments, the Government has been giving some consideration to whether or not it would be appropriate for South Australia to consider extending its Parliamentary

term to, say, four years. However, that is as far as the matter has gone at this stage.

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: As the Premier has told the media that the question of judicial appointments and any approach to Mr Millhouse were matters for the Attorney-General, will the Attorney-General answer the question that I asked yesterday, namely, whether the Attorney-General, either personally or otherwise, authorised an approach to Mr Millhouse for appointment to the Local and District Criminal Court bench or to any other judicial office? If so, why did the Attorney-General not make the approach himself? Also, why has the Premier misled the public by denying any official approach, when it is clear that a Cabinet member was involved? Finally, is the Premier calling Mr Lew Barrett a liar?

The Hon. K. T. GRIFFIN: The Premier has not misled anyone. Mr Lew Barrett has not been alleged to be a liar. I have made quite clear that, in respect of any particular appointment, it would be quite inappropriate for me to either confirm or deny approaches to any person in respect of any pending judicial vacancy.

I have made quite clear that any approaches are confidential, but obviously, when one is considering appointments to judicial office, one would look at the range of silks available, and other prominent and eminent practitioners. Really, that is as far as I can take the matter.

HANSARD

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: Has the Attorney-General, representing the Deputy Premier, a reply to the question that I asked on 18 August regarding the printing of *Hansard*?

The Hon. K. T. GRIFFIN: The reply is as follows:

1. Preparation of *Hansard* for mailing in the form suggested by the honourable member is presently being investigated as part of a total inquiry into the mailing system of the Government Printing Division.

2. Publishing two separate volumes of *Hansard* could not be considered as it would significantly increase publication costs plus delay the delivery time.

DISPOSABLE NAPPIES

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I seek leave to make a brief statement before asking the Minister of Community Welfare, representing the Minister of Environment and Planning, a question regarding disposable nappies.

Leave granted.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: On 30 October last year I asked a question regarding the problems caused by disposable nappies in sewage effluent. I received during January a reply that went into *Hansard* on 10 February agreeing that research work was required on this problem and stating that a committee had been set up with representation from the Department of Environment, the Waste Management Committee, the Engineering and Water Supply Department, and the South Australian Health Commission. It was stated that this committee would undertake further studies regarding the problems caused by disposable nappies in sewage effluent.

I should like to inquire whether this committee, which was set up nine months ago, has come to any conclusions and, if has not, when it is expected that it will have some solutions to this problem that it can convey to the Parliament.

The Hon. N. K. Foster: Don't dispose of this question.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: I realise that this question must be handled carefully. I will refer it to my colleague in another place and bring back a reply.

INDUSTRIAL COURT TRANSCRIPT

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I understand that the Minister of Consumer Affairs, representing the Minister of Industrial something, has a reply to a question on something that I asked some time ago.

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: I am able to identify the question, as it is the only one that remains in my reply-to-questions file. The honourable member asked on 22 July a question of the Minister of Industrial Affairs regarding Industrial Court transcripts, the reply to which is as follows:

1. and 2. No interstate witnesses were called by the Government.

3. Nil.

4. (a) No.

(b) The usual arrangements for the provision of transcript apply.

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: Will the Minister of Community Welfare undertake to request the following information from the Minister of Industrial Affairs? Can the Minister tell the Parliament how many interstate witnesses have been called before the bench; the identity of those witnesses; which professions they represented; and from which departments they came?

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: I will obtain that information and bring back a reply.

FARM TREES

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I seek leave to make a brief statement before asking the Minister of Community Welfare, representing the Minister of Agriculture, a question regarding farm trees.

Leave granted.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: A few days ago, I received a circular which, I am sure, was received by all other members, headed 'Focus on farm trees'. This circular reports a national conference with the title 'Focus on farm trees' which was held in Melbourne last year and the aim of which was to encourage regeneration of tree cover in rural areas.

I am sure that many people will have noticed, when driving through rural areas, that the number of trees on many properties seems to be decreasing, and that all visible trees are fully grown. It is rare indeed to see a young tree or any sign that, when existing trees die, they will be replaced by any tree cover at all.

I gather that this committee has been set up, that this conference deplores the declining population of trees in rural areas, and that it wants to do something about encouraging the planting and protection of young trees to maintain the environment, and, incidentally, of course, to be of benefit to stock on rural properties. The following statement caught my eye very strongly:

Funding to assist landowners in restoring tree cover is now available from the Forests Commission, Victoria, under the tree-growing assistance scheme.

No further details are provided on what this funding assistance involves but it is obvious that a plan to increase tree cover in rural areas has the moral support and financial support of the Victorian Government. My question is to the Minister in his capacity as Minister of Forests. Would he give consideration to a similar scheme here to encourage

tree planting and care in rural areas? Would he consider giving assistance, not only moral but also financial, as is apparently being done in Victoria?

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: I will refer the honourable member's question to my colleague the Minister of Forests in another place and bring back a reply.

HOME GARDENS ADVISORY SERVICE

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister of Community Welfare, representing the Minister of Agriculture, a question on filling positions in the Home Gardens Advisory Service.

Leave granted.

The Hon. B. A. CHATTERTON: A number of constituents have contacted me and have expressed concern because one of the officers within the Home Gardens Advisory Service has transferred to another job, leaving a vacancy in that service. Apparently vacancies are not filled quickly within the Department of Agriculture because of shortages of funds and also because the Minister has stated that priority will be given to filling vacancies in the regional areas rather than in the Grenfell Street building. Of course, the Home Gardens Advisory Service is in the Grenfell Street building. Will the Minister say whether that vacancy will be filled and, if so, can he indicate when it will be filled?

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: I will refer the honourable member's question to my colleague the Minister of Agriculture and bring back a reply.

TREE PLANTING

The Hon. N. K. FOSTER: I ask the Minister representing the Minister of Environment and Planning why native trees were not considered and/or planted in front of this building at the time that those awful exotics were planted a few months ago with a great deal of ceremony. I was hoping that they would die and be replaced with something better. However, all obnoxious plants seem to survive.

The Hon. J. C. BURDETT: I will refer the question to my colleague and bring back a reply.

GALLERY AUDIENCE

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I seek leave to make a brief statement before asking you, Mr President, a question on the audience in the gallery of this Chamber.

Leave granted.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I understand that the Standing Orders for this Chamber ensure that visitors in the gallery do not write, read or speak while they are observing proceedings of this Chamber. I do not know whether this is accurate or not but I suspect that it is not always adhered to.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: Are they allowed to laugh?

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I do not know whether that is mentioned in the Standing Orders. I have had passed to me a sheaf of papers containing notes which I can only presume were made by someone listening to the proceedings in this Chamber on Tuesday. The notes refer to two questions asked of the Minister of Community Welfare, representing the Minister of Health. The Minister of Community Welfare has assured me that it is not his handwriting. I cannot imagine that any other member of this Chamber would wish to make such notes.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Are you getting involved with thieves?

Members interjecting:

The PRESIDENT: Order! I understand that the question is directed to me.

The Hon. ANNE LEVY: I can only assume that someone in the gallery took notes during Question Time on Tuesday. I merely ask that you, Mr President, inform the Council of the Standing Orders regarding activities undertaken in the gallery by people who are observing proceedings in this Chamber. Can you ensure that the Standing Orders are upheld in the future?

The PRESIDENT: It is quite obvious that the honourable member is aware of the Standing Orders. To ensure that they are strictly adhered to is an impossibility, because people are able to read and write without making it obvious.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: You should have a policeman at every bench.

The PRESIDENT: Order! As far as informing people in the gallery what they can and cannot do, we make a point of informing them if we see them reading or writing in the gallery. In regard to the specifics of the honourable member's question as to how the notes were taken, I cannot tell her any more than she knows. If she would like me to investigate further, I will do so.

IRRIGATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Read a third time and passed.

FIRE BRIGADES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 23 September. Page 105.)

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I was intrigued and a little concerned when I read the *Hansard* report of the contribution to the debate made by the Hon. Mr DeGaris yesterday. I agree with many of the things that he said, but what intrigued me and made me make further investigations was the table that he had inserted in *Hansard* allegedly making a comparison of the salaries of officers State by State. I could not see where the figures came from and how the Hon. Mr DeGaris had arrived at them.

This was quite uncharacteristic of his contributions to debates, because generally the honourable member details where he gets his figures from. On this occasion he did not, which aroused my suspicion as to the veracity of the figures, so I made inquiries. In all fairness, I think all I can say about the figures is that they are grossly misleading, that they have misled the Council, and that whoever gave those figures to him (this is to be charitable to the Hon. Mr DeGaris) misled him.

I should like honourable members to turn to section 27 of the *Hansard* proofs of the debate yesterday and look at the table that the Hon. Mr DeGaris had inserted. He claimed that the salaries of Fire Brigade officers in South Australia were high compared to those in any other State. First, he did not in any way give the basis of the comparison. He gave only his bald figures, which do not look too bad. The salaries in South Australia look reasonable if we take the figures at face value, which we on this side have learnt never to do.

I will quote from the South Australian *Industrial Gazette* of 3 September 1981. I am having a little difficulty comparing the salaries paid to Fire Brigade officers under the

Fire Brigade Officers Award to what the Hon. Mr DeGaris claimed were the salaries, because he has not said where he got the figures. According to the figures given by him, the salary for the first year of service of officers in the South Australian brigade is \$412.97 a week. Under the Fire Brigade Officers Award, a D grade fire officer, which is the base grade (and I can only assume that the Hon. Mr DeGaris related his figure to the base grade), is \$262.30 a week, which is quite different from what the Hon. Mr DeGaris said was the case.

I think there is an obligation on that member to tell the Council where he got his figures and who advised him, and to elaborate on them. I am sure, knowing his ingenuity, that he will be able to do that in the Committee stage. It is regrettable that, when this Bill has come before the Council with the general support of all members, a note such as this has been introduced. It is totally uncalled for, quite unnecessary, totally irrelevant, and totally misleading.

The people to whom I went for the correct figures could not work out where the Hon. Mr DeGaris got the figure of \$412.97. Drawing the longest possible bow, it could be arrived at only by taking the D grade officer's weekly rate of \$262.30 with all these circumstances coming together: two hours compulsory overtime, night shift penalties for night shift, working throughout a weekend for all the weekends worked, and having a great deal of public holiday loading included. Perhaps, if all those circumstances occurred together once in a blue moon, one would arrive at a figure somewhere near the figure that the Hon. Mr DeGaris gave.

Stating a figure of \$412.97 without elaborating on how it was arrived at was misleading in the extreme. I asked myself why that member introduced this topic without giving us the basis on which the figures were compiled and telling us where he had got them. In the South Australian Fire Brigade, under the Fire Brigade Officers Award, it takes 10 years of service for fire officers to get to the top of the scale. In the other States it takes five years, so South Australian fire officers take much longer to arrive at the top of the scale, which is far below what the member said was the salary for a first-year officer. To suggest, as the Hon. Mr DeGaris did, that fire officers in this State are being paid exorbitant salaries is absolute nonsense.

The officers have rejected a proposition that they should go to the top of the scale after five years service. They prefer to wait 10 years, because they are not prepared to compromise their integrity and possibly the safety of the people of South Australia by having officers at the top of the scale after only five years. They want only the most experienced people at the top and they claim that it takes 10 years to get that experience. Far from sneering at the officers, as the Hon. Mr DeGaris did—

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: I didn't sneer at them.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: That is what you implied by quoting those rates. That was uncalled for and had nothing to do with the Bill. The officers should be congratulated for not grabbing all they could at particular times. Only the most experienced officers will go to the top of the scale, unlike fire officers in other States. The Hon. Mr DeGaris also made comparisons regarding the number of firemen in the brigade per 1 000 000 of the population in Sydney and Melbourne.

One notable omission was Western Australia. There was no question about this in the Bill; it was information that someone obviously handed to the Hon. Mr DeGaris. He has taken these figures at face value for his own reasons, which I question, and he has introduced them into this debate to attack the fire officers and the Fire Brigade. The number of men in the Fire Brigade in Western Australia per million of population is identical to that in South Australia. The

Hon. Mr DeGaris did not mention that. Instead, he used a highly selective set of figures. It is obvious from reading *Hansard* why more men appear to be employed in the Fire Brigade in South Australia per million of population than are employed in New South Wales. There must be a base number to operate a Fire Brigade, irrespective of the area. A much higher density of population produces some economies of scale. That is obvious to me, and I should have thought that the Hon. Mr DeGaris, if he had been commenting on these figures fairly and sensibly, would realise that. However, he had to make a snide attack on the manning of the Fire Brigades in this State, and I think that that was quite unnecessary and unworthy of him.

In conclusion, I refer to the salary scale of Fire Brigade officers in this State. As I stated earlier, the table inserted by the Hon. Mr DeGaris yesterday is obviously incorrect. A D grade officer in this State receives the base rate of \$262.30. The highest paid employee is a shift supervisor in the control room, and he receives \$261.50 per week. Therefore, an officer employed in that brigade receives only 80c more per week than some of the men he controls. Those employees of the brigade who receive \$261.50 a week are not overpaid in relation to the work they do and the skills they have. However, some officers in charge of them receive only 80c a week more. I do not believe that this area should have been introduced in the debate. However, to suggest that Fire Brigade officers in this State are overpaid compared to officers in other States is quite incorrect.

The Council has been misled by the introduction of wages into the debate. It was not called for, and I cannot understand the Hon. Mr DeGaris's motives. The information given to the Hon. Mr DeGaris was completely incorrect, and I believe he should tell his informant that he has been left with egg on his face. If the Hon. Mr DeGaris's informant has any spite to take out on the officers and men of the Fire Brigade, let him do it directly himself and not use an intermediary such as the Hon. Mr DeGaris. I regret that I had to comment on the Hon. Mr DeGaris's contribution in this way, but I thought it was necessary to put the record straight. I support the Bill.

The Hon. C. M. HILL (Minister of Local Government): One interesting factor about this debate has been the attitude of members opposite. The Hon. Mr Sumner led the debate for the Opposition, and I rather sensed with all his questioning and criticism that perhaps he was not very happy with the Bill and that he may have been going to oppose it or at least support some changes. However, I think it is fair to say that today the Hon. Mr Blevins has very strongly supported the Bill.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: This is exactly what I did.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I am pleased to hear that the Hon. Mr Sumner supported it.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: Are you sure you were here?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I was here, and I listened to all of the Hon. Mr Sumner's questions. This Bill was referred to a Select Committee in another place with membership coming from both sides of that Chamber. The committee's decision in relation to this Bill was unanimous, so I would have thought that we would hear a more supportive response from the Hon. Mr Sumner. The Hon. Mr Sumner has just indicated that he most certainly does support it.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: Do you want to listen to what I said? The first thing I said was that the Opposition supports this Bill. It cannot be any clearer than that.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I am referring to all the questions asked by the Hon. Mr Sumner. I have replies to those questions, and if the Hon. Mr Sumner gives me an opportunity I will answer those questions.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: I said that I supported the second reading, and I also said that the questions that I raised were important and that the Minister should provide the Council with a report. What's wrong with that?

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon. M. B. Dawkins): Order! The Minister has the floor.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I shall be very pleased to reply to the questions raised by the Hon. Mr Sumner. I think it is fair to say, given the Leader's line of questioning, that he raised doubts in some people's minds about whether he really supported the Bill.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: What an absolute load of rubbish! Read my speech!

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I was not sure, bearing in mind the unity of the Australian Labor Party and how they all work together. However, I am pleased to receive confirmation from the Leader that he supports this Bill. The first question raised by the Leader dealt with the subject of the proposed new Fire Brigade headquarters. The Fire Brigades Board engaged Civil and Civic to prepare a design brief incorporating all the specialist requirements and needs of the South Australian Fire Brigade headquarters. This brief was completed and approved by the board on 21 July 1981, and the Chief Secretary was so advised. It was intended that the board would call architect tenders. Following the release of the Cox Report, the Chief Secretary advised the board not to proceed any further at that stage. The Cox Report contained certain recommendations in relation to the rationalisation of existing resources at fire stations, and it recommended a new headquarters building which, in some respects, was at variance with the previous design. The Government will move on the new building as soon as this Bill is passed.

In relation to funding of the headquarters, since 1975 the board has approached Treasury for a specific allocation under the semi-government small loans programme towards the cost of construction of a new headquarters. This means that at present the board has between \$7 000 000 and \$8 000 000 invested until final approval is given to proceed with construction.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: When is that expected?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: As soon as this Bill is passed. In regard to the advisory council and the point made that the advisory council is not included in the Bill, the Select Committee recommended that an advisory council should be established to advise the Government on all matters affecting fire services in South Australia.

The Chief Secretary has given an undertaking in another place that he will take the necessary administrative steps to establish such a council if the passage of this Bill is successful. I, too, give that undertaking in this place. The reason for not including the council in the Bill is that there is already an advisory council to the Minister of Agriculture by virtue of section 28 of the Country Fire Services Act which has not been operated on to date. The Chief Secretary proposes to approach the Minister of Agriculture to discuss this matter once this Bill is passed, so that ultimately it is expected that there will be only one advisory council reporting to the Government on all matters relating to fire services, that is, matters on a State-wide basis.

The Chief Secretary has indicated that he will give an assurance that he will approach the Local Government Association in regard to its representatives on the advisory council. I make that point, because this matter was mentioned quite strongly by the Hon. Lance Milne, who brought into this Council a message from the Local Government Association that it believed it was justified in having two representatives on the council.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: Has the Local Government Association made representations to you?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: No, it approached Mr Milne.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: The association didn't go to the Minister?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: The association approached Mr Milne and, quite properly, he raised the matter in this Council. There was no need for the association to approach the Hon. Mr Milne or anyone else in this Council if it was seeking an undertaking that it would have representation on the proposed council, because the Chief Secretary had already given an assurance in that regard. Nevertheless, that was the situation. I also made the point in the second reading explanation that that would be the case.

In regard to the specialist committee to examine funding, which matter was raised by the Hon. Mr Sumner, I indicate that another recommendation of the Select Committee was to establish an expert committee to advise the Government on a more equitable method of funding. The question of funding was also raised by the Hon. Mr DeGaris. Funding, as such, was outside the terms of reference of the Select Committee, but it was considered so important by the committee that it saw fit to refer to that matter in its report. The Chief Secretary has indicated in another place that he will establish such a committee and that the Local Government Association, among others, will be represented on it. I believe that the Hon. Lance Milne was seeking an assurance and an undertaking that, first, such a committee would be established and, secondly, that the Local Government Association would have representation on it, and I give him that assurance. The Government is anxious to see the question of funding resolved. The Chief Secretary has indicated that he will attend to the establishment of this committee once the Bill has passed through Parliament. Regarding a consultative committee—

The Hon. K. L. Milne: Will you be putting it in the Bill, or will it be outside the Bill?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: At this point, I give an undertaking to the Hon. Mr Milne that a particular specialist committee on funding will be established by the Chief Secretary in the first instance and, in the second instance, that the Local Government Association will have representation on that committee.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: Will the report be made public?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I see no reason why the report should not be made public. It would be a final decision for the Chief Secretary and the Government but, as is customary in these matters, the Government, during its two-year successful career, has made public reports of this kind and has been most willing to do so in the interests of local government.

The Hon. K. L. Milne: The Local Government Association is asking for that to go into the Bill.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: I gathered that from your amendment. We will certainly discuss that in more detail in the Committee stage.

The Hon. Frank Blevins: Why do you think the association didn't ask the Minister? It's a bit of a snub, isn't it?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: In its wisdom on this rare occasion the association approached the Hon. Mr Milne. The Hon. Mr Sumner referred to the consultative committee, which is now included in the Bill. The Select Committee recommended that a consultative committee be established within the new corporation. Again, in this matter, as in all the other matters to which I have referred, the Bill follows the recommendations of the Select Committee. I point out once again with strong emphasis that the committee comprised equal numbers of members of both major Parties in the other place.

The purpose of the consultative committee will be to provide both clerical and administrative staff, as well as operational staff, within the corporation to give them the

opportunity to exchange ideas on matters affecting their work environment.

This Government's policy is to encourage on a voluntary basis communication between employees and management. This is the core of good industrial relations, and I hope members will agree with that. The formation of this committee will enable this objective to be achieved. Because the Government's policy is one of voluntary communication, the committee is not included in the Bill. It is not the practice of this Government to include provision for such consultative committees in its Bills. However, the Chief Secretary has given an undertaking in another place, and I give a similar undertaking here, that this consultative committee will be formed once the Bill is through Parliament.

The Hon. Mr Sumner referred to the Chief Officer and the possibility of that person having fire-fighting experience. The Chief Officer of the corporation will be directly responsible to the Minister. He will also be the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Secretary indicates that it would be preferable to appoint a Chief Officer who has had fire-fighting experience. Regarding personnel and fire safety, as a result of the manning recommendations in the Cox Report, the Government has established a discussion group to examine these matters. The two respective unions (that is, the officers and the fire-fighters unions) are represented on that discussion group. A building safety committee examines buildings throughout Adelaide in regard to safety and the occupants of the building. A representative of the brigade is on that committee, which was set up by the previous Government after the unfortunate Salvation Army building fire. This Government has agreed to the continuation of that committee.

Mr Cox indicated in his report that training skills are available within the brigade. The Hon. Mr Sumner referred to the Inns Report, and I point out that this Government does not stand by that report, which is the report of the Committee of Inquiry into Fire Services. This Government has instituted its own reports—the Cox Report first and, secondly, the report of the Select Committee to which I have referred. The Government agrees in principle with those two latter reports. The Inns Report was instituted by the previous Government.

Regarding the point made by the honourable member about the control of fires, it was the view of the Select Committee that, if the legislation indicated clearly who must be in command of a fire in difficult situations, many problems would arise and morale within the brigade and the C.F.S. would be lowered. Common sense prevails in situations where a fire spreads from a designated brigade area to a C.F.S. area, or vice versa. It was considered appropriate not to legislate in this regard. Certainly, it is a matter which the Fire Services Advisory Council would consider in greater depth and greater detail and on which it could try to establish guidelines.

I refer also to the matters raised by the Hon. Mr DeGaris, particularly the question of wages and the involvement of the Public Service Board. The Select Committee recommended that the Fire Brigade remain a statutory authority in order to keep its employees independent of the Public Service. The Public Service Board provides advice and an industrial relations service to statutory authorities, but it is not legally responsible for providing such a service.

The Public Service Board may become involved in salary determination by invitation only. The final decision must remain with the statutory authority. However, since 1975 the previous Government determined and advised all Ministers that, before statutory authorities responded to industrial claims, they had to clear that response with the Industrial Relations Co-ordinating Committee, which was

established to report to the Minister of Industrial Affairs on any of those matters. That committee, which has been continued in operation by this Government, comprises two senior officers from the Department of Industrial Affairs and Employment and two senior officers from the Public Service Board. There is, therefore, some oversight by the Public Service Board, and I have been assured that statutory authorities have accepted the decision of the co-ordinating committee and the Minister of Industrial Affairs.

I now deal with the matter of superannuation, to which the Hon. Mr DeGaris referred. Five trustees administer the present employee superannuation scheme. Once this Bill passes through Parliament, the Chief Secretary will appoint the corporation's representatives as trustees. This is simply an administrative step. Under the proposed new corporation, its employees will continue to remain in the A.M.P.-managed superannuation scheme. They will not be contributors to the State superannuation scheme.

Regarding the calculation of benefits, members receive a retirement lump sum benefit equal to 12.5 per cent of the final average salary for each year of membership, with a minimum of 40 years. The final average salary means the average of the member's salary used for fund purposes at the three annual review dates of the fund preceding his actual retirement date. The review date is 1 April each year. For example, with 40 years service at retirement, a member would receive five times his annual average salary over the last three years at the review date.

I hope that those explanations have assisted members in their consideration of the Bill. I think that in some respects this is a Committee Bill and that discussion may be generated in Committee. I notice that some amendments are on file. I therefore think that any further explanation ought to be left until the Committee stage. I thank those members who have contributed to the debate.

Bill read a second time.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I move:

That it be an instruction to the Committee of the whole Council on the Bill that it have power to consider a new clause dealing with finance of Fire Brigades.

The Hon. D. H. LAIDLAW: I second the motion.

Motion carried.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 to 8 passed.

Clause 9—'Repeal of ss. 8 to 33 and substitution of new sections.'

The Hon. K. L. MILNE: I move:

Page 4, after line 16—Insert new sections as follows:

13. (1) There shall be a council entitled the Fire Services Advisory Council.

(2) The Council shall consist of nine members, of whom—

- (a) one shall be the Chief Officer, who shall be the chairman of the Council; and
- (b) eight shall be appointed by the Governor, of whom—
 - (i) one shall be a person nominated by the Local Government Association of South Australia;
 - (ii) one shall be a person nominated by the Insurance Council of Australia;
 - (iii) one shall be a person nominated by the Fire-fighters' Association of South Australia Incorporated;
 - (iv) one shall be a person nominated by the Fire Brigade Officers' Association of South Australia;
 - (v) one shall be a person nominated by the Country Fire Services Board;
 - (vi) one shall be a person nominated by the United Farmers and Stockowners of S.A. Incorporated;
 - (vii) one shall be a person nominated by the Royal Australian Institute of Architects S.A. Chapter; and
 - (viii) one shall be a person nominated by the Building Owners and Managers Association of Australia Limited.

(3) A member of the Council appointed by the Governor shall hold office at the pleasure of the Governor.

(4) Subject to any directions of the Minister, the Council shall conduct its business in such manner as it thinks fit.

14. The functions of the Fire Services Advisory Council are—
- (a) to advise the Minister in respect of any matter related to fire services that, in the opinion of the Council, should be brought to his attention; and
 - (b) to advise the Minister in respect of any matter referred to the Council by the Minister for advice.

The Local Government Association feels very strongly about all this, because so much responsibility has been placed on it in the past. The association has been responsible for collecting 12.5 per cent of the cost of the Fire Brigade. I expect that the insurance people also feel strongly about it, although they have not said anything to me. However, the Local Government Association is rather frightened that it may be given the responsibility of collecting the whole lot. There has been a trend in recent years for the Federal Government and State Governments to put the responsibility on local government, thereby increasing rates and the amount of work to be done, and involving the employment of more staff, without making any contribution thereto.

The Local Government Association says strongly that this Fire Services Advisory Council should be part of the Bill. Indeed, there can be no sense in its not being part of the Bill. The association is not trying to be difficult. The association, which is responsible for many people, has had much discussion on this matter, on which I ask the Government's advice. I cannot see why the advisory council has not been made part of the Bill. If it became necessary to have the advisory council outside the Bill (and I cannot think why it should be necessary), an amendment could be moved that I am sure would be considered.

However, as the matter of funding has not been settled, the Local Government Association does not want to be put in the position where the council does not have any teeth, where its representations are not listened to and do not become paramount, and where another imposition is placed on local government, which is already finding things difficult enough.

One could imagine the reaction of the average ratepayer if he had to pay his rates and then, on top of that, a Fire Brigade charge. People instinctively feel that insurance companies are ripping them off in relation to premiums. They do not like having an imposition for Fire Brigade charges as well as their insurance premiums, as they must already pay stamp duty and other charges.

The fact is that insurance companies do not make profits from insurance premiums: they make their profits out of investments. Underwriting on most companies worldwide is a loss, and people regard any additional imposition on their premiums in the same way as they regard any other form of imposition: it is unpopular. It would be in the Government's interest to take the bull by the horns and face up to this matter. It should be included in some sort of taxation measure. It does need a lot of thought on the funding side. It is a special request that this Council give teeth to the Bill and make it safer for local government and more acceptable to it.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: The honourable member can wipe away his tears of woe in regard to local government being terribly short of money and being given too much responsibility comparable with its funding. Under the Commonwealth loan arrangements, local government has received an increase of 16.6 per cent this year, and the Commonwealth has indicated that the increase in funds is going to be 18.9 per cent next year.

The Hon. M. B. Cameron: A bit different from the State Government.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Exactly. In this State local government increased its funding from the Commonwealth loan source from \$25 000 000 to \$31 000 000 which has

been spread across all councils in this State. The purpose of this money is to enable them to take over more local responsibilities and to provide more services.

The Hon. K. L. Milne: Cut it out.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Let me tell the honourable member that the reason why local government in this State gets only 8.6 per cent of the Commonwealth loan grant money as against a population proportion of 9.2 per cent is that the Commonwealth Grants Commission believes that local government in this State does not provide sufficient services at the local level. If they did there would be a figure in excess of \$2 000 000 coming annually from Commonwealth sources for local government. I do not mind local government people coming to see the honourable member. I admire him for putting their case on their behalf.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: What about us—we're supporting you.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: People went to see the Hon. Mr Milne and not you. He is putting the case. I will not accept the point that local government can come forward with a justifiable fear that they are being asked to do more than their fair share in assisting citizens at the local level.

The Hon. K. L. Milne: They're frightened that they might be.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I said in my second reading explanation that the Minister in another place in charge of administering this aspect of fire services intends to establish an advisory council. He intends to carry out the principle which the Hon. Mr Milne is seeking by his amendment. We are all aware of problems in trying to marry the wishes and workings of the C.F.S., on the one hand, with the brigade in Adelaide, on the other. The more we can do to overcome these problems of the intermeshing of these two very fine services, the better. Under the C.F.S. legislation, there is provision for an advisory body. It has not yet been established, fortunately (and I stress 'fortunately'). If the Council and Parliament accept what the Hon. Mr Milne is wanting to do there will be provision for a separate advisory role. We would then have to go ahead ultimately with two separate advisory bodies advising the Minister on the provision of fire services State-wide.

I ask the question: is that conducive to what we are trying to do—to marry up and overcome the difficulties of these two services? Of course it is not. The Minister wants to establish an advisory body State-wide. On it he wants to have representatives from the C.F.S. side of the picture and representatives from the brigade. He gives the undertaking, as I do, and I hope that this will assure the Hon. Lance Milne on his main cause for concern, that the Local Government Association will have representation on that State-wide body, and so it should. The Council would agree with that, because of the worth of local government in South Australia.

Nobody can stress that more strongly than I. I submit with respect that that is the way to achieve what the Hon. Mr Milne is seeking in his amendment. Let us have a State-wide body. Let that body advise the Minister on both areas—the C.F.S. and the brigade. We will then not have this fragmentation or separation. We will not have the isolation, demarcation and all that flows from that when we have a boundary fire where no-one is sure whose job it is to get to the cause and start fighting it.

The Hon. Mr Milne will agree on reflection that that is the better course for the Government to take rather than agree with the proposal. I do not question his sincerity in putting this amendment forward but I do think, when we weigh up the points for the proposition with those against it, that the better course to adopt is the one which the Government is proposing and which is in opposition to the honourable member's amendment.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: I commend the Hon. Lance Milne for his desire to do what local government apparently want. I suggest to him that the solution, which is put forward by the Government and on which an undertaking has been given by it, is the far better solution. It was my privilege some years ago to lead for the then Opposition with regard to the new Country Fire Services Act. I had considerable co-operation from the then Minister of Agriculture, the Hon. Mr Chatterton, and from Mr Fred Kerr, who was the highly respected head of the Country Fire Services, in providing what I believe is a very good Act indeed as far as the Country Fire Service is concerned. As the Minister has said, provision was made in that legislation for an advisory committee. That committee has not yet been set up and has not been needed up to the present, because the new Act, which came into being over three years ago, has worked very well indeed. I believe that the solution which the Government has proposed—an advisory committee which would give advice to the Minister from both sides of the question (that is, the metropolitan Fire Brigade and the Country Fire Services)—is the much better solution. I suggest to the Hon. Lance Milne that he might find it advisable to support that course of action.

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: I must confess to feeling somewhat hurt. I think that the Minister should realise who are his allies in this Bill. However, he seems to have forgotten. The Hon. Mr Milne, who opposes the Minister and some of the clauses in the Bill, has been admired by the Minister and commended for his sincerity. The Hon. Mr Dawkins has commended the Hon. Mr Milne for raising this amendment, which is in opposition to the Bill. The Hon. Mr Milne is being praised for opposing the Minister. The Opposition, which supports the Minister, has had a vicious attack launched on it by the Minister of Local Government. For that reason, I feel somewhat hurt. By way of explanation, the Minister stated in his reply to the second reading debate that he had got the impression that I was opposed to the Bill. Nothing could be further from the truth. I do not know whether the Hon. Mr Hill was out of the Chamber when I spoke or whether he did not read *Hansard*. In case he is confused as to who is his ally in this matter, I will read what I said. My opening sortie was:

The Opposition supports this Bill.

I do not know what the Minister wants.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: Is there a 'but' then?

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: No. I went on:

I will direct a number of questions to the Minister at the appropriate stage.

I gave a comprehensive and lucid history of the Bill, including an analysis of the recommendations of the committee of inquiry set up in 1978 by the Labor Government, and stated the objections raised before that committee by the fire fighters and the officers, the objections to the original Bill raised by those people, the fact that the Bill was referred to a Select Committee, and the fact that in the end we arrived at the Bill that is before us. At the end of all that, which I thought would have been useful information for members who had not been acquainted with the Fire Brigade as I have been as shadow Chief Secretary before March this year, I said:

I support the second reading but I believe that the questions I have raised are important and the Minister should provide the Council with a report on progress in those areas.

There was no question of opposition. It was a genuine attempt to obtain information, and I am pleased that for the most part the Minister has given the information. I was particularly concerned about whether there was to be a new building for the Fire Brigade and about other matters regarding staff training and promotion and matters of concern to those in the fire service. Unlike the Australian

Democrats, we support the Bill and support the Government. That is not surprising, because the measure has come before us in this form following consideration by a Select Committee of which Mr Corcoran, the former Premier, and the shadow Minister, Mr Wright, were members. They agreed to the report. There were discussions between that committee and the Opposition.

This Bill goes part of the way in setting up a structure that I believe will be in the best interests of fire services in this State and the amendments are acceptable to the people who work in the service, the Select Committee having reported after full consultation with the parties. Therefore, the Opposition opposes the amendment suggested by the Hon. Mr Milne. The Government has given an undertaking that an advisory committee will be set up. The only difference that I can see between the advisory committee that the Minister intends to set up and the one that would be statutorily enshrined in the legislation is in regard to membership.

By the Hon. Mr Milne's amendment, only one person would be nominated by the board of the Country Fire Services, and the Minister proposes that there would be two. The Hon. Mr Milne proposes that the Chief Officer would be Chairman and the Minister proposes that a person appointed by him would be Chairman. The Hon. Mr Milne proposes that there would be nine members and the Minister proposes 10. The Local Government Association is specifically represented by one member under the Hon. Mr Milne's proposal. Under the Minister's proposal, there would be a representative from local government, but the Minister has given an undertaking that the Local Government Association would be asked to nominate a local government representative.

In all important respects, I cannot see the difference between what the Hon. Mr Milne proposes and what the Minister has undertaken to do. The only difference is that the Hon. Mr Milne would enshrine the advisory committee in legislation. I think that the Hon. Mr Hill has given a very good explanation of why it would be an informal advisory committee, formally set up but not statutorily enshrined, because we want to get to the position where there would be one committee for the whole State advising on the metropolitan area, other fire districts, and the Country Fire Services.

Whilst we have provision for an advisory committee in the Country Fire Services legislation, it probably is better that the position be left as it is now pending the recommendations from the advisory committee that the Minister proposes. I believe that it would then be appropriate to enshrine an advisory committee in legislation, as has been done in regard to national parks and community welfare. I think that the Government's ideas have considerable merit.

The Hon. K. L. MILNE: I wish to continue with my amendment, because the Local Government Association, which represents thousands of people, has discussed the matter and this is what it has requested. It is not vicious about the question. The association came to me because of my connection with local government over many years, and the representatives were not speaking in criticism of the Minister. The association was aware that I would know how that level of government felt about this level and the association thought that it would be a courtesy to have this provision in the Bill. I cannot see how it will prevent negotiations if there is a division between the country and metropolitan fire services. If the two are to be merged, whatever action is taken to get the two ideas together, I cannot see that enshrining the provision in legislation would prevent it. The association supports the Country Fire Services.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: Don't you trust the Minister?

The Hon. K. L. MILNE: Yes, I do, but I do not think it is what they want.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I, too, am very hurt by the Minister's approach to this matter, and I can understand the Hon. Mr Sumner's feelings. I, too, spoke in favour of this particular amendment, but I have not been caught in the same way as has the Hon. Mr Milne. Nevertheless, I am prepared to accept the Minister's undertaking that an advisory committee will be established. I accept the point, and I think the Hon. Mr Milne should also, that to have an advisory committee in this Bill and another one in the Country Fires Services Act would be a little strange. I accept the Minister's undertaking that an advisory committee will be established and that it will be similar to the one envisaged by the Hon. Mr Milne. I think it is more practical if one advisory committee covers both sections.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS: Whilst I am interested to hear that the Local Government Association approached the Hon. Mr Milne because of his experience with local government, I cannot understand why it did not approach the Minister. Several members of this Council, including the honourable Minister and you, Mr President, the Hon. Mr DeGaris, the Hon. Mr Creedon, myself, and perhaps other members of the Chamber, have had considerable experience in local government. I think the Local Government Association would have done well to approach those members who have had much experience in local government, because I believe they would have come up with a better proposition than the one put forward by the Hon. Mr Milne.

Amendment negatived.

The Hon. K. L. MILNE: I move:

Page 4, after line 37—Insert new section as follows:

15. (1) There shall be a committee entitled the 'Contributions Review Committee'.

(2) The Committee shall consist of four members appointed by the Governor of whom—

- (a) two shall be persons nominated by the Minister;
- (b) one shall be a person nominated by the Local Government Association of South Australia; and
- (c) one shall be a person nominated by the Insurance Council of Australia.

(3) The members of the Committee shall hold office at the pleasure of the Governor.

(4) The functions of the Committee are to inquire into and report to the Minister as to—

- (a) the persons or bodies that should contribute to the costs of administering this Act; and
- (b) the amount of the contributions that should be made by those persons or bodies.

(5) Subject to any directions of the Minister, the Committee shall conduct its business in such manner as it thinks fit.

(6) This section shall expire on 31 December 1982.

The Local Government Association has asked for this to be done, and I would have thought that it was discussed with the Minister. The association approached me as a second string. The difference between you amateurs who have experience in local government is that at one time I was President of the Municipal Association, which represented all the municipal councils, and I am a man of considerable consequence in this area. I think the association was very well advised to obtain my advice.

Amendment negatived; clause passed.

Clauses 10 to 14 passed.

Clause 15—'Officers and employees of the corporation.'

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: This clause defines the officers and employees of the corporation. The first officer is the Chief Officer, followed by the Deputy Chief Officer and other officers that the corporation appoints. At the moment there is an acting Chief Officer because the former Chief Officer retired several months ago. As the new corporation, what action will the Minister take in relation to the appoint-

ment of a new Chief Officer? What procedures will be adopted in relation to advertising that position? Will the position be advertised and, if so, will it be advertised only in South Australia, Australia-wide or world-wide? When these matters were being discussed previously it was mentioned that the Chief Officer's position should be advertised as widely as possible to ensure that the best possible applicant is secured. I point out that I am not attempting to take anything away from the present Acting Chief Officer. Nevertheless, I think it is a legitimate question. In relation to the appointment, how will the selection process be carried out? It is not a Public Service Board selection where a procedure is laid down for selection panels.

Some procedure for selection should be adopted whereby there is an input from the officers and employees of the brigade: the procedure should be similar to that which is adopted within the Public Service. By that I mean that a selection panel, on which there is participation by employees and by those who are experienced in this sort of position, should be established. One could envisage that there would be a selection panel perhaps involving people from interstate who are very much involved in the administration of fire services outside South Australia. That is done on occasions in relation to Public Service appointments within the normal Public Service system.

I think it is true to say that the position of Chief Officer is of considerable importance. The extent to which these amendments to the principal Act are successful and the extent to which the other improvements to the brigade that have been suggested are successful will depend very much on the Chief Officer. Will advertisements be placed for the position and, if so, where will the advertisements appear? Secondly, will a selection panel be established, including representatives of those who work in the brigade and other people, possibly also including people from interstate who have experience in the administration of fire services?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I agree with the honourable member that this is a very important appointment, because the Chief Officer will hold a key position in the new organisation. The position will be advertised nationally. I cannot give an undertaking that the position will be advertised internationally, but the point that the honourable member made in regard to widening the area of advertisement will most certainly be considered by the Chief Secretary.

In regard to the second point, I cannot give any undertaking as to the selection process at this stage. All of the matters that have been raised by the honourable member will be borne in mind by the Chief Secretary and the Government. I believe that the honourable member will agree that the Government has been most careful in the selection of appointees to other high offices over the past two years. We are very cautious in our approach and very careful and fair in our selection process. Questions relating to a selection panel or appointees to that panel are uncertain matters at present, but most certainly the issues raised by the honourable member will be considered fully.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: The position of Chief Officer is most important and it should be advertised as widely as possible. I considered moving an amendment to provide that it would be necessary to do this, but I would be prepared to accept a Ministerial undertaking that, if that position is to be filled, it will be advertised interstate.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I give that undertaking.

Clause passed.

Clauses 16 to 20 passed.

Clause 21—'Chain of command in respect of fire-fighting operations.'

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: Perhaps this point should have been made earlier. This clause deals with the responsibilities

of the Chief Officer and the lines of demarcation between the Country Fire Services and the South Australian Fire Brigade. I believe that the Minister gave his attention to that question when he replied to the second reading debate. He stated that he believes that these matters will be worked out on a commonsense basis in the future after discussion within the consultative committee that is to be set up. I accept that for the time being; however, the question I raised in regard to the Chief Officer was not completely answered by the Minister.

I asked whether the Chief Officer should have fire-fighting experience. The Minister replied that it was preferable. Does that mean that someone with fire-fighting experience will be appointed to the position of Chief Officer, or does it mean it is likely that someone without fire-fighting experience will be so appointed? The Country Fire Services Act contains a provision that is not contained in this Bill under which the Director of the Country Fire Services must be a person with fire-fighting experience. I believe that these questions are legitimate, because they have certainly concerned people involved with the Fire Brigade in the past, and were of concern during the earlier controversy surrounding the initial Government Bill. Will the Minister give more specific information on this point?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I understand that some people have a very firm view about this appointment, but at present the Government wishes to keep its options open. I have gone so far, and that is as far as I can go in indicating the Chief Secretary's view, which is that it would be preferable to appoint a Chief Officer who has had fire-fighting experience. I cannot give a clear undertaking that that will be a prerequisite for applicants. Because the matter has been raised again by the honourable member, the weight of his argument will be borne in mind at the appropriate time.

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: Is the Minister prepared to go this far in terms of an undertaking, given that nothing is in the Bill in this regard—that the advertisement will indicate that preference will be given to someone with fire-fighting experience? It seems that the Government is saying that it is preferable that that position ensue. Is the Minister prepared to give an undertaking that that will form part of the advertisement?

The Hon. C. M. HILL: Of course, that is really going the whole distance that the honourable member is seeking, because, if an advertisement contained words to the effect that preference would be given to a person with fire-fighting experience, that would certainly cause other people to hesitate and to be most reluctant to apply. It may well be in the State's interest that applications from such people ought to be lodged and given full consideration.

The point has been made quite clearly: the Chief Secretary's views on the matter have been expressed here. We appreciate that there are strong feelings in some quarters that it ought to be a prerequisite. But, having the responsibility, as the Government has, to ensure that this new corporation and service will be the very best that can be provided for the State, we consider that it is unwise to be tied down to too many restrictions at this stage of the Government's planning.

For that reason, I cannot go so far as to give the honourable member a clear assurance that what he seeks in regard to the advertisement will be put in train. However, I am quite prepared to discuss the matter further with the Chief Secretary and make quite clear to him that the point has been raised to this extent. I am sure that the Chief Secretary will bear that in mind when he proceeds later with his plan.

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: I find it a little strange that, if it is the Government's policy that it is preferable that a person with fire-fighting experience be appointed to the job,

it is not prepared to make some mention of that in the advertisement that calls for applications for the job.

Perhaps the Government has a legitimate argument as to whether or not this ought to be an absolute prerequisite. However, as I understand it, the Government had determined a policy, which is that, in effect, preference will be given to applicants with fire-fighting experience. If that is the Government's view, I find it a little strange that the Government is not prepared to say something to that effect in the advertisement, even if the Minister thinks that my formulation of the words is not acceptable to it. Surely there ought to be some reference in the advertisement to fire-fighting experience, if that is in fact the Government's policy.

I think that the Minister's reluctance in this area may perhaps cast doubts on the soundness or firmness with which the Government holds that policy. At the very least, in order to effect the Government's stated policy, there should be some mention in the advertisement of fire-fighting experience.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I should like to repeat the exact words from the note from the Chief Secretary which was handed to me in relation to my second reading explanation. They were as follows:

The Chief Secretary had indicated that it would be preferable to appoint a Chief Officer who has had fire-fighting experience.

It may well be that words can be found in the advertisement that may satisfy, or go a long way towards satisfying, the Hon. Mr Sumner. However, I can give no further undertaking other than that which I have already given.

Clause passed.

Clauses 22 to 31 passed.

New clause 31a—'Part to expire on 30 June 1983.'

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I move.

Page 8, after line 42I—Insert new clause as follows:

31a. The following section is inserted after section 60a of the principal Act:

60b. This Part shall expire on the thirtieth day of June 1983.

I have moved this amendment with good reason. Honourable members here and in another place have said that they are not satisfied with the existing financing system of the Fire Brigade. My amendment provides that this part of the Act dealing with the whole question of fire brigades expires on 30 June 1983. That gives the Government a period of almost two years in which to come up with a new scheme. Otherwise, the existing scheme will expire. If the existing scheme is to be renewed, it will be.

However, this is an indication of the Council's view that it is not happy with the financing system and that the Government should do something about changing it. The Select Committee's report indicates that the question should be examined, and it is up to the Government to decide whether it wants to do this by way of an outside committee, by a Select Committee of the Parliament, or in some other way. However, I think that the Council's indication should be made.

The Hon. Mr Blevins made the rather odd accusation that I misled the House with information. The information may have been inaccurate; I do not know. However, to the best of my knowledge the information that I gave to the Council was accurate. It came from a person who is closely associated with the fire brigades in Australia and, as far as I know, it was accurate. Admittedly, one can make mistakes, but, making comparisons of identical positions between States, I can say that the person who gave me this advice—

The Hon. Frank Blevins: Who was it?

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I am not prepared to say, but this person was closely associated with fire brigades in this State and in other States.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: I cannot support the amendment. I fully understand the honourable member's concern about this question of funding for the Fire Brigade. Indeed, I believe that all honourable members would take the view that at some stage some change in funding arrangements must be instituted for the brigade. However, whether the Government should be forced into action of this kind is most questionable in view of the present Government's approach to this question at this time.

At this time, the Government accepts the relevant part of the Select Committee's finding. Under the heading 'Funding', on page 2 of its report, the committee states:

The committee therefore recommends that a special committee be established to examine funding arrangements and to make recommendations to the Government. The committee does not believe that the review of funding arrangements should be undertaken by the consultative committee or the advisory council. A specialist committee is the only appropriate body to examine funding arrangements.

Faced with that recommendation from the Select Committee, I have already given an undertaking today that the Government will appoint such a committee of experts to advise it on a more equitable method of funding than that which exists at present. I state, for the Hon. Mr Milne's benefit, that that committee will have representation from the Local Government Association. To emphasise the Government's good faith in acknowledging that further investigation is needed, I said in my reply to the second reading:

The Government is anxious to see the question of funding resolved, and the Chief Secretary has indicated that he will attend to the establishment of a committee once the Bill is passed through Parliament.

That can be taken in good faith, and I must question very seriously whether there is a need for the amendment.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: What do you say is the deadline?

The Hon. C. M. Hill: It is 30 June 1983.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: I mean your deadline.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: We have not got a deadline. We are saying that we will move on establishing the committee, as soon as this Bill passes, to investigate the question of funding. We all intend that there be some change. I question very seriously whether there is a need for a provision such as that involved in the amendment to be written into the legislation. I would much prefer to see the system whereby the Government fully investigates it and considers the question. In the investigation a great number of people will have to be involved, particularly those directly concerned with the question of funding presently. If the Government proceeds in that way, by evolution we will ultimately find that the best answer to this very worrying problem may not be an answer which brings about a tremendous change as a first step. The Government of the day may have to introduce change in stages so that the impact of such change does not seriously or adversely affect to a marked degree the party which will have to find the funds for the brigade if change is made in the present system.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: We are already finding \$30 in every \$100.

The Hon. C. M. Hill: We are finding quite a deal now. It may mean that we have to find more as investigations continue. In finding an answer for an alternative system, it is going to be a very sensitive area and one upon which any Government ought to have the right to deliberate without having anything over its head forcing it into a situation that an amendment of this kind would do.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: I have a considerable amount of sympathy for the amendment moved by the Hon. Mr DeGaris but I am sorry to say that, with the new-found

alliance between the Opposition and the Government, I do not wish to create any irreparable rift over this minor matter. Having said that, I think that what the Hon. Mr DeGaris says is true. He wants to try to get some kind of finality on the question of funding which is now being recognised by most people as being inequitable. It is true that the Inns Report of 1979 made comprehensive recommendations about funding. However, it is not true to say that there has been no inquiry into the matter. The Inns Report recognised the inequity of only those people who insure their properties paying a levy which finds its way into Fire Brigade funds. Those people who do not insure pay no levy. The proposition put forward by the Inns Committee was that there should be a levy or a rate struck on the property owners, depending on the value of the property. As I understand it, that was quite a firm recommendation. It also recommended that there should be a contribution from general revenue from the State Government more or less equivalent to the contribution at the present time and that the Commonwealth Government should make some contribution to cover the cost of fire protection of the not inconsiderable number of Commonwealth properties in the metropolitan area. The Government apparently finds those recommendations unacceptable or at least finds them subject to further investigation.

The Hon. Mr DeGaris is concerned that a committee will be set up which will drift on into oblivion, that the anomaly currently existing will continue and that the Government will not be prepared to grasp the political nettle, that nettle being that any other system of funding might reflect badly on the Minister and his Party. I point out to the Minister that the Hon. Mr DeGaris, who is a member of the Liberal Party and who is not unknown for his astuteness, has foreseen that problem for the Liberal Party and has quite clearly made the date for the expiry of the part relating to funding June 1983 so that any political embarrassment will fall on a Labor Government. I cannot quite see why the Hon. Mr Hill is so upset about it. No doubt what the Hon. Mr DeGaris says has considerable merit.

However, these matters were canvassed by a Select Committee in another place, and it was agreed that an informal committee would be set up on a permanent undertaking given by the Minister. I suppose the only way that we can keep track of that committee is to continue to ask the Minister what has happened as time goes by. I think all members would agree that some solution must come about in the reasonably near future.

The Hon. R. C. DeGARIS: I am rather surprised at the Hon. Mr Sumner's view. The very reason for this amendment is that, if any change is to be made to the funding of the Fire Brigade, it is to be made in the first year of any Government. No Government is going to change the funding of the Fire Brigade in the last 12 months of its life. The only way that we can get any change is in the first year. If it is not done in June 1983 it will not be done at all. A change will be politically unpopular for a brief period. If the Government or the committee does not come up with a satisfactory answer the Government has to come back and review this form of funding, and the matter will be debated again. If we do not do it, it will be swept under the carpet forever, and we will go on with a system of funding for the Fire Brigade whereby \$34 out of every \$100 paid in insurance will go to the Fire Brigade.

People are tending to insure for less than replacement value because of the existing position. I ask the Hon. Mr Sumner to reconsider, because this is one way in which a more equitable system can be achieved, and we would be certain to achieve it by June 1983.

The Hon. C. J. Sumner: I would like to support the Hon. Mr DeGaris. I appreciate what he has said. My point

was that, although the change of funding might have to be made in the first year of Government because of the political consequences, those consequences would be for the Labor Party. The Opposition wants this legislation passed in accordance with the understanding and undertakings given before the Select Committee. On that basis, I cannot support the Hon. Mr DeGaris, although I certainly support his sentiments.

He and I may be able to join forces to ask the Minister to give an undertaking as to when the inquiry will be completed. We have accepted undertakings about the consultative committee and the committee to consider funding. It is not going much further to ask for an undertaking on when the report will be made available. The Minister has said that the report will be made public in accordance with the Government's policy on open government. It is not going much further to give an undertaking that the report would be submitted within 12 or 18 months.

The Hon. R. C. DeGaris: Would you make it December 1982?

The Hon. C. J. SUMNER: I think that would be more palatable. The concern is that there has been no indication from the Government on when the committee will report.

The Hon. C. M. HILL: It is impossible to lay down specific times at this early stage of the Government's plan. I cannot give any idea, because it is a very vexed question. Let us cut away the talk of specific dates and election times. The Government wants change in this area and acknowledges that the present position ought to be improved. When the committee reports and the Government has considered those findings, ultimately change will come, and that will improve what we have now.

New clause negatived.

Remaining clauses (32 to 49) and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

MINING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 17 September. Page 980.)

The Hon. C. W. CREEDON: It would appear that the main reason for this Bill is the requirement to satisfy the needs of Western Mining Corporation. Western Mining Corporation presently holds an exploration licence in respect of the Olympic Dam area, and an application in respect of a licence to cover the Andamooka opal fields has been lodged, but at this stage and with the present state of the legislation it would not be possible for the company to explore for minerals beneath the precious stones field.

I believe it is essential that Western Mining Corporation, or any other person for that matter, if that party had a licence, be allowed to drill in this area to determine whether mineralisation has occurred. It is essential that we as a State know just where our mineral resources are.

The second reading explanation points out that the amendments which relate to the access that will be given to Western Mining do just that and no more. The changes we are asked to consider will allow exploration to occur: in other words, for a licence to be issued to that effect but that no further activity can take place other than that which is defined in the Act in the term 'exploration' and words which are contiguous to that particular word.

If Western Mining were to discover mineralisation below the precious stones field which it believed would warrant production and the Minister was of like mind, the Minister does not have the power to allow that activity to occur. I believe that, quite correctly at this stage, a provision is

being inserted that would require agreement by both Houses of this Parliament before there was any production activity.

This Bill also provides that the maximum term of exploration licence, which is currently two years, be increased to five years. The explanation given is that after an initial period of two years the Minister may require reduction in the area comprised in the licence. This does not fully explain why he saw the need to increase the period proposed for such a licence for five years, but it is the kind of request that I can understand Western Mining Company making, because we are frequently assured that exploration is a very expensive business.

I can readily believe that, because of the scale of activity that may be involved in the application at this present stage of mining technology, it is not unreasonable to allow longer periods for such a licence. At the same time it is wise to provide for some curb on that licence time which would allow the Government to have some control on what might occur during a five-year period. The Bill makes several modifications to the Act of a more minor nature. One of them provides that companies will not be allowed to hold precious stones prospecting permits because of an amendment contained within it. The reason given was that many companies had been formed by opal miners in order to circumvent the principle that only one claim may be held by one person.

It would seem to be a reasonable thing to be doing. In New South Wales there is a similar provision within their legislation relating to gemstone mining. Obviously gemstone miners have similar thoughts in different States, and there has been a need to try to curb the activity that was occurring in New South Wales. I think that one of the main things about this kind of activity is to know or be reassured that all bodies were consulted, that is, the small miner as well as the larger bodies such as Western Mining. We have here an attempt to carry out two distinctly differing mining activities at greatly different levels, but the opal miners were in first and should receive major consideration.

My colleague Mr Payne, as Opposition spokesman in another place, in order to satisfy himself that the Bill actually does what it sets out to do, contacted personnel from Western Mining Company and also personnel from Roxby Downs to ascertain their feelings about the legislation and to ensure that there had been some degree of consultation. He thought that reference to that in the Bill should have occurred, and he was pleased to report that it had occurred. The information he received from Roxby Management Services and also from the corporate body of Western Mining is that there were meetings with opal miners at Andamooka, for example, at which representatives of Western Mining were present, together with officers of the department. There were discussions at officer level with officers of the department and officers of Western Mining Corporation. Amendments were circulated through the Chamber of Mines, an opportunity for discussion was given, and further amendments as a result of input relating to the suggested amendments were made. My colleague was told that they were circulated, and there appears to have been a good deal of satisfaction with those parts of the legislation that apply to Western Mining.

It was interesting to note that Western Mining Corporation indicated that it had taken the trouble to consult the Coober Pedy miners, even though they are not affected by the present requirements. I guess the company is looking ahead to the day when it might be searching that area for minerals. The Opposition supports the Bill.

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

**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HEALTH COMMISSION ACT
AMENDMENT BILL**

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 22 September. Page 1042.)

The Hon. J. R. CORNWALL: I would like to make what I consider to be two important points before proceeding to a specific discussion of the clauses of this Bill. The first point concerns the extraordinary comments made by the Minister of Health during the second reading of this Bill in another place. She castigated me for criticising the Health Commission because it was a statutory authority. That seems to be an extraordinary attitude. If we apply that across the board to every statutory authority in the State we would not be allowed to do our duty as Parliamentarians at all.

The South Australian Health Commission has never worked and, in fact, it has deteriorated further during the two years of this Administration. Much of this deterioration has been directly due to the Government's policy and the way in which the Minister of Health operates. The Minister has taken it upon herself to act as Minister and Chairman and to involve herself in discussions with a very small number of people in the hierarchical structure. That has had very poor results. I recently called for a Royal Commission to look into the South Australian Health Commission, with the widest possible terms of reference. I serve notice that during the Budget debate I will be renewing that call and providing further detailed evidence on why it is necessary.

Secondly, and I have made this point before, I believe this is possibly the worst second reading explanation that I have ever seen. I will continue to make that point while we continue to receive these dreadful second reading explanations. Very often it is quite impossible to understand what they are about, what is intended and the general thrust, simply because people do not get around to writing normal, reasonable English for the Minister's second reading explanation. I appeal to the Government to lift its game and ask the people responsible for writing these explanations to please express them in a way that we can understand.

One of the main thrusts of this Bill is to change the existing legislation as it affects community health centres. This presented the Minister and the commission with not only an ideal opportunity but I would have thought an obligation to spell out the Government's and the commission's policy and philosophy in relation to community health centres. Unfortunately, the explanation does not do that. The Minister has not done it and neither has the commission, except in the most general terms as they relate to amalgamations between hospitals and health centres in country areas. In his reply, perhaps the Minister of Community Welfare will correct this omission. I would be particularly interested to know the Minister's and the Government's policy in relation to the autonomy of metropolitan community health centres such as St Agnes and Clovelly Park.

The Minister's recent action to place Christies Beach under the umbrella of the Flinders Medical Centre has already created some public controversy and alarm. There is quite a degree of concern amongst people connected with community health centres that there might be more behind the apparently simple thrust of these amendments than meets the eye. I would certainly like the Minister to assure me specifically on what the Government has in mind for metropolitan community health centres.

Clauses 4, 9, 13 and 21 cause the Opposition some concern. Clause 4 amends section 6 of the principal Act by substituting a new definition of 'Government Health Centre'

as 'any health centre designated as a Government health centre by the regulations'. It goes with clause 21, which repeals the third schedule listing existing health centres. There was a specific reason for the schedule originally being put in: it was to give a firm undertaking to the health centres listed there that their continuing existence would not be threatened. Many people associated with health centres are uneasy about the proposal to amend through clauses 4 and 21. In the present economic climate, and given the penchant for this Government to dismantle the public sector, this worry is quite understandable. I repeat that I would like the Minister to spell out quite clearly the Government's policy on metropolitan health centres and all the possible consequences that might arise out of a failure to amend.

If we are unable to obtain a firm assurance that the overall and general autonomy and general direction and conduct of health centres will not be interfered with in any dramatic or substantial way by these amendments, the Opposition will have to oppose them. Clauses 9 and 13 refer to the amalgamation or take-over of health centres by hospitals. I can appreciate that this is necessary in some instances to provide an integrated service. In some country areas particularly, or I would suggest exclusively, this is a rational and desirable way to co-ordinate services. I can think of no better example of this than the Loxton Hospital, where there is a total integration of all services that should be provided to a local community.

That is all very well in relation to a relatively small community hospital, which, in addition to acute care beds, has hostel accommodation, nursing bed accommodation, and perhaps Meals on Wheels run from the kitchen, as well as community health programmes run from that central point. However, there is an overwhelming body of professional opinion not only in this State but also world-wide that sees it as a highly undesirable trend to base or to closely attach community health centres to large hospitals. I refer to the metropolitan setting. Again, I say that we seek assurances that this is not intended in the metropolitan area, that there is no intention for the existing community health centres to be taken in under the great umbrella or the monolith of our large public hospitals. Unless we get some sort of assurance about that, we would have to oppose the clause.

New section 27 (3a) (b) also requires specific clarification. New subsection (3a) (a) refers to consent to take over or amalgamate being given by the governing body or, in other words, the board of the hospital or health centre. It further refers to mutual agreement being reached by the governing body and the Health Commission. That is quite unexceptional and, indeed, it is quite desirable. However, new subsection (3a) (b) appears to be a catch-all provision to give the commission powers in case agreement is not reached. Again, I seek further clarification from the Minister in that regard. The same remarks apply to new section 48 (3a) (b): I would like clarification in this regard, also. Most other clauses of the Bill are unexceptional. For example, clauses 6 and 7 refer to public servants who work for the commission and who are to remain public servants. Provision is made for that situation.

Clause 10 amends section 31 of the principal Act to ensure portability of leave rights between the commission and the Public Service. The Opposition has no trouble at all in enthusiastically supporting those clauses and many other areas of the Bill.

There are only two other clauses that I believe require comment. Clauses 5 and 8 deserve our derisory support. In view of the gross maladministration of the commission at present, it is ironic that two cosmetic clauses should be inserted that refer specifically to efficiency. I would have

thought it was explicit in any Government or any organisation that aspires to be a public administrator that efficiency in all cases would be understood.

Regarding efficiency and rationalisation, I will digress slightly, although my remarks will certainly be germane to clauses 5 and 8 of the Bill. I refer to an article that appeared in the late edition of the *News* today in which the Minister of Health, Mrs Adamson, accused me of being ignorant of the hospital system. That is about the only phrase she has been able to constantly dredge up in the past three months, in reference to me. According to her, I am always ignorant of something that is going on. I assure the Minister that that is not the case. I work very hard to be well informed in these matters. In this article the Minister has made a series of quite contradictory remarks. For example, she stated that in recent weeks I had criticised the Health Commission for not rationalising hospital services and for not giving a role to the community non-profit hospitals. That is not the case. I have not criticised the commission for not giving a role to community non-profit hospitals: I have criticised them for not defining a role in the overall scheme of things involving community non-profit hospitals.

In fact, relations between the commission and many of the community non-profit hospitals are not good. The interface between the commission's other services and the community hospitals is very ill defined, and many of the boards believe that at present they are working in something of a vacuum. What I have been doing consistently, and what I will continue to do, is appeal to the Minister and the commission to work out the interface between the specialists and public and teaching hospitals, on the one hand, and the community non-profit hospitals on the other. Mrs Adamson stated today:

It is ridiculous to suggest taxpayers' money should be used to duplicate and compete with the services being provided by these institutions—

referring to the community hospitals—
especially in a very expensive teaching environment . . .

That was an extraordinary statement for her to make, because the criticism I made was of a letter written by the Chairman of the Health Commission to the Administrator of the Flinders Medical Centre. In that letter there was no suggestion of rationalisation in terms of competition between existing services. Rather, the letter was a specific condemnation overall of the Flinders Medical Centre getting into specialty services. The specific criticisms were that the Flinders Medical Centre had developed an *in vitro* fertilisation programme, which had received considerable publicity, and that it had also received recently substantial publicity about its limb reimplantation programme—in other words, the microsurgery being done at the Flinders Medical Centre.

Those sorts of services are simply not provided in community hospitals; no-one expects that they would be. There is no competition with the community hospitals, because there is no suggestion that they will ever get into that area. I was referring to a letter from the Chairman of the commission criticising the fact that Flinders Medical Centre got into those areas at all. One of my specific criticisms was that that is a perfectly valid role for a specialist teaching hospital, and it seemed to be almost a fit of pique on the Minister's part to get the Chairman to write to Flinders and say, 'Ease off. We don't really want you getting any favourable publicity about your activities in these fields.'

Mrs Adamson was also quoted as refuting my allegation that public hospital funding had been cut by 8 per cent in the past two State Budgets. She claimed that this was another example of my misuse of the facts. She went on to

say that expenditure on public hospitals in South Australia increased by 14 per cent in the past financial year, well in advance of inflation. Again, that is a case of the Minister playing with facts and figures to suit any particular line she wants to take at any particular time. It has been the proud boast of the Minister and the Government that they have been cutting and slashing, getting into the public hospital area, where they claimed, prior to the last election, there was waste and extravagance. It is well known that the area of public hospitals has been substantially cut back in successive Budgets. One can play with figures as much as one likes.

I do not intend to canvass these areas at any length: it would be wrong of me to do so in this speech, but they will be canvassed at great length in the Budget debate. The fact is that, as a matter of policy, the Minister and the Government have cut back in the areas of public and teaching hospitals, and they have been proud to proclaim it. If anyone doubts that there have been cutbacks, let them talk to administrators, senior medical staff working in the hospitals, nursing staff and, just as importantly or perhaps more importantly, let them talk to patients.

There is no doubt at all that there have been substantial cuts over the past two years and that at this stage the quality of patient care is being seriously affected. I was calling for us to rise up in defence of these great institutions and to maintain the standards of excellence that we have come to expect. It sits ill on the Minister in those circumstances to be boastful of the fact that they are being cut back, and that the Government is trying to push more and more people away from the public hospital sector into private and community hospitals and yet, on the other hand, to play with figures because it suits her purpose. It also sits ill on the Minister to put out misleading statements claiming funding, in real terms, has been increased over the past two years. The Minister cannot have it both ways.

Perhaps the Minister of Community Welfare will say what is the truth. Have there been cuts in funding in our public and teaching hospitals, and has there been a deliberate Government policy of putting more people into private and community hospitals, or has there been an almost burgeoning increase in funds? I know the answer, but the Government cannot have it both ways. I should like the Minister when he replies to answer that question. Subject to receiving satisfactory answers to the various questions that I have raised, the Opposition intends to give some qualified support to the second reading.

The Hon. M. B. DAWKINS secured the adjournment of the debate.

HANSARD LEADER

The Hon. K. T. GRIFFIN (Attorney-General): I seek leave to make a brief statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. K. T. GRIFFIN: It is appropriate today to draw attention to the fact that Mr Gordon Stacey, the Leader of *Hansard*, retires tomorrow after 22 years in the Public Service. Gordon Stacey commenced duties on 21 February 1949 in the then Country and Suburban Courts Department as a temporary clerk on an annual salary of £418, or \$836. In January 1951, Gordon was appointed to the position of Clerk and Reporter, and in March 1955 he was appointed to the position of Reporter in the Government Reporting Department. In July 1967 he was appointed Senior Reporter.

In December 1975, Gordon Stacey was appointed to the position of Assistant Leader of the *Hansard* staff, a position

that he held until April 1978, when he was appointed to his present position as Leader of *Hansard*. In the period of time that Gordon has been a *Hansard* Reporter, he has served the Parliament well, and has earned commendation from a variety of people who have come in contact with him.

Gordon has been involved in a number of developments in the Parliamentary reporting field, including the installation of a tape-recording system, in conjunction with microphones, in the House of Assembly Chamber, to be used as a back-up to manual reporting. More recently, he has been involved in the installation, on a trial basis, of word processing equipment for the purpose of determining whether or not word processing will be used to a much greater extent in the recording of Parliament and in the Government Printing Division.

Gordon has a quiet disposition. Nevertheless, he has exercised responsible and competent leadership as Leader of *Hansard*, and I want to place on record appreciation of his contribution to the work of Parliament and to the Public Service over a long period of time. I hope that he will have a long and happy retirement and that he will periodically return to visit Parliament House and many of the friends he has made in the time he has been here.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I seek leave to make a statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: I, too, would like to endorse, on behalf of the A.L.P. members of this Chamber, the remarks of the Attorney-General in relation to Gordon Stacey. I will not repeat all the things the Attorney-General has said. I am sure that, over the past 20 years, Mr Stacey has found repetition by members to be one of the crosses he has had to bear.

The Hon. M. B. Dawkins: Undue prolixity!

The Hon. FRANK BLEVINS: Indeed. So, I will spare him on this occasion. I think that is probably the least we can do. It has been a pleasure to work with Gordon Stacey—and I say that deliberately. All members of this House have worked with Gordon Stacey. Gordon and his team have been very efficient, but also very unobtrusive. When we get carried away here and make what we believe to be a fine speech, I am always quite surprised afterwards to find that someone has taken the trouble to write it down accurately, and I am sure that sometimes the hand of Gordon has gone over it to tidy it up more than a little bit.

Certainly, his work, the way in which he has done it, and the way in which he has organised his team have been absolutely superb. He has been a very loyal servant of the Parliament, as I hope we all are, and certainly a very good public servant. I wish Gordon a very long and happy retirement and, on behalf of everyone on this side, I thank him very much for his attention and the way in which he has treated us over the years, forgiving us our occasional slip into prolixity, as the member opposite said, or tedious repetition. Thank you very much, Gordon.

The PRESIDENT: Now that I am in the picture about what is going on, I, too, would like to add my appreciation and thanks to Gordon Stacey for the quite excellent job he has done in leading our *Hansard* staff. I claim that we have one of the best reporting staffs anywhere in the world. I do not believe that they could be much better. They make everyone's speeches so much better and are of so much assistance to us generally that I am sure we all join in wishing Gordon happiness and a wonderful retirement. Many thanks, Gordon.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.40 p.m. the Council adjourned until Tuesday 29 September at 2.15 p.m.