

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, August 15, 1974

The SPEAKER (Hon. J. R. Ryan) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

PETITION: SPEED LIMIT

Mr. WRIGHT presented a petition signed by 28 residents of South Australia, stating that because of conversion to metrics the speed limit of 30 kilometres an hour past school omnibuses and schools was too high and presented an increased threat to the safety of school-children, and praying that the House of Assembly would support legislation to amend the Road Traffic Act to reduce the speed limit to 25 km/h.

Petition received and read.

QUESTIONS

The SPEAKER: I direct that the following answers to questions be distributed and printed in *Hansard*.

VEHICLE RATINGS

In reply to Mr. BLACKER (August 1).

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The advisory committee that I appointed for this purpose has operated since July 1, 1974. Assessments of vehicle load ratings are being made on the basis of information supplied by owners in vehicle description forms which are required to be lodged with applications for registration. Experience so far has shown that it has been necessary to inspect vehicles in a small number of cases, and it is considered that this situation will still apply in the future. When vehicles in country areas need to be inspected, the committee will arrange for its representative to carry out an inspection, and this should not cause undue inconvenience to owners. In all the circumstances, the appointment of regional committees is considered unnecessary.

FAIRVIEW PARK BUS SERVICE

In reply to Mrs. BYRNE (August 7).

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Because of the need to provide bus services on routes recently abandoned by a private bus operator, the trust is faced with a shortage of buses and is unable to introduce new services or extensions to existing services until buses it has on order become available. Investigations are now being made into the possible extension of the Tea Tree Gully service into the Fairview Park area, as soon as additional buses are available. However, no agreement has as yet been reached with the Tea Tree Gully council on the use of roadways in the area as bus routes, and no further progress can be made in the investigations until this question is resolved. I am unable to state at present when the general review of services is likely to be completed.

COUNCIL GRANTS

Dr. EASTICK: Can the Minister of Transport say how much money has been made available to South Australia by the Australian Government under an interim financing measure to enable councils to maintain roadworks programmes and how much of this money the State Government has paid out to councils? It has already been brought to the Minister's attention that a letter from the Commonwealth Minister for Transport (Mr. C. K. Jones) has been sent to councils informing them of the current situation concerning the availability of finance for roadworks. A relevant part of that letter, referring to delays

in the availability of normal funds from the Commonwealth and States, is as follows:

We emphasize that delays in introducing the legislation are not of the Government's making. Interim finance has been arranged in anticipation of legislation passing in this Parliamentary session.

The relevant legislation was introduced in the Senate last Tuesday and first appeared on the Senate Notice Paper yesterday. The letter continues:

We are informed that many local authorities are not receiving funds from States for roadworks. If this is the case, your council should immediately contact the appropriate State Minister. The States have been told that for the moment interim finance for roadworks can be made available pending enactment of the legislation. Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania have already received funds under these arrangements.

When this matter was raised last evening by the member for Gouger, the Minister appeared to have no knowledge of the matter.

The SPEAKER: Order! Reference to a previous debate cannot be included in any part of a question. The honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Dr. EASTICK: I assume that the Minister has now made inquiries within his department to ascertain where this money is and how it has been apportioned. It is on that basis that I ask him to give these details to the House.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I intended later today to deal with the very points the Leader has raised, when I will be introducing a Bill, notice of which I gave the House yesterday.

Dr. Eastick: That will be too late.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: It might be too late for the press release that the Leader wants to catch: he may already have given his statement to the press.

Dr. Eastick: That's a lie.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Minister of Transport.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: As I will be saying later today, the position is that I wish to thank the member for Gouger for drawing to my attention that a joint letter had been sent to the Mayors and/or Chairmen of councils throughout the State (or, so I understand; the letter was certainly sent to some councils).

Mr. Rodda: Have you got a copy?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Yes, having sufficient friends in local government, have now been provided with ample copies of the letter.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Later today I will be saying it appears that the Australian Ministers forgot to send me a copy or even notify me that the letters were being sent out. The serious omission in the letter, by which the Ministers regrettably are trying to make themselves out as Father Christmas and the State Government as the big bad wolf, is that we are faced with two threats.

Mr. Dean Brown: It's the other way around.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The member for Davenport is displaying his usual ignorance.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member for Davenport is out of order. He knows what Standing Orders require of him.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The fact is that the South Australian Government has been informed by the Prime Minister that, if the current legislation before the Senate is opposed and defeated (and this will be done, if it is done, by Senators who belong to the same Party as

the Leader and other members opposite belong to, as well as by one Senator who used to be a member of the Leader's Party but who is now a member of a Party in the Senate all by himself), the bridging finance made available as a result of the arrangement between the Premier and the Prime Minister at the recent Premiers' Conference will be immediately withdrawn.

Dr. Eastick: A little bit of blackmail.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: It is not blackmail: it is a statement of fact. In addition, the Commonwealth Minister for Transport has persistently said that, if the legislation is not passed, Commonwealth sources of finance will immediately dry up.

Mr. Goldsworthy: Ned Kelly himself.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I do not know about the Ned Kelly part. I attempted to negotiate with the former Minister (Mr. Nixon), but I did no better with him, so that if the honourable member wants to call one Minister Ned Kelly he had better call them both Ned Kelly, if he has the courage.

Mr. Goldsworthy: What I was—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! If honourable members persist in interjecting when questions are being asked or answered, I shall have no hesitation in warning them in accordance with Standing Orders.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: In the light of the two factors to which I have referred (and these factors are of tremendous importance in relation to the finances of the State), any Government that acted differently from the way in which we acted in the first six weeks of this financial year would have been acting completely irresponsibly. I believe that we had no alternative but to follow the course we followed.

WHYALLA ODOUR

Mr. MAX BROWN: Can the Minister of Works say whether the studies dealing with the intensity and direction of odours emanating from the Whyalla sewer ponds have been finalized yet? The Minister will know that this problem has been of some concern in Whyalla, especially during the summer of 1973-74. As I desire to have the problem completely solved, particularly before the coming summer, I am most eager to know what is the current position.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: The honourable member having told me yesterday that he was interested in what progress had been made in the investigation into the problem being carried out in Whyalla by the department, I have obtained the following report:

The first odour survey has now been completed after operating for six months, and 12 observers reported the presence or absence of odours from various sections of the city. Of the original 12 observers, only six have consistently forwarded their observations. Preliminary conclusions reached are as follows:

(1) The majority of the odours have been recorded by people located in the south-eastern section of Whyalla between Norrie Avenue and Spencer Gulf.

(2) One observer recorded odours on 64 different days over this six-month period.

Flinders University is continuing its meteorological survey and it is intended to now send the first six months' returns for correlation with their observations. The observations by Flinders University are due to be completed in December, 1974, and arrangements are in hand to continue the odour survey until the end of this year.

Works programme: In an attempt to reduce the odours emanating from the two anaerobic lagoons, experimental work was initiated.

(1) Effluent was recycled to the anaerobic lagoons in an attempt to create an aerobic layer on the surface and thus reduce odours. This was unsuccessful due to the large area of the lagoons.

(2) An effort was made to desludge the two anaerobic lagoons to reduce the amount of sludge creating the odours. The sludge that had built up locally around the inlets was removed, but it was found impractical to desludge all of the two anaerobic lagoons.

(3) The depth of the anaerobic lagoons was increased by raising the water level by 300 mm in an attempt to improve the lagoon performance. Results have proved inconclusive.

Design programme: From a practical point of view, it has been found that very little can be done to reduce the odours emanating from the two anaerobic lagoons. Therefore, designs have been prepared to convert the anaerobic treatment process to an aerobic system. This will be achieved by the use of surface aerators. The proposed modifications are currently being estimated and approval will be sought in the immediate future to proceed with the work. It is anticipated that the modifications could be implemented within nine months after approval. Allowance has been made for this expenditure during the current financial year.

The honourable member can see from the reply that progress has been made in the matter and it appears that a solution is imminent.

MOTION TO SUSPEND STANDING ORDERS

Mr. COUMBE (Torrens): I move:

That Standing Orders be so far suspended as to enable me to move a motion without notice.

The SPEAKER: I have counted the House and, there being present an absolute majority of the whole number of members of the House, I accept the motion. The motion is "That Standing Orders be suspended." Those in favour say "Aye", against "No". There being a dissentient voice, a division must be held.

While the bells were ringing:

Mr. COUMBE: Mr. Speaker, have I the right to speak to my motion?

The SPEAKER: I gave the honourable member the opportunity.

The House divided on the motion:

Ayes (18)—Messrs. Arnold, Becker, Blacker, Boundy, Dean Brown, Chapman, Coumbe (teller), Eastick, Evans, Goldsworthy, Gunn, McAnaney, Millhouse, Nankivell, Rodda, Russack, Tonkin, and Venning.

Noes (22)—Messrs. Broomhill and Max Brown, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Corcoran, Crimes, Duncan, Dunstan (teller), Groth, Harrison, Hudson, Keneally, King, Langley, McKee, McRae, Olson, Payne, Simmons, Slater, Virgo, Wells, and Wright.

Pairs—Ayes—Messrs. Allen, Mathwin, and Wardle.

Noes—Messrs. Burdon, Hopgood, and Jennings.

Majority of 4 for the Noes.

Motion thus negatived.

QUESTIONS RESUMED

FAMILY PLANNING CLINIC

Mrs. BYRNE: Will the Attorney-General obtain from the Minister of Health a report on recent negotiations for the establishment of a family planning clinic at Modbury Hospital? I asked a question about this on November 28, 1973, to which, on December 13, I received a written reply to the effect that on October 30, 1973, the Board of Management of Modbury Hospital had approved the application by the Family Planning Association (South

Australia) Incorporated for permission to establish a family planning clinic at the hospital. Problems were associated with the establishment of the clinic and a further discussion was arranged for March, 1974, to review the position.

The Hon. L. J. KING: I will refer the matter to my colleague.

MOTION TO SUSPEND STANDING ORDERS

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): I move:

That Standing Orders be so far suspended as to enable me to move a motion without notice.

The SPEAKER: I have counted the House and, there being present an absolute majority of the whole number of members of the House, I accept the motion.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: If this motion is carried, I shall move:

That this House express deep concern at the action of the Commonwealth Minister for Transport (Mr. C. K. Jones) in communicating directly with individual local government bodies advising of funds for road grants being available immediately from the State at a time when the State Minister had not been advised that such funds had been received, and that this House deplore the threat to the future of this State through the Prime Minister's indication that no funds for roadworks will be available to the Highways Department if current legislation before the Australian Government does not pass.

In seeking the suspension of Standing Orders, I point out the extreme gravity of this matter to the people of the State. For some time we have been questioning the Minister of Transport on this matter. I do not think that the significance of the motion is lost on anyone involved in the operations of the Highways Department, or of local government, nor is the Opposition unaware of the vital and crucial nature of the motion: its importance cannot be challenged. The position is that councils are currently—

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member, in seeking suspension of Standing Orders, may only explain the reasons for seeking the suspension: he will not be allowed to canvass the subject matter of some expected motion.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: In canvassing the importance of the motion and the necessity for suspending Standing Orders, I will point out the gravity of the situation, without going at length into the material contained in the substantive motion. The Minister is in an impossible position at present, and the Highways Department is at a complete loss to know where it stands. Indeed, the Minister made this public at a meeting I attended recently. Local government is faced with having to retrench staff.

The SPEAKER: Order! I point out once again that Standing Orders do not provide for a debate on an expected motion to be moved later. Standing Orders provide only a certain limited time in which to give the House the reasons for seeking the suspension, not to canvass the subject matter of a later debate.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: With respect, Mr. Speaker, my reasons for seeking suspension are that we are now threatened with a considerable degree of hardship as a result of unemployment, not only in the Highways Department but also in councils, and that situation is developing now. In enumerating my reasons for seeking suspension, I point out what is now happening with respect to the matter canvassed in the motion. Regarding the second part of my motion, I point out that the Government is in a completely impossible position as a result of a threat the Prime Minister has levelled.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member, in his remarks, referred to the motion as saying something. I point out, once again, that he is introducing the substantive motion into the reasons for suspension. Standing Orders do not provide for any deviation whatsoever, only for an explanation whether to accept or reject suspension, not the subject matter of a later debate.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: The Minister himself has publicly acknowledged the gravity of the situation in which he finds himself. Local government authorities, which have already acknowledged the gravity of the situation, are faced with having to make immediate retrenchments. The Minister has said that, not only in the House but also at meetings, one of which I attended. The Commissioner of Highways is gravely disturbed, I believe (and that would be an understatement), as a result of the position in which he finds himself. We, as a Parliament, find ourselves in a completely impossible situation in which decisions will be made from afar on all roadworks down to the level of small country roads.

All of these works could be delayed as a result of the legislation the Commonwealth Government is trying to pass. I seek suspension because I believe that we are in a crisis situation; so, too, are the Minister of Transport, the Highways Department, and local government. I will quote what the Commonwealth Minister for Transport (Mr. Charles Jones) said in reply to a question on July 11 in the House of Representatives (and this is why I seek suspension):

Mr. Virgo is quite happy with it, because he knows what is under way.

In these circumstances, I think that is a gross distortion of the situation. The Minister is not happy. I believe that he has been placed in an impossible situation and that he himself would acknowledge that. A threat has been levelled at the Senate, in Canberra, that, if it does not pass the relevant legislation, which is a gross infringement on the rights of the South Australian Minister and the State, no funds will be forthcoming.

The SPEAKER: Order! Once again I point out (and I will not continually point out) that Standing Orders do not provide for a discussion. The honourable member is introducing the subject matter of his later motion in a discussion for the suspension. That is not permitted, and it will not be tolerated.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: This is an urgent matter, and we need funds immediately. Council employees have been told to take their accumulated leave and people living near me are being told to take leave, because there is no money to pay them. That is the situation: it is centralism at its worst.

The SPEAKER: Order! I rule the remarks out of order. The honourable Premier.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Premier and Treasurer): I oppose the motion. The honourable member cannot in this way or, indeed, in any other ways that have been attempted recently, nor can any other Opposition member—

Mr. Millhouse: We haven't really tried yet!

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The honourable member is often very trying!

Mr. Millhouse: I'm sorry I get under your skin, Don.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I must say that, wherever else the honourable member gets, it is not there. Opposition members cannot take Government business out of the Government's hands, as they well know.

Dr. Eastick: Isn't this a most important matter for the Government?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Members know the procedures available to them. There were no approaches this afternoon to the Government about the suspension of Standing Orders on any such matter before the House met.

Mr. Coumbe: We wanted to hear what the Minister had to say.

Dr. Eastick: The Minister didn't make a statement.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: That's completely untrue, and the Leader knows it.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: If the Opposition is concerned to have a debate in the immediate future about this matter, it should pay attention to the Notice Paper. The Minister of Transport will be introducing a measure this afternoon on which the Opposition will have ample opportunity to debate the whole of the subject matter.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: They were told that half an hour ago.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Opposition members know what is the situation. We know also that they must put up an occasional flag, and I am sorry that I have to pull it down again.

The SPEAKER: The motion before the Chair is "That Standing Orders be suspended." Those in favour say "Aye", against "No". There being a dissentient voice, a division must be held.

The House divided on the motion:

Ayes (18)—Messrs. Arnold, Becker, Blacker, Boundy, Dean Brown, Chapman, Coumbe, Eastick, Evans, Goldsworthy (teller), Gunn, McAnaney, Millhouse, Nankivell, Rodda, Russack, Tonkin, and Venning.

Noes (22)—Messrs. Broomhill and Max Brown, Mrs. Byrne, Messrs. Corcoran, Crimes, Duncan, Dunstan (teller), Groth, Harrison, Hudson, Keneally, King, Langley, McKee, McRae, Olson, Payne, Simmons, Slater, Virgo, Wells, and Wright.

Pairs—Ayes—Messrs. Allen, Mathwin, and Wardle.

Noes—Messrs. Burdon, Hopgood, and Jennings.

Majority of 4 for the Noes.

Motion thus negatived.

QUESTIONS RESUMED

GILLES PLAINS INFANTS SCHOOL

Mr. WELLS: Will the Minister of Education use his good offices in an endeavour to have work on upgrading Gilles Plains Infants School carried out as expeditiously as possible? For 18 months the situation regarding the buildings at this school has been under review, statements having been made that urgent repairs will be carried out. However, as yet nothing has been done. The school council has contacted me about the matter. Knowing the urgency involved, I share the council's concern. I respectfully request the Minister to do what he can to have the work carried out immediately.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I shall be pleased to look into the matter and see what can be done to assist.

PETRO CHEMICAL INDUSTRY

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I had a question for the Premier, but he is not here.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I will go ahead and hope that the honourable gentleman comes back.

The SPEAKER: Order! To which honourable Minister is the question directed?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I will have to direct it through his Deputy, but I still hope he comes back—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MILLHOUSE: —in time to answer it. The question that was to be directed to the Premier—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MILLHOUSE: —is as follows: Is it a fact that a Commonwealth public servant has been for some considerable time in South Australia working closely with Mr. Scriven and his officers on the Redcliff petro-chemical project and, if that is so, why was it necessary so precipitately to send Mr. Scriven to Canberra on Tuesday? I was mightily re-assured by the Premier's rebuttal to me a while ago that I could not get under his skin, and I ask this question in response to his express invitation to me yesterday to ask any question that I liked to ask about the Redcliff project. I understand that, in fact, an officer of the Commonwealth Government has been here on the project, working with Mr. Scriven for a considerable time. If I am right in this, as I believe I am (and this is what I want to know from the Premier), it seems incredible that there could have been any breakdown in communication between the Commonwealth Government and the State Government on the time table and the urgency of getting an answer quickly out of the Commonwealth.

The Hon. G. T. Virgo: You're labouring it a bit now.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I am not labouring it at all: I am simply searching for the words in which to give the next part of my explanation. The only inference that can be drawn is that there is a deliberate attempt on the part of Mr. Connor or someone else to bring this project to the verge of collapse—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MILLHOUSE: —(to use the phrase used yesterday), because, if I am right in what I have suggested in my question, there could not possibly be any lack of communication between the two Governments as to the urgency of the matter. The fact that the Prime Minister has nominated the end of this year for the report and that this Government is insisting on having it by September shows that there is more to it than a lack of communication. I therefore put this question through the Premier's Deputy, in the continued absence of the Premier,—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MILLHOUSE: —following the Premier's invitation to me to do so, and I hope that I will get a full and frank answer from him, fuller and franker than the replies (here he is now!) that he gave yesterday in answer to questions by L.C.L. members. Perhaps I could just tell him, while he is being filled in on this,—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MILLHOUSE: —that it was his express invitation yesterday to ask him anything at all about the Redcliff project. Has his Deputy been able to put him in the picture sufficiently?

The SPEAKER: Order! Leave to explain the question is withdrawn. The honourable Deputy Premier.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: In due course and in good time, I will put the question to the Premier.

Mr. Millhouse: That's no good; you're deliberately trying to get out of it.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: I am sure the Premier will be able adequately to reply to the—

Mr. Millhouse: Let him do it now.

The Hon. J. D. CORCORAN: —inference drawn in this matter by the honourable member. I do not particularly see—

Mr. Millhouse: Every time they find something to say—

The SPEAKER: Order! In accordance with Standing Order 169, I warn the honourable member for Mitcham.

GROCERY PRICES

Mr. McANANEY: Will the Premier once again obtain a report on grocery prices from the Commissioner for Prices and Consumer Affairs? From a cartoon in the newspaper I notice that food prices have leaped again, but the usual stock reply to our queries is that the increase is caused by various factors such as wage increases and that competition in the industry will keep prices down to a reasonable level. Can the Premier say when we may have an up-to-date report on grocery prices?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The Attorney-General, not I, is the Minister in charge of the Prices Branch. However, I will ask him to obtain a report for the honourable member.

TUBERCULOSIS

Mr. CHAPMAN: Will the Minister of Works ask the Minister of Agriculture at what stage is the department's compulsory tuberculosis testing programme as it applies to cattle on Kangaroo Island? When is the programme expected to be completed? Is the department satisfied with the effectiveness of the exercise so far? What action will the department take to prevent diseased cattle from entering that area in future? It is well known that ultimately Kangaroo Island will become a food bowl for metropolitan Adelaide, and concern has been expressed because of the lack of scrutiny of imports of stock and seed plants to the island. This matter is viewed with great concern by members of the island community, because they believe that what is now a relatively clean, and disease-free area should be protected, and they seek the urgent attention of the Minister of Agriculture in these matters.

The Hon. I. D. CORCORAN: I shall be pleased to ask my colleague for a report for the honourable member.

ADVERTISEMENT

Mr. DUNCAN: Is the Attorney-General aware of the wild and inflammatory advertisements that have been placed in the *Elizabeth-Salisbury-Gawler News Review* by a licensed land agent, one William Simpson, concerning the future of Tolmer and Womma Roads, Elizabeth? Is the Attorney-General aware that this action has caused much worry and concern in Elizabeth both to people living in Tolmer and Womma Roads and to the Elizabeth council? Will the Attorney-General refer this matter to the Land and Business Agents Board for inquiry into what may be discreditable conduct on behalf of this business agent, pursuant to section 78 of the Land and Business Agents Act, 1973? Whilst I was overseas, the *Elizabeth-Salisbury News Review* carried an article in the form of an advertisement by Bill Simpson, a land agent in Elizabeth, concerning a proposed multi-lane highway through Elizabeth Park. This advertisement stated that houses on the north side of Tolmer Road faced the bulldozer. After inquiries, the Highways Department indicated that there was no firm plan for this action, and it seems that the person concerned, by inserting this advertisement, was seeking to cause grave concern throughout the Elizabeth community, and, in fact, did so. It seems that this is a matter that should be referred to the Land and Business Agents Board.

The Hon. L. I. KING: I will have the matter examined.

WATER POLLUTION

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Can the Minister of Environment and Conservation say why the Chairman of the Spencer Gulf Waters Pollution Committee (Dr. W. G. Inglis) has been holding the report of this committee since November, 1973, and why did the Minister say that such a report had not been prepared? Yesterday, we heard from the Premier one of the greatest tirades ever heard—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DEAN BROWN: —when explaining that it was the Commonwealth Government that was holding up environmental studies and the possibility that the Redcliff project would go ahead.

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: I said nothing about the Commonwealth Government holding up environmental studies.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Of course you did.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DEAN BROWN: We heard that the Commonwealth Government may not have its report available until the end—

The Hon. D. A. Dunstan: I said nothing about that.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: We know that the Commonwealth Government is threatening the future of the Redcliff project at this stage. In reply to a question on July 30, the Minister of Environment and Conservation said that no report had been prepared but that one possibly would be. I understand on excellent authority that the Chairman of that committee has had a manuscript of that report since November last year. Furthermore, in the manuscript of that report is the following statement:

Subject to the availability of staff, the programme—that is, for the study of Spencer Gulf—should commence in January of 1974.

I think this matter needs careful examination and that we should have an explanation from the Minister. The report recommends that work should be started as from January, 1974, but the Minister is still claiming that there is no such report.

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: The honourable member has been here for almost 12 months and I do not recall when he has been correct in any matter, and he is wrong again now. The honourable member is trying to suggest that there is available a report prepared by the Spencer Gulf Waters Pollution Committee. However, that is not the case: several recommendations were prepared by that committee for the Government and, as I have indicated, these recommendations have been given to us and are being considered.

KANGAROOS

Mr. ALLEN: Can the Minister of Environment and Conservation say whether stage 2 of the export ban on kangaroo skins from this State has been implemented? In July this year Conservation Ministers met in Adelaide, and the Commonwealth Minister (Dr. Cass), in a newspaper article, was reported as saying that South Australia seemed assured of sole Commonwealth rights to export kangaroo skin products when a Commonwealth ban applied in other States from August 1. The press report states:

He forecast that, subject to Senator Murphy's acceptance, the kangaroo export ban would be lifted in two stages. From August 1, South Australia would be able to export toys and souvenirs. If this proved successful and there was still a build-up of skins from legitimately tagged animals, South Australia would then get a clearance to resume hide exports as well.

The report goes on to state that the South Australian Minister of Environment and Conservation (Mr. Broomhill) reacted coolly to the proposal. People in the northern parts of the State are at present worried about the increasing numbers of kangaroos. Information I have suggests that the numbers are greater than at any time during the history of the white man in this country, because many waterholes are available and kangaroos are breeding. With the advent of a dry season, which must come eventually, there will be a tremendous increase in the number of kangaroos and people are therefore worrying about the effects of the export ban. Can the Minister say whether the stage 2 ban has been lifted in this State?

The Hon. G. R. BROOMHILL: When stage 1 was announced by the Australian Government it was indicated that South Australia would have the opportunity to export a limited number of skins. I indicated that that situation was unsatisfactory and that it did nothing at all for the total conservation programme of kangaroos in this State. Accordingly, from the time of that announcement, I have been in regular contact with the Australian Department of Environment in an attempt to have the second stage of the programme implemented. I repeat that it was obvious even at that stage that the lifting of the ban would be necessary if South Australia was to continue with the programme that was agreed between the Australian Government and South Australia. At this stage I have not reached agreement with the Australian Government for the ban in the second stage to be lifted to enable South Australia to export hides adequately tagged and harvested in accordance with the policies laid down and agreed to by the State and Australian Governments. I hope that the steps taken by me this week will result in the lifting of the prohibition as soon as possible.

UNLEY TRAFFIC

Mr. LANGLEY: Can the Minister of Transport say whether the redevelopment of traffic patterns in the Unley area will continue? This was a pilot scheme for the metropolitan area. Although residents in my district have been pleased with the work carried out so far, a recent press report stated that this excellent scheme might be curtailed. Since the press report was published work has commenced near the Unley Primary and Infants School for the safety of students. It appears that work is still being carried out. As this has been a pilot study in an accident-prone area where there are wide streets, many people in the area are keen for the work to continue.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I should be disappointed if work in this area was stopped or reduced, because this is a pilot project of tremendous value. It is my department's desire to see the project proceed as quickly as possible. As the honourable member has raised the matter, I shall be pleased to look into it and bring down a reply as soon as possible.

STENHOUSE BAY SCHOOL

Mr. BOUNDY: Will the Minister of Education reverse the arbitrary decision that was taken to close the Stenhouse Bay rural school on August 24, 1974? Two days ago the Stenhouse Bay school council received a letter informing it that the school would be closed on that date. Naturally, parents are concerned about the impending closure. Stenhouse Bay is 58 km from Warooka, the school to which children attending the Stenhouse Bay school would have to go. Closure of the school will result in primary schoolchildren having to use the bus that takes secondary schoolchildren to Yorketown. The bus leaves Stenhouse Bay at 7 a.m. and returns at

about 5.30 p.m. As the children who would have to attend Warooka are between the ages of five years and 10 years, parents believe that the time the children would be away from home is far too long and far too hard on small children. The journey would involve a 145 km round trip for them each day. Further, the school is to be moved from the site at Stenhouse Bay to another location and equipment is already being transferred to the Warooka school. The school council and parents are incensed that this action is being taken without their having an opportunity to state their case and protest against it.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: My recollection is that enrolments at Stenhouse Bay would decline to five students if the school were kept open in the third term. In those circumstances it is extremely difficult to justify keeping the school open. Declining enrolment is certainly a reason to justify taking the decision.

Mr. Millhouse: You can't justify sending small children away from home at 7 a.m.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: If the member for Mitcham would care to discuss the matter of school transport for children with the member for Mallee, who used to be his colleague, or with the member for Eyre, he would appreciate that the kind of situation that exists at Stenhouse Bay is not at all unique in education in the country areas of the State. When enrolments decline substantially, the cost for each student rises astronomically, and this raises the question as to what stage the department should continue to justify the opening of a school. The normal basis of operation in this State during the period the member for Mitcham has been a member of this House has been that, if school enrolments fall below six students, the school will not be kept open. That policy was followed in this case: it is better than the children having to do correspondence courses, and transport is being provided. As it is a couple of weeks since I saw the document relating to this matter, I will check the details and bring down a more detailed reply next week for the honourable member.

PORT LINCOLN RAIL TRAFFIC

Mr. BLACKER: Will the Minister of Transport indicate whether he instigated an inquiry into the fall-off of traffic in the Port Lincoln Division of the Railways Department and, if he did, will he detail the results of that inquiry to Parliament?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The level of traffic on all lines is and always has been constantly under review. It is more intensely studied now since the State Transport Authority was established. Eyre Peninsula traffic depends, I would be safe in saying, over 90 per cent on the rural seasons. As I do not have with me the specific information required by the honourable member, I shall be happy to get it for him.

LOXTON SCHOOL

Mr. NANKIVELL: Will the Minister of Education obtain a report on the present planning and the date it is expected that work will start on construction of the Loxton Community Hall that is to be built on the high school grounds?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I shall be pleased to do that for the honourable member.

PETROL

Mr. EVANS: Is the Premier aware that Mr. J. Cass (a spokesman for Petroleum Refineries of Australia Proprietary Limited) has announced that the Port Stanvac oil refinery will start closing down as from this afternoon's

shift and that the entire operation will be closed within 24 hours? I understand that a statement was released by Mr. Cass indicating that the refinery no longer has storage space to continue production of fuel oil and that additional supplies could not be processed. I further understand that Mr. Apap (Secretary of the Storemen and Packers Union) has been asked whether the refinery will be permitted to transfer through the pipeline to Birkenhead some of the existing fuel oil supplies at the refinery. Is the Premier aware of these circumstances and is the Government involved in this crucial situation?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: The Government has involved itself in the situation, and we have been keeping closely in touch. I assure the honourable member that the position is not as bad as he evidently believes it is. I do not think there is any need for panic. Some movement of supplies has taken place today and, in consequence, I do not think it will be necessary for us to consider the Emergency Powers Bill today.

At 3.5 p.m., the bells having been rung:

The SPEAKER: Call on the business of the day.

METROPOLITAN TAXI-CAB ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO (Minister of Transport) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Metropolitan Taxi-Cab Act, 1956, as amended. Read a first time.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It effects a minor metric conversion to the principal Act, the Metropolitan Taxi-Cab Act, 1956, as amended. Section 37 of the principal Act, amongst other things, exempts from the application of the Road and Railway Transport Act taxi-cabs plying for hire to any place that is distant not more than 25 miles from the General Post Office at Adelaide. As an exact metric conversion of this amount is 40.234 km, the figure to be inserted will be 40 km. The difference in English measurement being about 256 yards is not felt to be significant in this regard.

Mr. DEAN BROWN secured the adjournment of the debate.

IMPOUNDING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO (Minister of Local Government) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Impounding Act, 1920, as amended. Read a first time.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It effects three amendments by way of metric conversion to the principal Act, the Impounding Act, 1920, as amended. Clauses 1 and 2 are formal. Clause 3 amends section 15 of the principal Act by converting a distance of 5 miles to one of 8 kilometres and this is almost an exact conversion. Clause 4 amends section 26 of the principal Act which fixes certain charges for the delivery by a pound keeper of certain notices. The alteration proposed here is to increase the charge from one shilling a mile to 10c a kilometre.

Mr. RODDA secured the adjournment of the debate.

ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. L. J. KING (Attorney-General) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Arbitration Act, 1891-1934. Read a first time.

The Hon. L. J. KING: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

EXPLANATION OF BILL

The purpose of this Bill is to render ineffective any provision in an agreement relating to future claims or disputes under which arbitration is made a condition precedent to the institution of proceedings in a court of law. Provisions of this kind are called *Scott v. Avery* clauses after the decision of the House of Lords in 1856 which decided that such clauses did not have the effect of ousting the jurisdiction of the courts and were therefore valid. The effect of the clause is that a person cannot sue in the courts. He must resort to arbitration which is expensive and is conducted in private.

These clauses are often oppressive to claimants under various kinds of contract. For example, in many contracts of insurance a person is compelled to resort to arbitration before he can sue on the policy. This is an additional and unnecessary expense to him. It severely curtails his rights where things go wrong in the arbitration. It gives the company the advantage of sheltering behind the privacy of arbitration and thereby escaping the adverse publicity of a court action. Arbitration is frequently a shield for unethical business practices. The publicity of a law suit, which may expose a company's effort to avoid liability on some unmeritorious ground, may be very injurious to the company. But arbitration proceedings are conducted in private, and so such publicity is avoided. However erroneous or defective an arbitration award may be, a claimant cannot obtain redress for its deficiencies except in the most exceptional circumstances. However artificial, or onesided, the agreement may be he is still usually obliged to depend on it for the assertion of his rights. Commonly, for example, in indemnity insurance policies the liability of the insurance company is qualified by a *Scott v. Avery* clause, but the liabilities of the other party are not so qualified. These evils are intensified where the agreement is made between parties of widely different bargaining strength. The stronger party puts forward a form of contract, usually a printed form, which the weaker party must either adopt or reject. The terms of the arbitration clause are not open to rejection. Even between parties of equal bargaining strength the clause is unsatisfactory because it involves binding the parties to arbitration at a time when the cause of the dispute and its suitability for arbitration proceedings is unknown.

Clauses 1 and 2 are formal. Clause 3 enacts new section 24a of the principal Act. The effect of this new section is to render void any provision of an agreement that requires a future claim or dispute to be referred to arbitration. Subsection (2) makes it clear that where a dispute has actually arisen it is competent for the parties to the dispute to agree to refer it to arbitration. Clause 4 makes a consequential amendment to the definition of "submission" in section 27 of the principal Act.

Dr. EASTICK secured the adjournment of the debate.

MOTOR VEHICLES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO (Minister of Transport) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Motor Vehicles Act, 1959-1973. Read a first time.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill, which increases motor vehicle registration fees, drivers' licence, permit and testing fees, is necessary for

two principal reasons. First, the Australian Government's new roads legislation, which has been passed by the House of Representatives and is currently before the Senate, requires South Australia to provide additional funds for matching requirements and, secondly, to offset the effect inflation has had on our proposed road programme. I deal with the second point first. In the financial year 1973-74, the Highways Fund had a total of \$52 890 000 available for roadworks, made up of \$31 000 000 from the Australian Government in terms of the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act; \$702 000, again from the Australian Government, for work on the Eyre Highway and the Traffic Engineering and Road Safety Improvement Programme; and \$21 190 000 from the State sources of motor vehicle registration, licence fees and similar related charges, including road maintenance contributions.

If members accept, as I do, the view of the Highways Department that road building costs have been subject to 15 per cent inflation, it is clear that, to achieve the same effort in 1974-75 as was achieved in 1973-74, additional funds to the extent of \$7 930 000 must be provided. Under the present terms of the Motor Vehicles Act, and the Australian Government's proposals, South Australia in this financial year will have available for road building purposes the sum of \$54 500 000, made up of \$31 000 000 from the Australian Government and \$23 500 000 from State sources. When compared to \$60 800 000 which is necessary after taking into account the effect of the inflation at 15 per cent to achieve the same effort as was achieved in 1973-74, we find a short-fall of \$6 320 000 for this financial year. This short-fall is as previously stated, due entirely to the inflationary pressures to which we have been subjected and, unless steps are taken to either remove or reduce this short-fall, it is clear that our road programme will have to be drastically cut. This is a step which the Government is not prepared to take.

I turn now to the first point, namely the requirements of the Australian Government's new road legislation. As stated earlier, South Australia received in accordance with the terms of the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act \$31 000 000 in 1973-74. Members would know that the Commonwealth Aid Roads Act is an Act which provided Commonwealth funds to the various States for the five-year period prior to June 30, 1974. Well over two years ago, the Ministers responsible for road building in all of the six Australian States, together with their appropriate officers, commenced negotiations with the then Commonwealth Minister (Hon. P. Nixon, M.H.R.) and his officers and, following the change of Government, these discussions were continued with the present Minister (Hon. C. K. Jones, M.H.R.) and his officers. In addition, the basis for the provision of funds has been the subject of very serious and lengthy considerations by the Commonwealth Bureau of Roads, which, on November 22, 1973, presented its report, together with recommendations, to the Australian Minister for Transport. This report is an illuminating document and, although there are recommendations in it with which I and my fellow Ministers from the various States violently disagree, it does constitute a new approach to the question of finance for roads and contains many desirable and long overdue reforms.

The recommendations of the bureau have been substantially followed by the Australian Government in the legislation which has been introduced into and passed by the House of Representatives and which is currently before the Senate. However, there are three important areas where the Australian Government did not adopt the bureau's recommendations. These are as follows:

- (1) The sums recommended by the bureau to the States have been markedly reduced by the Australian Government.
- (2) The amounts of the matching quotas recommended by the bureau have also been reduced.
- (3) The life of the current legislation is for three years, whereas the bureau recommended the continuation of the five-year legislative period that has previously applied.

I now deal with each of these points in some greater depth. The decision to reduce the amounts to the States means that the South Australian recommended entitlements for the three-year period from 1974-75 to 1976-77 have been reduced from \$36 000 000, \$39 000 000 and \$41 000 000 to \$31 000 000, \$33 000 000 and \$36 000 000 respectively. It is clear that, when compared with the sums made available in previous years, the sums for this and the next two financial years are quite inadequate for our needs, unless we are willing to reduce savagely our road-building programme.

I turn now to the second point, namely, that of the matching requirements. Although the level of matching recommended by the bureau has been reduced by the Australian Government, we are still required this year to provide a sum of \$25 400 000 for matching purposes. Likewise in 1975-76 we must provide \$28 400 000, and in 1976-77 \$31 400 000, making a total for the three-year period of a matching requirement of \$85 200 000. Without increases in motor vehicle registration fees and other like charges, it is not possible to raise this amount. As stated earlier, the expected income in this financial year from State sources eligible for matching purposes is \$23 500 000. It can thus be seen we are about \$2 000 000 short of that required for matching purposes. The short-fall in the next two succeeding years is even greater. Having taken into account all of these facts, the Government was faced with making one of four decisions namely:

- (1) not to increase State revenue and thereby forgo Commonwealth finance that would otherwise be available, and at the same time drastically reduce the road-building programme;
- (2) to increase State revenue only to the extent required of us by the Commonwealth legislation and to reduce the road-building programme proportionately to the amount of finance available;
- (3) to increase State revenue not only to meet the demand of the Australian Government legislation but also to ensure that our own programmes are not drastically cut; or
- (4) to increase State revenue to the extent necessary to ensure an expansion in our road programme.

The Government has chosen the third alternative, believing that it is in the best interests of the people of South Australia to do so. Accordingly, this Bill seeks to increase the following:

- (a) drivers' licences from \$3 to \$5 a year, other than for pensioners, who will still have to pay only \$2;
- (b) learners' permits from \$1 to \$3;
- (c) registration fees for trailers over 5 cwt (254 kg) by \$10;
- (d) fees for driving tests conducted in accordance with sections 72 and 79a from \$1 to \$3; and
- (e) registration fees of all vehicles by about 25 per cent with the provision that the pensioner rebate will be increased from 15 per cent to 30 per cent so as to maintain their approximate present level of payment.

It has been estimated that by adopting these increases as from October 1, 1974, the amount available for road-building purposes for 1974-75 will be \$59 220 000, for 1975-76 \$63 720 000, and for 1976-77 \$67 750 000. From information I have been able to glean, it is clear that most of the other States will be forced to take similar action. For instance, in Western Australia, I understand that the Court Liberal Government intends to increase motorists' taxes by 65 per cent; in Victoria the Hamer Liberal Government expects to include in its Budget a provision increasing motorists' taxes by 50 per cent; whilst in New South Wales the Askin Government currently is considering recommendations of a very substantial nature but, as no decisions have been actually taken, I am not at liberty to disclose the extent of the recommendations.

There is one further point I wish to make before dealing with the clauses of the Bill. There have been, from time to time, questions asked of me both in this House and by direct contact by councils in relation to the likely level of grants to local government bodies for this and succeeding financial years. I regret I have not been able to provide the information sought but, from this second reading explanation, members will realize that I had no alternative. Only yesterday, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition expressed his concern at the delay in determining the level of grants for local government. Many of the points that he made would have my concurrence and I certainly concur in his view as expressed that the legislation necessary to provide this Commonwealth money has still not been assented to by the Senate of the Australian Government. I thank the member for Gouger for last evening drawing my attention and that of the House to the letter which apparently has been forwarded to the Mayors and Chairmen of all local government areas by the Australian Minister for Urban and Regional Development and the Australian Minister for Transport. It appears that the Australian Ministers forgot to send me a copy or even notify me that the letters were being sent.

However, because of the excellent relationship existing between local government and me, as Minister of Local Government, I have now been provided with several copies of this letter, and I thank those who provided me with this information for their thoughtfulness. It is strange that the Ministers forgot to send me a copy, when a perusal of the letter addressed to the Mayors and Chairmen reveals a recommendation that they should contact the State Minister. I am concerned that a letter of this nature should be sent to local government (or to anyone) without a proper explanation of all of the factors. It appears that the two Ministers have decided that they will put their hands on the handle of the big wooden spoon that some people are using to stir up strife between State Governments and some areas of local government.

Whilst the Australian Ministers labour the point that interim finance had been made available to several States, including South Australia (and that is true, it has), what they conveniently forget to tell local government is that the Prime Minister has advised the Premier of this State (and, I presume, the Premiers of other States) that, unless the legislation currently before the Senate is passed in the current session, he will immediately withdraw the interim financing arrangement into which he entered. From the tenor of the letter, it would appear that the two Australian Ministers expect the States to ignore the threat that has been consistently made by the Australian Minister for Transport regarding the availability of funds. As late as August 8, the Minister for Transport concluded a press statement with the following words:

I repeat the statement I made last week: Funds for the State and local government roads programmes will dry up if the Government's roads grants Bills are rejected by the Senate.

In the light of this statement, it would be an act of complete irresponsibility for the State Government, through the Highways Department, to enter into any agreement on the level of funds for local government until the level of financial assistance had been clearly and properly clarified by the Australian Government. I can assure the House that we have acted (and will continue to act in future) responsibly in all matters, including these. I can certainly completely agree with the final paragraph of the letter from the Australian Ministers.

Earlier, I indicated to at least one Opposition member that an opportunity would occur later today to debate the very matter that the Opposition was attempting to suspend Standing Orders in order to debate. I was told that the Opposition had no knowledge of the matters to be brought forward. The *Hansard* report shows that, when asked about this matter by the Leader, I said, "I intend later today to deal with the very points the Leader has raised, when I will be introducing a Bill, notice of which I gave the House yesterday." Therefore, it is wrong for members opposite to say that they had no notice of the matter. If members now want to debate this issue, they will have the opportunity to do so when I have concluded my explanation.

Mr. Coumbe: We had no knowledge of what was in the Bill, and you know it. The newspapers got it before the House did.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The newspaper refers to an increase in registration fees of 20 per cent and in licence fees of \$1. I do not think that is what the honourable member has heard me say this afternoon. I cannot stop newspapers from making guesses; in this case, obviously they were not right.

I hope that, in the light of the explanation I have given, members will realize that the course of action I took was unavoidable. However, subject to, first, the level of financial assistance from the Australian Government to the State being as proposed in the legislation currently before the Australian Parliament, secondly, the conditions attached to the expenditure of Australian Government, State and local government authorities permitting the allocation of grants to councils in accordance with needs as assessed by the Highways Department, and thirdly, increased revenue being made available to the Highways Fund through higher registration and licence fees, it will be possible (and it is intended) to allocate to local government authorities in South Australia grants so that permissible expenditure during 1974-75 will be about \$200 000 above that actually expended during 1973-74. Grants are those funds allocated for expenditure on roads that are the prime responsibility of local government, and do not include debit order allocations which are for expenditure on roads where the Commissioner of Highways accepts the prime responsibility. I emphasize that these assurances (indeed, the whole road-building programme of the State) are completely dependent on the passage of the three Bills dealing with finance for roads that are currently before the Australian Senate. I now turn to the clauses of the Bill, and seek leave to have their explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 provides that the Act presaged by this Bill will come into operation on a day to be fixed by proclamation. It is the intention of the Government that this measure will have effect from

October 1, 1974. Clause 3 inserts in section 5 of the principal Act a definition of "caravan", and I would commend it to honourable members' attention. Clause 4 repeals and re-enacts section 29 of the principal Act which sets out the general scale of motor vehicle registration fees. For the convenience of honourable members, I have had circulated a summary of the alterations proposed so that the extent of the increases will be apparent. As I have indicated, the increases are of the order of 25 per cent.

Clause 5 amends section 38a of the principal Act which provides for concessional registration of a motor vehicle owned by certain pensioners. The concessional reduction has been increased from 15 per cent to 30 per cent, with the result that actual fees payable by these pensioners will be only marginally increased. Clause 6 makes an amendment in the same terms as the amendment proposed by clause 5 to section 38b of the principal Act which relates to a concessional registration fee for certain incapacitated persons.

Clause 7 amends section 57 of the principal Act by recognizing that the fee payable on the transfer of registration of a motor vehicle was previously increased from \$1 to \$4. Clause 8 repeals and re-enacts section 63 of the principal Act and increases the fees payable in respect of (a) general traders' plates from \$50 to \$62.50; and (b) limited traders' plates from \$10 to \$12.50. Clauses 9 and 10 are drafting amendments. Clause 11 merely relocates the definition of "authorized examiner" which was formerly set out as subsection (2) of section 79a of the principal Act. The definition is now expressed to relate to the whole of Part III of the principal Act. Clause 12 enacts a new section 72a of the principal Act empowering the Registrar to issue a temporary driving permit to enable a person lawfully to drive a vehicle in order to undergo a practical driving test. The provision is, it is suggested, quite self-explanatory.

Clause 13, by amending section 76 of the principal Act, increases the driver's licence fee from \$3 to \$5, and the fee for a learner's permit from \$1 to \$3. Clause 14 is a consequential amendment. Clause 15 provides that a fee of \$3 will be payable for every practical driving test conducted under the Act other than tests carried out internally by public authorities and tests carried out for the purposes of sections 80 or 87 of the Act.

Mr. ARNOLD secured the adjournment of the debate.

PUBLIC PURPOSES LOAN BILL

In Committee.

(Continued from August 13. Page 436.)

First schedule.

State Bank, \$4 600 000.

Dr. EASTICK (Leader of the Opposition): When we last dealt with this matter, I drew the attention of the Minister of Works to the fact that the sum of \$2 000 000 provided for advances to the State Bank was the same sum as that provided in 1973-74. In view of the massive escalation in building costs, does this mean that applications for loans to build will not be approved? When progress was reported, my understanding was that more information would be made available when we dealt with the matter again.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON (Minister of Education): Under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, the State Bank receives a certain allocation. In his second reading explanation, the Treasurer made clear that the total sum of new funds available to the State Bank in the current financial year would be \$18 060 000, so that the

actual payments made to the State Bank out of Loan funds for house purchase are only a minor fraction of the total sum available. The item of advances to State Bank relates particularly to the purchase of existing houses. The bulk of State Bank loans to borrowers is for constructing new houses. During the term as Treasurer of the late Mr. Frank Walsh, an item was introduced into the Loan Estimates to provide some funds for purchasing existing houses. The item in these Loan Estimates relates to that, and not to money for new constructions, that being the main activity of the bank. A full statement about this may be found in the Treasurer's explanation.

Dr. EASTICK: Unfortunately, I still do not have the information I desire. I seek an admission by the Government that opportunities for persons to purchase houses will be fewer than in the past. Even the \$18 000 000 to which the Minister has referred, when measured against the inflation rate of 38.7 per cent in building costs during the latter part of 1973 and into 1974, will be insufficient to enable a meaningful building programme to take place.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The increased allocation has not been as great in percentage as the increase in the maximum limit of a loan, so that the number of new loans to be undertaken by the bank will be somewhat less. However, that situation may be offset by a sharp increase in the allocation of funds to the Housing Trust.

Mr. BECKER: Will the \$2 000 000 allocated for advances to the State Bank provide for the expansion of any bank services?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN (Premier and Treasurer): During this year no marked alterations in the activities of the bank are contemplated, although a long-term study is involved in maximizing the use of the banking facilities of the State Bank and Savings Bank. This allocation is to allow the bank to provide for general banking purposes.

Mr. EVANS: Should a person be able to repay a lump sum off his mortgage, the bank reduces the period of time still outstanding but will not reduce the amount of repayment. Will the Treasurer negotiate to alter this policy, so that the monthly payments can be reduced?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: Generally, the bank wishes to lend as much money as possible, and a reduction in repayments, as a result of a lump-sum payment, may benefit the lender but not the bank's general policy. However, I will discuss this matter with the Chairman of the board and obtain a report for the honourable member.

Mr. EVANS: The bank's present policy discourages people from repaying large sums, which they invest elsewhere. The money is needed for housing.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: Of the money allocated to loans to producers, will wineries have access to a large share? Also, can the Treasurer explain the reference to student hostels?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I am not aware of a proposal for any large sums to be allocated to wineries, but producer co-operatives would qualify for applications under this item. Discussions have been entered into about an advance to a winery in the Chaffey District, but I am not aware of the conclusions that have been reached.

Mr. BECKER: Is there a percentage break-up of the allocation of \$2 000 000 for general banking and for housing, and will any provision be made for personal loan or credit facilities? As it has been predicted that there may be serious credit difficulties within three months, will the State Bank be able to provide cheap finance to people on low incomes who are in financial difficulties?

Perhaps the bank could refinance hire-purchase arrangements to make payments easier for people. Some constituents in my district who have over-committed themselves are feeling the pinch because of increased costs and rising rents. Finance companies and credit organizations will not always extend loan payment periods, so, to help people on low incomes, provision could be made to refinance their hire-purchase instalments through the State Bank.

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I am not aware of such a proposal in the State Bank. The honourable member, with his banking experience, must know that the refinancing of hire-purchase contracts in a case where a person has already over-committed himself is a particularly unattractive proposition to a banker. Although the State Bank has carried out much financing in accordance with the social policy of this State, it still has to act as a viable banking operation. I do not intend in these Loan Estimates to provide for the State Bank to run an uneconomic operation. The State Bank has made provisions in the personal credit facility business over a long time. However, I will take up the matter with the Chairman of the State Bank, but I think it unlikely that he would recommend that the bank refinance hire-purchase commitments where people are over-committed.

Mr. BECKER: The Treasurer may not have fully understood my point. I foresee that in the next 12 months, because of inflation and increased rents, people will get into financial difficulty. Are we, as a State, going to encourage people to go bankrupt? We should be looking at a system to prevent that. Bankruptcy is a social disease that some people will avoid and others will not. The problem could be solved by giving people long-term loans, which would not be uneconomical for a viable bank operation.

Mr. BLACKER: Will the Treasurer explain the \$2 000 credit in respect of loans for vermin-proof fencing? Do I understand that no further payments will be available for this purpose?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I expect this sum was a payment in from the total project. Although it is not expected that we shall make further payments this year, I will get a report for the honourable member.

Dr. EASTICK: Is the \$40 000 for student hostels to be used to provide better educational opportunities for people, especially those in outback areas?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: This has been a long-standing arrangement in which a subsidy has been paid for the provision of boarding accommodation for people as far as schools are concerned where organizations, invariably non-government schools, apply for a subsidy to set up boarding accommodation for students who attend school. The proposal for payment this year is on the basis of applications received.

Mr. ARNOLD: Regarding money for wineries and loans to producers, one of the co-operative wineries in the Riverland applied for a loan to buy grape-harvesting machines. With the acute labour shortage these days it is difficult to get pickers for the crop, but the co-operative was told that its application would not qualify under the loans to producers item. Will the Treasurer take up this matter with the State Bank?

The Hon. D. A. DUNSTAN: I will get a report for the honourable member.

Line passed.

Highways and Local Government, \$3 500 000.

Dr. EASTICK: The grant for the "Highways and Local Government" line is a relatively small grant of

\$3 500 000. Can the Treasurer say how adequate this amount will be for this year, having regard to the requirements over the next three years? I have in mind particularly the arrangements outlined by the Commonwealth Minister for Transport (Mr. Jones). Matching grants are to be applied in respect of roads other than national roads and, on the figures given to me for 1974-75, the amount is \$14 300 000 from the Commonwealth Government, funds from the State Government being \$25 400 000. For 1975-76 the Commonwealth funding will be \$15 100 000 and the State will be required to find \$28 400 000. For 1976-77, the Commonwealth grant will be \$15 600 000 and the State will be required to find \$31 400 000. The Highways Department will be required to find additional assistance and it is on that basis that I query the adequacy of the \$3 500 000 on this line.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO (Minister of Transport): I do not think I can give a simple answer to the question because it covers four areas. I am hoping that this will be the last time an amount for the south-western suburbs drainage scheme will appear in the Loan Estimates. The last tender has been let, but I was told earlier this week that the contractor had not yet put a pick into the ground. The other urban drainage schemes cover many things and councils are taking advantage of this. I am delighted that they are doing so and that money is being spent fairly well. I do not imagine that the matter of public parks is being questioned by the Leader. The only query seems to be the \$1 000 000 to be spent on roads and bridges.

Dr. Eastick: In effect, yes.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I cannot say exactly what is to be done with the \$1 000 000, except that it is generally regarded as an emergency amount. If the Leader will accept that statement, I should like to seek further advice from the Commissioner of Highways and subsequently provide through the normal channels an answer giving full details.

Mr. COUMBE: Work on Eyre Highway is to be undertaken, I understand, by the Commonwealth Government. How will this work be done? How will the grants be made available? Will all these grants be handled entirely through the office of the South Australian Minister? Will he be responsible for letting the contracts in the normal way? Will the Minister have any say in the carrying out of the work either administratively or otherwise?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Legislation on this matter has not yet been passed by the Parliament and accordingly the details the honourable member seeks have not yet been finalized, although they have been discussed at officer level. I hope that the *status quo* is maintained and that at least nothing more restrictive than what is proposed under the urban transport scheme will apply, but at this stage I cannot give the answers the honourable member seeks because until the legislation is passed his questions are hypothetical. To the best of my knowledge the legislation has not been passed.

Mr. Coumbe: There's some doubt in your mind?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The Opposition in the House of Representatives put forward 18 amendments all of which were unacceptable to the Australian Government. If the Opposition in the Senate does likewise and amends the Bill, the points I referred to earlier this afternoon will become effective. In those circumstances I do not think I can have anything but doubts in my mind.

Mr. KENEALLY: An application has been made by the Port Augusta City Council for a subsidy towards effluent drainage schemes in that city. In July, 1967, the Drainage Co-ordinating Committee recommended that

Port Augusta have a common effluent drainage system because of the initiative the council had shown in requiring householders to install effluent drainage. It would appear that the Government has changed its policy towards the requirements for Port Augusta and it might be that the city will now be required to have a sewerage system. In the meantime, because of the high water table at Port Augusta, effluent is being pumped into the water table and effluent is running down the beaches into Spencer Gulf. This is an unsatisfactory situation and the council is most anxious to know whether or not it will receive the subsidy in respect of a common effluent drainage scheme or, if not, whether plans for sewerage the city can be implemented soon.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I do not have the information available here, but I shall certainly be pleased to get it for the honourable member and let him have it as soon as possible.

Mr. RODDA: The Minister gave a tentative answer concerning the possible passing of legislation in the Commonwealth Parliament. At page 8, the Treasurer's explanation of the Loan Estimates states:

The Commonwealth Aid Roads Act expired on June 30 last and new legislation is being arranged to grant assistance to States for roads and transportation purposes. The prospects now are that the remaining work, on the Eyre Highway will be financed under the proposed National Highways Bill. However, until the necessary legislation is effective, funds may be required to continue work on this project and to cover other transitional arrangements. An advance of \$1 000 000 is proposed for these purposes. I seek information on the South-Eastern Freeway which has been referred to in this place. Has it been taken care of in another way?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The freeway, which is no different from any other road in South Australia, has been provided for in accordance with the provisions of the Highways Act. If the new legislation is passed by the Senate, most of the money (which will be about \$14 300 000 this financial year, I think) will be spent on the freeway.

Mr. McANANEY: Can the Government use Loan funds for the matching contributions required by the Commonwealth Government, or must the money come from revenue such as vehicle registration fees?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: No decision has been made regarding the source of the money. However, I do not think that the Treasurer would look kindly on me if I suggested that we use Loan funds, because the call on Loan funds now is such that I do not think he would give me a good reception.

Mr. BECKER: The sum of \$450 000 has been allocated for work on the south-western suburbs drainage scheme. What work remains to be done in the Patawalonga basin area? Will dredging be carried out in this area of the basin near the West Beach trust area, and what drains remain to be constructed to complete the whole system?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I will obtain specific details (perhaps accompanied by a map) from the Highways Department. I imagine that the docket submitted to me only a few days ago, regarding the exchange of land and rearrangement of the canal with the West Beach trust area, deals with the area in question. I think it is drain No. 1 that remains to be completed, but it is not a very big job. The tender for this work has already been let.

Dr. EASTICK: I note that the \$250 000 allocation for public parks is a new line and I appreciate that public parks hitherto were funded from other sources. Money obtained as a surcharge on land tax goes towards the

development of public parks. Can the Minister give me additional information on this new project?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: There has been a marked increase in demand in this area; hence, the increase we are providing.

Mr. CHAPMAN: Regarding the \$1 000 000 allocation for roads and bridges, I understand that the investigations taking place at Cape Jervis and Penneshaw for port facilities are progressing satisfactorily and are nearing completion. In the light of a satisfactory outcome of these investigations, and a linking of the two points, does the Minister expect that, in 1974-75, the Highways Department's expenditure will be directed to the general upgrading of roads on Kangaroo Island in line with the original agreement whereby, as a result of the sea link being installed, there will be a heavy additional flow of traffic, thus requiring the upgrading of the island's roads? Has provision been made in the \$1 000 000 allocation for this upgrading programme?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The \$1 000 000 allocation is to continue work on Eyre Highway, as a bridging arrangement, pending the enactment of the new Commonwealth Government legislation. Expenditure on the island's roads comes from the Highways Fund: it is not Loan works.

Mr. GOLDSWORTHY: Regarding the \$250 000 allocation for public parks, some time ago I asked the Minister whether councils could be told whether they were likely to qualify for financial assistance (the specific council I had in mind was the Tanunda council). Can the Minister tell me what has been the outcome of this inquiry?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I have been unable to come up with an answer. However, I will again take up this matter with my department and see whether I can come up with a satisfactory answer.

Mr. GUNN: As the Commonwealth Government will become involved in work on Eyre Highway, can the Minister say how long it will be before the Commonwealth Government will take complete charge of this project? Also, can the Minister give me any information regarding Stuart Highway, which is a contentious matter particularly in the northern areas of my district?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: If the Senate passes the three Bills today, the legislation will become effective during the 1974-75 financial year. The question must be directed to the members of the Senate.

Mr. BECKER: Can the Minister say whether any council in my area sought assistance in the provision of drainage? In certain parts of the area difficulties have sometimes been experienced near the Sturt River, following heavy rains. A survey carried out by the Glenelg council revealed that \$250 000 would be required to upgrade the drainage system, and I assume that in areas of high density development the existing drainage system is not adequate. Are funds provided to upgrade the floodwater drainage system to meet such problems?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: The policy is not to provide finance for what could be described as internal drainage systems. There is a prerequisite that stipulates, I think, that the minimum area being drained must be about 40 hectares. I will ask the Commissioner of Highways to supply a copy of the criteria and let the honourable member have it. I doubt whether any local government body, other than perhaps the West Torrens council, would qualify, remembering that West Torrens, Marion, Glenelg, Brighton, Mitcham, and so on, are all involved in the south-western suburbs drainage scheme.

Line passed.

Lands, Irrigation and Drainage, \$3 310 000.

Mr. ARNOLD: I refer to the item of irrigation and reclamation of swamp lands. The department's rehabilitation programme, which was to repipe completely the whole system in the Ral Ral Division of the Chaffey irrigation area, has been changed and part of the work has been deferred indefinitely, with the result that two-thirds of the area has a completely closed-pipe system while one-third remains as an open-channel system. As a result, the system as originally designed cannot be used effectively: a completely closed system would be a fully charged system with water available to growers not on a roster system, as under an open-channel system. The new system and the existing old system must be used in the old manner, with growers continuing on the roster system, involving general irrigation and special irrigation set at predetermined dates.

The rehabilitation programme of the Renmark Irrigation Trust is well advanced and certain sections of the new distribution system have water virtually on demand, or within 48 hours of the application being lodged. Although a great deal of money has been spent in the Renmark and Chaffey areas, the effectiveness of the system has not improved to the extent one would hope. The metering of water provided to complete the system cannot be used, and it will operate only if it is a completely closed system with a certain head of pressure. As this is a serious defect in planning, I would prefer to have seen a further stage of development in another area deferred, even for 12 months, in order at least to complete one section first.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I shall draw the remarks of the honourable member to the attention of the Acting Minister of Lands. I gather the honourable member is saying that those parts of the area that have been fitted out with a closed system cannot get the most effective use of it because the system is not fully closed. I will obtain a reply to the points raised.

Mr. RODDA: The total sum of \$100 000 provided for the South-Eastern drainage scheme would hardly be sufficient to maintain the system. In view of the fact that a committee has been appointed by Parliament to examine drainage charges, is it intended that the drainage programme in the South-East will be slowed down, as could be indicated by the small allocation for this work this year?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I am not sure whether maintenance work for this scheme is carried out as a consequence of payments from the Loan Fund or as a consequence of the normal operations and rate collections of the South-Eastern Drainage Board. I will check that for the honourable member. I imagine that a considerable proportion of maintenance costs is met by ordinary rates collected from people who receive some benefit from drainage work that has taken place in the past. As the honourable member knows, capital development of further drainage in the South-East has been minimal for some time; probably the honourable member supports that.

Mr. ARNOLD: In the last 12 months, I have raised continually in this place the matter of drainage at Cadell, representation having been made to the Minister of Lands. The department has installed in the Cadell irrigation area a modern, comprehensive drainage system, but difficulties arise if growers are not able to afford to install internal drains on their properties to make use of the system. Seepage has affected a considerable area at Cadell, and this land cannot be used unless drains are installed on properties. As more land is affected each year, revenue received by the Lands Department in rates is reduced. So

far, the Government has not told growers whether they can expect long-term assistance, by way of loan or grant, to rehabilitate the area. Will the Minister obtain from the Acting Minister of Lands information about this matter?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I will put my best foot forward.

Line passed.

Woods and Forests, \$4 200 000.

Mr. COUMBE: The second reading explanation states that last year 300 hectares of land was purchased for forestry purposes. No reference is made in the explanation to the purchase of additional land this year for future plantings. Why is this?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: As the explanation states, an area of 2 300 ha is being prepared for planting in 1975, whereas 2 100 ha of land was prepared in 1974.

Mr. Coumbe: Preparing is not purchasing.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I am getting to that. I am not sure whether it is necessary for the department to purchase additional land in order to sustain the kind of development to take place in future years. Perhaps the existing landholdings are sufficient for at least some years ahead. I will check the matter with the Minister of Agriculture.

Line passed.

Railways, \$12 600 000.

Mr. COUMBE: The explanation refers particularly to the Port Stanvac to Christie Downs railway, for which Commonwealth assistance is expected. The Treasurer states:

During the year the Government entered into an agreement with the Australian Government to undertake projects in connection with urban public transport.

A week or two ago, the Minister of Transport said that the South Australian Government had entered into an agreement with the Commonwealth Government in relation to the standard gauge rail link to Adelaide, with plans including at least one line from Tarcoola or thereabouts to Alice Springs. The sum of \$12 600 000 under this line would certainly not cover that project. Does the Minister expect this financial year to receive from the Commonwealth Government grants for work on these projects? I understand these works are to proceed as soon as practicable.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: Three different financing arrangements will apply to these projects: first, the Alice Springs to Tarcoola project will be completely financed by the Australian Government, and this State only need pass the enabling legislation. Secondly, the standardization project will be financed initially by the Commonwealth Government, but we are responsible for repayments of 30 per cent of the amount. Thirdly, the public transport project is on a two for one subsidy basis, and we have to provide funds from our sources to match the Commonwealth Government's grant. In addition, there will be the normal Loan money that has always been available for railway improvements.

Mr. MATHWIN: Will any new bridges be built on the Christie Downs line, especially in the older Hallett Cove area so that people living east of the line will have better access?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I will obtain that information for the honourable member, and also for the member for that district.

Mr. COUMBE: What does the Government intend to do about providing rolling stock for the standardization project? Will it be manufactured at the Islington workshops, and will any of the work be done this year with funds from special grants?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: These questions merit a more comprehensive reply than I can give now. Generally, the standardization proposals do not contemplate providing new rolling stock but, rather, of converting much of the existing rolling stock. The Government desires that as much as possible of the work will be carried out at Islington, if suitable facilities are available. However, as has been required by previous Commonwealth Governments, I am sure the Commonwealth Government will insist that tenders be called and let to the lowest acceptable tenderer, but I will obtain further information for the honourable member.

Mr. RODDA: Some concern has been expressed at the effect of ballasting at Keith, and some conservationists have suggested that Mt. Monster may disappear. Is an extensive reballasting of the Adelaide to Melbourne line being proceeded with? Although there is nothing new in the survey, is the matter being kept in mind? With the obvious duplication and extension that must come within the next 10 years, with the advent of Monarto, what is the future of the Adelaide to Melbourne line?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I will obtain that information.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Much money is being allocated to supplying new freight vehicles and improving the present freight stock. Recently, I drove from Bordertown to Adelaide and, during the journey, I counted about 200 interstate road transport vehicles going to Melbourne. I was surprised to see so many of them. Obviously the road transport companies have a large market there. The Railways Department has implemented some new schemes for improving the freight services from Adelaide to Melbourne, and, vice versa. I understand we now have a speedy service known as the jet service: if goods are at Mile End by 4 p.m. on one day, they will reach Melbourne the next day. That is an excellent service. Has the Railways Department carried out any surveys to find out why people prefer road transport to rail transport and how the Railways Department can somehow get some of (hat work? If that was done, it would reduce some of the road problems, the wear and tear on roads, and the danger caused by these massive transports.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I entirely agree with the honourable member's concluding remarks, and the same can be said for the Railways Commissioner and his officers. In a reply to a question in this House last Tuesday, it was stated that the Railways Department had earned an extra \$4 000 000 in the past financial year. The figures this year are climbing nicely. The department is continually seeking to improve its share of the freight business, as shown by these figures, and will continue to do so. At present, the department is enthusiastically trying to rearrange its method of financing, which is an advantage. If it can rearrange its financing so that the efforts of the railway staff do not have to reflect inefficiency because of Government decisions to give concessions, I think we shall get somewhere. That is the area into which we are moving.

Mr. MATHWIN: I am sure the Minister would be disappointed if I did not mention the Glenelg tram.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Mr. Acting Chairman, on a point of order, this line has nothing to do with the Glenelg tram.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member has referred to the Glenelg tram, but there is nothing in this line about trams.

Mr. MATHWIN: The Minister of Transport said earlier that this related to the Glenelg tram.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member is out of order.

Mr. MATHWIN: The Minister misled me.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Following my question to the Minister about improved freight services between Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney, I understand that Thomas National Transport and other large transport companies are responsible for up to 50 per cent of the freight transported by the railways. Is that so? If so, do these large companies work on concessional rates for their freight? I have been told that they are subsidized or receive great concessions because of their large tonnages. If that is so, the rest of the people using the railways (the State as a whole) tend to subsidize these large companies.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I will get the information for the honourable member, although that has nothing to do with the Loan Estimates. If I get any information, it will be ready when we discuss the Budget.

Mr. COUMBE: I want to ask a question of the Minister about capital, because that is something in which I am interested but does not appear here as an item. I refer to the West Lakes development scheme, which is covered by another line further on. At one time it was intended that a spur railway be constructed from Hendon to West Lakes. That was canvassed when I was a member of the Industries Development Committee, when we looked at the Football Park project. Has the Minister, in his capital planning, considered the movement of crowds from major matches at Football Park, where great road traffic congestion has occurred?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: As far as I know, there is no provision in this year's Loan Estimates for money to be spent on extending the railway line to West Lakes. We intend to do that: it is part of the Director-General's programme of upgrading and expanding public transport services, but in this financial year, as far as I am aware, there is no provision for spending money there. In the initial stages, we intend to cater for the travelling public by using buses; rail facilities can be used later. I will have these facts checked and, if they are incorrect, I will bring back the correct information for the honourable member.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: First, can the Minister say to what extent the Railways Department carries out tests on the strength of concrete in railway bridges; secondly, if such tests are carried out, where is the work done; and, thirdly, whether regular records of any such tests are kept?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I will obtain the information from the engineers.

Mr. McANANEY: Can the Minister say how much will be spent on the railway line from Adelaide to Victor Harbor? I agree with the member for Davenport that we must upgrade the main railway lines, particularly interstate lines. Something is wrong if a railway service cannot compete on equal terms with road transport. Because modern roads are being built to Victor Harbor and Strathalbyn, the railway line will be used to an even smaller extent, if that is possible. The sooner the line is closed the better.

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I will get the information that the honourable member is seeking.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Regarding work on the railway line from Port Stanvac to Christie Downs, what percentage of the total contract has been given to the Engineering and Water Supply Department, and on what basis? Does the department have to compete against private contractors before contracts are let?

The Hon. G. T. VIRGO: I will obtain the information for the honourable member.

Line passed.

Marine and Harbors, \$6 095 000.

Mr. CUMBE: For years the Marine and Harbors Department's policy has been to purchase land at Birkenhead for future development. Regarding the provision of \$60 000 for land and property acquisition, can the Minister representing the Minister of Marine say whether part of that sum will be spent on acquisition in the Birkenhead area for future development by the department?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I will obtain the information for the honourable member.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Regarding land acquisition in connection with the West Lakes development, exactly what land is referred to and for what purpose will it be used?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I suspect that the reference relates to the development of the haven, but I will check and let the honourable member know.

Mr. EVANS: How many allotments have been sold at North Haven and what prices have been received? When the project was first mooted, it was stated that the allotments would sell for about \$4 500 each, but allotments have recently been for sale at about \$10 000. The original idea was that the average person could buy an allotment, thereby encouraging home ownership by the average working man. However, if allotments are selling for about \$10 000, the average person in the area will not be able to buy the land, and the area will be used as a pleasure resort by people who wish to live near the sea-board and use the recreation facilities there.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: Although the matter raised by the honourable member does not relate to the Loan Estimates, I will see whether I can get the information he requires.

Mr. DEAN BROWN: Further to my question about land acquisition in connection with the West Lakes development, what area is being acquired and how much is being paid for each hectare or each block?

Mr. BLACKER: Will the Minister give details of the \$19 000 allocation for the Port Lincoln slipway?

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I think this relates to the upgrading of the slipway. However, I will check on the matter.

Line passed.

Engineering and Water Supply, \$38 110 000.

Mr. EVANS: Will the Minister say how much money is to be allocated this year to extend the Blackwood sewerage scheme? Considering the inflationary spiral, the overall vote has not increased substantially over that of last year, which means that less work will be done this year.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I will obtain that information.

Dr. EASTICK: The Premier was confident earlier that South Australia would receive a special grant of \$3 500 000 for sewerage this financial year. Although last year the Government applied for and expected to receive \$2 000 000 without any strings attached, it received only \$1 600 000, which was to be repaid over a short period and at 8 per cent interest. This means that the Government will have to pay \$5 000 000 for that loan. Does the Minister believe that, if this \$3 500 000 or any part of it is made available for urban sewerage schemes, it will be advanced on the same terms and conditions as the 1973-74 allocation, or can we expect the Commonwealth Government to honour its promise to the people of Australia, and particularly of

South Australia, and make the money available as a grant that will not have to be repaid?

The Hon. Hugh Hudson: What is your authority for making that statement?

Dr. EASTICK: First, it was a promise made during the 1972 election campaign and, secondly, it is contained in the Treasurer's statement. This was to be a grant without strings attached, the only requirement being that it should be used for sewerage. Although the Premier was confident that this sum would be forthcoming, I do not share his confidence in the Australian Government. I therefore seek the Minister's assurance that this will be a grant and not a loan. Not only do the States have to get on their bended knees to recoup money that they have paid into the Commonwealth Treasury: they must also pay an exorbitant rate of interest that goes into the Commonwealth Government's coffers.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I am well aware of the Leader's political prejudices. I point out that the figure of \$3 500 000 is a conservative estimate of the loan that the South Australian Government expected to receive from the Australian Government. The Treasurer made clear in his Financial Statement that it was expected to be a loan. Although I am not certain of the terms and conditions of the loan, it is worth while pointing out to members that in current circumstances an interest rate of less than 10 per cent is not exorbitant.

Dr. Eastick: Taking it against a background promise that it would be reduced, it is exorbitant.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: The Leader has not given his authority for the statement he made. I have asked him for his source, but he has not given it.

Mr. Evans: It was stated last year.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: By whom?

Mr. Evans: By the Treasurer.

Dr. Eastick: It was also stated in the 1972 Commonwealth A.L.P. policy speech.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: In current circumstances, borrowing for further sewerage development at rates of interest of 8½ per cent to 9 per cent would be advantageous to South Australia. Funds are not available at that rate of interest from any private institution. Any person who borrows privately must now pay a much higher rate of interest than that. No-one wants to justify these high rates in comparison with, say, rates immediately after the Second World War, and I would much prefer to see significantly lower rates of interest. However, I point out that any person who lends funds at rates less than the current percentage rate of inflation of prices must have concern for the decline in the real value of the funds he lends.

If the Government, on behalf of the community, is able to borrow funds at a lower rate than the current inflation rate, there is some advantage to the community. The ultimate weight of the interest indebtedness in relation to the total revenue of the State is likely to decline in such circumstances rather than to expand. I suggest that that matter is something where the adjective "exorbitant" used by the Leader is completely inappropriate, because not one of the Leader's supporters outside in the community would lend at that rate of interest. Regarding the terms of money available under the sewerage arrangement for this year, I will obtain the information for the honourable member.

Mrs. BYRNE: Regarding the \$2 012 000 allocation for extensions, services and minor works in relation to metropolitan sewerage, can the Minister say whether it is intended that any sewerage extensions will take place in

the Tea Tree Gully district and its relevant suburbs? The stage has now been reached, fortunately, where no large area needs to be sewered. Nevertheless, some pockets still require sewerage, and this is a matter of concern to the people affected.

The Hon. HUGH HUDSON: I will try to obtain the information for the honourable member.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

EMERGENCY POWERS BILL

The Legislative Council intimated that it insisted on its amendments Nos. 1 to 4 and No. 6; that it did not insist on its amendment No. 5, but had made the following alternative amendment:

5a. Compensation:

- (1) A person who, as the result of compliance with any regulation under this Act or while complying with or being engaged in the carrying into effect of any such regulation, suffers loss, damage or injury, other than any such loss, damage or injury resulting or arising from and by reason of any prohibition, limitation or restriction on the sale or supply of any goods or services, shall be entitled to compensation under this Act from the Minister.
- (2) Every claim for compensation under this Act shall be made in a form and within a time approved of by the Governor.
- (3) In default of agreement as to the amount of compensation between the Minister and the claimant the Minister shall direct that the claim shall be referred to arbitration before a single arbitrator who shall be a judge of the Supreme Court.
- (4) The procedure to be followed at the arbitration shall be as determined by the arbitrator, but, subject to any such determination, the procedure shall be as nearly as possible the same as the procedure in the trial of a civil action in the Supreme Court.

SUPPLY BILL (No. 2)

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

FIRE BRIGADES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. L. J. KING (Attorney-General): I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation incorporated in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

EXPLANATION OF BILL

It makes a number of amendments to the principal Act some of which will remove some misleading and unnecessary provisions which had been detected when the Act was examined with a view to preparing it for consolidation and reprinting under the Acts Republication Act, 1967. The Bill also makes amendments which are of a corrective nature and which bring the Act into line with the policy that has already been approved by Parliament in other legislation whereby a provision of an Act fixing fees or charges that have been, or are capable of being, varied by regulation under the Fees Regulation Act, 1927, is replaced by a power to fix and vary fees and charges by regulation alone made under the principal Act itself, thus avoiding the difficulty encountered in the consolidation of an Act which arises when a provision of the Act has been amended by a regulation which is still subject to disallowance by Parliament at the time when the consolidation is to be brought out.

The Bill also makes conversions of old currency references to decimal currency. Section 6 (1) provides, *inter alia*, that the Act should apply in the following localities:

(1) the municipalities and parts of municipalities mentioned in the second schedule; (2) the districts and parts of districts mentioned in the second schedule; and (3) every municipality or district, or part of municipality or district, in which the Governor, on the recommendation of the board, by proclamation declares that the Act shall apply. The subsection goes on to provide that any such proclamation must not be made before the expiration of three months after written notice has been given to the council concerned that the board's recommendation had been made.

The second schedule consists of references to municipalities and districts and parts of municipalities and districts (referred to in (1) and (2) above) in which the Act applied when it was enacted in 1936. However, additional localities to which the application of the Act has been extended by proclamation under paragraph (3) above are not included or required to be included in that schedule. Since the Act was passed, about 90 proclamations have been made extending the application of the Act to additional localities. Accordingly, the second schedule does not provide a means of ascertaining the localities in which the Act applies. Besides, because of the nature of the descriptions of some of the localities defined in some of the proclamations, it is often difficult, if not impossible, to identify those localities without recourse to a map depicting sufficient detail for the purpose. Also, a number of localities shown in the schedule as district council districts are now municipalities with possibly different boundaries.

There is little point in including descriptions of localities in a schedule to an Act like this, especially if the schedule becomes out of date by an administrative act like the making of a proclamation or by the alteration of boundaries by operation of law. Since there have been about 90 proclamations since May 1, 1937, when the Act came into operation (and no less than 28 of those proclamations were made between May 23, 1968, and July 26, 1973), the second schedule does not include all the localities in which this Act applies or their correct descriptions and, in its present state, is quite misleading and serves no useful purpose. The difficulty would not be overcome by the expensive and tedious process of preparing a new schedule (which could now run into several pages) to replace the existing one, because with each future proclamation under section 6, and with every other change of boundary by operation of law, that new schedule also would become out of date.

It would seem that ever since the Act was passed, any person wanting information as to the localities in which the Act applied would have had to seek and obtain that information either from the Fire Brigades Board or the council of the municipality or district concerning which the information is sought, and there seems to be no logical reason for retaining the second schedule (which is now inaccurate and misleading) so long as the Act continues to apply in the localities in which it now applies and the procedure for extending its application is not altered.

Clause 2 accordingly strikes out subsection (1) of section 6 of the principal Act and inserts three new subsections in its place. The new subsections retain the existing localities in which this Act applies as well as the existing procedures for extending or adding to those localities without reference to the second schedule, which is to be repealed by clause 26 of the Bill. Clauses 3 to 9 inclusive convert old currency references to decimal currency.

Clause 10 amends section 51 of the principal Act, subsection (2) of which refers to a payment to the board of "charges in accordance with the fourth schedule". The

charges prescribed in the fourth schedule are capable of being varied by regulation under the Fees Regulation Act, 1927, and, in keeping with the policy already approved by Parliament in other legislation, this clause strikes out the reference to the charges in accordance with the fourth schedule and replaces it with the passage "such charges as may be prescribed for the purposes of this section and as are applicable and appropriate". The clause proceeds to preserve the existing charges continued in the fourth schedule until regulations prescribing charges for the purposes of section 51 of the Act have been made and have taken effect.

Clauses 11 to 17, inclusive, convert old currency references to decimal currency. Clause 18 converts a reference to the Commissioner of Waterworks to the Minister of Works. Clauses 19 and 20 convert old currency references to decimal currency. Clause 21 amends section 69 on the same principles as clause 10 amends section 51. Clauses 22 and 23 convert old currency references to decimal currency. Clause 24 makes a drafting amendment to section 73. Clause 25 converts an old currency reference to decimal currency. Clause 26 repeals the second schedule, which becomes redundant because of the amendment to section 6 by clause 2. Clause 27 repeals the fourth schedule, which becomes redundant because of the amendments to sections 51 and 69 by clauses 10 and 21 respectively.

Mr. EVANS secured the adjournment of the debate.

MENTAL HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. L. J. KING (Attorney-General): I move:
That this Bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation incorporated in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

EXPLANATION OF BILL

This Bill, if approved by Parliament, will enable the Mental Health Act to be updated, consolidated, and reprinted under the Acts Republication Act, 1967. It also removes from section 3 of the amending Act of 1960 two subsections which have not been capable of incorporation in the principal Act and enacts a new section 19a in the principal Act which would have the effect of preserving any rights and powers that would have existed under those subsections.

Clause 1 is formal. Clause 2 repeals subsections (2) and (3) of section 3 of the Mental Health Act Amendment Act, 1960. Those subsections, which were not incorporable in the principal Act, were enacted as transitional provisions consequential on the repeal of section 20 of the principal Act. That section had provided, *inter alia*, that a medical officer resident in an institution became entitled to six months leave of absence after each period of five years continuous service whilst in residence in any institution or institutions.

Section 3 (1) of the 1960 amending Act repealed section 20 of the principal Act but, as there were then some medical officers to whom that section applied, their rights were protected by section 3 (2) of the 1960 amending Act, while subsection (3) of that section provided that the period of service in respect of which leave had been taken pursuant to section 20 of the principal Act or pursuant to section 3 (2) of the 1960 Act was not to be taken into account for the purposes of any claim for long leave of absence under any Act relating to the Public Service. However, as those two subsections were not given a "home" in the principal Act, they now stand as substantive enactments of the 1960 amending Act, which, therefore, would have to be reprinted as a separate public general Act unless they are repealed, in which case it would be necessary to enact as an enactment of the principal Act a saving provision to safeguard the rights of persons whose rights to leave under the repealed enactments are still alive and have in fact been recognized by the department.

Clause 3 enacts a new section 19a, which, in effect, safeguards the rights of those officers and also re-enacts the provisions of section 3 (3) of the 1960 Act that would apply to all officers in the Public Service to whom those repealed enactments applied. Clause 4 makes a grammatical alteration to section 41. Clause 5 inserts the word "or" after subsection (1) (b) and after subsection (2) (d) of section 98. The insertion of that word after those paragraphs is consistent with the wording of those subsections.

Dr. TONKIN secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.23 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, August 20, at 2 p.m.